Team Case Project- Team 1  
SC 3383   
Campaign: “Give the Suit Off Your Back”

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**Overview:**

Men’s Wearhouse started a National Suit Drive in 2008 to collect gently used professional clothing to distribute to men transitioning into the workforce. In June of 2010 Mullen Agency decided to promote the National Suit Drive that was more public relation driven as opposed to advertising (Murphy,2010). This campaign was half the cost of a general advertising campaign, but generated just as many results. The name of the new campaign was Give the Suit Off Your Back, and it was perceived as a “sexy medium” due to the fact that men displayed themselves with small amounts of clothing in public places. There were many media outlets used as well as creative techniques to get communities involved in five major markets in the United States. These cities include New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco and Washington D.C. Mullen’s campaign was able to provide Men’s Warehouse with donations that exceeded their original goals. Men’s Wearhouse also reached two of their biggest sales days in history and made more than 250 million media impressions in less than 24 hours (Murphy,2010).

**Situation Analysis:**

**A. Internal Environment**  
 Men’s Wearhouse was founded by George Zimmer in 1973 (“2010 National Suit Drive,”). It’s a men’s dress apparel retailer and one of North America’s largest specialty retailers with 1,239 stores (“Investor Relations”). The Men’s wearhouse, Moores and K&G stores carry a full selection of designer, brand name and private label suits, sport coats, furnishings and accessories (“Investor Relations”). The guarantee of Men’s Wearhouse is “Your Satisfaction is our highest priority at the Men’s Wearhouse. If you are not completely happy with the fit, quality, or fabric of any item, you may return your purchase within 90 days of the original sale (“Our guarantee,”). Each store offers benefits to make sure a suit fits the customer perfectly along with a tailoring guarantee. At every Men’s Wearhouse location the customer is able to receive free re-alterations on the seam of any garment purchased at Men’s Wearhouse. Quality service is what makes this company stand out from a competitor. The current stock exchange in dollar price is $28.78 with a 280,075 volume. Men’s Wearhouse also operates a global corporate apparel called Dimensions and Alexandra in the United Kingdom (“Investor Relations”).

**B. Timeline** (“Our guarantee,”)

* 1973: Men’s Wearhouse is founded by George Zimmer
* 1975: One of the first tag lines for the Men’s Wearhouse commercials was established “Considerably more for considerably less”, and the first commercial was aired at this time.
* 1981: 12 stores are currently thriving in Texas and Men’s Wearhouse expands to its second market, the San Francisco Bay Area.
* 1986: George Zimmer becomes the spokesman for Men’s Wearhouse. Expansion continues with new Men’s Wearhouse stores in Dallas, Sacraento, Portland and Seattle.
* 1992: Men’s Wearhouse starts selling dress shoes to go with their suits. 100 stores to name at this point. The initial Public Offering brings in $13 million, which allowed a much more rapid expansion nationwide.
* 1993: Men’s Wearhouse enters the Los Angeles market, and they begin to sell sportswear.
* 1998: Men’s Wearhouse opens stores in the New York market. Revenues exceed $1 billion for the first time.
* 1999: Men’s Wearhouse purchases the Canadian menswear chain “Moores”. Men’s Wearhouse acquires Atlanta-based K&G Men’s Supersore, which becomes K&G Fashion Superstore.
* 2000: Tuxedo rental business sparks. Men’s Wearhouse is named one of the “100 Best Companies to Work for” in American by Fortune Magazine.
* 2001: Offical Men’s Wearhouse website launches.
* 2006: Men’s Wearhouse acquires two dry cleaning chains in the Houston area and rebrands them as MW Cleaners. Men’s Wearhouse buys 509 Afterhouse Formalwear and Mr. Tux tuxedo rental stores and converts them into Men’s Wearhouse locations.
* 2008: Men’s Wearhouse celebrates its 35th Anniversary. The National Suit Drive is hosted asking customers to give the suit off your back.
* 2011: One in five suits bought in the U.S. if from the Men’s Wearhouse, now one of the largest specialty retailers of men’s apparel, with more than 1,200 stores.

