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Seeing (RED): a qualitative analysis of the product (RED) campaign and integration of public relations and marketing theory

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SEEING (RED):
A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PRODUCT (RED) CAMPAIGN AND INTEGRATION
OF PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING THEORY

A Thesis
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agriculture and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements of the degree of
Master of Mass Communication

in

The Manship School of Mass Communication

by
Amy Elizabeth Martin
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ABSTRACT

In an effort to combat the AIDS epidemic around the world, the Product (RED) campaign aims to engage consumers in an “economic initiative” with exclusive products from their corporate partnerships. Academic journals claim that this effort is a new form of Cause-Related Marketing (CRM), even though it involves many Public Relations strategies and tactics. Product (RED)’s unique nature is unlike previous CRM campaigns due to its corporate partnership agreements. Researchers have not previously studied initiatives such as Product (RED) through either Public Relations or Marketing theories. David’s (2004) Convergence Theory creates a cyclical model to merge both Public Relations and Marketing theory where both fields compliment each other in strategy and outcomes. Cancel et. al.’s (1997) Contingency Theory states that Public Relations strategies function along a continuum of either advocacy or accommodation tactics. The purpose of this study was to understand the creation process of the Product (RED) campaign in order to fully comprehend how social activism campaigns combine both Marketing and Public Relations strategies. This research compiled interviews with Product (RED) campaign organizers, corporate partners, and social responsibility analysts. Results showed a blend of both Contingency and Convergence Theories, applying a mix of accommodation and advocacy strategies. Interviews displayed differing levels of consumer and corporate engagement, as well as key campaign elements to include for future social activism campaigns.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

On October 13, 2006, Chicago's Magnificent Mile was decorated in a new color: red. Pedestrians looked quizzically at some of the famous shops now toting this new color and logo. Consumers saw the “(RED)” logo plastered on the main windows of the two-story Gap ® store, along with pictures of famous celebrities donning the newest fashion with those recognizable features (Oprah, 2006; Product (RED), 2007b; Spethmann, 2007).

Shoppers finally realized what was happening when Bono and Oprah Winfrey stepped out of their red convertible with bright red shopping bags and multiple cameramen. Their entrance into the Gap ® signified the Product (RED) campaign launch in the United States (Oprah, 2006). In an effort to combat the egregious AIDS epidemic in Africa, Product (RED)'s concept to engage consumers in an “economic initiative” with exclusive products drew attention to the cause (Product (RED), 2007b). The launch garnered media attention from around the world with the backing of high-powered celebrities and large corporate partnerships.

Nicknamed “the RED Brigade,” social activists Bono and Bobby Shriver conceptualized an effort to empower international consumers to solve an international problem (Spethmann, 2007). Before starting this endeavor, Bono sought advice from Robert Rubin, former U.S. Treasury secretary during President Clinton's administration. Rubin's advice was three-fold. First, a successful social activism campaign must clearly articulate a desperate need to the American public. Second, such a campaign must “convince” American citizens that their efforts can solve the incredibly complex AIDS crisis. Last, Rubin suggested that Bono recruit major retail operations and use their marketing budgets for the cause (Bono, 2007a). To accomplish this large-scale project, Bono and Shriver partnered with Converse, Gap, Emporio Armani, Motorola, Apple, and American Express (Product (RED), 2007b). The (Product) RED business model is unlike any charitable organization. It is structured similar to a licensing company, drawing up a five-year

contract with each company (Spethmann, 2007). Each partner produces and promotes a “flagship” product containing the color red and Product (RED) logo. Contractual obligations vary with each partner, giving up to 50% of the profits to the Product (RED) campaign¹ (Bono, 2007b; Spethmann, 2007). These proceeds are funneled to the Global Fund to give antiretroviral medicine to HIV/AIDS victims in African regions. The Global Fund also directs HIV prevention programs, as well as educational sessions for children orphaned by AIDS (The Global Fund, 2007; Product (RED), 2007b; Product (RED), 2007c; Spethmann, 2007).

In many ways, Bono and Shriver’s concept appeals to the socially conscious consumer. According to Webster (1975) this specific consumer is one “who takes into account the public consequences of his or her private consumption or who attempts to use his or her purchasing power to bring about social change” (p. 188). Social change is at the heart of all Product (RED) communications. Their website, www.joinred.com, stresses the toll that HIV/AIDS has inflicted on African nations. Communications engage consumers with factual and emotional appeals directed to the conscience, instead of simply asking for a large donation.

These corporate partnerships are not the only players for the Product (RED) effort. A small annual fee from each corporate partner sustains the eleven (Product) RED staffers without dipping into fundraising dollars (Product (RED), 2007a; Spethmann, 2007). Campaign creators outsourced specific jobs to other firms. The Persuaders, LLC, a Public Relations firm, is responsible for Product (RED)’s creation, implementation and website maintenance (Product (RED), 2007b). Another communications company, Signal Rock Communications, is handling all media relations and communication requests (Rodeheler, 2007). All of these contributors mostly work behind the scenes, as Bono and other Product (RED) celebrity endorsers carry out all campaign strategies and

¹ American Express is a partner for the United Kingdom (Product) RED campaign only. According to Worth (2006), American Express will assess the longevity and success of their endeavor before introducing the RED credit card to American consumers.

communications in the media. The complex structure and partnerships within this campaign are cause enough to investigate its unique ability to engage consumers.

Even though Product (RED) is clearly touted as a Marketing venture (Benady, 2007; Bono, 2007a; Spethmann, 2007; Worth, 2006), the campaign integrates a vast amount of Public Relations strategies and tactics to achieve significant charitable contributions for the Global Fund. The website is full of press releases, fact sheets, biographies, and more campaign tactics. Product (RED) displayed media relations tactics through high profile media events, such as the (Product) RED debut on the Oprah Show and the *Vanity Fair* July 2007 “Africa” issue.

The blend of Marketing and Public Relations strategies causes both scholars and professionals to react in various ways. Some are skeptical of how the two fields can merge to ensure a successful campaign (Benady, 2007; Grunig, 2000, 2006). Others see the overwhelming benefits of Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC) approaches and believe success is achieved when the two work side-by-side (David, 2004; Spethmann, 2007; Worth, 2006).

After its one-year anniversary, the (Product) RED campaign has come under fire for its lackluster financial performance. Critics believe that the Marketing component makes the campaign feel like a “scheme” (Benady, 2007, p. 24). Some trade publications believe that the Marketing dollars would be better spent through direct campaign contributions (Benady, 2007). For example, Gap ® invested an initial \$25 million in Marketing costs, while donating \$2 to \$2.5 million to the Global Fund during the first year (Spethmann, 2007).

Questions about the Product (RED) campaign also fall upon the shoulders of current and future corporate partners. Since it’s initial six partnerships, Product (RED) added Hallmark Cards, Dell, and Microsoft to their lineup (Product (RED), 2008b). These last three partnerships built upon the foundation of communications for the Product (RED) campaign through commercials and social marketing endeavors. Dell and Microsoft’s (RED) computer was featured in a television

commercial during the 2008 Super Bowl and Hallmark launched an awareness campaign through Facebook (Product (RED), 2008). With these new partnerships and a Sotheby's Valentine's Day art auction, Product (RED) currently touts it's over \$100 million raised for the Global Fund as a way to hinder criticism. This fundraising total puts the United States at the top of countries participating in Product (RED), which includes the United States, United Kingdom, and Europe (Product (RED), 2008).

Both Bono and Shriver also counteracted critics by saying that "sustainability" is the goal for their fundraising efforts, not "instant gratification" (Bono, 2007b; Shriver, 2007). In a special interview by NBC correspondent Brian Williams (2007), Bono publicized the \$47 million raised by Product (RED) in its first year. He also confronted critics by addressing the long-term goals of the campaign. "We [Product (RED)] want the companies to make profits because it makes the campaign sustainable," said Bono. "The idea is to make RED the star, not me."

Product (RED)'s unique structure calls for an in-depth look as to whether or not a blend of Marketing and Public Relations strategies can successfully integrate in a social change campaign. By qualitatively examining the campaign's steps of creation and implementation, a clearer picture of Marketing and Public Relations strategies will emerge. In addition, this study will examine if the campaign is successful in the eyes of consumers after the one-year anniversary. In a world where consumers are "demanding more from corporations than just products," research must determine a corporation's role in promoting social responsibility and whether Marketing and Public Relations theories are able to fully integrate the two disciplines into one practice.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Edward Bernays, commonly called the father of Public Relations, attempted to professionalize Public Relations practice and separate his techniques from publicists and press agents of his day. In *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, Bernays (1923) argued that Public Relations professionals needed to exemplify ethical conduct and socially responsible behaviors. He believed Public Relations professionals were responsible for explaining the world to the company and the company to the world. In a 1980 speech for the Public Relations division of the Association of Educators in Journalism and Mass Communication conference, his definition of Public Relations was well-received by attendees: “Public Relations is the practice of social responsibility. It holds the key to America’s future” (Grunig & Hunt, 1984).

Many theorists agree on Bernay’s view of Public Relations as a communication conduit between public and organizations (Cutlip, Center, & Broom, 2000; Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Grunig, 2000: 2006; Harlow, 1976). Various scholars, however, adapted his concept to argue that Public Relations can operate in either management or persuasive functions.

Proponents for a management definition for Public Relations include Harlow (1978) and Grunig & Hunt (1984). Harlow’s (1978) definition explicates Public Relations as a vehicle to facilitate mutual communication between organizations and their publics. He believes Public Relations promotes accountability, mutual understanding, and anticipation of future organizational crises. Grunig & Hunt (1984) also contend that Public Relations professionals need to thrive in an organizational management capacity. Their definition explains Public Relations as a “management of communication between an organization and its publics” (p. 6). These authors stress that professionals are most successful when integrated in the dominant coalition, the highest decision making group within an organization (Grunig & Grunig, 1989).

The persuasive view of Public Relations started with Ivy Lee and his ability to “tell the

truth” about organizations through the press-information model (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). As a journalist turned Public Relations consultant, Lee represented the Rockefeller family during the early 1900s. His main responsibility was to positively present the Rockefellers by reversing John D. Rockefeller’s tyrannical reputation into a man of generous charity (Heibert, 1966; Grunig & Hunt, 1984). Peake (1980) adopted Lee’s view of Public Relations as a strategic persuasive tool to influence public perception. Cutlip, Center, and Broom (2000) softened the persuasive title in their definition by stressing that the only time persuasion guides public opinion is when it operates in a responsible fashion.

Public Relations and Marketing Theories

Whether operating in a persuasive or management capacity, formal Public Relations has relatively short, but rich, history of facilitating communication through all forms of business and society. In order to understand which definitions of Public Relations and Marketing apply to social activism campaigns, it is important to draw distinctions between four views of Marketing and Public Relations. First, Grunig (2000, 2006) and his cohorts view Public Relations excellence through continual feedback between corporations and publics, as explained in his Excellence Theory. Second, Candel and his cohorts (1997) apply contingency theory to show how Public Relations professionals employ a mixture of accommodative or advocacy strategies in their campaigns. Third, integrated Marketing communications (usually shortened to “IMC”) incorporated the persuasive aspects of Marketing with Public Relations strategies. Kotler and Mindak (1978) first attempted to merge the two fields together by concentrating on the public’s ties to certain Marketing brands. By adapting Marketing’s “4P” model, David (2004) presents the final viewpoint by advocating that Public Relations and Marketing can have a symmetrical relationship. In his convergence theory, David states that Marketing and Public Relations professionals both complete “value-driven exchanges” in their campaigns (p. 193). His conception of these exchanges

combines the “4Ps” of Marketing with social and corporate values of Public Relations. David believes this symbiotic relationship can be successful for both fields.

Public Relations Excellence Theory

For over twenty years, James Grunig and his colleagues envisioned Public Relations excellence as a theoretical feedback loop between companies and their audiences. In many ways, Grunig’s (1992) development of the two-way communication model is a foundation for Public Relations strategies and tactics. By utilizing the roots of organizational theory, Grunig laid the framework of his model by understanding Carter’s (1965) and Chafee and McLeod’s (1968) understandings of coorientation. Coorientation measured how multiple individuals or organizations related planned messages to each other, as well as other environmental systems (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Grunig & Stamm, 1973; Grunig, 2006).

The Excellence Study created a partnership between Public Relations researchers and the International Association of Business Communications (IABC) Foundation. Grunig incorporated the work of David Dozier, William Ehling, Larissa Grunig, Fred Repper, and Jon White to contribute instrumental knowledge of diversity, power among Public Relations professionals, employee communication, operations research, and integrated Marketing communications (Grunig, 2006). These contributions helped professionalize Public Relations and increase the field’s theoretical breadth in both academic and professional realms (Cancel, Cameron, Sallot and Mitrook, 1997; Sallot, 2002).

Excellence Theory centers on two-way symmetrical communication as a key component for Public Relations success (Gower, 2006; Grunig & Grunig, 1989; Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002; Grunig, 2006). According to Grunig (2006), two-way symmetrical communication occurs when both organizations and publics are actively communicating a message to each and receiving

feedback. This contrasts two-way asymmetrical communication because the organization values feedback from their publics instead of only communicating their singular message.

Excellence Theory is a combination of four Public Relations communicative strategies: managerial, strategic, symmetrical, and ethical (Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002). Essentially, Grunig, Grunig, and Dozier (2002) believe the most effective campaigns have all four components in play. First, the professional is a member of management or the dominant coalition. The message is extensively researched, planned, and strategically communicated. Symmetrical communication ideally flows equally between the organization and the public, all in an ethical manner. While the cornerstone of Excellence Theory is two-way symmetrical communication, this feature exists in an autonomous Public Relations department and functions entirely as a management entity (p. 13-15; Grunig, 2006).

According to Kelly (1998), Grunig's Excellence Theory also crosses over to fundraising management. Kelly asserts that fundraising professionals can adopt one of two perspectives to donor relations. First, an asymmetrical assumption is that fundraisers are "manipulating" philanthropists for their non-profit organization, receiving little feedback except for financial contributions (p. 9). On the other hand, a symmetrical approach looks at donors as a way to educate about the cause as well as simultaneously benefit through increased funds. While the symmetrical view is seen as more "idealistic" in nature, it emphasizes equal contribution and relationship building efforts from both donors and fundraisers (p. 9).

