

ALWAYS

#LIKEAGIRL

CHANGING THE MEANING OF WORDS TO MAKE GIRLS PROUD TO BE GIRLS



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'Nobody will ever share anything that has the Always logo on it'

Who would want to be associated with periods?

A great idea proved that you can make a feminine hygiene brand more popular. But it surely was no easy task.

Sanitary pads are a low involvement/high sensitivity category. Women claim not to care about periods yet they care immensely about how they are portrayed and take any message very personally.

Communication has also traditionally been very functional, as performance is key: after all, if a product lets you down the consequences can be quite unpleasant. Hence brands have historically fought over product superiority, using demos and showing women doing exceptional and often silly things during their period, to prove how 'liberating' a good pad can be. It soon became quite clichéd.

Yet this worked well for Always for quite some time, especially thanks to the great performance of its products, and the brand became globally recognised and used by over 227 million women.

More recently, though, research showed that women were getting tired of, and even annoyed by, stereotypical feminine care advertising.

Competitors started to engage young women at a more emotional level and to connect with them on social media. Their products also improved and functional differentiation between brands narrowed.

The result is that Always lost relevance with the 16 to 24 age group. This was a big issue in a category where, research shows, women tend to stay very loyal once they find a brand they like.

As Always' most loyal user base was aging and would eventually leave the category at menopause, the brand needed to secure its young consumer base to keep the business healthy in the long term.

Driving affinity and connecting with people at a higher level and in a different way was key. Product communication would not do. Always had to stand for something more than just protection, show that it had a heart and that it truly cared about women.

Moving away from product confidence

Confidence is at the core of the Always brand equity, and it was, therefore, our starting point.

The way we had communicated it historically was always very functional. We promised women to fix a physical problem so that they could be more confident during their period. It all started with the product, and confidence in the product would lead to self-confidence.

Yet this logic was exactly what women were starting to reject.

Confidence was indeed an issue for them, and one they were increasingly sensitive about; it affected their lives way beyond their period. But it was not an issue a pad could solve.

If we were to stay within this territory, and be more relevant, we had to move from a rational proposition to a much more emotional one.

We also had to find a distinctive angle, as most female brands promised confidence and many were already fighting for 'female empowerment'.

Puberty and the drop in confidence

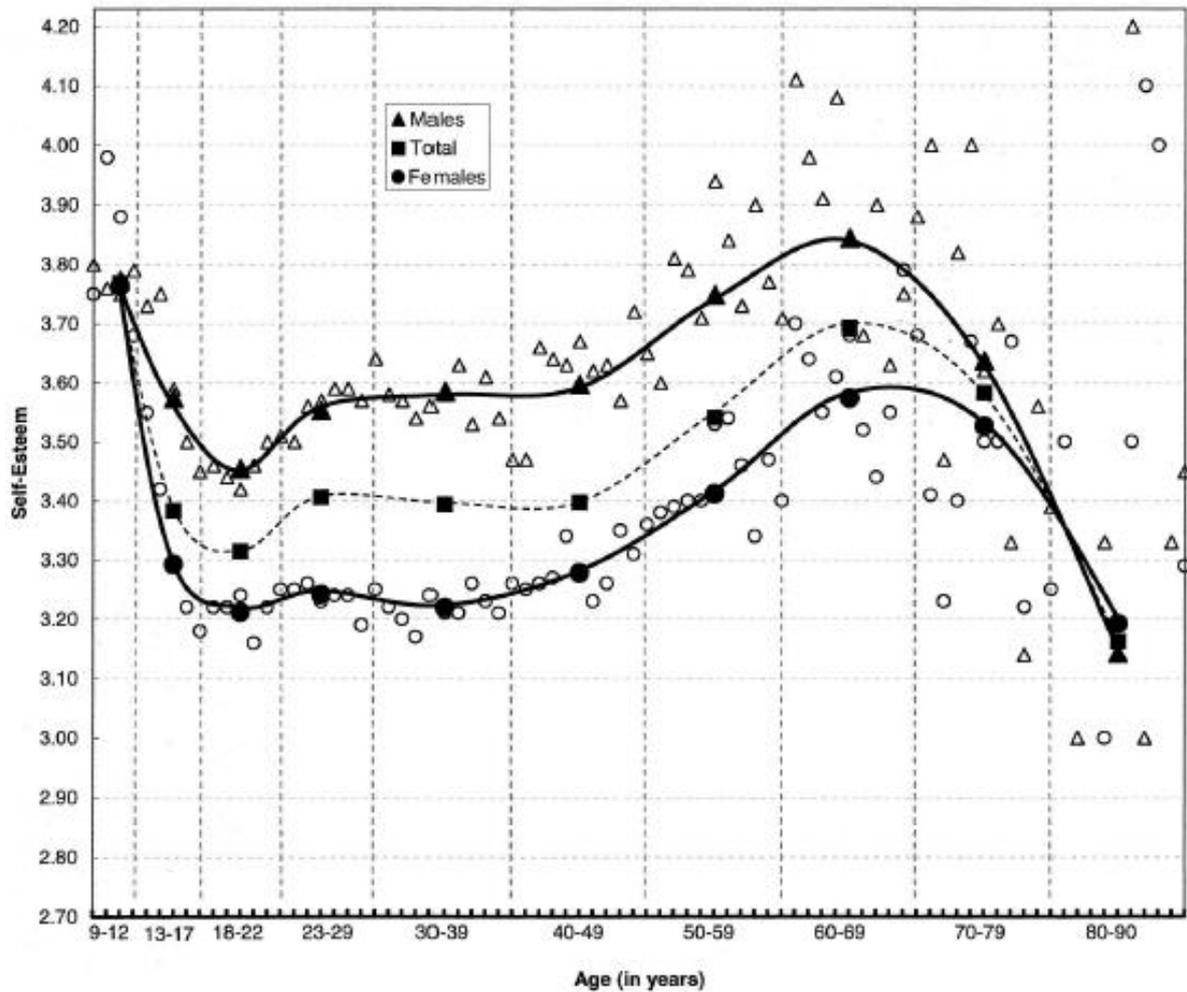
As we started to look at confidence throughout a woman's life, we soon realised that puberty is undoubtedly the most vulnerable phase.