**C. Current Organizational Culture**

With the growth of over 1,200 stores Men’s Wearhouse has become a corporate giant when it comes to upscale men’s retail. They have taken the next step of success by going global to Europe and Canada. Men’s Wearhouse doesn’t have a direct stock purchase program and the company declared a quarterly 7 cent per share cash dividend to holders of record as close of business on June 17,2008 payable on June 27, 2008 (“Investor Relations,”). The Management team consists of :  
Douglas S. Ewart: President and Chief Executive Officer  
George Zimmer: Executive Chairman  
David H. Edwab: Vice Chairman of the Board  
Neill P. David: Executive Vice President, Chief Financial Officer, Treasurer and Principal Financial Officer  
Charles Bresler, Ph.D.: Executive Vice President of Marketing and Human Resources

Men’s Wearhouse has tied together marketing, real estate and merchandise for their culture. Their large presence across the United States allows for Men’s Wearhouse to stand out in consumers mind. Men’s Wearhouse was able to achieve a 150 percent increase in revenues driven through e-commerce sales (“2010 annual report,” 2010).

**D. Communication Tools and Messages Used in the Past**

Men’s Wearhouse made their mark in media with a proficient commercial in 1975. Their main message was “Considerably more for considerably less”, which allowed them to represent themselves as affordable. George Zimmer became their spokesman in 1986, which established credibility for their everyday low prices (“Our guarantee,”). In 1997 George Zimmer added “You’re going to like the way you look” to his well known taglines.

Men’s Wearhouse started the National Suit Drive in 2008, and it has grown throughout the years. A partnership was created in 2010 with 200-plus nonprofit organizations to help collect clothing. Through a program called “local giving” the Men’s Wearhouse stores reach out to find out the needs of their communities and support their neighborhood nonprofit organizations with gift card donations and volunteerism throughout their employee MatchMoney Program (“2010 national suit drive,”). Coverage in 9 of the top 10 media markets picked up on the Take the Suit Off Your Back Campaign, and there were more than 250 million media impressions in less than 24 hours (murphy,2010).

In terms of social media Men’s Wearhouse has a Facebook page. There are 1,530 likes and 96 people “talking about us”. You are able to log into Facebook and “Like” their page. Men’s Wearhouse has represented their brand on Twitter as well. They have tweeted 1,389 times, following 320, and 3,287 followers. Their website is extremely up to date ([www.menswearhouse.com](http://www.menswearhouse.com)).

**E. Publics**

1. Males trying to enter the workforce that need professional clothing to give them an edge in a job Interview.

2. Males currently in the workforce who are able to donate professional attire for males across the nation.

3. Business and non-profit community organizations that can encourage their employees and members to donate their own gently used professional clothing.

4. All realms of media to promote the National Suit Drive, and specifically the Take the Suit Off Your Back campaign.

5. Universities in areas that are close to Men’s Wearhouse stores to promote the Suit drive for graduates entering the workforce.

**F. External Environment**

The Mullen Advertising and PR agency recognized that branding efforts for Men’s Wearhouse and specifically the National Suit Drive were curtailed (Murphy,2010). With the country in the position that is with the unemployment rates rising there needed to be a spark in the campaign. Consumers were looking past the buy-one-get-one-free and 50% off sales that Men’s Wearhouse was promoting. Although the National Suit Drive might not directly bring a profit from a variety of consumers it has a last impression on the brand that results in success. Using the 200 plus non-profit organizations puts a positive light on the campaign and to Men’s Wearhouse as an entirety. Externally there became a breath of fresh air with the “light hearted” approach of using males in cities to walk around with just a tie and underwear on to promote a serious cause.

**SWOT Analysis**

**Strengths:**

* Men’s Wearhouse connecting with individuals that might not be able to afford a suit promotes genuine and positive branding.
* Connecting with more than 200 non-profit organizations allows for the community to do the job for you.
* The campaign demonstrates exceptional social responsibility.
* Gives a fun and sexy approach that makes a lasting impression.
* The media is able to promote a serious cause such as high unemployment in a way that is interesting to a broad range of audiences.