Contingency Theory

As the Excellence Theory evolved over the past two decades, Grunig (2006) recently stated that his vision for symmetrical communication might incorporate contingency theory to foster relationships between practitioners and key publics. Contingency theory states that all Public Relations strategies function along a continuum of either advocacy or accommodation tactics

(Cancel et. al., 1997). Grunig (2006) and Cancel et. al (1997) define accommodation and advocacy in similar ways. Advocacy tactics promote or endorse a specific viewpoint. Public Relations practitioners commonly define advocacy as promoting the needs of the client (Cancel et. al., 1997; Sallot, 1993). In contrast, accommodation tactics foster “mutually beneficial relationships” by building trust among all parties (Cancel et. al, 1997, p. 36; Cutlip et.al., 2000).

By stating that Public Relations strategies “depend” on the situation, Cancel et. al (1997) set forth contingency theory to explain how accommodative and advocacy strategies flow on a continuum. Ranging from “pure advocacy” to “pure accommodative” strategies, Cancel and her cohorts argue that Public Relations strategies seldom fall neatly into those two categories. To reconcile that notion, they propose that each strategy combines a mix of the two, but that some strategies can fall more in line with one side than the other depending on the viewpoint of the organization. For the purpose of this study, we are explaining advocacy strategies as those that fall more along the side of selling a Product (RED) product than promoting the results of the campaign and Global Fund. Accommodative strategies are more appropriate labeled as those are more informational about the campaign and Global Fund’s resulting efforts due to campaign donations. A balanced mix of both accommodative and advocacy strategies would equally promote the products and explain the cause of the resulting efforts of the Product (RED) campaign.

Empirical testing of contingency theory increased in recent years. Recent research from Rhee (2004) investigated the valued role that CEOs play in relating company messages of credibility and integrity to important publics (Grunig, 2006). Contingency theory also has played a part in van Dyke’s (2005) research into international organizations’ relationships with employees and other corporations, and how those interactions affected their reputation among an international audience. While these organizations did provide feedback models for each of their publics, they only adapted to the two-way communication model enough to keep the peace among all parties.

Grunig (2006) and David (2004) best describe the future of contingency theory and its application for Public Relations professionals. David (2004) combined accommodative and advocacy components into his convergence model, which is explained later in this section. He explains it as a natural part of the professional process, and highlights how it should be combined in campaign practices to demonstrate the fluidity of Public Relations. Grunig (2006) desires to see Public Relations research discover how to harness the fluidity of the profession and its ability to combine Marketing strategies in that process. More importantly, he identified increased focus on “how symmetrical communication can be combined with coercive behaviors, the possible misuses of symmetrical communication,” as well as other factors to possibly arbitrate more influential two-way communication strategies (p. 168-169).

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)

Grunig’s (2006) “independent yet separate” ideal adds fire to the continuing debate of the roles of Public Relations and Marketing professionals. For over 100 years, Public Relations and Marketing scholars remain at odds with each other to determine the roles each field plays in business management. Tedlow (1979) compiled a historical record of Public Relations functions from 1900-1950. In his work, he determined the nature of Public Relations in management roles showed it was more powerful as a buffer and communication tool for “protection against...hostile public opinion” (p. 193). He clearly delineated this role of Public Relations to be separate from a sales function, saying that practitioners were not called to promote products. Other authors believe public relation’s agenda can be integrated with Marketing. Even with disagreement, all believe but future research needs to determine whether to keep the two entities separate or fully integrate (White and Mazur, 1995; Kotler and Mindak, 1978).

Authors have tried to operationalize levels of integration between the two fields’ involvement in campaigns. Kotler and Mindak (1978) pioneered the effort to research Integrated

Marketing Communications (IMC). They created a five-scenario scale in which Marketing and Public Relations could interact, ranging from an increased Marketing emphasis and low Public Relations input to high Public Relations emphasis with low Marketing input. Hallahan (1999) adapted it to include a six-point scale:

- 1) Celibate: neither Marketing nor Public Relations is present.
- 2) Co-existent: both Marketing and Public Relations are equally present and fully functioning.
- 3) Combative: both Marketing and Public Relations are equally present, but at odds with each other.
- 4) Co-optive: both fields are present, but one is increasingly emphasized
- 5) Coordinated: both fields are present, but functioning separately
- 6) Combined: both fields are present and fully integrated

Even with these definitions, the debate continues concerning how effective integrated Marketing communications can be in business practices. Since 2000, academicians rarely elaborate about IMC as an efficient way to combine Marketing and Public Relations strategies. Trade publications, such as Croft and Dalton (2003), explain the most common IMC strategies in ways that are applicable to any business setting. These types of publications offer step-by-step instructions to implement the IMC tactics and give little explanation concerning how it merges Public Relations and Marketing concepts.

Convergence Theory

Academicians and practitioners call for an increased connection between communications and social causes, and marketers are constantly searching for potentially socially responsible ties for their consumer brands (Gower, 2006; Lafferty, Goldsmith, & Hult, 2004; Vardarajan & Menon, 1988). Drawing from the Marketing theory, David (2004) created a cyclical model to marry

Marketing practices with public relation's social responsibility function in order to create civic engagement.

David (2004) uses concepts from both Marketing and Public Relations theory to show similarities between the two fields. He makes the distinction between concepts "markets" and "publics" by explaining that individuals are both consumers (Marketing philosophy) and socially responsible citizens (Public Relations philosophy). David argues these two identities can intertwine through social Marketing campaigns. In his 3P model for Public Relations, David believes that Public Relations could create civic engagement and "strengthen the links on the citizen side of the engagement" through professional values, Public Relations practice, and pragmatics (p. 191).

To create civic engagement through social activist campaigns, David (2004) advocates the need to academically divide each person into their societal roles as consumer and citizen. When these roles are split, as in IMC campaign approaches, individuals are less likely to exhibit socially responsible behaviors. His solution created a model to allow Public Relations and Marketing to coexist in a way that satisfies both the company's profit and the consumer's interest.

The duality between Marketing and Public Relations lies in value-driven trades between corporation and individuals. His cyclical model (see Appendix A) illustrates the deals between markets and corporations as "transaction exchanges" on the Marketing side, and "relationship stakes" on the Public Relations side. These "relationship stakes" would foster corporate citizenship and social responsibility among the corporation and citizens respectively (David, 2004).

In the process of combining Public Relations and Marketing strategies, David (2004) explained how specific definitions of terms from both fields overlapped in his research. "Relationship stakes" are the advantages and drawbacks for both organization and publics to engage in a Public Relations campaign. On other hand, "transaction exchanges" are the cost and benefit decisions between consumers and retailers for a specific product. David also describes Public

Relations playing more of a role in “citizenship” functions, or building goodwill and activism between publics and organizations. The “citizenship” function translates to “entrepreneurship” functions on the Marketing side, defined as the corporation also being a pioneer for socially responsible business practices.

Professionalism. In order for the transactions to flow evenly, David (2004) argues that his “3P” model, adapted from marketing literature, is the most efficient. His foundation is the first “P” of professionalism, as it is understood through social norms and organizational ethics. David employs a cultural audit and mapping technique, based on the PRSA Code of Ethics and Grunig et. al.’s (2002) view of Public Relations and social ethics. Professionalism, as defined by David (2004), needs to find a balance between organization and individual practitioner, social and personal factors, and “relationship building” and “problem-solving” (p. 195). The importance of this balance is clear in situations where missteps in corporate image and community relations made an impact on the corporation’s bottom line, such as past racist comments by Texaco employees (Coombs & Schmidt, 2000). David’s professionalism factor echoes Public Relations literature of reputation management (Coombs & Schmidt, 2000; Hutton et. al., 2001).

Practices. An intriguing aspect of David’s (2004) argument is his view of the second “P,” Public Relations practices, and his perception of the connection between Grunig (1992) and Cancel et. al’s (1997) view of contingency theory, as well as accommodation and advocacy functions of Public Relations. Both of these seminal theoretical works explain “accommodation” as fostering “mutually beneficial relationships” by building trust among all parties. The main concentration with accommodation strategies is accepting feedback from all publics and giving their publics what they desire. “Advocacy” is defined as a means of promoting or endorsing a specific viewpoint. It generally is approached from a view of one-way communication strategy, only promoting a cause and not wholly receiving feedback. David (2004) believes that while the accommodation and

advocacy are more fluid concepts than previous researchers want to admit, the importance of accommodation and two-way communication has become more prized in Public Relations excellence.

David's (2004) view, citing Miller (1989) is that advocacy and one-way communication models can serve a more important role, especially if they are conveying a message for the good of the community. As long as "professional values are not compromised," advocacy should be viewed as more important in the grand scheme of Public Relations (p. 200). Grunig (2006) believes each campaign has a unique combination of advocacy and accommodation strategies, but stresses the importance of "mutually beneficial relationships" that accommodation strategies typically offer.

Pragmatics. The final "P" of "pragmatics" in how Public Relations examines a consumer's purchase decisions through the consumer's personal preference. David (2004) emphasizes two main aspects of risk and perceived control of the Public Relations professional as they implement the first two Ps of professionalism and Public Relations values. In order to balance reputation management, risk, and perceived control of situations, David (2004) adapted research from Zegans (1991) states that in an ideal situation,

"The decision maker (within the corporation) seeks out the best information, carefully interprets risk, internally estimates payoffs, and ultimately settles on a decision that maximizes payoffs but minimizes risk to self and the organization" (p. 206).

While this model ideally presents a win-win situation for a corporation, David's (2004) model misses a common aspect of successful Public Relations campaigns: symmetrical communication from the consumer to corporation. There is no explicit feedback mechanism in his argument, essentially stating that the only way that Public Relations can function in his model is to function as Grunig and Hunt's (1984) press-agent with asymmetrical communication. To

accurately “nurture relationships between the citizenship side of corporations and publics” through Public Relations, corporations must understand the public’s needs by offering a forum for public feedback (p 208). Communicating corporate social values may be an indicator of a consumer’s purchase intention (David, Kline, & Dai, 2005). If the company’s brand and non-profit campaigns fit well together, consumers are more likely to buy products to support that cause (Nan & Heo, 2007). In their experiment, Nan and Heo (2007) discovered that those who exhibited both a high brand consciousness and high connection to the social cause would be more likely to purchase the campaign product. However, they also noticed that different Cause-Related Marketing products elicited a different purchase response. Consumers were less likely to purchase products that were more utilitarian in nature, regardless of whether or not they strongly believed in the advocated cause. For example, if a person strongly supported breast cancer research, researchers expected that consumer to purchase products that donated money to that cause. If the consumer had a choice between two items that supported breast cancer research, they would be less likely to buy pink ball-point pens to support research and more likely to buy a pink stuffed animal that had no utilitarian value.

Because of these consumer purchase behavior findings, researchers found evidence that a profit margin from a Cause-Related Marketing campaign cannot be the only measurement of success in the eyes of corporations and campaign beneficiaries. Corporations and campaign managers must implement another form of feedback, and this element is missing from David’s (2004) model. If other feedback avenues are not created, professionals may possibly neglect the “public” in Public Relations (Nan & Heo, 2007).

ROPES Model

When examining a campaign that reports \$47 million raised for the Global Fund, fund-raising models come into play. As previously mentioned, Kelly’s (1991, 1998) addition to fund-

raising management models explains how fund-raising practices parallel Grunig's Excellence Theory. Common linkages exist between two-way symmetrical communication in both Public Relations and fundraising practices. According to Greenfield (2001), donor communication is key to maintaining existing charitable contributions and garnering new support. The desire for consistent, sustainable support outweighs a one-time gift (Greenfield, 1991; 2001).

To create consistent support, fund-raisers turn to the ROPES Model. Representing a successful flow of a fund-raising campaign, the acronyms represent the following process: research, objectives, programming, evaluation, and stewardship. Kelly (1998) asserts that in-depth research is critical to the program's success, and that all publics, organizations, and opportunities need to be analyzed. Most research comes from a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methods, as well as primary and secondary data sources. Objectives are measurable and obtainable results desired in a successful campaign. According to Broom and Dozier (1990), "objectives describe the specific results to be achieved by a specified date for each of the well-defined target publics" (p. 40). Using quantifiable objectives in the planning stages improves accountability between client and practitioner. Kelly (1998) also distinguishes objectives into two categories. Output objectives are the concrete outcomes of the plan's implementation, including the amount of money raised and media impressions garnered through publicity. Impact objectives are the behavioral change or awareness component on behalf of the targeted publics.

The final three stages include the actual program and evaluations of its success. As Kelly (1998) explains programming through two components: cultivation and solicitation. Even though cultivation is often thought of as "conning" people out of money, it sincerely involves a sustained, concerted effort to meet the needs of donors and involve them in the organization's affairs. Both Kelly (1998) and Culbertson (1992) stress the importance of a fund-raiser's transparency in the

cultivation stage. Solicitation is the simple act of asking for the gift, especially if they feel it is in the best interests of both parties (Kelly, 1991).

After solicitation and cultivation occurs, fundraisers place a growing emphasis on programming evaluation and stewardship. Evaluation occurs for both impact and output objectives. Impact objectives are more difficult to evaluate, simply because of their unquantified nature. To amend this, fund-raisers look at the six effects of impact objectives: awareness, accuracy, understanding, agreement, behavior, and repeat behavior (Kelly, 1998, p. 430). Once those are accounted for, evaluation takes place for the fundraising process and tangible outcomes. Suggestions that arise help refine the fund-raising process for later projects.