Puberty is also the time when girls first come into contact with the pads category and the brand, and when periods have the most dramatic impact on their lives.

This made it the perfect territory for Always.

The more we read about puberty the more it became clear it was not just a 'vulnerable phase'. It was actually a time affected by a real confidence crisis.

The graph below shows just how big a crisis it is:



Source: 'Global Self-Esteem Across the Life Span' Study, American Psychological Association, Inc., 2002, Vol 17, No. 3, 423 – 434

Self-esteem drops for both boys and girls during puberty, but the drop is twice as big for girls. Later in life men's self-esteem rises higher than it was pre-puberty. The same is not true for women, who never regain the pre-puberty level of self-esteem.

Understanding why this happens was key. If we could even reduce the drop a bit, we would allow girls to start the 'journey into womanhood' from a better place.

Our target audience had just left puberty, but we were sure they would embrace our cause wholeheartedly if made aware of how big a set-back this time is for women.

Finding an enemy

We dug deeper into the causes of the drop in confidence, learning everything possible about the physical and physiological changes girls go through.

We could not change any of that.

Yet, we realised that there are also many external cultural factors that impact a girl's confidence during puberty, as this is the time when she learns what it means to be a girl, and young womanhood comes to be defined by a set of rules, like beauty and submissiveness.

Here we found the perfect enemy: the gender stereotypes that put pressure on girls and define how they should think and behave. It is during puberty, in fact, that for the first time girls feel the pressure to act in ways that are inconsistent with their actual thoughts and feelings, as they begin to learn about traditional gender roles and pick up on everyday sexism perpetuated within society.

Society constantly dwells on the differences between genders, sending out the message that leadership, power and strength are for men, not for women. And that boys should be raised not to be a girl, as if being female was 'not good enough'.

These stereotypes inevitably crystallise into girls' self-perceptions and affect their behaviours.

We could help change that.

But simply raising awareness about the confidence drop and its causes would not be enough. We needed to create cultural change.

The idea and the creative work

Our creative insight was that gender stereotypes are so ingrained in our culture, they are even part of our language. The expression 'like a girl', in fact, tends to be used, in every language, as an insult to tease somebody who is weak, over-emotional or useless.

