

Video

2019 Winner: Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation

Entry Title: Women Making Waves

Project Overview

Every day, women are underrepresented in the c-suite, in the media, in sports. Nowhere is this more true than in the outdoor industry. Six in 10 women can't come up with a single outdoor female role model, and this gender inequality is particularly apparent when it comes to fishing and boating: only one in five women and girls believe they represent a typical angler. The fishing industry needs everyone if it is to continue thriving. The number of new participants may be on the rise, but so is the number of those who've stopped participating—5.6 million in 2017 alone—one million more than the year before. Why does this matter? Without recreational fishing, the entire outdoor industry suffers. Many of the conservation programs that protect our country's natural habitats depend on the proceeds from fishing license sales to remain in operation. As the fishing population continues aging out of the sport, recruiting young, diverse anglers is critical to the longevity of this shared tradition. Women make up half of new participants in fishing and boating, but are the highest to drop out – in fact, only 19% of women think an angler looks like them. We wanted to change that so we launched a campaign with bold empowering statements and imagery to encourage all women to get on the water. That's why we developed the Women Making Waves initiative, a nationwide integrated campaign to start the tides of change and empower women to make their voices heard by the outdoor industry.

Goals/Objectives

For #WomenMakingWaves to succeed, we needed to do more than just offer women a chance to see themselves represented on the water—we would need to create an active role for them to play. By empowering real women to take part in the campaign, Making Waves gave the fishing industry a serious dose of girl power. It only takes one to start a revolution, but it takes everyone to carry it to success. If we were to truly get more women fishing, we would need to get the entire industry onboard. To influence thought leaders across the fishing industry to follow our lead, we leveraged the news media to spread the word about Making Waves all summer long. The goal—a 50-percent year-over-year increase in summer media placements—was lofty, but we were up for the challenge. Getting butts in boats, influencing industry leaders and driving digital engagements are all well and good, but at the end of the day, it's the ultimate goal that counts. Thus, the definitive measure of Making Waves' success would only be found out on the water: new female participants.

Strategy/Tactics

We knew we needed the news media's help to influence industry leaders to support female anglers; the question was how to gain the media's attention. To inspire media contacts and audiences alike, we launched the Making Waves campaign on Mother's Day with a powerful anthem video. Featuring a strong, female-led soundtrack, the short

film kicked off the reinvention of a timeless outdoor tradition. With a confident and bold tone, the rallying cry video was shared throughout the media, sending a signal to the entire industry that the tides of change had arrived.

Success Metrics/Results Achieved

Making the water more inclusive for women is not a job that can be done alone, which is why inspiring the entire industry to take up the mantle was critical to the success of Making Waves. To get industry leaders onboard, Exponent targeted news media nationwide with an inspiring anthem video, aiming for an ambitious 50-percent year-over-year increase in summer media placements. But as the short film caught fire among the news media, Making Waves quickly blew past the goal, achieving an 82-percent year-over-year increase in media placements, far exceeding our goal. Our female audience on YouTube grew 28% YOY and our watch time on our YouTube channel went up from 679,548 minutes to 2,058,187! Although the work's not over yet, the Making Waves video started a powerful rallying cry across the entire fishing industry. The water is open to everyone, and we developed Making Waves to give the fishing industry a powerful reminder of that. The campaign garnered media attention nationwide and drove thousands of people to RBFF's digital properties, but the real impact is happening where it counts the most—right on the water. Female participation in fishing is growing; women now make up 45 percent of new fishing participants. Thanks to Making Waves, RBFF is forging a path ahead for the entire industry to follow. By tackling a barrier head-on, we helped empower women from all walks of life grow the sport, change an industry, and Make Waves.

Learn more

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Take Me Fishing Video

Association Website:

www.takemefishing.org