Kelly's (1998, 2001) main contribution to the ROPES model is the final step of stewardship through four main functions: reciprocity, responsibility, reporting, and relationship building. As a "necessity for all relationship management," stewardship adds longevity to any client/organization partnership (Kelly, 1998, p. 433). Modeled after Grunig's two-way symmetrical model, fundraisers need to meet the long-term desires of donors. Their efforts are honored with sustainable contributions and free-flowing communication between donor and organization, especially gratitude for charitable gifts (Duhe, 2007; Kelly, 1998; 2001). The principle of responsibility incorporates accountability among donors and organizations. Donors feel appreciated and believe the organization has a high level of accountability in regards to their donated gift's use (Greenfield, 1991; Kelly, 1998). In return, donors tend to give more contributions toward organizations that report and communicate the donation's use through obvious and subtle actions (Kelly, 1998; 2001). Donors want notification of how their gifts are being spent, and will even see cost-cutting measures on behalf of non-profit organizations as a responsible use of their money. If a non-profit minimizes money spent on mailings and increases Internet use for communications, donors have a tendency to view them as better stewards in their reporting mechanisms (Waters, 2007). Organizations, such as

the Global Reporting Initiative, aid in creating and reflecting feedback of reporting mechanisms for both non-profit and for-profit entities (Bernhart & Slater, 2007; Global Reporting Initiative, 2006).

Finally, all of these factors culminate to the effectiveness of donor/organization relationship building. If reciprocity, responsibility, and reporting are high, relationship building will be high as well (Waters, 2007; Kelly, 2001). This positive correlation is necessary to understand the ROPES model, especially when considering motivations and actions of socially responsibility campaigns.

Integrating Social Change: Corporate Social Responsibility and Cause-Related Marketing

Grunig (2000, 2006), Hallahan (1999), David (2004), and Kelly (1998) provide compelling views of Public Relations as the field attempts to cooperatively serve the public and organizations. To understand Public Relations and Marketing's role in social change campaigns, an important starting point is to break down both fields into their social relations components. Public Relations professionals stress corporate social responsibility (CSR) to demonstrate how organizations can build goodwill and mutually beneficial relationships with the public. For marketers, their method of Cause-Related Marketing (CRM) allows consumers to contribute to organizational charity efforts.

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

In Grunig and Hunt's (1984) definitive handbook for Public Relations, they devote an entire section to the importance of organizations operating in a socially responsible manner. Bernays (1922) believed social responsibility to be a foundational quality in Public Relations professionals. Because corporate social responsibility is frequently piecemealed into various sub definitions, this research will adopt Grunig and Hunt's (1984) definition that social responsibility is "making a contribution to, and not having adverse consequences on, the larger society of which an organization is a part" (p. 48). In addition, these authors highlight that two-way symmetrical communication is an "integral" measurement tool for corporate social responsibility (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 48; Grunig, 1992, p. 17).

Sub definitions of CSR complicate the already blurred lines from both Marketing and Public Relations fields. Mohr (1996) attempted to alleviate confusion by dividing corporate social responsibility activities into two areas. First, he combined “multidimensional definitions” together to reference a company’s social responsibility. David, Kline, and Dai (2005) delineated these types of CSR activities to include moral/ethical company practices, relational practices for sustained community involvement among employees, and discretionary/philanthropic contributions.

David, Kline, and Dai’s (2005) experiment showed that the combination of corporate expertise (the prestige associated with the company name) and corporate social responsibility values significantly affected consumer’s purchase intentions. For those companies who rely more on corporate expertise, corporate social responsibility values were not as significant a factor in purchase intention. By looking at specific corporate social responsibility value factors, they found strong support for discretionary practices. Discretionary strategies, such as a corporation’s support of a social cause, had a significantly positive effect on how consumers viewed corporate social responsibility values. In addition, relational and moral practices had a higher impact on public perception than discretionary/philanthropic contributions (David, Kline, & Dai, 2005). Pinkston and Carroll’s (1991) examination of CSR activities found similar results, leaving philanthropic priorities the least prized CSR value. Other types of Mohr’s (1996) multidimensional CSR initiatives include corporate sponsorships of community events (Close et. al., 2006; Hal Dean, 2002; Lichtenstein, Drumwright, & Braig, 2004; Simmons & Becker-Olsen, 2006) and partnership with non-profit organizations (Andreason, 1996, 2003).

Mohr’s (1996) second area combines all aspects of social Marketing. Kotler’s (1991) definition explains that social Marketing leads to transactions that benefit the organization, the consumer, and greater society. Porter and Kramer (2002) recognized the stakeholder and societal demands on corporations, urging them to be more driven by the bottom line or more responsive to

social problems. The authors argue that philanthropic efforts and social Marketing campaigns can be influential and friendly to the profit margin, but only if they are seamlessly aligned in the where and how of making financial contributions (p. 66). Positioning the correct alliance is essential to CSR activities, explained later in Cause-Related Marketing (CRM) discussion.

Authors agree that reputation management represents a third defined area of corporate social responsibility initiatives (Freeman, 2006; Hutton et. al, 2001). A contributing factor to financial success is a company's reputation, and corporate responsibility ranks high on budgetary allotments and perceptions of corporate communication roles (Hutton et. al, 2001). Hutton's (2001) findings communicated that philosophies of "supporting Marketing and sales" ranked the lowest in corporate social responsibility practices, according to surveyed Fortune 500 companies. Reputation management literature generally addresses using CSR initiatives in response to crisis (Coombs & Schmidt, 2000; Guth & Marsh, 2005; Small, 1991). Activities resulting from the Exxon Valdez oil spill are clear examples of implementing CSR ideas to improve reputation after a major catastrophe (Small, 1991).

Cause-Related Marketing (CRM)

Growing attention on social problems by consumers and corporations allowed Cause-Related Marketing (CRM) to become the hot buzzword in integrated marketing campaign circles. For some, it seems that CRM activities are the perfect blend with CSR initiatives, Public Relations communications, and Marketing principles (David, Kline, and Dai, 2005; David, 2004; Nan & Heo, 2007). The impact of each CRM campaign lies in its profitability and public perception (Vardarajan & Menon, 1988; Nan & Heo, 2007).

Vardarajan and Menon (1988) established a definitive framework by defining CRM's basic principles as:

“Cause-Related Marketing is the process of formulating and implementing Marketing activities that are characterized by an offer from the firm to contribute a specified amount to a designated cause when customers engage in revenue-producing exchanges that satisfy organizational and individual objectives” (p. 60).

From this definition, three components must be present for a successful campaign. First, the corporation desires to increase profits by supporting a cause. Yoplait’s partnership with the Susan G. Komen Foundation is a prime example of this motive. For every yogurt lid that is returned by consumers, Yoplait donates \$0.10 to the Komen Foundation, up to a certain amount (Nan & Heo, 2007). With this scenario, Yoplait is increasing their sales margin while helping out a cause. Increasing sales is the primary objective for companies in the CRM campaign (Vardarajan & Menon, 1988). Second, the consumer must have a connection to the cause presented in the campaign. This factor also increases sales if the company has a high brand-awareness prior to the campaign (Nan & Heo, 2007). Third, the consumer does not need to engage with the cause outside of purchasing the products through the campaign. While the hope is consumer awareness of the cause will increase, additional attention to the benefiting organization is a byproduct of the campaign (Vardarajan & Menon, 1988).

CRM activities have increased tremendously in the past twenty years. The initial CRM attempt occurred in 1983 by American Express to raise over \$1.7 million dollars to renovate the Statue of Liberty (Andreason, 1996). Trimble & Rifon (2006) argue that CRM tactics have received more attention in business trade publications than academic journals. As CRM became a higher priority by Marketing professionals, these specific campaigns moved from a “relationship Marketing” concept in trade publications to consumer perception research in scholarly articles (Andreason, 1996, Nan & Heo, 2007, Trimble & Rifon, 2006).

Most consumer research centers on attitude surveys concerning cause-brand relationships

and public perception. Perception and brand recall of CRM campaigns grew in the past ten years among (Ross, Patterson, and Stutts, 1992; Webb & Mohr, 1998). When asked to recall advertisements, 53% of those surveyed recalled a promotion from a CRM campaign (Ross, Patterson, & Stutts, 1990; 1991). When Webb and Mohr (1998) resurveyed the public about CRM efforts, 79% recalled a CRM campaign and its components. Consumers view corporations as more socially responsible if they implement a CRM initiative, and are positively influenced to purchase the products from the campaign (Smith & Alcorn, 1991). A major factor of this perception is the relationship between brand characteristics and the company's supported cause. Lafferty, Goldsmith, and Hult (2004) were first to experiment with CRM research and added empirical evidence of a strong cause-brand alliance influence. Additional experimental research provides mixed support for CRM campaign influence on perceptions. Hamlin and Wilson (2004) recognized participants did not show significant changes in purchase intent after viewing the CRM experimental condition. On the other hand, Lafferty and Goldsmith (2005) found consumers would have more positive attitudes toward the campaign and purchase behaviors if they were exposed to CRM advertisements.

Product (RED) Corporate Partners and Social Responsibility

Aspects of corporate social responsibility are not foreign to some of the Product (RED) corporate partners. Gap, one of the founding partnerships in the Product (RED) campaign, released its first social responsibility report in 2003. In 2004, their second responsibility report emerged to counteract the previous year's allegations of unfair labor practices (Gap, 2004). Titled *Facing Challenges, Finding Opportunities*, this report outlined efforts to evaluate employee factory conditions, alignment of increased cultural diversity in core business solutions, and efforts to involve employees in global social responsibility initiatives. Gap provided global and regional maps that detailed efforts in those communities as an "approach to creating lasting change (Gap,

2004, p. 6). In addition, Dan Henkle and colleagues itemized specific goals for the 2005-2006 fiscal year broken down by overall focus area, general strategy, and specific tactics. The media lauded this report, appreciating Gap's honesty and commitment (Gap, 2004).

In their 2005-2006 report, Gap approached social responsibility from a perspective of making their goals measurable and specific. They interpreted their goals defined in the 2004 report, and explained results through the lens of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) (Gap, 2006). For the first time, they published specifics on their supply chain flow. Not only did Gap meet a majority of their goals, but they also started a CSR Scholars program to empower business leaders and managing professionals to incorporate social responsibility into the mainframe of their business practices.

In addition, the 2005-2006 report clarified Gap's commitment with the Product (RED) campaign as a combination of "design" and "virtue" because it helps both the company, employees in Africa, and a non-profit cause (Gap, 2006). According to Gap, "donations alone are unlikely to resolve the major challenges faced by developing nations" (p. 51). However, they stated clearly that their goal is to create a sustainable cash flow to the Global Fund, long after large donations fade away. For them, the "power of knowledge" is accomplished through informing consumers through their marketing campaign (Gap, 2006).

Research Questions

The objective of this study is to gain an in-depth analysis of the Product (RED) campaign as it pertains to Marketing, Public Relations, or an integration of the two fields.

RQ 1: What Marketing and Public Relations strategies are communicated in the Product (RED) campaign creation and implementation?

RQ 2: Does the Product (RED) campaign closely align to the Excellence Theory, Contingency Theory, Integrated Marketing Communications, Convergence Theory, or

ROPES Model?

RQ 3: Are Product (RED) campaign officials more likely to perform accommodation or advocacy functions in their portion of the campaign?

RQ 4: Are social responsibility analysts more likely to perceive accommodation or advocacy functions in the Product (RED) campaign officials?

RQ 5: Are Product (RED) corporate partners of more likely to perform accommodation or advocacy functions?

RQ 6: Are social responsibility analysts more likely to perceive accommodation or advocacy functions in the Product (RED) corporate partners?

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

In order to view the Product (RED) campaign in light of various Public Relations and Marketing theories, the researcher based this case study from Yin's (2003) model and employed qualitative research methods. The researcher determined that in-depth interviews were essential to determine the campaign's creation and structure.

Case Study Approach

Because of (Product) RED's unique nature, this study reached Yin's (2003) definition that a case study "investigates a contemporary phenomenon in a real life context and multiple sources are used" (p. 33). A single-case holistic design examined the campaign from the perspective of Product (RED) campaign organizers, corporate partners, and social responsibility analysts who previously investigated the campaign.

The "how" and "why" research questions posed in this study leaned more toward a qualitative research approach (Yi, 2003). David's (2004) research only presented theoretical explanations of how his Convergence model would operate in the business realm. As of yet, his theory is not tested through experimentation and surveys. The researcher needed to qualitatively understand this model before it is tested quantitatively because of the unique campaign environment, intricate campaign design, and lack of empirical data of the Convergence model.

Data Collection

Open-ended Interviews

To determine the quality of the Product (RED) campaign, the main contributors need to "tell the story in their own terms" (McCracken, 1988, p.41). According to Grunig and Hunt (1984), it is imperative to interview those in the dominant coalition, or those who hold the ultimate decision-making power in the Product (RED) partnerships. Following McCracken's (1988) model of the long interview, this study consisted of interviews conducted via phone or in person. Interviews

averaged 48 minutes in length. If necessary, the researcher obtained follow up information via email communication. The researcher snowballed each interview to determine influential people for possible additional interviews.

In McCracken's (1988) four-step model of inquiry, the first two steps of an analytic and cultural review were accomplished through the previous literature review. Researchers created three separate interview questionnaires for Product (RED) organizers, Product (RED) corporate partners, and corporate social responsibility analysts/watchdog groups (See Appendix 2). Each questionnaire addressed campaign specifics to identify accommodation or advocacy tactics, partnership creation, and communication strategies among all parties. From those questions, the final stage of discovering analytical categories occurred. Common themes immediately surfaced, making a second round of interviews unnecessary.

Subjects

In all, this study analyzed six personal interviews and four podcast interviews, conducted by social responsibility analysts. The personal interviews included an assistant to Product (RED) executives, a Product (RED) staff member, an assistant to a Product (RED) corporate partner executive, and three social responsibility analysts who previously interviewed those within the Product (RED) campaign. Product (RED) assistants responded to relay information on behalf of their respective executive. The four podcast interviews included: Tamsin Smith, President of Product (RED); two interviews from Dan Henkle, Vice President of Social Responsibility for Gap; and Dan Rosan, social responsibility analyst and former head of public health and policy for Interfaith Coalition of Corporate Responsibility (ICCR), a social responsibility analysis and consulting group. All interviewees wanted to remain confidential, and are identified in results by their respective interview group. Information from podcast interviews is identified directly by the name of the interviewee (See Table 1).