**Weaknesses:**

* There isn’t one spokesperson.
* People gravitate to causes for women and children. Supporting men is more difficult.
* No matter what, some people won’t take a suit that someone else has worn.
* Might cause negative connotations towards Men’s Wearhouse brand because it is somewhat risqué.
* Hard to control the message due to the fact that it is spread out across the United States.
* Many outside resources have to be used especially in terms of hiring models. This causes a lot of time and effort in training to allow for the models to be credible when asked questions about the campaign on the street corner.

**Opportunities:**

* Men are eager to connect with Men’s Wearhouse because they want to benefit from receiving a free suit.
* It makes the public aware of the unemployment issue, and encourages communities to help each other out.
* It is a unique campaign that is great for word of mouth.
* Easily remembered, which allows for it to be a lasting campaign for the future.

**Threats:**

* Other suit companies could try to duplicate the campaign.
* Preconceived notion that it is to be taken lightly because of the sex appeal.
* Possible protesting if individuals might be offended.

**Problem Statement:**

Due to the rise in job loss with a striking 82% loss that has occurred with men in 2010, one in 10 men were umemployed, which makes for a large need for America to understand why unemployment is a serious issue. The campaign’s goal is to provide the public to donate gently used professional clothing items. (Murphy, 2010)

**Objectives:**

The Mullen PR Agency’s Give the Suit Off Your Back campaign involves Men’s Wearhouse stores collecting gently used suits and other articles of professional clothing and distributing them to men transitioning into the workforce in order to give them an edge in all-important job interviews.

This campaign, unlike many others, is aimed primarily toward men because people tend to gravitate toward causes for women and children, therefore supporting men and finding programs that do is more difficult, which is why this campaign is of such unique importance. Along with their three-pronged messaging strategy that involves leveraging news about the economy, motivating people to give back and excite people about the Men’s Wearhouse brand, Mullen’s specific campaign objectives were as follows:

* Achieve the donation of 100,000 articles of clothing during the drive, which would be in the month of September 2010
* Drive in-store traffic and related sales
* Demonstrate Men’s Wearhouse’s commitment to social responsibility

* Generate at least 200 million media impressions
* Establish a more emotional connection between the Men’s Wearhouse brand and its customers

One of the campaigns key messages was tying the National Suit Drive to the struggling economy through statistics on recession and data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In order to get this message across, Mullen’s strategy was to communicate the pain men were experiencing amid a growing sense of media fatigue. The public needed to understand that unemployment was still a serious issue for many Americans, no matter social class, geography or race.

Mullen used a play-on-words in order for their messages to make an impact. They performed research dealing with trends related to the recession. Buzzwords were being used throughout the public, and one in particular was “mancession.” Mullen took this word and ran with it, promoting Men’s Wearhouse as helping to fight the “mancession” by making a “bronation” of suits and professional clothing to help with the “he-covery.”

**Programming:**

The Give The Suit Off Your Back Campaign created and implemented several events and activities to raise awareness about donating suits to those reentering the workforce. Below we have listed the main events or strategies used in this campaign.

**A. Third Party Endorsements:**

**“**The Give The Suit Off Your Back” Campaign utilizes third party endorsements from local and vocal nonprofit organizations. Utilizing nonprofit organizations and also past recipient participation in the drive will prompt new consumers and old ones to donate their suits. Homeless shelters, community services centers, correctional facilities, and from 48 states endorsed and participated in the campaign giving it recognition and support, (2010 National Suit Drive). These nonprofit organizations worked directly with Mullen’s communication team to ensure all donated clothing would be “smoothly distributed, and the services provided would be matched with the company’s vision,” (Murphy, 2010). While the drive did not have a spokesperson or major name sponsor, Director of Corporate Giving Julie Town says if she had a wish list for the next campaign, “it would be adding a big sponsor or a well-known spokesperson into the mix”, (Murphy, 2010).

