

WPPED CREAM 2008

MEDIA | HIGHLY COMMENDED | MEC COLUMBIA
CALI COUNCIL | PUT YOUR FACE ON

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

A city authority in Colombia challenged us to increase voter turnout in local elections.

THE CHALLENGE

Cali is the third largest city in Colombia. But the local population had become so disenchanted with their politicians that they had lost faith in the democratic process itself. The extent of this decline was demonstrated during the city elections when only 15% of the electorate voted – the worst turn-out for any Colombian city.

With the next election imminent, the city authority was determined to increase citizen participation at the polling booths. They challenged us to reduce the abstention rate by 5%. They wanted the campaign to find private sponsors to fund the campaign that would reach even the most disaffected parts of the electorate.

OUR INSIGHT

We needed to reignite the citizens' passion for politics. In Colombia, there is an expression best translated as 'to put on the face'. It means to stand up and fight for what you believe in. We adopted it as our slogan – 'Put on the face for Cali'.

We discovered that the group most likely to respond to our message was young adults 30+ who, with children, jobs and houses, are more directly affected by politics. We needed to make them feel that the campaign was addressing them personally.

OUR SOLUTION

Before the election, we canvassed local opinion formers and business leaders to raise funds and sow the seeds of our campaign.

Although we used local TV and radio, we focused mainly on non-traditional channels. In shopping malls, actors performed short plays about democratic responsibility. 'Put on the face for Cali' stickers were distributed at colleges, in malls and restaurants. We gave slogan T-shirts to supermarket staff. At a key local soccer match, players wore our T-shirts to sing the Cali anthem. We ran ads in cinemas, and installed mirrors in the cinema lobbies so that people could see that they were the main focus of the campaign.

We developed a dedicated website with practical information about the election and a chat room where people could comment on the candidates' campaigns.

THE RESULTS

- 31.3% increase in turnout
- 7.3% decrease in electoral abstention
- 69% awareness of campaign