The researcher chose possible interviewees from all three categories based upon their proximity to the campaign decision-making process. Interviews of Product (RED) campaign organizers and corporate partners were all members of the dominant coalition, all of which were considered credible and essential to the campaign (Grunig & Hunt, 1984). The third set of interviews, corporate social responsibility analysts were chosen based upon prior knowledge of the Product (RED) campaign and previous investigative research of the initiative. Criteria for these interviews centered on background research of the analysts and their credibility within the realm of socially responsible business practice research, knowledge of HIV/AIDS, and understanding of the Product (RED) campaign. Each of the social responsibility analysts interviewed someone within the Product (RED) campaign, asking critical questions concerning the campaign's creation and implementation.

The social responsibility analysts in personal interviews currently work or were employed with four specific organizations: Ethical Corporation, Business Ethics Magazine, Corporate Watchdog Radio, SocialFunds.org, and the Interfaith Coalition for Corporate Responsibility (ICCR). Each organization is well-known for investigating socially responsible investing, business practices, sustainability among Cause-Related partnerships, and activism for corporate responsibility among both shareholders and business partners. Because social responsibility was hypothesized by many trade publications as a key component to the corporate partner's reasoning for participating in Product (RED), the researcher felt that outside social responsibility research groups would provide unbiased, rich information.

Data Analysis

All recorded conversations were transcribed and coded according to themes that emerge from interviewee's responses. The researcher took notes concerning non-verbal cues and important responses, and combined that knowledge when analyzing the transcribed data. Coding for themes

Table 1

Personal Interviews:

Product (RED) Campaign Organizers: 2 interviews

Product (RED) Corporate Partners: 1 interview

Social Responsibility Analysts: 3 interviews

Online Podcast Interviews (conducted by Social Responsibility Analysts):

Tamsin Smith, President, Product (RED) Campaign Organizer: 1 interview

Dan Henkle, Senior Vice President of Gap, Inc., Product (RED) Corporate Partner:
2 interviews

Dan Rosan, Social Responsibility Analyst: 1 interview

will follow McCracken's (1988) conditions in consistency, unity, and clarity.

After transcribing interviews and podcasts, the researcher read each interview individually and parsed through information in three ways. As categories and themes first emerged, they were placed in context of Public Relations and Marketing theory, most specifically David's (2004) Convergence model and Cancel et. al.'s (1997) Contingency theory. Second, the researcher noted prevalent topic themes that emerged from each transcript. An average of 10 salient themes emerged per interview or podcast, with the most frequent being sustainability, engagement, accountability, transparency, credibility, social responsibility, consistency, Cause-Related Marketing tensions, goal alignment, and detailed numbers. Once those were recognized, the researcher grouped those themes according to how they were mentioned as a part of the campaign. Most of these subcategories fit into larger themes of the Product (RED) campaign process, campaign strategy, sustainability, and levels of engagement.

The third analysis examined these macro level and sub level themes and view the degree to which each of the interviews fell into specific categories. The difference among responses between Product (RED) dominant coalition, corporate partners, and social responsibility analysts provided a

greater depth of insight into the campaign. Their reactions also further informed research questions by analyzing respondents' motives through their emphasis on specific campaign components and the order in which they explained the Product (RED) campaign process.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

As with any qualitative case study of this type, its results from the in-depth interviews cannot be generalized to all social activism campaigns (McCracken, 1988; Morgan, 1988; Yin, 2003). They can, however, provide an intensive look to see if a balance of Public Relations and Marketing theory is possible in real-world settings.

In analyzing the interviews and podcasts, four main themes emerged through discussions of the Product (RED) campaign. The overarching themes of sustainability, communicated campaign strategies, campaign process, and campaign success emerged in responses though all interviews. While these were common themes, each interview group approached the topic from a different perspective and defined each theme differently. There were a few instances where two of the groups shared the same perspective, but all three never came to a consensus. The two combinations of groups that were most likely to agree were Product (RED) campaign organizers and corporate partners, and Product (RED) corporate partners and social responsibility analysts.

Sustainability

Sustainability appeared to be a buzzword among all interviews, but each respondent defined the term differently according to their perspective. “Sustainability” or “sustainable loop” echoed through all conversations, between both those inside and outside the Product (RED) camp. The Product (RED) campaign organizer viewed sustainability as consumers’ repeated purchase of Product (RED) merchandise. According to the Product (RED) campaign organizers:

Organizer 1: “Sustainability is what will differentiate us [from other Cause-Related Marketing] campaigns, and will really drive very significant contributions to the Global Fund over time.”

Organizer 2: “The product sales during [United States’ Product (RED) launch] were quite amazing for just a couple days on the market, but we’re building things for the long term. We look to keep that excitement and dynamism going in the UK, US, and other territories where we’ll take RED.”

Campaign organizers also structured message points as a personal connection between consumers and products. After mentioning the range of merchandise, a Product (RED) campaign organizer offered personal appeals to become the “RED person.” As one Product (RED) staff member said, “If you feel like you’re a RED person, you’ve done something RED ...that’s something you don’t feel every day. And so, I believe, that as people get a taste of that, it will become something they want over and over again.”

The Product (RED) corporate partner approached sustainability from two standpoints. Initially, corporate partners referred to Product (RED) as a sales loop, or an “economic initiative that creates a sustainable flow of money to the Global Fund.”

Partner 1: “Customers will be able to come in, look at a variety of products that are, we think, excellent products that they’re really going to respond to, and donate 50% of our profits to the Global Fund.”

Partner 1: “We have a product that people love, that people are buying, and hopefully buying a lot of, so that, we have every intention that this is going to be a sustainable venture for us, and that it will be a good source of revenue for the company for the long-term.”

While recognizing the role consumers and their individual purchase preferences play in the longevity of fundraising, corporate partners also viewed sustainability as a mechanism to help their workforce. Dan Henkle of Gap saw that the Product (RED) sustainability incorporated Gap’s employees in a larger purpose for the affected African regions:

“We think this is a good extension some of the work that we’ve already been doing as a company. We’ve been sourcing product out of Africa for nearly a decade, and one of the things that we think is important is, if you’re doing business in Africa, you see the impact that diseases such as HIV/AIDS are having on people who are working and living there. And, as a responsible company, you need to be responding to that. So, we think it make sense to invest long-term into this project because it invests into so much more with our employees.”

Henkle: “The funds raised with this initiative create a healthy sustainable work force, and beneficial revenue in the long-term for the company, which benefits all.”

From the outside looking in, social responsibility analysts leaned more toward the corporate partners’ perspective of sustainability. Analysts recognized that companies would increasingly incorporate these types of “sustainable loops” within their core business strategies to assist all key publics:

Analyst 2: “Because HIV/AIDS is a growing global problem that impacts companies’ work forces, business strategies like that of Product (RED) partners will become a trend. Companies like Gap aren’t looking at this exclusively as a philanthropic or benevolent venture. I mean, it certainly is both of those things, but it’s also saying ‘Hey, we need a vibrant, healthy work force, and HIV/AIDS is a threat. We need to help.’”

Analyst 3: “[Product (RED)] is an interesting idea in that, in its description, it is a attempt to make AIDS relief more sustainable. In other words, it is not just companies giving away money, but it is an effort to create a loop where consumers buy things with a portion of that going to the AIDS effort in Africa. And the Marketing effort is interesting as well because the companies are Marketing the effort and the campaign, which creates an awareness – which is a virtual loop.”

Social responsibility analysts also mentioned a possible skepticism in the public’s view of sustainability. They estimated that the sustainable loop might fail if two occurrences happen. First, any large barrage of Cause-Related Marketing efforts could ruin the sustainable loop if consumers do not believe the campaign is credible or transparent. As one analysts described:

Analyst 1: “The corporate partners need to be clear with consumers in their intentions because it could be a double-edged sword. On one hand, there’s a whole image, and I know it varies from company to company, but if they’re engaged in some of these issues, it becomes a competitive advantage. On the other hand, if consumers think it’s a pure awareness campaign and the word emerges that it is a Cause-Related Marketing campaign, those consumers will

completely lose trust in the organization and corporate partner.”

Second, analysts believed that the “out of sight, out of mind” concept may cause a sales decline in Product (RED) merchandise. One analyst explained:

Analyst 2: “I think it definitely has fallen off my radar screen in general. So, my sense is that it had a big punch with the launch. However, this doesn’t mean that they can’t continue to remain relevant and impactful in their long-term goals.”

The “loop” concept was most prevalent among the corporate partner and analysts, and commonly noted that it was the effort to make sure the company was not simply writing a check to a cause and moving on with business strategy. For them, corporate business strategy heavily integrated the sustainability loop. For Product (RED) campaign organizers, the sustainability loop was a repetition of purchase intention.

Campaign Definitions

Many of the campaign elements mentioned in interviews were a blend of outcomes and strategies (Grunig & Hunt, 1984; Kelly, 1998). When explaining the Product (RED) campaign, all interviews referred to a main strategy of communicating three campaign elements: accountability, goal alignment, credibility, and transparency. All four communicated strategies intertwined in many areas, but each interview group emphasized different communication strategies to different degrees.

Credibility

Of the four campaign elements mentioned in all interviews and podcasts, respondents more frequently promoted the credibility surrounding the Product (RED) campaign. Campaign organizers believed that consumers would find the campaign credible if they viewed the Global Fund as a credible organization. The corporate partner also defined credibility through partnerships, but more related to the Global Fund and outside organizations than with the Product (RED) initiative. Social responsibility analysts directly credited credibility more frequently than those

within the campaign. Their focus was to examine how those in the Product (RED) camp communicated credibility.

Product (RED) campaign organizers communicated the campaign's credibility through two associations. The first is its partnership with the Global Fund. In her podcast, Tamsin Smith explained:

“[Product (RED)] chose the Global Fund because of the leverage that it has in gaining resources...as well as their ability to be very applied when it comes to transparency and diligence ... We felt that the credibility of the organization would be significant in terms of making the consumer feel comfortable with where their money was going.”

Corporate partners also measured credibility among relationships, but only referred to the credibility of the Global Fund and outside social responsibility analysis organizations. According to a corporate partner:

Partner 1: “The pillar of the Global Fund is their ability to utilize local resources and community in the effort to fight AIDS. This fact contrasts what the skeptics point to, again and again, in other circumstances where companies give a little bit of money, which goes toward foundations run by well meaning people who do not know what they're doing. Frankly, the Global Fund knows what it's doing.”

Dan Henkle specifically noted the Gap's relationship with other social responsibility watchdog organizations:

“The Gap and Interfaith Coalition for Corporate Responsibility have had a long relationship. That relationship focused on the supply chain and working conditions in Gap textile factories, and it's been a very productive relationship.”

Along with campaign organizers, social responsibility analysts focused more on the actions of campaign organizers and corporate partners to display credibility as an extension of business practices.

Analyst 3: “Credibility is a measuring stick of how well the campaign follows its intended mission and goals. Many would agree that all aspects of the campaign must be credible in order for the public to consider the products.”

Another social responsibility expert clarified:

Analyst 2: “It is very easy for a company to equate philanthropy or giving money away with corporate responsibility, and that’s one of the laziest forms of engagement that a company can have. Instead, Product (RED) corporate partners are engaging in deeper questions, such as ‘what are we doing to help our suppliers,’ or ‘how can we help provide resources to these affected areas, in ways that closely align with our company’s goals?’”

Analysts also concluded that transparent motives among campaign and corporate partners equated a highly credible campaign. According to one social responsibility analyst:

Analyst 1: “ From my perspective, it seems like a pretty good, well organized, marketing effort that is transparent. When looking at these campaigns, I automatically have a “bullshitometer” that I sort of, automatically apply to see whether it feels like a greenwash effort or whether there’s some substance to it. The way that the campaign is partnered and administered, in conjunction with the Global Fund, I think really helped to validate the whole thing because it was partnering with one of the most well-respected organizations dealing with HIV/AIDS and other diseases globally.”

Social responsibility analysts believe that these transparent partnerships must also align closely to the organization’s original mission, in order to remain authentic and not appear contrived. In referencing authentic business practices relating to this campaign, social responsibility analysts often referred to Gap’s commitment to the Product (RED) campaign and how it simply extended their established social responsibility initiatives:

Analyst 1: “I think Dan [Henkle] was pretty clear eyed in his assessment of [the Product (RED) campaign]. I think he was obviously ‘rah-rah’ about it, but also had a critical voice about it, too. They are very tied to other organizations that help

communities in the regions where they worked, but he is very up-front about the benefits and challenges in partnering with these organizations. He is also clear in his estimations of what works and what doesn't. I was pretty pleased with my interview with him. I got the sense that he was authentic."

Analyst 2: "Gap is farther along than most companies in their social responsibility initiatives. Initiatives, such as Product (RED), allow the Gap to shine because they enter into the project with the right motives and know how to implement and sustain their efforts."

Accountability

Along the lines of credibility in the partnership between Product (RED) and the Global Fund, a common extension was a component of accountability to the consumers who purchase and support the Product (RED) initiative. Product (RED) organizers communicated accountability according to detailed numbers from both the Global Fund and individual products of Product (RED) lines.

Organizer 2: "The leverage that the Global Fund has, in terms of purchasing the drugs and distributing them, and their ability to apply diligence in their operations was most appealing when considering the partnership, especially because of their low overhead at roughly 3%."

Regarding the products, campaign organizers explicated numbers, such as "50% from Gap, 1% for American Express, and \$10 US from each Apple iPod Nano." According to a Product (RED) campaign organizer:

Organizer 1: "I want to make sure that we're giving accurate and full information to the consumers," explained one Product (RED) employee. "We want to make sure that consumers can possibly understand just what a difference they are making with their purchase."

This study's researcher anticipated campaign organizers to take their communication of fundraising figures one step further by relating the amount earned to detailed, tangible results. Kelly (1998) emphasizes the importance of accountability between donors and organizers,

especially in the sense that donors understand exactly how the organization uses the money they donated. The researcher expected that campaign organizers would communicate a combination of human-interest stories and specific outcomes Product (RED) funded projects. These types of results are seen frequently in fundraising campaigns to generate awareness and prolonged giving (Kelly, 1998). However, Product (RED) campaign organizers did not communicate these outcomes in interviews or podcasts.

