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FLASH MOBS FOR POWERFUL PR CAMPAIGN

Developing of information technologies and society in general led to appearance of a big quantity of goods and merchandise lines. Nowadays advertising people are looking for new technologies, specific PR-tools and unique integrated mass communications to increase effectiveness of their work.

Organization of flash mobs is one of such unusual methods.

“*Flash mobs*” are groups of people who assemble in a public place and collaboratively perform an act, usually something unusual and even strange. This seemingly pointless performance can actually be extremely beneficial to marketing and public relations professionals.

Flash mob movement was born in the USA in 2002, after appearance of a book that was written by sociologist Howard Rheingold named «Smart mobs: the next social revolution». After that people started to use new communications for self-organization. The first flash mob occurred on June 3, 2003 at Macy's department store in the city of New York. About 150 people were gathering around one an expensive rug in furniture department. Participants told sales assistant that they wereshopping for a "love rug" for their warehouse on the outskirts of New York, where all they lived together.

Flash mob was added to the 11th edition of the Concise Oxford English Dictionary on July 8, 2004 where it noted it as an "unusual and pointless act" separating it from other forms of smart mobs such as types of performance, protests, and other gatherings.

Flash mobphenomenon became popular about 10 years ago, after appearance and spreading of various social media: it gave opportunity of rapid and handy communication between thousands of people. It seems that traditional flash mobs are close to retirement, but they are about gathering theirpeak in advertising business.

There are different types of flash mobs:

- traditional flash mob
- political or social mob
- commercial flash mob
- x-mob
- smart-mob
- i-mob

Let's consider on commercial flash mobs.

The most important thing that this is one of the most effective instruments of attracting attention from psychological point of view.

Goals of flash mobs for PR:

- Draw attention to the brand to increase brand visibility and recognition.
- Engage the consumers by making the Flash Mob a "live" TV commercial.
- "Go viral"– attempt to make the YouTube clip of the flash mob.

Reasons why flash mobs is genius for PR:

- Unconventional and unique: In contrast to other advertising techniques, flash mobs are nearly impossible to miss because they tend to lure bystanders (and possible consumers) into watching the performance.

- Flash mobs cost next to nothing: most flash mobs are organized through social media, which are free. In addition, these events usually takes place in public areas (no need to rent out the space).

- YouTube renown: flash mobs always a surprise and capture the attention of a large audience in unexpected forums, in that way many witnesses usually catch the action on tape or mobile phone or other devices. Many of these videos then go to television news shows and YouTube.

- Flash mobs make closer relationship between consumers and product: consumers are more likely to remember the product or cause from witnessing a live performance rather than viewing a billboard or commercial.

- Great use of Social Media:

Flash mob phenomenon has a lot of benefits for use in PR and marketing. They are something fresh, new, unique, something that was used very rare before. It makes people remember the product. People are sending each other commercials from YouTube that were based on flash mobs. So it's a good experimental marketing technology that can be used for PR campaign and for developing a brand.