

Campaigns That Shook the World: The Evolution of Public Relations

Danny Rogers

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This retrospective title takes an in-depth look at some of the world's great public relations campaigns.

Is it possible for a campaign that promotes a person, product, or service to have such a dramatic impact that it “shakes the world”? Danny Rogers thinks so—and he proves it in *Campaigns that Shook the World: The Evolution of Public Relations*. In his book, Rogers examines nine campaigns, each of which is a classic that has had far-reaching effects.

Choosing the campaigns to include is admittedly a subjective endeavor, but Rogers, a renowned marketing journalist, provides ample justification for his selections. In fact, early on in his description of each campaign, he includes a section called “Why the campaign shook the world,” where he explains exactly that.

Rogers provides a rare perspective on such campaigns as the “reinvention” of the Rolling Stones, the launch of the Product (RED) global initiative, and the unprecedented election of Barack Obama. All case studies share a parallel structure so they can easily be compared and contrasted: Rogers introduces the campaign and discusses why it is great, details the cast of individuals involved, provides a full description of the campaign's elements and phases, and reflects on unique attributes. One of the more interesting inclusions is a section called “The Campaign Star,” in which the author identifies an individual who played the leading role in each campaign. This lends a very personal aspect to what made the campaign great.

While all of the campaigns in the book are either British or American, each represents a true marketing breakthrough with global implications. For example, the “Campaign for Real Beauty,” promoting Dove-branded products, used “real women” to start and sustain a conversation about the definition of beauty around the world. The story of how this campaign unfolded is fascinating, in part because it was not universally supported internally. Brilliant both in its execution and its integrated use of all media, including social media, the Campaign for Real Beauty continues to be “the absolute gold standard” in terms of “‘thought leadership’ and earned/social media campaigns,” writes Rogers.

Rogers' keen observations bring each campaign to life, but perhaps the most instructional part of the book is his concluding chapter, “A manifesto for great campaigns.” Here the author identifies ten essential elements of great campaigns, illustrating each by referring to one of the campaigns described in the book. This chapter is sure to be highly useful to any PR practitioner; it effectively acts as a road map for following in the footsteps of the greatest campaigns.

Consumers as well as marketing professionals are likely to find *Campaigns that Shook the World* to be informative and engaging. It is, after all, great campaigns that have the ability to not just shake the world, but to change it.

BARRY SILVERSTEIN (December 7, 2015)

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