Accountability becomes part of a larger picture when discussing the Product (RED) campaign with corporate partners. Interviews showed that corporate partners defined accountability by communicating responsible business practices evaluation through their company. Dan Henkle clearly explained:

“A really important factor to Gap is that we have a pre-approval process so that if you want to do business with Gap, Inc., my team is going to have to visit that factory and see if it meets standards. If it does and we enter into a contract, we have an ongoing monitoring approach that evaluates socially responsible practices. This same approach carries over to the Product (RED) initiative and it’s merchandise.”

Henkle also explained that accountability is shown through a continual commitment:

“We’re looking at this as an ability to expand our realm of social responsibility practices within the company, as well as contribute to a situation where, over time, this could amount to some serious cash flow into the Global Fund from the private sector.”

According to a corporate partner, Gap’s example served as a “pillar for accountable operations, and instills confidence in the consumer.”

Social responsibility analysts view accountability similarly with corporate partners as a function of partnerships, but were more detailed about the actual partnerships than the money behind the process. An analyst explained:

Analyst 1: “The partnership with the Global Fund and Product (RED) is the driving force behind the campaign. The proceeds are great, but real accountability occurs when the money reaches the Global Fund...Most of the money the Global Fund disperses comes from government, but it also comes from the private sector and individuals such as Bill Gates and Bono.”

After this analyst detailed the process of grant funding for the Global Fund, he described the monitoring and evaluation process:

Analyst 1: “The benchmarks for the Global Fund are performance driven. If a grant doesn’t meet its expectations, the grant is pulled. This evaluation component adds to the accountability of the Global Fund, making it a reputable organization.”

All interviewed social responsibility analysts detailed the Global Fund’s grant making process, a component that was not present in any other interviews.

Goal Alignment

Of all campaign elements, all interview groups communicated their goal alignment motives as their strategy. Product (RED) organizers briefly mentioned their unity with the Global Fund through how each entity’s goals matched. When initially considering the project, Tamsin Smith explained in her podcast interview:

“It was important that one of the original goals of the Global Fund when it formed was that 10% of the funding comes from the private sector. They had not found a way to get even close to that mark in their years of existence. And so, for us, the challenge of coming in and finding a way to help the Global Fund meet that goal and build awareness around the organization itself was a pretty compelling reason for us to go that route.”

For Product (RED) campaign organizers, goal alignment is also communicated through their relationships. A Product (RED) organizer detailed they carefully consider partnerships through a “passionate commitment to see change.” When assessing new partnerships, Product (RED) organizers communicated that they added to the “family” atmosphere by “add[ing] carefully, just a

couple of partners, again people that we feel embrace what RED is and are very committed to creating this compelling product line for us.”

Corporate partners expressed goal alignment as a construct within and throughout their own organizations, for both internal and external publics. In both podcast interviews, Dan Henkle addressed the parallel motivations behind his movement in Product (RED):

Henkle 1: “We’ve been sourcing product out of Africa for nearly a decade, and one of the things that we think is really important is that, if you’re doing business in Africa, you see the impact of diseases such as HIV/AIDS.”

Henkle 2: “The t-shirts that we are producing are all produced out of Africa, and, in fact, are using 100% African cotton in them as well. And so, it has not only provided cash flow into the Global Fund, but has also provided jobs and economic growth into the region, which we think is so important.”

Social responsibility analysts explained goal alignment only on behalf of corporate partners, not on the side of Product (RED) campaign officials. In response to Gap’s commitment to Product (RED), two social responsibility analysts remarked:

Analyst 1: “Gap is very well developed in its social responsibility practices. Their goals are the same as those of the campaign, and so it seems natural that they would be involved in Product (RED). It helps their workforce, their profit margin, and allows consumers a chance to make a difference. Because all of those things are done well on their behalf, their presence in the campaign is seamless.”

Analyst 3: “Sustainability needs to fit seamlessly in the overall business plan of the company. Gap really sees this effort not as a corollary, but as something that is very close to the core of their business and need to be increasingly.”

Transparency

In interviews with Product (RED) campaign organizers, the concept of transparency was never mentioned. Even though it was never specifically detailed, campaign officials communicated transparent business practices through the same method as they communicated accountability: detailed numbers. Tamsin Smith provided numbers of specific donated profit percentages of

individual products, such as “\$10 on the sale of every Apple iPod Nano” and “the American Express card, which contributes 1% of your total bill directly to the Global Fund.” In this same interview, Smith mentioned each current corporate partner and their specific product line. She also offered fundraising totals that, at the time of that interview, “[Product (RED)] raised about \$12 million to date.”

Interviews indicated that the corporate partner defined transparency similarly as they accountability by explaining their motives behind joining Product (RED), as well as their ability to monitor and evaluate success. As previously mentioned, Dan Henkle clearly communicated the Gap’s reasons for being involved with the RED initiative.

“It is a multi-year commitment that we’re making. We’re looking at this campaign as something that consumers are really going to like. The product is wonderful, but also there’s this element of giving back as well.”

Another corporate partner mentioned:

Partner 1: “As multiple brands are participating in this, you can really see a situation where, over time, this could amount to some serious cash flow into the Global Fund from the private sector. We are excited to support a cause that is so worthy, accountable, and efficient. Because [our company’s] goals aligned with Product (RED), we wanted to be involved and be as forthcoming with info as we can to give consumers knowledge.”

In the example of Gap, Dan Henkle used his company’s transparency communication strategy to explain monitoring of fair labor conditions and evaluation of the Product (RED) campaign.

“We have very extensive factory monitoring programs. I have a team right now of 94 people in about 22 countries throughout the world. We also have a code of vendor conduct that really looks at everything from labor issues, wage issues, health and safety issues, environmental issues, and we have a team of dedicated monitors that are monitoring all our apparel factories that we do business with.

This is a way that we know what issues are most important to our employees and receive feedback from them as how to improve our workforce.”

Social responsibility analysts recognized transparency primarily through the perceived motives of Product (RED) campaign organizers and corporate partners. They saw it more of a business model and that communicating transparency was a key ingredient to beneficial corporate social responsibility. One analyst explained:

Analyst 2: “There needs to be a seamless integration of social responsibility and business practices. They can be as benevolent as they want, but ultimately savvy consumers are going to look at the company with a critical eye if it looks too ‘gimmicky’ to them.”

Dan Rosan explained in his podcast interview:

“Ever since their ground-breaking 2004 social responsibility report, Gap has included transparency into their social responsibility plans. They made a lot of waves in the CSR community because they sort of critiqued themselves and revealed the degree to which their supply chain manufacturing was meeting, or not meeting, standards. So, it was a degree of transparency that was sort-of unheard of. And, I think that transparency is a factor in this campaign, that the Gap is really taking a proactive, innovative, risk-taking approach to sustainability issues.”

For some analysts, communicating the transparency in business practices and motives was essential for instilling consumer trust.

Analyst 1: “One of the things that RED has done well is create a brand, through reputable and transparent corporate partners, that tells consumers that there’s not green washing going on because the money goes to a reputable source.”

Campaign Process: Engagement

Among the three interview groups, the Product (RED) campaign process included varied levels of engagement. Similar to other results, each group indicated a different level of engagement in how it related to campaign sustainability.

Product (RED) campaign officials communicated engagement on an individual consumer level. One campaign organizer linked an individual consumer's identity with the brand identity, encouraging them to become a "RED person" or a "good looking Samaritan." In her podcast interview, Tamsin Smith explained that they "want [products] to be off the rack, easy for people to do a very good thing." For those within the Product (RED) organization, the individual purchase serves as a method of civic engagement. As one campaign official explained:

Organizer 1: "This is a very individual, empowering action that we are making available to people. We're not saying 'Write a letter to the President and tell him how you feel.' In the case of RED, as soon as you buy an item, that money is flowing to the Global Fund. There are no ifs, ands, or buts about it – its happening." To campaign officials, sustainability depends on individual engagement being repetitive and not a singular action.

Organizer 2: "The idea behind here with RED is that the product offerings themselves will be so compelling that you'll not only want to purchase them just because you want to support a cause...but you'll keep again, and again, and again purchasing them, and, in a sense, kind of switching your purchase choices. Brand loyalty is a very powerful thing in the marketplace, and if people keep focusing on the RED option, it makes a big difference."

The Product (RED) corporate partner indicated engagement on two levels. First, they explained motives for engagement as a means toward a holistic work force. One Product (RED) corporate partner clarified that corporate engagement in this campaign is seen as "the dialogue as a way to help [the companies] to become better and smarter." As a corporate partner described:

Partner 1: "I believe more companies now see that the dialogue created with these types of campaigns is a way to help them be better and smarter as a company. And, I think initiatives like RED can help make an example of how you transition what will have grown up within a company, either on the communications or the foundation side, and really begin to boil those behaviors and those goals into the actual operational goals of the corporation itself."

Dan Henkle also explained engagement as a way to improve his employees:

“The other aspect here that is equally important to us is that this really provides economic development to Africa as well...So, this is just a way to give funding to the Global Fund, and to also really invest in the communities in which we’re operating there and provide more economic development into the region.”

Second, corporate partners indicated that they saw consumer engagement and benevolence in their own consumer market research:

Partner 1: “Our customers are telling us they want their dollars to do more...through the feedback we receive from employees and from consumers alike, the idea of actually buying a product that you love but also having the product do more, we think that’s going to resonate with our customers.”

Social responsibility analysts expressed inherent skepticism with recruiting American consumers, potentially without a basic operating knowledge of the campaign. As one analyst described:

Analyst 3: “The idea of people buying things is very much a Western, materialistic approach to a real kind of poverty. But, on the other hand, it creates somewhat of a sustainable loop. It brings the consumer in a way that hasn’t happened in the past. I wonder, if when people buy these things, they really know much about what’s going on. That’s the danger with campaigns like this. They may feel like they’re saving the world. Meanwhile they are not pressing government to do anything. They’re just buying a t-shirt, and I’m not quite sure what the balance is or will be.”

While one analyst held this skepticism, other analysts described potential political engagement because of the individual engaging nature of the Product (RED) campaign. One social responsibility analyst explained:

Analyst 2: “Gap and its consumers are saying, ‘We believe in the Global Fund,’ and the people who control the money in government need to hear what the Gap is saying. I hope that this Gap announcement has a sort of catalytic effect that prompts governments around the world to say, ‘You

know, if the Gap finds the Global Fund as a good investment, we should too.””

Campaign Success

Product (RED) campaign organizers, corporate partners, and social responsibility analysts define the Product (RED) campaign’s success in very different ways. While campaign organizers explained their definition of engagement as individual, recurring consumer purchases, their definition of success is very similar. Product (RED) campaign organizers see the success of the Product (RED) initiative when it produces that repetitive purchase intention among consumers. According to one corporate organizer:

Organizer 1: “That was always the vision: that [the products] be something so attractive and so desirable in and of itself that a consumer would want to buy it, and over and over again, that they would, either just know going in or discover after that purchase, love being a RED person.”

In addition, when Tamsin Smith mentioned this process in her interview, she went from a theme of consumers buying RED products “again and again” to briefly mentioning that they think that “sustainability increases when [this action on behalf of consumers] increases, and will really drive significant contributions to the Global Fund over time.” In her interview, she went on to mention the credibility of the Global Fund’s organization and evaluation structure:

“We felt that the credibility of the organization would be significant in terms of making the customer feel comfortable with where their money is going.”

The process for Product (RED) campaign officials, however, ends with a repeated cycle of purchasing RED products.

Corporate partners viewed the Product (RED) process and success through two lenses. First, they explained that the money donated to the Global Fund through purchases was a large part of favorable campaign outcomes. According to Dan Henkle in one podcast interview, the Product (RED) “economic initiative is trying to deliver a sustainable flow of private sector money to the

Global Fund.” He believed that Gap offered products that “consumers were really going to respond to, but then, 50% of the profits of these products will go right back to the Global Fund.” In both interviews, Henkle linked his 50% profit numbers to Global Fund donations.

Second, corporate partners also defined success as their ability to reflexively serve their employees in African regions. As a personal interview indicated:

Partner 1: “The other aspect here that is equally important to us is that this really provides economic development to Africa as we, so some of our Product (RED) products are actually, not only 50% of the profits go back to the Global Fund, but some of them are even being produced in Africa as well. So, this is just a way to give funding to the Global Fund, but to also really invest in the communities in which we’re operating there and provide more economic development to that region.”

Partner 1: “We’ve been sourcing out of Africa for a decade, so Product (RED) was a perfect extension to work already present within our organization. We’ve worked for years on the issue of HIV/AIDS in Africa. This was just another opportunity to focus on an issue that really requires a lot of attention. So, the fact that we’ve been doing business in Africa not only deals with HIV/AIDS, but also something that’s really exciting about it is that it provides some economic development in Africa as well. This development is good for our employees, and ultimately good for issues larger than AIDS.”

Dan Henkle also mentioned the Gap’s motivation to help their work force through the Product (RED) initiative:

“If you’re operating in an environment where very few people are getting tested and treated, obviously, if left untreated, you have a lot of illness and a lot of people who are dying from this disease on a daily basis. When factories are trying to be as competitive as possible, this is not only a humanitarian issue that needs to be addressed, but it’s also very very vital to the economic development of a country that is dealing with this. So, [Product (RED)] really hits this on the head... You have to do something about HIV/AIDS if you’re operating out of

Africa, and we think this really works for the factory workers, the factory owners, and also for a company like Gap operating there.”

In the eyes of social responsibility analysts, success was defined as consumer and corporate awareness of HIV/AIDS and not finite fundraising totals. One analysts described their measure of success to “go beyond increasing sales and generating revenue for the [Global] Fund, and figure out if there was a way to engage the companies for better results while engaging consumers to go beyond a purchase and learn more about the disease.” When viewing the Marketing arm of the campaign, another analyst described sustainability as a measure of success “because the companies are marketing the effort and the campaign, which ultimately creates an awareness so it’s got a virtual loop.” Another analyst was unsure of how successful (RED) is because of the lack of consumer attention and proactive efforts:

Analyst 1: “I wonder, if when people are buying these things, if they really know what’s going on. And, so the danger with campaigns like this is that the consumers may buy a t-shirt and feel like they’re saving the world. Meanwhile they’re not pushing their government to do anything. They’re not pushing the United Nations to know anything. You know, they’re just buying a t-shirt.”

