



Syracuse University:
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Public Communications

Public Television in the United States and Croatia: A Comparison of Two Campaigns

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Background

PBS

- "Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) was founded in 1969, at which time it took over many of the functions of its predecessor, National Educational Television (NET). It commenced broadcasting itself on October 5, 1970. In 1973, it merged with Educational Television Stations. Since its founding in 1969, PBS has grown to include 354 stations which cover all 50 states of the United States. The unique method of having each station pay for programming has facilitated organic and easy growth around the country" (PBS 2023)

Croatia

- HRT (Croatian Radio Television) was founded and government-funded until the 1990s
- NOVA TV launched in 2004 (this case is before 2004)



Research: PBS

- Began with a survey used to identify topics for a focus group
 - Telephone interview
- The Focus group was made up of reps of the community that targeted stations outreach
- Populations studied include PBS subscribers and others within broadcast station reach
 - Located within the two-state region
- The research was difficult to convey not only to subscribers but company management
 - Based on the audience size of evening local news programs and the expansion of the viewing audience
 - In 1st research study, the Audience size sample was 10% of total subscribers (500), found that evening news had a significant following
 - 2nd research study, 303 interviews with subscribers, large numbers of viewers viewed by satellite , showed that most subscribers as well only subscribed for the perks associated with subscribing



Neff, B. D., & Susac, V. (n.d.).
Case19PRL615Parkinson&Ekachai[23].pdf.

Research: Croatia

- Used secondary sources, sections covered include: research techniques, client needs, target publics, history and image of subject television systems, and Legal and financial limitations
- The campaign focused on passing legislation to support the public broadcasting system
- To help build democracy
- Data came from media publications and legislative documents using Croatian public television (HRT)
 - It was used because it is a good model for democracy



OBJECTIVES

PBS

1. Reconnecting the viewing area to the public their experience with public broadcasting
2. Involving the viewing area public in the development of the program
3. Empowering and engaging the viewing public to assist in the capital campaign effort to support the future of public television

Croatia

1. Designing a campaign addressing the public's need for public television
2. Developing strategies and tactics to establish standards for public television to ensure the system will flourish as a young democracy
3. Establishing the role of public relations as a means for developing an organizational infrastructure both internally and externally





Strategies

✦ PBS

- Based on research, there is a lack of community involvement
- It can become a wide vehicle for integrating local news into the community
- Based on observations, the station took a community relations approach designed to connect the station and viewers: focusing on membership, viewership, and fundraising

✦ Croatia

- Interpersonal campaign
 - Supported by letter writing
 - Done to help stimulate change and focused due to how mass media is not big in Croatia
- Seeking intervention from the outside
 - An example is using other countries to help support the cause

Tactics

PBS

- Soliciting underwriting donations
- Station tours
- Special events
- Visual pieces used to draw in diversity
- Used university students to help be manpower
- Specific messages included :
 - My favorite memory of Big Bird
 - Public Broadcasting is supported by you - the community
 - PBS programming of your flavor

Croatia

- Email and other forms of interpersonal communication directed at legislature and journalists



Evaluation

01

PBS

- The campaign made it interactive by involving the community
- Reached school-aged children and social groups
- Membership and underwriting doubled after the campaign

02

Croatia

- Successful in creating a public broadcast system
- Not successful in private control
- Only successful in meeting limited objective



My Recommendations

PBS

- Social media campaigns
 - Similar to tv campaigns with Big Bird
 - Targeted towards children and parents
 - One specifically for their news channel
- Telethon highlighting benefits of membership
- Monthly events involving the community



My Recommendations

Croatia

- Social media campaigns
 - Rallies, events, and talks with other country officials about democracy and news
- Having a town hall with the local legislature
- Utilizing modern mass media practices to replace letter writing
- Partnering with local "influencers" to encourage the younger crowd to get involved

SOURCES

Neff, B. D., & Susac, V. (n.d.). Case19PRL615Parkinson&Ekachai[23].pdf.

Public Broadcasting Service. Visit the main page. (n.d.).

[https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Public_Broadcasting_Service#:~:text=Public%20Broadcasting%20Service%20\(PBS\)%20was,merged%20with%20Educational%20Television%20Stations.](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Public_Broadcasting_Service#:~:text=Public%20Broadcasting%20Service%20(PBS)%20was,merged%20with%20Educational%20Television%20Stations.)