



## #WhatTheFlush: Disrupting the Water Conservation Conversation

### NIAGARA CONSERVATION with PadillaCRT

#### SITUATION ANALYSIS

Every day, Americans unnecessarily flush away millions of gallons of water because their toilets aren't designed with conservation in mind. That's a critical concern at a time when water has become a precious commodity around the globe, especially in drought-parched places like California.

Despite serious warnings about the situation, the issue of wasted toilet water hasn't resonated with the public, and thus the problem persists. So when PadillaCRT was tapped to help launch the world's most efficient toilet, we knew we had to take an unconventional, if risky, approach to drive the issue – and the solution – home.

The cheeky #WhatTheFlush campaign used good old bathroom humor to tout the water-conserving advantages of the Stealth® Toilet, which was developed by Niagara Conservation to use just a fraction of the water per flush than conventional toilets. The result: Homeowners who install the Stealth Toilet can conserve up to 20,000 gallons per year and reduce their water bills by 60 percent.

The disruptive 360-degree campaign PadillaCRT designed around this high-tech toilet included a “Potty Talk” video featuring a Bravo TV funny lady, and a supporting cast of online influencers to drive social conversations around the Stealth® Toilet. WhatTheFlush.com contained an array of amusing content, side-by-side with the details about the Stealth's innovative technology.

The campaign not only changed the conservation conversation. It exceeded the company's ambitious sales goals and ensured high-volume sales of the product through Home Depot channels.

#### RESEARCH

##### Primary Research

PadillaCRT conducted a social media audit, which revealed:

- Consumers can tolerate chatter about otherwise “too-much-information” bathroom activities when the tone is humorous or even sarcastic.
  - Insight:** A slightly irreverent tone could be effective in educating consumers about the benefits of switching to the world's most efficient toilet.

- Although installing a new toilet is considered one of numerous ways to save water, it is not a key discussion or decision driver.
  - Insight:** Niagara Conservation would need to both elevate the role of toilets in saving water as well as position the Stealth as the brand to buy – no easy feat for a cost-conscious company.
- Cost is a consideration when weighing myriad water-saving options for the home.
  - Insight:** At \$150, the Stealth® Toilet isn't the least expensive device on the market, but is within reach of most households in the target market (California). Therefore, price should be part of the message set.

##### Secondary Research

- [90% of consumer purchases still happen in stores.](#)
  - Insight:** Although labor intensive, we needed to create in-store promotions to coincide with the disruptive earned, shared, owned and paid media campaign.
- According to [Nielsen](#), humorous advertising tops the list of most appealing message types in the U.S.
  - Insight:** This reinforced our hypothesis that infusing fun into tired water conservation messages could break through consumers' complacent attitudes about the issue.

#### PLANNING

##### Campaign objectives:

- Meet the sales plan number (confidential) to successfully drive volume through Home Depot Channels (i.e., in store, online and pro deck sales)
- Recruit 15 million consumers to engage with the brand online.
- Generate awareness of Niagara Conservation's Stealth® Toilet by securing 200 million media impressions.

##### Strategies

- Leverage celebrities and influencers as brand ambassadors to create the kind of endorsements that could reach millions of consumers.
- Drive purchase intent by creating disruptive and memorable advertising/digital content that fosters an emotional connection with consumers.
- Secure earned media awareness of Niagara's Stealth® Toilet to keep its benefits at the top of consumers' minds.
- Use social media to expand campaign reach by recruiting more consumers to connect with Niagara online.

**Total budget: (REMOVED BY PRSA-NY)**

## EXECUTION

### Strategy 1: Leverage celebrities and influencers as brand ambassadors.

- Partnered with Jenni Pulos, known for Bravo's hit series "Flipping Out" and "Interior Therapy," leveraging her as the campaign's key spokesperson, starring in a humorous video and participating in earned media.
- Partnered with four influencers in the home design/improvement space for a social media campaign that involved replacing their current toilets with the Stealth® Toilet, featuring reviews on their blogs and social channels, placing Niagara into the dialogue for bathroom remodels.

### Strategy 2: Drive purchase intent by creating disruptive and memorable advertising/digital content.

- Created humorous online video featuring Jenni Pulos and the benefits of the Stealth® Toilet, called "Potty Talk."
  - Earned **free air time and full integration** into an [episode](#) of Bravo's "Flipping Out" by working with Pulos' crew to accommodate reality show filming during the "Potty Talk" shoot. As a result, the #WhatTheFlush campaign and **Stealth® Toilet were featured in three scenes** during the segment at **no cost** to Niagara.
- Developed a campaign microsite to drive purchase of the Stealth® Toilet on HomeDepot.com with a clear call to action of "buy now."
- Ran disruptive out-of-home advertisements in California markets.

### Strategy 3: Secure earned media about awareness of Niagara's Stealth® Toilet.

- Launched the campaign through a multimedia news release and a media tour with Jenni Pulos.
- Conducted ongoing media outreach to generate continuous coverage about the campaign.
- Used controlled tactics (MAT release and audio news release) to extend program reach.

### Strategy 4: Use social media to expand campaign reach.

- Established a social media tone of voice and published ongoing social posts using this humorous and irreverent tone across Facebook and Twitter to support the campaign.

- Executed a social media launch to drive views of the video and traffic to WhatTheFlush.com through promoted content.

## EVALUATION

The chances we took with #WhatTheFlush paid off. The campaign **exceeded all objectives**.

### Sales Objectives:

- Exceeded sales goal (confidential) – selling significant volume through Home Depot channels.
- Immediately following the #WhatTheFlush campaign launch, both brick and mortar and online sales increased by **67 percent**.
- Total volume sales of the Stealth® Toilet (between 4/1/16 to 10/1/16) will help **save up to 766,340,000 gallons of water** annually in the U.S.
- Drove **48,738 visits to WhatTheFlush.com** from April 1 to October 3, 2016, with an astounding 6:35 average time spent on the site and 2,141 clicks to "buy now."
- Sold over **720** toilets at Home Depot stores during in-store events that integrated with the campaign.

### Engagement Objectives:

- Exceeded campaign objectives by engaging with over 16 million consumers online:
  - "Potty Talk" video was viewed **212,494** times across Facebook and YouTube.
  - Garnered **12 million Facebook impressions** between April and September 2016.
  - Earned high praise from HubSpot's blog in an article applauding "10 Companies with Unexpectedly Good Twitter Content."
  - Influencer campaign garnered a total of **3,996,348** impressions with **11,820** positive fan engagements.

### Awareness Objective

- Exceeded campaign goal by generating more than **230 million** media impressions, effectively accelerating the conversation around water conservation.