Instead of echoing this skepticism, some social responsibility analysts again described their hope of Product (RED)’s future success in activating consumers and corporate toward political engagement. An analyst explained this process through awareness of the Global Fund’s needs:

Analyst 2: “The Global Fund is going to be short for their 2007 fiscal year, unless there are new actions by government. So, what you have is the Gap saying, “We have faith in the Global Fund,” right? Bill Gates is saying, “We have faith in the Global Fund.” These are big, credible institutions and the people who control the money need to listen to what the Gap and its consumers are saying. They need to listen to what Bill Gates and all the people who have RED Dell computers are saying. And I hope that these new corporate partnerships and new ways to engage consumers will serve as a sort of catalytic

effect. If it does, Product (RED) will succeed in ways larger than previously imagined.”

While the same themes emerged throughout the interviews, each interview group added a different perspective to campaign elements, success, and process. Ultimately, these varied responses culminated to a multiple perceptions of sustainability in how it relates to the Product (RED) campaign. This mixture of diverse viewpoints provided many insights into how the Product (RED) campaign could possibly be successful with a variety of key publics and motives among all involved.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The Product (RED) initiative was met with both elaborate praise and harsh criticism on all fronts. For some people, seeing over \$50 million donated to the Global Fund within the first year was satisfying enough as a large measure of success (Product (RED), 2007d). The other extreme believed that the campaign is a method to make more money for the corporate partners, and have them appear that they are being socially responsible. With those two ends of the spectrum, it is difficult to enter into a research project without bias. However, the thorough interviews collected about the campaign and socially responsible initiatives allowed researchers to gain a clear, objective picture of a successful campaign.

RQ 1: What Marketing and Public Relations strategies are communicated in the Product (RED) campaign creation and implementation?

One aspect of the campaign that was not entirely clear was technical Marketing and Public Relations strategies employed by both the campaign officials and corporate partners. Those within the Product (RED) campaign emphasized their communication message points of credibility, accountability, transparency, and goal-alignment, along with how it branched from the overarching theme of sustainability. When asked about the campaign strategy beyond simple message points, neither campaign officials nor corporate partners divulged information. Campaign officials pointed to the Product (RED) website and campaign timeline, but offered no insight into the campaign's initial decision-making process.

This result caused the researcher to reevaluate the study's direction in order to gain an accurate picture of Product (RED). As data collection continued, the researcher discovered that the communicated message points were more important than the campaign strategy. The themes of goal-alignment communicated an attempt at two-way symmetrical communication, although not always achieving desired results. Credibility, transparency, and accountability served as a

communication strategy to build trust between the campaign and consumer. As shown in subsequent sections, the communicated message strategies provided a deeper look into the Product (RED) campaign officials and corporate partners' motivations.

Theoretical Interpretations

RQ 2: Does the Product (RED) campaign closely align to the Excellence Theory, Contingency Theory, Integrated Marketing Communications, Convergence Theory, or ROPES Model?

Due to the unique nature of Product (RED) and this case study's holistic approach, analysts attempted to clarify which Public Relations and Marketing theories best fit with the campaign. Each theory includes different aspects of the Product (RED) campaign, but two theories contain a better context and understanding for the larger picture: Contingency Theory and Convergence Theory. For that reason, the researcher will discuss those two theories more in depth at the end of this section.

Public Relations Excellence Theory

According to Grunig, Grunig, and Dozier (2002), the four main pillars of Excellence Theory are the managerial, strategic, symmetrical, and ethical components of a Public Relations campaign. Analysis of only the Public Relations elements in the Product (RED) campaign yields mixed results of the initiative's success according to the Grunig "gold-standard" of two-way symmetrical communication.

The ingredients of Excellence Theory success that consistently existed in Product (RED) are the managerial and strategic elements. According to all interviews, those within the Product (RED) organization were members of the dominant coalition. Each member of Product (RED) had input on new plans for the campaign, ranging from the CEOs to their administrative assistants. The thorough answers provided by those from all levels of the Product (RED) campaign gave the sense

that all participants are knowledgeable and actively involved. Communications specialists outside of the Product (RED) offices were also part of the dominant coalition. The same held true for Product (RED) corporate partners. The CEOs or Vice Presidents of Corporate Responsibility were always in touch with Product (RED) dominant coalition members, especially in regard to their company's participation efforts. For example, Gap went to the Product (RED) dominant coalition to brainstorm new ways to provide more information to customers in their Product (RED) one-year anniversary, in-store communication blitz.

Strategy was present in all aspects of the Product (RED) campaign. Both Product (RED) dominant coalition and corporate partners researched their target audience, completed extensive environmental scanning, and developed a plan accordingly. One piece of strategy that this study's researchers cannot glean from data is how they consistently re-evaluate strategy through market research. Most of the interviews were completed at the beginning of the campaign, and interviews from social responsibility analysts did not provide the necessary data. Tangible, detailed evaluation research is essential to a sustainable campaign such as Product (RED) (Babbie, 2005).

Product (RED) included both symmetrical and ethical components to some extent throughout the campaign. Both elements, however, were not as strong as possible in order to fit a close definition of Grunig's (2002) excellence in Public Relations. In looking at communication symmetry, most of the communication output was asymmetrical, rather than symmetrical. According to interviews with Product (RED) campaign officials and corporate partners, no feedback mechanisms existed or are publicized by those within the campaign. Campaign organizers expected consumer engagement to end by buying the particular product, which they would like to see repeated time and time again.

In considering other key publics, corporate partners offered more two-way symmetrical communication than campaign officials through their efforts to meet the needs of employees in

developing countries. Companies, such as Gap, included helping the economy of their employee base as a part of the decision making process to be involved in the RED campaign. However, researchers cannot assume that all corporate partners treated the Product (RED) campaign with those same intentions. While this is an effort, however, corporate partners received little feedback from consumers. According to social responsibility analysts, consumers wanted to be more engaged in the campaign, but needed avenues to do so.

Ethics, the last component of Excellence Theory, was present in all interviews conducted with this study. Interviews from Product (RED) dominant coalition, corporate partners, and social responsibility analysts echoed characteristics of accountability, transparency, and credibility. The question of ethics arose when considering criticisms of the campaign. All of the social responsibility analysts mentioned popular media's critiques of the Product (RED) campaign in how they spend more in Marketing efforts than they do in donations to the Global Fund. Social responsibility analysts do not believe the campaign is unethical, but it raised questions as to whether Product (RED) is transparent or successful enough to consider it ethically sound.

With two of the four Excellence Theory elements present and two partially existent, this study determines that the Product (RED) campaign doesn't entirely fit the definitions of Public Relations excellence as put forth by Grunig and cohorts (2002). Grunig's theory also does not account for additional Marketing aspects, which is key in a campaign such as Product (RED). Possible new modifications of Grunig's (2006) work will include these types of socially responsible campaigns in building Public Relations theory.

Integrated Marketing Communications

While this campaign clearly attempts to integrate Marketing and Public Relations strategies and tactics, the researcher could not easily relate the results to Integrated Marketing Communications. The theory and practice are not as prominently recognized as other theories,

which guided the researcher to believe that it is not the best route to describe the Product (RED) campaign. None of the strategies in the Product (RED) campaign were included in Croft and Dalton's (2003) detailed workings of Integrated Marketing Communications.

One small connection, however, does occur in Hallahan's (1999) six-point interaction between Marketing and Public Relations strategies. If researchers needed to classify Product (RED), it would fall in the "co-optive" category. According to both Product (RED) campaign officials and corporate partners, they utilized both Public Relations communications tools and Marketing strategy in all of their efforts. Even though both fields are at play, Marketing strategies were communicated more often, making it a more dominant field. All those involved in the campaign were clear to state that Product (RED) was not a traditional Cause-Related Marketing venture, but emphasized Marketing strategy more often than Public Relations strategies.

ROPES Model

Continuing with Grunig's (2002; 2006) Excellence Theory, Kelly (1991; 1998) discovered commonalities between Public Relations excellence and fundraising efforts. With the creation of the ROPES Model, Kelly used previous elements of research, objectives, programming, and evaluation to estimate success of a campaign. She then added stewardship as a further measure of fundraising success.

Previous analysis of the Product (RED) campaign clarified that extensive research explored and informed strategy decisions and vague campaign objectives (see Excellence Theory analysis). According to the ROPES Model, objectives need to be detailed, measurable, and attainable. In analyzing interviews with Product (RED) officials and corporate partners, their main objectives were broad, mostly to "engage the private sector in the fight against AIDS." There were no detailed accounts of anticipated fundraising goals, consumer awareness, or media impressions. The Product (RED) campaign may have those types of figures in their internal documents, but the data from

interviews and website did not reveal any information to conclude objective formation as set forth by the ROPES Model.

Programming is a growing aspect of the Product (RED) campaign. Researchers need to remember that the campaign is in its initial stages, and many aspects of cultivation may not be entirely present. Solicitation, however, was a strong point of the campaign. By the consistent mention of product offerings and product quality in the Product (RED) dominant coalition interviews, researchers gained a strong sense that the “ask” is present. Kelly’s (1998) concept of cultivation was present between campaign organizers and corporate partners, as seen by the companies’ involvement in decision-making. Cultivation between the campaign and consumers was lackluster, as seen by the lack of feedback mechanisms and no expectations of consumer engagement after the Product (RED) purchase.

As previously mentioned, the evaluation component of Product (RED), according to the ROPES Model, was difficult to define. Many of the Product (RED) dominant coalition and corporate partners interpret campaign success as the amount of money raised for the Global Fund. Interviews showed that the initial sales burst for Product (RED) elicited responses by those within the campaign to boast millions of American dollars flowing to Africa. An aspect of evaluation that was not equally present was the amount of awareness among the American consuming public. While fundraising income is important, awareness and campaign knowledge can add to the sustainability of the Product (RED) effort. If those variables are not measured, the campaign might find longevity difficult.

The last aspect of the ROPES Model is stewardship, which fell along the lines of sustainability efforts and reflecting the needs of their donors. Analysis of stewardship needed to reflect the four “Rs:” reciprocity, responsibility, reporting, and relationship building. Reciprocity would include feedback mechanisms of donors, allowing them input on the fundraising effort and a

sense of control mutuality. As shown above, Product (RED) campaign officials were less likely to mention or include feedback mechanisms for their consuming publics. Corporate partners elicited more of this behavior, but only in regard to employee satisfaction and limited consumer input. Responsibility appeared to be a strong point of the Product (RED) campaign, as both the campaign and the Global Fund are highly reputable. All interviews described both entities as credible, mostly transparent, and highly accountable to their mission. Analysis showed that this high rating of responsibility flowed from the Global Fund's reporting mechanisms. Social responsibility analysts sang praises of the Global Fund's evaluation process and its accountability to both beneficiaries and donors. Finally, relationship building appeared to be growing as time goes with the campaign. According to social responsibility analysts, corporate partners who were well established in social responsibility practices elicited reputable levels of relationship building skills among all their publics. Product (RED) officials did not mention relationship building as a priority within their interviews, but corporate partners mentioned their satisfaction in how Product (RED) dominant coalition includes their input.

After analyzing the Product (RED) campaign through the ROPES Model, the researcher believes that the fundraising effort only slightly fits the framework that Kelly (1998) provided. If Product (RED) increased efforts through consumer feedback mechanisms and consumer engagement, it would be much easier to classify the effort as successful through the ROPES Model. Kelly's model accounts for both Public Relations and Marketing strategies, which makes it an appealing model to use when assessing the campaign. However, a combination of the following two theories provide a much clearer lens to evaluate both Public Relations and Marketing techniques in the Product (RED) campaign.

Contingency Theory

By saying, "it depends," Cancel et. al. (1997) leaves a great deal of necessary flexibility

when relating Public Relations strategies to academic theory. As an extension of Grunig and Hunt's (1984) attempts for two-way symmetrical communication, Cangel and cohorts knew that different campaigns called for different strategies and tactics. Product (RED)'s Public Relations and Marketing strategies fit well within the flexibility of contingency theory because different campaign players were allowed to exercise different strategies when most needed. Resulting strategy differences resonated with social responsibility analysts, as they reported ways in which Product (RED)'s effort played to certain aspects of contingency theory.

RQ 3: Are Product (RED) campaign officials more likely to perform accommodation or advocacy functions?

RQ4: Are social responsibility analysts more likely to perceive accommodation or advocacy functions in the Product (RED) campaign officials?

Analysis of interview themes from Product (RED) campaign organizers showed a heavier influence of advocacy functions than accommodation functions. When asked to describe the campaign, those in the Product (RED) dominant coalition maintained emphasis on the individual product offerings than the benefits of the campaign itself. They offered a larger goal of "the fight against AIDS," but rarely specified exactly what that entails. For consumers, they presented the many appealing aspects of products, such as Apple iPod Nanos and Gap T-shirts, saying that they are quality products that everyone wants to have. Campaign organizers were also more likely to promote an individual consumer connection with the individual product by calling people to become "RED" in their purchases and efforts. They mentioned the beneficiary, the Global Fund, at least a few times, but more in reference to a certain dollar amount that each individual product or company donated in the initial sales.

Analysts noted appearances of transparency in Product (RED) officials' efforts to mention the Global Fund and its credibility, but not a great deal of transparency in details of what the

Global Fund does for AIDS in Africa. Because of limited Global Fund promotion in communications and interviews, the researcher believed that advocacy outweighed accommodation strategies from the Product (RED) campaign organizers' perspective.

RQ 5: Are Product (RED) corporate partners more likely to perform accommodation or advocacy functions in their portion of the campaign?

RQ 6: Are social responsibility analysts more likely to perceive accommodation or advocacy functions in the Product (RED) corporate partners?

