

# Public Relations

## Case study:

# LEGO

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### **Context for instructors and educators**

I needed a case study for the topic namely public relations. Because I could not find any OER material on this topic, I have decided to contribute to the OER community in the hope that other instructors may find the content useful.

The case study is not fictitious. It is but based on facts about the 2018 Lego campaign available on the internet. As much as the intent was to keep to real and information, it is still based on information from other sources.

The case study is meant for educational purposes only and not for news or entertainment purposes. All sources and authors have been referenced. Please visit the sources and websites for the full stories this case study is based on.

## **Lego's global Rebuild the World brand campaign**

Lego, one of the world's top toy companies, has made headlines in 2019 with their first brand campaign since the 1980s. Although the Lego movies have helped to put the brand in the minds of kids, no Lego advertisement had been released in three decades. The 2019 brand campaign, which involved a live action-adventure short film directed by Traktor, was designed by the French agency BETC.

BETC joined hands with Lego's internal team to develop the Rebuild the World campaign inspired by the World Economic Forum's emphasis on the importance of creativity. Creativity is a skill that organisations look for in employees because today's children will walk into jobs that have not existed before. Because Lego believes that they can help children to develop the creativity they will one day need in their jobs, creativity was the theme of their campaign.

The aim of Lego's campaign was to stimulate creativity and show that it enables change and imaginative problem-solving. The vice presidents of the Lego Group and of BETC indicated in an interview that parents, gift givers and buyers, who see the brand as a model set, were the primary audience of the campaign. Lego wanted to change their perception of the Lego brand as a set of instructions. At the same time, Lego wanted to promote the idea that children delight in playing with their bricks.

The campaign included a live-action and CGI adventure film. Surprisingly, not one Lego brick featured in it. It was launched on Twitter according to what they called the tease, reveal, reinforce framework. Two days before the campaign, Lego tweeted a six-second teaser video to excite the curiosity of their primary audience. On the day it was launched, Lego released the full version of the film. The Promoted Trend Spotlight, one of their ad products, maximised their audience reach.

The integrated global campaign ran on television, Spotify and other social and e-commerce channels. The out-of-home content included billboards or posters. The photographs appearing on them were by photographers who have contributed to luxury-brand campaigns. Lego's campaign was not sales based because they wanted to shift perceptions and ensure that their product is bought for the right reasons.

It will not be easy to measure the success of this campaign. It will take time to determine if the perceptions of the target audience have indeed changed. Only when their target audience mentions Lego and creativity in the same breath, will Lego know that they have succeeded.

### **Lego in South Africa**

Although Lego products have been available in South Africa for many years, the stores selling them were not certified. The Yellow Brick Co approached the Lego company in 2014 to open certified stores in South Africa, but Lego believed that the South African market was not ready for certified stores. In 2016 Lego changed their mind and invited the Yellow Brick Co to submit a tender.

The Yellow Brick Co was awarded the license. Because they were happy to commit to Lego and because Lego was also open to their suggestions and ideas, the contract process went smoothly. Throughout this process, The Yellow Brick Co maintained trust and a mutually beneficial partnership was entered into.

In 2018 the first Lego store in Africa opened in Sandton City, one of South Africa's most prestigious shopping malls. More certified stores, each creating up to 20 new jobs, were to be opened in South Africa. Today you will find a Lego store in Menlyn in Pretoria, Canal Walk in Cape Town, and Gateway in Durban,

to name but a few. These stores create much needed jobs and maintaining transparency with their stakeholders.

Since 2015 the Lego Foundation, in partnership with UNICEF and the South African government, has inspired children to be creative lifelong learners. Their aim is to promote children's rights and business principles. Through their partnerships, the LEGO Foundation, the LEGO Group, and UNICEF adhere to the Ubuntu philosophy and the values of the UN Global Compact locally and globally.

### **Questions**

- 1) Define public relations with reference to Lego by using at least three (3) elements in the case study.
- 2) Explain the difference between the objectives of the PR team at the Lego Agency and those of the Rebuild the World initiative.
- 3) How would you classify the Rebuild the World campaign?
- 4) Identify and explain the PR instruments Lego used for this campaign.
- 5) Identify and explain the media Lego used for this campaign.
- 6) Discuss two requirements of successful public relations The Yellow Brick Co met when Lego stores opened in South Africa.
- 7) Identify one objective in the Lego case study and discuss how Lego intend to measure it.

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