



Irish Spring

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Smell Like a Pro

Situational Analysis

Irish Spring is a bar soap and body wash brand that aims to add adventure to its customers' everyday lives. According to Nielsen's Ad-Hoc Service for the Bar and Body Wash Product Category, Irish Spring is the top body-cleansing brand for men in 2024 (Irish Spring, n.d.). Irish Spring aims to gain market share through its "Smell Like a Pro" campaign to increase awareness of its brand and body products.

Research

"You're not a dish. You're a man." by Dr. Squatch

In 2017, Dr. Squatch partnered with Raindrop, an agency headquartered in San Diego, CA, to increase its market share in the men's body soap market. At the time, Dr. Squatch had a small, loyal following but the company had dreams of expansion. Raindrop completed the following steps to increase Dr. Squatch's sales to over \$100 million by primarily utilizing YouTube:

- *Brand Cohesion.* Raindrop needed to create the brand's cohesive personality, messaging and mission. Alignment of these materials allowed consistent communication from the brand to generate stronger brand recognition and recall in its consumers.
- *Updated Content.* Then, Raindrop updated the brand's website, social media ads, product images and email marketing sequences. Like creating brand cohesion, updated content allows for consistent communication from the brand to its consumers.
- *Anchor Video.* Raindrop produced one of YouTube's most viral video advertisements with more than 120 million views and 100,000 shares across YouTube and Facebook (Raindrop, n.d.).

Irish Spring can explore these strategies to update its brand messaging and create a more cohesive brand experience for its consumers. These tactics have proven to generate significant market interest for Dr. Squatch. Therefore, these tactics should be considered when aiming to achieve a similar goal by a competing company.

The New York Times "The Truth is Hard" Ad Campaign

On February 26, 2017, The New York Times launched its "The Truth is Hard" integrated marketing campaign focused on gaining universal trust within its audience. The famous news publisher was losing paid subscribers, while its readers lacked overall confidence in the news industry. Readers were first challenged to determine what the truth meant to them. The New York Times then released video content of what it looks like when its journalists produce truthful content and what it takes to get there amid worldwide conflicts.

The organization aimed to improve public perception of its content and mitigate fake news. The campaign resulted in a 100% increase in subscriptions, \$16.8 million in earned media value and was the first newspaper company to pass two million digital-only subscribers, proving to be very successful. The campaign utilized public relations, earned media, digital, social and print forms of messaging. Some campaign results include:

- 20 million views across YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter.
- 648 articles and TV segments, generating 753 million impressions.
- The subscriber landing page hit the campaign goal in the first four days.
- Went from a brand campaign to an idea people could rally behind.

Some of the campaign tactics and strategies include:

- “The Truth Is...” black and white digital advertisement shared on TV and social media platforms.
- “The Truth Is...” short films released when newsworthy subjects were trending to show journalist production and involvement.
- Inspired by the 2016 presidential election news opportunity.
- Advertising on billboards, radio, podcasts, talk shows, and first-person footage.

Irish Spring has the potential to use many similar strategies as the New York Times to lead to a successful campaign of its own. The key takeaway from the NYT “The Truth is Hard” campaign related to Irish Spring is that content needs to entertain, inspire and inform effectively through a specific message. This can be applied to Irish Spring when thinking about using similar messaging ideas to generate more visits on its digital platform and increase online sales and audience perspective of trust in the brand from the campaign (AMA, 2018).

“The Man Your Man Could Smell Like” by Old Spice

In 2010, Old Spice partnered with Weiden+Kennedy, an advertising agency based in Portland, OR to produce a campaign to help increase body wash sales and transform the brand’s identity. According to Weiden+Kennedy, “60% of its body wash purchases are made by women” (Weiden+Kennedy, (n.d.)). Weiden+Kennedy wanted to leverage these results and create a campaign that would spark conversation between couples, thus launching “The Man Your Man Could Smell Like.”

The campaign launched online during Super Bowl weekend and on television shortly after. Weiner+Kennedy targeted couples that would be watching the campaign together and created a “response” campaign due to the overwhelming success. The Weiner+Kennedy team filmed 186 video responses via social media platforms including Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and Reddit. The responses were aimed at answering questions from the media in real time. The campaign and Weiner+Kennedy team positioned themselves to become the fastest-growing and most popular interactive campaign in history.

Irish Spring will utilize these strategies to support its target audience and create a strong presence in the market by supporting the brand's identity and messaging. Irish Spring will target middle-aged women through relationships with its primary target audience, young (black and Asian) men. Irish Spring focuses on freshness and practicality, appealing to men who appreciate a more traditional and straightforward approach; therefore, the campaign's messaging should be considered.

"Thanksgiving Week, The Latest Example of the NFL's Popularity." by Brad Adgate

In 2023, the NFL's Thanksgiving Day games were studied after setting a viewership record for a second consecutive year. Statistically, the ratings performance of regular season NFL games have accumulated a larger audience than any World Series or NBA Finals game. According to Forbes, "The late afternoon game on Thanksgiving Day (Dallas vs. Washington), on CBS, generated an average audience of 41.8 million viewers" (Adgate, 2023). This game is the second most-watched regular season NFL game, only being surpassed by the 2022 Thanksgiving Day game (Giants vs. Cowboys) with 42.1 million views.

Irish Spring will feature Dexter Lawrence, a professional football player for the New York Giants as its spokesperson for this campaign and utilize the viewership for Thanksgiving Day games to leverage this campaign. Irish Spring will be able to reach a wider audience by collaborating with the NFL Thanksgiving Day game, hence, the target audience should be studied and the brand's key messaging.