As Product (RED) organizers utilized mainly advocacy functions, corporate partners were more likely to use a blend of accommodation strategies in their campaign communications. Corporate partners, such as the Gap, were more likely to display their intentions of examining and communicating with all publics, both inside and outside of the Product (RED) initiative. While they do address the individual product offerings similar to Product (RED) organizers, corporate partners were more likely to discuss their intentions in the campaign and how it affected their own workforce and shareholders. Corporate partners presented results as more of a win-win situation for everything, which Cancel and cohorts (1997) would agree is a component of "mutually beneficial relationships."

Social responsibility analysts were also more likely to recognize corporate partners as more accommodating in their communications efforts. They discovered corporate partners easier to reach via phone or e-mail for interviews, gave greater access to information, and were more transparent in their strategies and results. When explaining the campaign, social responsibility analysts more frequently mentioned corporate partner's efforts to engage with their employees in the developing companies by receiving feedback and input.

Overall, the mix of accommodative and advocacy strategies on behalf of both Product (RED) campaign organizers and dominant coalition proved to be somewhat successful. The

researcher believed that a more even mix between the two strategies would provide the most effective campaign efforts from both parties within the campaign. Corporate partners seem to have the most effective blend, according to Contingency Theory. Product (RED) organizers may need to increase accommodation tactics by communicating new ways to allow consumer feedback, increased information about the Global Fund, and more approaches to stimulate consumer engagement beyond the purchase.

Convergence Theory

Results according to Contingency Theory provided a small picture of flexible, yet intricate, nature of the Product (RED) campaign. David's (2004) Convergence Theory provided further analysis of how practitioners integrated Public Relations and Marketing components. By incorporating aspects of Contingency Theory into this model, Convergence Theory is structured to stimulate civic engagement through both campaigns such as Product (RED). David's (2004) hope of "strengthen[ing] the links on the citizen side of engagement" proved to be moderately correct in its estimation of consumer engagement and integration of Public Relations and Marketing tactics.

The three components of Convergence Theory include professional values, Public Relations practice, and pragmatics. David's (2004) model heavily incorporated Contingency Theory with the element of Public Relations practices. As determined by the previous section, Product (RED) organizers were more likely to provide advocacy functions and two-way asymmetrical communication in their campaign efforts. David agreed that this type of communication was most beneficial, and that researchers need to view advocacy as a more important element of the Public Relations process. According to the "Public Relations practices" element of Convergence Theory, the Product (RED) campaign organizers communicated the most effective message.

Turning to professional values, David believes that relationship building and problem solving factors define professionalism. Convergence theory incorporates these two components

through relationship exchanges in Public Relations practices and transaction exchanges in Marketing literature. On the Public Relations effort, Product (RED) focused more on building relationships with corporate partners than consumers, which might be a detriment to the campaign. Relationship building is highly prized in a two-way symmetrical communication environment, when both side of the relationship are provided ample opportunities to give thorough input into the campaign (Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002; Grunig, 2006). The researcher believed that Product (RED) officials' use of two-way asymmetrical communication was offset by the corporate partners' inclusion of their many publics in the campaign. The corporate partners displayed more of a "relationship building" aspect in their approach than did the Product (RED) dominant coalition.

Product (RED) organizers showed more emphasis on the "transaction exchange" aspect of the campaign through their direct promotion of products. While this was somewhat expected, researchers anticipated that the transaction exchange component would be more prevalent in corporate partners than campaign organizers. The fact that both entities worked together through two separate avenues added support to David's theory of combining Public Relations and Marketing strategies for success.

According to David's (2004) final "P" of pragmatics, risk and perceived control are the two main factors of interaction between corporation, consumer, and cause. The key is minimizing risk and maximizing perceived control of the situation, all while presenting the company as socially responsible. In many ways, this was the strongest component of the Product (RED) campaign by both the dominant coalition and corporate partners. The Product (RED) dominant coalition conducted the research to know that providing quality products with a stimulating brand/licensing agreement was the best way to minimize risk. Perceived transparency and accountability communication components also contributed to the least risk possible on their side of the campaign. Researchers asserted that campaign officials have the most perceived control and least risk of

anyone tied to the Product (RED) campaign. This strategy also left them up to criticism, because they also provided the fewest ways for consumers to provide feedback of their efforts to engage in the Product (RED) campaign.

These actions left corporate partners with a greater sense of risk, but also ensured that they needed to increase their perceived control of the campaign. Corporate partners needed to engage on two levels. First, companies discovered the necessity of transparent communications and feedback mechanisms to and from consumers. These feedback mechanisms included research between their workforce and meeting their needs. Second, corporate partners minimized risk by inventing and reinventing new quality products to engage consumers.

Between Product (RED) dominant coalition and corporate partners, this researcher believes that corporate partner's actions fall within David's Convergence Model more than the actions of campaign organizers. However, the bare minimum of David's model encourages consumer engagement only to the level of purchase, which is what Product (RED) organizers provided. The model encourages companies to step further into risk through entrepreneurship, something that most Product (RED) corporate partners accomplished. Because there are two organizational components in the Product (RED) campaign, the model is adaptable for both side of campaign organizers and corporate partners. David and Product (RED) officials are correct in assuming that consumers are equally "target markets" and "citizens," but in order for the model to be fully effective, the "citizen" component needs to be enhanced with more opportunities to provide feedback and input.

Findings and Observations

Each interview and podcast contributed vital pieces of information, whether explained or observed. The themes from Product (RED) organizers, corporate partners, and social responsibility analysts add to the discussion of whether or not campaigns like this will be a corporate trend in the future. In order for socially responsible, Cause-Related Marketing campaigns to thrive,

practitioners need to learn from the Product (RED) campaign's marked difference in perceptions by those within the organization and those who critically researched the initiative. Successful and unsuccessful campaign strategies emerged from those different campaign impressions, which can shed light to future Public Relations/Marketing blending endeavors.

Perception Differences

The most interesting finding throughout all interviews was the distinct response difference among Product (RED) campaign officials, corporate partners, and social responsibility analysts. In a massive and intricate campaign such as Product (RED), the researcher assumed to find all dominant coalition members with the same motives and concept definitions of the campaign. In line with Grunig's Excellence Theory, the researcher expected all groups' goals to closely align for a successful campaign. These highlighted perception differences allowed the researcher to reanalyze success with varied group's motivations.

The interview themes clearly indicated that goal alignment was a key factor to the success and longevity of the Product (RED) campaign. In many ways, relationship building and cooperative relationship maintenance from Grunig, Grunig, and Dozier's (2002) Excellence Model played out between Product (RED) organizers, corporate partners, and the Global Fund. As long as all three entities clearly united with a common vision and communicate that to their publics, goal alignment was achieved with two-way asymmetrical communication. The ideal Public Relations scenario is if those three entities carried it one step further and allowed their publics avenues to offer feedback and other ways to be involved. As social responsibility researchers investigated this campaign, their interviews revealed two major trends in the differences of how the dominant coalition perceives the campaign and the image that the public has about Product (RED).

The first perceived difference is how each group answers the basic question of describing the Product (RED) campaign. Product (RED) dominant coalition's explanation placed more

emphasis on the products than the cause. While they do mention that the proceeds will “fight AIDS in Africa,” they were more inclined to discuss the brands and product features for consumers to purchase. Social responsibility analyst’s dialogue added more of the Global Fund into the conversation by describing what the money benefited and the credibility of the organization. If asked, these analysts vaguely mentioned the products, but were overall more concerned how the money was spent.

A second observable difference was the level of engagement that each party expected on behalf of consumers. Product (RED) organizers discussed how consumers would love the quality products and buy “again, and again, and again” to create a sustainable campaign. Social responsibility analysts, on the other hand, took the individual consumer’s engagement a bit further and suggested it might encourage others to be a part of Product (RED)’s mission. They believed that the campaign would be sustainable on a larger scale if those consumers who were passionate about the cause would spur others on to contributing to the dialogue of AIDS in Africa. Furthermore, it was their hope that social activism on the consumer level would empower citizens to participate in more traditional civic engagement opportunities.

Those within the campaign voiced their belief that consumer engagement originates from two aspects of our current society. The first is a societal emphasis comes with an individual’s altruistic desires to do acts that benefit a larger community issue. Product (RED) corporate partners attempted to put a human face on the fundraising number, especially outlining specifics of what projects need funds the most. Corporate partners continually saw consumer benevolence in their own consumer market research. One corporate partner described “our customers are telling us they want their dollars to do more...through the feedback we receive from employees and from consumers alike, the idea of actually buying a product that you love but also having the product do more, we think that’s going to resonate with our customers.” Corporate partners, more than

organizers, believed this individual effort translates to a larger communal discussion as the campaign grows and matures.

The second reason for consumer engagement was a belief, from campaign organizers, that traditional forms of civic engagement are not as relevant for current society. Product (RED) dominant coalition members asserted that society and some individual's "frames of reference" do not resonate with current governmental leadership, making it difficult for people to participate in governmental discussions as they once did.

The discrepancy between expectations and perceptions was great between the Product (RED) dominant coalition and social responsibility analysts. Product (RED)'s themes emerged to only desire asymmetrical communication and advocacy strategies, according to Excellence Theory and Contingency Theory, respectively. Social responsibility analysts desired symmetrical communication outputs and a more balanced strategy between advocacy and accommodation. Those within the Product (RED) organization needed to assess this public's need and transform some communication strategies to improve perceptions.

Transparency and Accountability

Improved communication strategies for the campaign could include more details to build upon strategies of transparency and accountability. While campaign organizers did mention themes of transparency and building consumer-brand connections with credibility and transparency, those strategies were not as present in communications as the researcher hoped. As previously mentioned, Product (RED) dominant coalition were more likely to promote the individual product offerings and their quality than provide information of the Global Fund. In addition, if detailed specifics of the Global Fund distributions and tangible results were presented, Product (RED) organizers might see a renewed interest in the products because consumers are more apt to consider the products knowing distinct facts about the non-profit organization. This increase in sales might

also be a feedback mechanism for consumers to express support (David, 2004; Grunig, Grunig, & Dozier, 2002).

The choice to use feedback mechanisms was also a clear example of propelling the sustainable “loop” of Product (RED) success. Through the interviews, corporate partners operated feedback mechanisms best in their relationships with their employees in Africa, as well as their consumers. By investing in the communities, companies like Gap were able to understand and meet the needs of their employees. Not only does this give a sense of accountability in business practices, but it also armed those companies with ways to help promote their product through Marketing efforts because it showed the company as making a difference. David’s (2004) model accounts for this through convergence of Public Relations and Marketing trends

In addition to offering more information of what the money was constructively doing, campaign officials could also offer the same approach as some of the social responsibility analysts: human-interests stories of Product (RED) beneficiaries. The only interviews that mentioned stories of African AIDS victims were those of social responsibility analysts through their own investigative work. By presenting the faces of who would benefit from the campaign, it added a new level of engagement on behalf of the consumer. It created a dialogue between consumer groups to understand their purchase intentions and whether or not their t-shirt purchase will make a difference in Africa. The dialogue could further civic engagement, according to David’s (2004) Convergence model.

By including more components of transparency and accountability, the debate of whether or not Product (RED) is a Cause-Related Marketing initiative or social responsibility move may disappear. Companies benefit from corporate social responsibility practices when it happens organically within their organization. Product (RED) is a new business model, and sustainability will occur if campaign strategy falls more in line with Convergence and Contingency theories.

Limitations

The main limitation with this study was the inability to achieve primary interviews with people in Product (RED) and their corporate partners. The depth of this study would greatly increase with interviews with the original four members of Product (RED) and their corporate partners. When contacted for interviews by email and phone calls, all members initially refused interviews, citing that they could not complete an interview either because it was not for media purposes, or because they simply received too many interview requests. All people with whom researcher requested interviews with referred them to the company or organization website, saying that all possible information could be accessed at that location. Those within the Product (RED) organization agreed to additional email questions, which helped in data collection.

Even though this limitation provided obstacles, it proved to be a finding in and of itself. If transparency is a key value of the Product (RED) initiative, then this study's researcher expected all members of the dominant coalition to be open to conversations and very forthcoming with information. The opposite response, however, provided different results. Because the dominant coalition was not transparent in any attempts for researchers to contact them, transparency was called into question in the mind of researchers.

This lack of transparency in initially securing campaign conversations bled over with difficulty in securing answers to the first research question. Both campaign officials and corporate partners were reluctant to discuss the technical aspects of Product (RED)'s creation and Public Relations strategies. When asked questions to allow officials to provide specific answers of campaign strategies, campaign officials and corporate partners defaulted to communication strategies and pre-fabricated message points.

While this was a large limitation, it brought about a new and unique research avenue. It was

incredibly beneficial to dialogue with those who thoroughly investigated the campaign since it's beginning stages. The interviews added insight of how Product (RED) compared to other social activism campaigns, both within its organization and among its corporate entities. It also allowed researchers to see the corporate partner's motivations for becoming involved in Product (RED), in relation to their other social responsibility initiatives.

Implications for Future Social Activism Campaigns

With increased emphasis on social responsibility in commercial business, the question remains as to whether or not Product (RED) offers a new model of incorporating Public Relations and Marketing strategies toward social activism. According to social responsibility analysts, initiatives like Product (RED) may be the future of corporate social responsibility practices, if completed correctly. Each interviewed analyst offered three integral aspects of a successful corporate social responsibility and Cause-Related marketing campaigns, all of which are essential in light of the future of Product (RED).

First, each company must display a holistic commitment to the cause. This is primarily achieved through transparency in their communications and allowing ways for consumers to engage and participate. Third-party social responsibility organizations are the best advocates to determine how well corporations reflect transparency and engagement in their efforts to brand themselves with a cause. These organizations provide a critical eye when approaching corporate social responsibility, and are able to look at the greater picture of how well the cause fits with the corporations mission statement.

There also needs to be a seamless fit between cause and corporation, and the best cause-corporation associations in Cause-Related Marketing or corporate social responsibility happen organically. According to social responsibility analysts, philanthropy efforts must flow out of a genuine mission for the cause at hand. If it is more forced than organic, consumers will perceive it

as disingenuous and manipulative. The strategy to incorporate socially responsible campaigns must also be a part of the core business strategy, not a peripheral venture.