**B. Media Outlets:**

Utilizing media outlets through executive support played a key role in this campaign as Mullen took to using national talk shows like “Today”, a leading morning show, and other business outlets such as the approximate 1,000 Men’s Wearhouse stores in 200 identified markets. Mullen’s team also drove media outreach to late-night talk shows, major newspapers, consumer lifestyle online outlets, and local and regional media that would influence smaller audiences by using a human-interest angle, (Murphy, 2010). By targeting major or big name media outlets Mullen saw an opportunity for the “trickle down effect” to be used. The idea was by targeting high profile media; regional and local media would then follow their lead and give the campaign coverage as well. CBS’s “The Early Show” also gave the campaign television coverage after Mullen sent “tighty-whitey” mailers directly to editors informing them about the campaign. Online or mainstream media was a key target for this campaign as bloggers were very sought out. Mullen found it important to not just target male bloggers who owned suits, but also women. Getting women or “mommy bloggers” involved was important to the campaign as it’s been shown that 42 million U.S. women are using social media in the form of blogs today, (Campbell, 2009).

**C. Guerrilla Tactics:**

The guerrilla tactics used in this campaign were the stand out techniques that created a general buzz about donating suits. Mullen acquired male models to implement in five major cities like New York, Washington D.C., Chicago, Los Angeles, and San Francisco, (Murphy, 2010). These models stripped to nothing but their shoes, socks, boxer shorts, and ties holding signs that encouraged people to “Give the Suit Off Your Back”. These male models were equipped with talking points when people had questions about the campaign and how to interact with media professionals as well. Not only were male models driving buzz wearing little to nothing, but there were also street teams readily available to answer questions. These street teams included Mullen PR professionals who were placed strategically to direct potential donators to Men’s Wearhouse store locations.

**Evaluation:**

The Give the Suit Off Your Back campaign was an incredible success and exceeded all of the objectives that had been set prior to the launch. Mullen set the suit donation goal at 100,000 articles of clothing for the month-long suit drive during September 2010. By the end of the drive, the campaign had exceeded that goal and ended up with more than 102,000 articles of clothing nationwide. Following the launch of the campaign, Men’s Wearhouse had its two biggest sales days in history, generated 575-plus news stories in nine of the top 10 media markets and made more than 250 million media impressions in less than 24 hours (Murphy 2010).

When most Americans think of major societal problems, the issue of unemployment among men across the country is not one that immediately jumps to mind. Often times, people associate women and the elderly as those not active in the workforce, but in actuality, “82% of job loss had occurred with men, and in 2010, one in 10 men were unemployed” (Murphy 2010). Because of these shocking findings from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Men’s Wearhouse began their annual National Suit Drive in order to demonstrate social responsibility, raise awareness of the unemployment rate and to help bridge the unemployment gap by aiding the struggling men trying to break into the workforce, whether it be for the first or hundredth time.

Men’s Wearhouse won the 2010 Gold level Best Social Service or Education Campaign by the Cause Marketing Forum by dedicating its paid advertising to promotional offers in 2010 with the “donate clothing, receive a discount” deal during their National Suit Drive last year. The Give the Suit Off Your Back campaign only used public relations strategies and tactics to gain awareness and participation in the drive throughout the month of September, as opposed to their usual advertising-based campaigns (“Doing Well by Doing Good 2011).

Listed below is the exact breakdown of collected items:

* 102,536 Total items collected
* 22,746 Suits
* 18,847 Dress shirts
* 15,210 Slacks
* 11,855 Sport coats
* 5,200 Business casual
* 4,425 Women’s wear
* 2,202 Shoes

More than 18,000 individuals, businesses and community organizations donated to the National Suit Drive in September of 2010. Men’s Wearhouse stores nationwide matched each of the 22,746 suit donations with a new tie and dress shirt for every recipient. All of the items brought in during the National Suit Drive to the various Men’s Wearhouse locations are given to clients of non-profit job training and employment program to give them a helping hand when entering the American workforce (“2010 National Suit Drive”).

On top of the huge success from the Give the Suit Off Your Back campaign, total revenue and sales at Men’s Wearhouse nationwide for 2010 equaled $2.1 billion, which was an increase of more than 10 percent from 2009. Tuxedo rentals also increased by nine percent and experienced its best year to date. The company generated a 150 percent increase in online sales and the Men’s Wearhouse franchise geographically expanded to the United Kingdom (“2010 Annual Report” 2010).

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