Big Idea

Irish Spring's "Smell Like a Pro" campaign utilizes a strategic partnership with the New York Giants during the Giants' highly anticipated Thanksgiving Day game against the Cowboys. This collaboration will leverage the excitement of football to engage fans, promoting the idea that using Irish Spring can elevate personal freshness to a professional level.

Through interactive fan experiences, social media promotions and on-site branding, the campaign aims to boost brand awareness and resonate with existing and potential customers. This ultimately drives market share growth during a peak shopping season. By aligning with a beloved sports event, Irish Spring reinforces its positioning as a go-to choice for those who want to feel confident and invigorated, just like their favorite Giants players.

Goal

Irish Spring will generate awareness of its brand and products to young, American men.

Objectives

1. To generate awareness among 40% of young men by Nov. 30, 2024.

2. To create positive associations about Irish Spring's brand among 30% of young men by Nov. 30, 2024.
3. To maintain market share among the men's body wash market by Dec. 7, 2024.

Strategy

Partner with the New York Giants for its Thanksgiving Day game to promote the Irish Spring brand to its viewers while positioning Irish Spring as the industry's leading body care brand of 2024.

Publics

1. Young (Black and Asian) Men

Demographics

- 18-34 years old
- Low to middle-class income
- Football fans (Giants and Cowboys)

Psychographics

- Value hygiene
- Favors efficient, simple-to-use products
- Seeks a cost-effective option
- Active lifestyle

Geographics

- North American target

Channels

- Social media
- Commercials

2. Middle Age Women

Demographics

- 25-40 years old
- Low to middle-class income
- Married or in a relationship
- Has a spouse or teen sons

Psychographics

- Value hygiene
- Favors scented products
- Enjoys holiday shopping
- Family-centric
- Research-oriented

Geographics

- North America

Channels

- Social media
- Point-of-sale advertisements (print media)
- Word of mouth

Spokesperson

Dexter Lawrence will be the spokesperson for the “Smell Like a Pro” campaign. Lawrence is a professional football player for the New York Giants and starts as a defensive tackle. He has been an active player in the NFL since being drafted in 2019. Lawrence will endorse “Smell Like a Pro” and share his feedback on the Irish Spring brand.

Lawrence’s presence throughout this campaign will set the Irish Spring brand apart from other competitors, as he is considered by the NFL a top defensive lineman, has been named an All-Pro and has an Instagram following of over 138,000 followers. According to the New York Giants, “Lawrence has blossomed into one of the league's best defensive linemen since the start of the 2022 campaign, evidenced by his back-to-back selections as a second-team All-Pro” (Citak, 2024). Lawrence has often emphasized values like hard work, dedication, and community involvement, which aligns with the Irish Spring brand and “Smell Like a Pro” campaign.

Key Messages

“I’m Thankful for Irish Spring”

This message keeps the “Smell Like a Pro” campaign relevant to the Thanksgiving season. Irish Spring will use this message to convey a desire for its products.

“Freshness That Can’t Be Tackled”

Irish Spring will use this message to convey the lasting scent of its products. This message will convey that its products deliver lasting freshness while keeping its customers clean.

“Smell Like a Pro with Irish Spring.”

Irish Spring values its consumer’s hygiene and satisfaction with its products. It offers products with lasting scents to keep its customers fresh for extended periods.

Tactics

Paid

- **New York Giants Partnership:** Sponsor the New York Giants for the Thanksgiving Day game. Irish Spring will have its logo on team equipment and will secure television commercial spots.
- **Sponsored Advertisements:** Release social media and television commercials with Dexter Lawrence promoting Irish Spring.
- **Paid Influencers:** Sponsor content from influencers like the BDGE Fantasy Football YouTube page; Twitch streamer, Kai Cenat; and the New Heights podcast with Travis and Jason Kelce.

Earned

- **Media Kit:** Release a media kit with a press release, fact sheet, news advisory and more.
- **Press Conference:** Invite reporters to interview Dexter Lawrence and New York Giants players about the upcoming Thanksgiving game and Irish Spring.

- **PR Packages:** Send popular influencers and retired sports professionals packages of men's body soaps and bar soaps by Irish Spring. Retired Giants players include Eli Manning, Lawrence Taylor and Michael Strahan.

Shared

- **Social Media Interaction:** Encourage consumers to share their favorite game-day scent on Facebook, Instagram and TikTok using the #smell-like-a-pro hashtag. Dexter Lawrence will kick-start the challenge on his profile and Irish Spring's profile.
- **Social Media Poll:** Motivate the audience to choose their preferred scent of Irish Spring bar soap through a poll.
- **Social Media Commenting and Reshares:** Irish Spring will reply to social media comments and reshare select customer content to interact with its consumers and incentivize more social media interaction.

Owned

- **Point-of-Sale Advertisements:** Posters will be placed near Irish Spring products in stores to draw attention and push website visits.
- **Website Landing Page:** Videos linked to the website to establish thought leadership, brand recognition and increase traffic to the specific body product pages.
- **Hashtags:** Featured on social media platforms on every post from Irish Spring to further campaign image and user-generated content, conversation and search engine optimization: #smell-like-a-pro.

Proven Maxim

An appeal to audience self-interest is likely to be effective.

Irish Spring aims to attract consumer conversation and interest in its products through selective messaging focusing on the social and personal interests of its audience.

A suggested action or appeal, as part of a message coupled with it, is more likely to be accepted than a message by itself.

Irish Spring wants its target audience to believe the company wants the best for them and their hygiene. This positions Irish Spring as a brand of growth and trust through its call-to-action.

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