

How charity: water Used AI to Find the Narrative Which Inspired the Most Engagement

Introduction

charity: water’s mission is to ensure everyone has access to clean, safe water. With the help and support of donors and fundraisers, they fund water projects across the world, bringing clean water to communities in need. Recruiting monthly, recurring donors is especially critical to their mission of solving the global water crisis, providing a more sustainable way to continue funding water projects.

With Facebook as an integral part of their acquisition strategy, charity: water’s marketing team is constantly testing different iterations of imagery, messaging, and calls-to-action to find what sparks the most engagement with their digital audiences. Though this trial-and-error approach has yielded moderate improvements in engagement, they wanted a more data-driven way to pinpoint the stories and messaging that would resonate best with new audiences.



Images explored in one Persado experiment

Their team wanted to understand whether content about their mission statement or language focused on community resonated most strongly with their audiences. charity: water used Persado to machine-generate 16 Facebook ads across 1,024 permutations spanning different emotional sentiments, imagery, and narratives. This approach allowed them to pinpoint precisely which stories and imagery were most powerful for different age segments and genders.

Finding the Right Story and Message with Persado

In an effort to increase acquisition and engagement, charity: water sought deeper insights of what inspires Facebook users to become donors. They began using Persado’s AI technology to test and learn at a greater scale.

Impact

 227.4%

The Difference Between the Most and Least Effective Message for Conversion Rate

 3,056

More Website Conversions

 20.6%

More Website Content Views

 146.56%

Conversion Rate Uplift for their 1% Lookalike Audience

 32%

Conversion Rate Uplift Across Audiences

CONTROL

charity: water

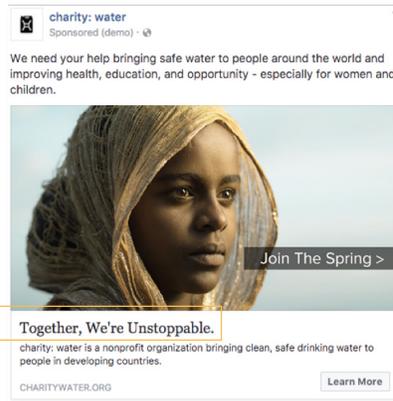


The story of community resonated more strongly across all audiences than language about their mission statement. "Together, we're unstoppable" was more powerful than phrases like "Help us make history" and "end the water crisis of our time." In addition, language evoking the emotion of Encouragement outperformed the imperative language in charity: water's control.

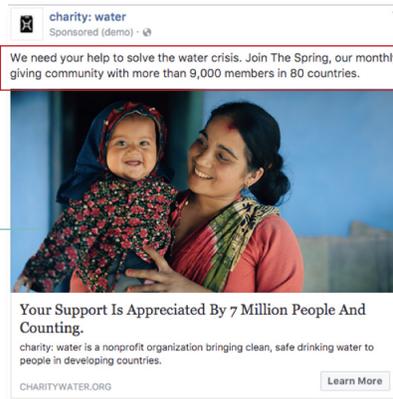
Varying the image contributed more than 50% to engagement, thereby having the greatest impact on response rates. While the close-up image of the woman resonated most across all audiences tested, the mother-and-daughter image resonated most with women and the 1% lookalike audience.

PERSADO

The Winning Message: All Audiences



The Winning Message - 1% Lookalike Audience



“ We care about getting our message and story out there to potential new donors. By design, this requires us to test outside-the-box while still staying true to our core vision. Persado helped kickstart a new era of testing at charity: water, helping us discover in a very data-driven way what aspects of our vision inspire donors the most, and how we can use the right emotions, language and imagery to connect more strongly with different audiences.

-Jason Keramidas, Chief Product Officer

Emotional language was the second biggest contributor to engagement (35%). Encouragement phrases like "We need your help," outperformed phrases like "A call-to-action," which conveys Anxiety, a historically top-performing emotion across industries and regions.

Conclusion

charity: water's team is excited to continue exploring the core narratives from Persado's experiment to drive more engagement. "We were able to do months of testing in just one Persado experiment," Amy Zhang, a Senior Demand Gen Manager at charity: water explained. "Our audience heavily skews toward women, so just knowing that the image of a girl and language around community perform best with women compared to men has been an incredibly valuable insight. We've taken these insights and continued to use them to recruit more monthly donors from our key target audiences."

charity: water plans to continue using insights generated by Persado more broadly across Facebook and hopes to run more experiments in the future.

About Persado

Persado is reinventing digital marketing creative by applying mathematical certainty to words, the foundational DNA of marketing. By unlocking the power of words, companies win every digital marketing moment, experiencing dramatic new levels of brand engagement and revenue performance across every channel.

For more information about Persado or to schedule a demo, please visit persado.com and follow Persado on [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#).