Third, credibility among other organizations is key. If the company is partnering with a cause, such as Product (RED), there may be more clout in its endeavors. As one social responsibility analyst determined, “The partnership with RED allows companies to come in and say ‘we’re not doing another Marketing scheme. There is substance behind this campaign.’” Credibility also builds when companies are transparent and allow the consumers to engage beyond a purchase point. Employee and corporate engagement also adds to the credence on behalf of consumers.

For this researcher, the most important aspect of a successful Public Relations campaign is transparency among all members of the initiative. While transparency is a broad term, it must reflect a true, genuine nature through both campaign communications and campaign actions. There should be no room for the public to doubt if they have the full range of information on a specific initiative. Moreover, this information must be accompanied by the campaign’s endeavors. A full measure of Public Relations excellence must center on, from beginning to end, with transparency.

Because of this steadfast belief, the researcher does not feel comfortable calling Product (RED) a successful public relations campaign. The lack of transparency surrounding the initiative leaves the researcher believing that Product (RED)’s Public Relations strategies are pretentious in nature. If transparency were truly a foundational quality of this campaign, research would provide fewer results of an advocating stance and marketing drive. Transparency would breed open communication among consumers, corporate partners, and Product (RED) organizers. Because a higher level of transparency does not seem to exist, this study’s researcher determines that a campaign such as Product (RED) should not be classified as a Public Relations initiative.

The Bottom Line of Success

For the Product (RED) campaign, the bottom line question is “To what degree is the campaign successful?” As seen in the results, different involvement within Product (RED) creates a varied definition of what success means. The recent announcement of over \$100 million raised through both products and a Valentine’s Day Sotheby’s art auction most likely caused Product (RED) organizers to see the program as successful. Corporate partners see their products selling off of store shelves, and believe in the success of Product (RED). Some partners also witness the economic impact of Product (RED) in African regions, and believe that Product (RED) is a worthwhile effort. For social responsibility analysts, success means clinging to the hope of change and of a larger consumer social and political engagement.

These mixed definitions of success lead to multiple conclusions, ultimately leaving the public confused as to whether or not Product (RED) is making a difference. If success is defined by amount raised in a little over a year and a half, Product (RED) organizers can view the program as very lucrative and sustainable. If the campaign is to be measured by levels of awareness, Product (RED) may be disappointing to most. This study’s researcher hoped to find a campaign whose organizers believed in empowering an equal amount of awareness and fundraising as a degree of success. Those sentiments were not wholly discovered in the results from these interviews. However, raising \$100 million in almost two years is a remarkable feat for any non-profit organization, and must be recognized as a significant contribution.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This insightful look into the Product (RED) campaign provided a deeper understanding of how Public Relations and Marketing theories can blend in an important area of corporate social responsibility. In this campaign, organizers and corporate partners assume that altruistic consumer aspirations are a driving force behind campaign sustainability. While campaign organizers view social responsibility and individual consumer engagement as a means to fundraise, corporate partners appear to see a broader picture of their involvement as it relates to cause awareness and social responsibility.

By relating this campaign to Public Relations and Marketing literature, the researcher discovered that Convergence and Contingency Theories best described the efforts in this campaign. The flexibility of both theories lent itself well to explain the fluidity of strategies among the various players within Product (RED). According to Contingency Theory, a blend of accommodative and advocacy strategies appeared to work best for the Product (RED) corporate partners. For the Product (RED) dominant coalition, a more distinct advocacy strategy emerged, leaving room for improvement with two-way symmetrical communication and opportunities for consumer engagement and feedback mechanisms. David's (2004) Convergence Theory provided a correct framework to examine the campaign engagement between consumers and organizations. His estimations of transaction exchanges, relationship stakes, and the climate of the corporate partners was correct when examining the Product (RED) campaign.

The larger question raised by this project is the role for future corporate social responsibility campaigns and the integration of Marketing strategies in those endeavors. The business model set forth by the Product (RED) campaign provides a rough sketch of what the researcher believes to be the future of social responsibility. While not entirely perfect in all aspects, Product (RED) provided a framework for companies to expand and mature their social responsibility efforts. More

experienced companies, such as the Gap, were able to expand their portfolio of socially responsible business practices by researching the needs of all publics and aligning their goals with the Product (RED) campaign. For other companies, Product (RED) allowed them to dip their toe into future ways to develop social responsibility efforts through Cause-Related Marketing. Hopefully, this initial foray into corporate social responsibility will grow as their company discovers additional needs that align with their mission statements.

The one aspect of the Product (RED) campaign that causes pause for the researcher is the larger misunderstanding between Public Relations and Marketing campaign components. At first glance, the Product (RED) initiative appears to be a Public Relations driven effort. The campaign includes multiple communicated strategies, such as transparency, credibility and accountability, that make it seem as a great Public Relations move for both corporate partners and the (RED) organization.

When a person, whether practitioner or academician, thinks of the main tenets of Public Relations, the Excellence Model are highly considered as the way that a Public Relations campaign should be run. A highly successful campaign is generally seen as employing two-way symmetrical communication through their strategies and tactics. Grunig's Excellence model is the default consideration for most Public Relations endeavors. If a campaign is labeled "Public Relations" and does not appear to have the Excellence Model's characteristics, the public has a tendency to believe it to be "spin."

Because of these misunderstandings, Public Relations professionals are sometimes fighting an uphill battle to legitimize the profession and professionalize their work. If campaigns such as Product (RED) are perceived solely as Public Relations while heavily concentrating on Marketing tactics, then Public Relations practitioners must work extra to clarify the distinction between the two fields and validate their work. While it is common practice to blend marketing and public

relations strategies in professional situations, this researcher believes practitioners need to adhere to more traditional, foundational Public Relations strategies if the campaign is truly to be perceived as Public Relations.

Even with criticism for popular media, the Product (RED) campaign donated more than \$50 million by January 2008 (Product (RED), 2007d). According to Kelly (2001), evaluation of Public Relations campaign components guides strategies for future campaigns in “long-term relationship maintenance” (p.213). If the Product (RED) dominant coalition and corporate partners critically analyze their strategies for this campaign, their results will assist those who undertake projects like this in the future.

Product (RED) sets a precedent and can have long-term business advantages in because social responsibility work can position a company to address issues that affect their operations and key publics. Cause-Related Marketing efforts can prove to be a double-edged sword if companies are not transparent and accountable. The debate continues whether or not Product (RED) is successful in its initiative to engage the private sector in the fight against AIDS. With a potentially sustainable campaign, only time will tell. Campaign sustainability will be an enduring theme with corporate social responsibility programs, and time will tell if other corporations are inspi(RED) with the Product (RED) business model.

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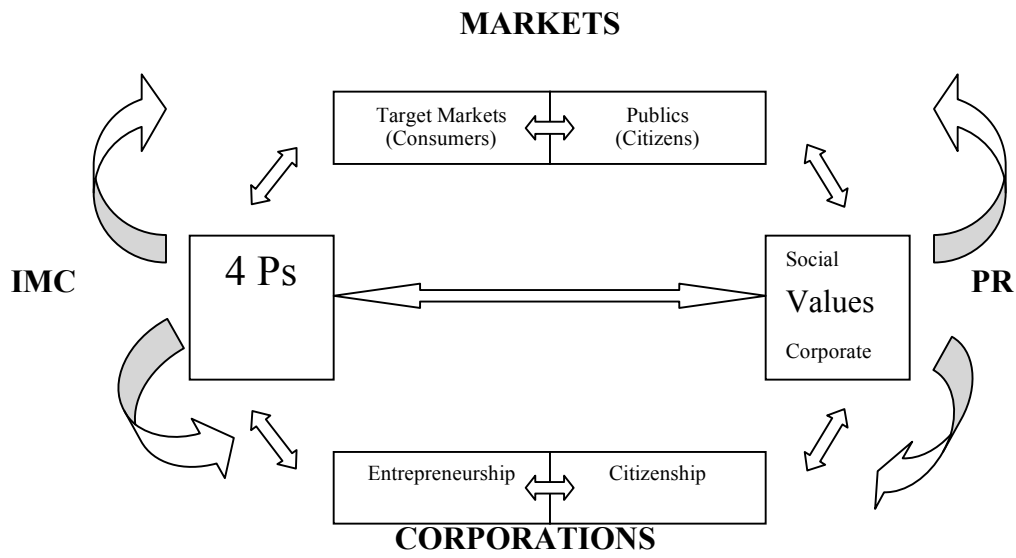
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APPENDIX A: DAVID'S (2004) CONVERGENCE MODEL



APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Product (RED) Dominant Coalition – Interview Guide

1. Tell me about the Product (RED) campaign.
 - a. In your opinion, what is the most important value of the campaign?
2. How was the Product (RED) campaign created?
3. Walk me through how you see this campaign at work?
 - a. <if mentioning sales as the end point> Is that where it stops?
4. How do you evaluate the success of the campaign?
 - a. I see that the project raised \$47 million in the first year. Was that your primary goal?
 - b. What are your goals for future years? How do they compare to accomplishments in the first year?
5. Who are the different audiences that you're trying to reach?
6. What are the channels of communications between you and your corporate partners?
 - a. How involved are you in their Product (RED) decisions?
 - b. How do you get feedback from Product (RED) corporate partners?
7. Do you get feedback from Product (RED) consumers?
 - a. (If YES): What are your Product (RED) consumers saying?
 - b. (If NO): Would you like more feedback from consumers? How do you and the Product (RED) team go about making that happen?
8. I noticed that Hallmark became a corporate partner of the Product (RED) campaign in October. How do you choose your corporate partners?
 - a. What are some of considerations you make when looking for corporate partners?
9. Where do you see the campaign in the next 5 years?
 - a. Do you see the goals changing over time?

- b. How do you see this being accomplished?
10. Is there anyone else within Product (RED) or any of the corporate partners that I should speak with?

Product (RED) Corporate Partners – Interview Guide

1. Tell me about the Product (RED) campaign.
 - a. In your opinion, what is the greatest value of this campaign to your company?
 - b. Are there secondary values that you see?
2. How did <Company name> 's partnership begin with Product (RED)?
3. Walk me through how you see this campaign at work in <company>?
 - a. (If it ends at the Product (RED) purchase) Is that where it stops?
4. Were you one of the decision makers to initially approve this project with Product (RED)?
 - a. Yes/No Prompts:
 - i. (If YES) What about the campaign motivated you to participate?
 - ii. (If NO) Who were the main people to decide?
 - b. If your contract is up, do you think you'll renew? Why or why not?
 - c. What would be some considerations for you to renew or not?
5. How is your company display Product (RED) to your consumers?
 - a. Do you receive feedback from consumers about their Product (RED) experience?
 - b. (If YES): What do your consumers say?
 - c. (If NO): Would you like to receive feedback or are you satisfied with your results?
6. How does Product (RED) fit into your every day corporation
 - a. Does it just augment what you already do or are you doing it as something new?
 - b. If new: what results do you expect?

7. I know that the corporate partnership is built very similarly to a license agreement. In your opinion, do Product (RED) campaign managers accept in suggestions or concerns from corporate partners?
8. How do you evaluate the success of the campaign?
 - a. I see that <company> raised \$ _____ in the first year. Was that what you expected?
 - b. How much money do you envision raising in future years?
9. Where do you see the campaign in the next 5 years?
10. Is there anyone else within your <company> or in Product (RED) that I should speak with?

CSR Research Group Interview Guide

1. Tell me about your work with <CSR Research Group/ Publication>
 - a. What other organizations do you research with your involvement in these media outlets?
2. Tell me about the Product (RED) campaign from your perspective.
 - a. In your opinion, what is the most important value of the campaign?
3. Why did you choose to look at this campaign and interview <Product (RED) organizer/corporate partner>?
 - a. What was it that you wanted to learn about the initiative?
 - b. I see that the interview was completed in October 2006, a few weeks before the US launch. Have you done a follow up interview with anyone at Product (RED)?
4. Walk me through how you see this campaign at work
 - a. <if mentioning sales as the end point> Is that where it stops?
5. In your interview with <before mentioned RED person>, you asked them to elaborate on how Product (RED) differentiates itself from other cause-related Marketing efforts. What are your opinions on that difference?

- a. Do you feel the RED campaign is a CRM venture?
6. To you, is this a unique campaign? What about the Product (RED) model is unique to you?
 - a. Do you see their goals changing over time?
7. How do you believe Product (RED) evaluates the success of the campaign?
 - a. <Product (RED) spokesperson> elaborated on “sustainability” with the RED campaign. In your words, what do you think that means?
 - b. In your opinion, how does the RED project obtain sustainability for the Global Fund?
 - c. Do you see or envision any “red flags” with the campaign?
8. What, do you believe, is the potential for a campaign like this and it’s involvement of corporate social responsibility?
9. Did you receive feedback about your interview/publication?
 - a. P: (If YES): What are your Product (RED) consumers saying?
 - b. P: (If NO): Do you believe the general public is concerned with socially responsible companies?
10. Did you edit the interview to fit it within the timeline for the podcast? May I have the complete un-edited of that interview?
11. Is there anyone else within Product (RED), their corporate partners, or other corporate social responsibility research groups that I should speak with?
 - a. May I use you as a reference?

VITA

Amy Elizabeth Martin is a native of Wichita, Kansas. She graduated with Bachelors of Arts in psychology from Kansas State University in 2004. Amy wanted to explore opportunities near family in Louisiana, and began working for a national non-profit organization. Realizing her passion for creating strategic events to allow community relations, Amy decided to accept a position in the Manship School of Mass Communication's Graduate program.

During the program, Amy's research interests included direct-to-consumer pharmaceutical advertisements and consumer knowledge, crisis communication within political scandals, and individual consumer engagement as a new form of political civic engagement. This study rose from an observation of the increasing merge of marketing and public relations strategies to link corporations with worthy non-profit causes, in order to manage the company's reputation. The Product (RED) campaign provided a unique case study to understand the changing roles for public relations practitioners and corporate social responsibility.

After graduation, Amy plans to pursue a career in public relations/public affairs strategic agency work before deciding to possibly return to earn her doctorate. She wants to professionally conceptualize the future role of corporate social responsibility and strategic communication.