

## AMERICA'S PIZZA HITS A HOME RUN WITH SPORTS FANS

Domino's Pizza with Jericho Communications

Category 97: Use of Research for Publicity

### OVERVIEW:

If you had a craving for delicious, cheesy home-delivered pizza tonight, whom would you call? Chances are, Domino's Pizza (one of America's favorite pizza makers) would roll off the tongues of many consumers, especially men watching sports on TV. Domino's ongoing challenge is to stay on top of the pack of fast-food alternatives and continue to grow its market share within a fiercely competitive environment. Jericho successfully helped Domino's differentiate itself by creating a unique consumer-oriented publicity tool call the Domino's Pizza Meter. This original, tongue-in-cheek research tracks trends and predicts events by tying changes in pizza ordering habits to social, political and sports-related happenings. Armed with the Pizza Meter results, Jericho elevated Domino's above the fast-food industry clutter by talking to our target audiences (in this case, sports fans) about subjects they hold near and dear to their hearts. In essence, we demonstrated that Domino's is out there in the trenches with Americans, interwoven into every aspect of their lives...that Domino's is "America's Pizza."

### PLANNING:

The objectives of the program were to:

- \* Increase visibility for Domino's Pizza, strengthening the company's positioning as "America's pizza"
- \* Generate a sense of fun and excitement among the media and consumers about Domino's Pizza

To do this, the following strategies were employed:

- \* Conduct original research that ties Domino's into topical, sports-related and social happenings
- \* Deliver compelling, humorous news stories that capture the attention of print and broadcast journalists nationwide

Domino's Pizza's target audiences were:

- \* Male consumers, particularly sports fans aged 18 to 44
- \* Current and potential pizza lovers across America
- \* Sports and general consumer media, as conduit to above audiences

### JERICO CREATIVE PHILOSOPHY:

We believe that for a publicity campaign to be truly successful, it has to reach its audiences through the media outlets that they enjoy reading, which are usually

not the client's industry trade publications. The message must also contain an emotional appeal, addressing something that the audience truly cares about. For instance, sports lovers probably do not read food and beverage trades to find out which pizza is the best. But, when they see news about a pizza maker in the sports pages or hear it from their favorite commentator, they are likely to pay attention -- both to the message and the product. By shifting the focus off the pizza product itself and onto current events, the campaign broadened and deepened the product's appeal.

#### EXECUTION:

\* Taking America's Pulse with Pizza - The Domino's Pizza Meter, developed several years ago by Jericho, informally tracks trends and sometimes even predicts events based on changes in pizza orders. One year, for instance, the Domino's Pizza Meter "predicted" Desert Storm happenings based on a huge rise in pizza deliveries to the White House. Here is how this creative, decidedly not-too-serious research mechanism works: Domino's nationwide fleet of pizza delivery drivers informally poll Americans by observing and gathering information about when pizza is ordered, exactly what is ordered, and who pays the bill. Domino's store managers are also interviewed by telephone, by Jericho, following noteworthy events throughout the year. A database is maintained and analyzed to identify and monitor how pizza orders relate to sports, political or other social happenings.

\* Pizza Meter News Bureau - A three-pronged media effort playfully packaged and delivered the Domino's Pizza Meter results, targeting all areas of the media, from business to sports to fashion. First, a "pizza box" press kit was distributed to a select list of the country's top national sports media and television producers. The kit included a press release, a humorous facts-at-a-glance sheet, Pizza Meter history booklet and Domino's pizza coupons. Second, the facts-at-a-glance sheet was distributed to the top 50 daily newspapers and radio station markets, leading consumer magazines, and food/restaurant trades. Finally, a customized, sports-oriented press release and "sports-facts" survey findings sheet reached national sports wire services as well as sports editors/producers in the top 50 markets. The sports release played particularly well with this media segment because Dennis Rodman was at the height of his career at that time, and he had also appeared in a Domino's ad campaign.

#### EVALUATION:

1. Awareness Soars. News of the Domino's Pizza Meter was splashed across the headlines in print and broadcast outlets nationwide. More than 80 million media impressions were generated, including placements in: WALL STREET JOURNAL, USA TODAY, LOS ANGELES TIMES, NEW YORK DAILY NEWS, BOSTON GLOBE, CHICAGO TRIBUNE, PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER, DETROIT NEWS, ABC-TV's "GOOD MORNING AMERICA" and "LIVE WITH REGIS AND KATHIE LEE," NBC-TV's "LATE SHOW WITH CONAN O'BRIEN, ESPN's SPORTSCENTER, CNBC-TV's "STEALS AND DEALS", TV FOOD NETWORK'S "IN FOOD TODAY," and RADIO AMERICA. In addition, 48 local television and 24 local radio broadcasts around the country highlighted the Domino's Pizza Meter.

Domino's Pizza Meter hit a home run with sports fans, the publicity program's number one audience this year. More than 75 percent of the media placements were in the sports pages or part of sports broadcasts targeted at men. This Pizza Meter campaign was one of the most successful ever undertaken, with media results tripling those of the previous year's program.

2. Fun and Excitement for All. The press had a field day with the Pizza Meter facts, particularly those about Dennis Rodman. They also reacted with gusto to the pizza box mailing, with 50 press representatives inquiring about it -- and, all of them covering the Pizza Meter. Excitement about the Domino's Pizza Meter extended well beyond the scope of the original media campaign when Saturn, the progressive automaker, showed a Domino's delivery driver rattling off Pizza Meter factoids in its ad campaign. Once again, Domino's won its way into the hearts and bellies of Americans.