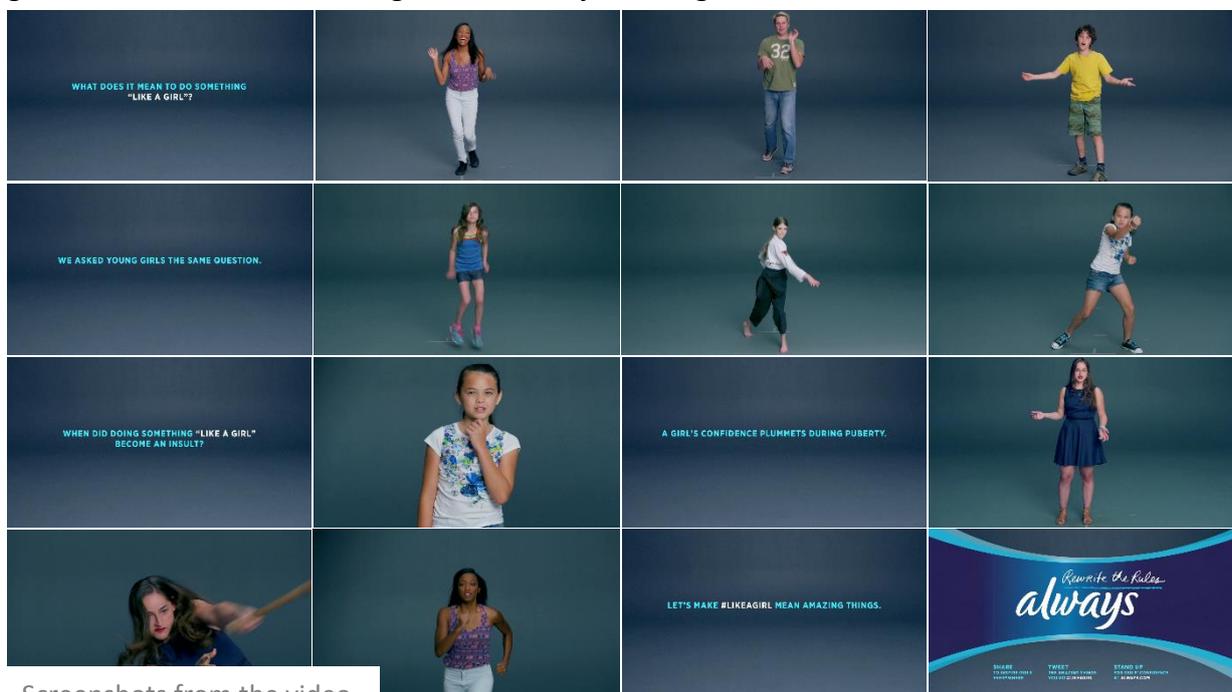
Changing the negative meaning of a sexist expression was a powerful idea.

It may seem like an insignificant thing. But at a moment when identities are already very fragile, words can have a devastating effect.

To demonstrate this, we created a social experiment, holding a fake casting call with young women and men, boys and young girls. They were all asked to do things 'like a girl', for example to run or fight like a girl. The results, captured on camera, were astonishing and proved our point better than we could have ever expected.

Women, boys and men all behaved in a silly and self-deprecating way, acting out the insulting stereotype. But when the prepubescent girls were asked the same questions they reacted completely differently. They ran and fought and hit as hard as they could, with confidence, pride and incredible self-belief. They had clearly not been influenced yet by the 'rules' that define womanhood and were simply being themselves. For them, doing something 'like a girl' meant doing it as best as they could.

The video, shot by the award winning filmmaker Lauren Greenfield, was carefully put together in order to take viewers on an emotional journey. You go from laughter, to surprise, to anger, as you realise how language can affect the way girls perceive themselves. You end in tears, when the older girls realise that they have been sucked into a cultural cliché and they are given the chance to do it all again, this time just being themselves.



Screenshots from the video

Getting #LikeAGirl out in the world

We had a powerful insight that resonated universally, and one piece of content able to bring the whole story to life. Hence we decided to focus solely on the video, and maximize views and reach.

As we wanted to affect culture, we harnessed the power of social media. We chose YouTube, or similar channels in countries where YouTube didn't exist, as the main vehicle, given its ability to drive mass awareness. The video ran as a pre-roll, accompanied by paid Facebook and Twitter posts, paid reach and influencer outreach.

To drive engagement and participation, we leveraged the hashtag #LikeAGirl, which appears at the end of the video, as a call to action, and asked women to tweet all the amazing things they do '#LikeAGirl'.

A team was set up to respond in real-time throughout the launch. This created a community of people, inspired by a common cause.

A #LikeAGirl page, hosted on Always.com, was also created to serve as a campaign hub and give women the opportunity to engage in conversations around the topic.

Furthermore, the overall campaign included PR/ER activation through e-influencers and top media.

Finally, a 60 seconds version of the video was aired during the 2015 Super Bowl.

Results beyond our wildest expectations

We drove popularity of the brand

- 76 million views globally after 3 months (objective was 10 million); most viewed video in P&G's history; #2 most viral video globally¹.
- 53% of reach amongst women 13-34 y.o. in the US
- Top of mind awareness increased 6 pts (77% to 83%) amongst rep and +9 pts (49% to 58%) amongst our target² in the US³
- +1,100 media placements; 4.4 billion global impressions earned in just 3 months
- 177,000 #LikeAGirl tweets in the first 3 months, including many celebrities
- Always Twitter followers tripled in the first 3 months
- Over 1 million shares by Day 28.
- Always YouTube Channel subscribers grew 4,339%!
- Engagement rate on Facebook was over 2x the target, at 2.25%
- 35,000 people commented on the #LikeAGirl program in the first three months
- 4,500 pieces of user-generated content was created in response to the CTA in first three months.
- Ranked most popular digital campaign of the Super Bowl⁴.

¹ AdAge Viral Chart July '14

² 16 to 24 y.o.

³ US Brand Health Tracker July vs. June, across market activities with #LAG as most prominent

⁴ Adobe Marketing Cloud (based on an analysis of mentions on a variety of social networks and Internet platforms)



We drove relevance and an emotional connection to Always, and improved equity scores.

- Positive sentiment for #LikeAGirl reached 96% in just 3 months⁵ (objective was 70%) with mentions of general praise and love for the message and the brand
- Emotional connection amongst rep US increased by 3.3 points (from 38% to 41%)⁶.
- Always Pads Equity increased from 38.1 to 41.4 in the US, while most competitors saw slight declines⁷. The “makes me feel confident” attribute increased 6 points (37 to 43).⁸
- Ad Recall was 6.5 times the US norm (47% vs. 7%), with brand linkage at 59% (in line with TV norm of 57%)⁹.
- In Google’s Brand Lift study, the video scored well above average on Ad Recall (US: +59.6%; UK: 52.3%; France: 90.8%) classifying #LikeAGirl amongst the absolute top (above best in class) in Google’s database.

We drove purchase intent and brand preference

- In the US claimed purchase intent increased post-campaign (from 42% to 46%) and grew +50% amongst our target (from 40% to 60%).¹⁰
- Purchase intent increased up to 92% among those who viewed the video on YouTube¹¹.
- Always received a 6.93% lift in overall brand preference, 8% higher than the Consumer Packaged Goods average¹².
- Always’ dollar share grew 1.4pts to 59.6%¹³.

⁵ USA, UK and France

⁶ US Brand Health Tracker July vs. June, across market activities with #LAG as most prominent

⁷ Ibid

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ US Brand Health Tracker July vs. June, across market activities with #LAG as most prominent

¹¹ In countries with YouTube; Google Brand Lift Study, 2014

¹² Google Brand Lift Study, 2014, USA only

¹³ Total Pads US - July IYA - #LAG as key marketing activity

We drove cultural change

- Before the campaign the expression 'like a girl' was mostly used in a derogatory way; since the launch it's been attached to overwhelmingly positive sentiment, becoming a symbol of female empowerment around the globe.
- In a study conducted in December 2014¹⁴, almost 70% of women and 60% of men claimed that 'Viewing the video changed my perception of the phrase 'like a girl''.
- On March 9th 2015 Always received a UN award for the impact the campaign had on female empowerment around the world.



¹⁴ Always Puberty and Confidence Wave II Study – Sample: 1000 women 16 – 49 years old and 500 men 16 – 24 years old

Sparks retweeted

 **heidi** @Regina_Heidi 21d
When somebody tells me I am doing something #LikeAGirl I know I must be doing something right.
@Always
pic.twitter.com/GOHJuN74Q3



Details

 **England Cricket** @ECB_cricket

THIS is how you... Hit #LikeAGirl
youtu.be/6oJHo86yKgc



THIS is how you... Hit #LikeAGirl

View Larger

THIS is how you... Hit #LikeAGirl

 **Hallie Wilson** @coralsncognacs

Seen on 27th street... (This one's for you, @iamnowMellyG. cc @soulcycle) #likeagirl 🍷😘❤️
pic.twitter.com/VrZtSQAwgk



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