

Avance



RIGHT ON TARGET!

General Motors' Diversity Crisis

Challenge

General Motors Corporation was facing a crisis. The situation developed when already poor relationships between the corporation and its minority dealers across the United States became openly hostile and highly volatile. Lawsuits were threatened. The African American press got wind of the story and published it in newspapers throughout the country. Finally, a major network decided to produce and air two segments highlighting the situation as part of its "Black and White in America" series.

Solution

Avance was given two directives on two fronts: First, to help manage the crisis and spearhead the damage control effort. Second, Avance created and implemented a strategic marketing communications plan with both short- and long-term strategies, which addressed the company's issues with its minority dealers and the minority community-at-large. Avance met both the goals by developing a strategic plan, based on its Avance Diversity CommunicationsSM model, which the company followed while in crisis mode. The marketing tools of public relations and advertising were the underpinnings of the second strategic marketing communications effort. Avance's staff developed relationships and met frequently with the producers of the network show in Washington D. C., and was able to paint a more positive picture of its client for the network's producers. In the end, this strategy yielded a more balanced story and helped tell the company's side-of-the story, on national television. Avance created and implemented advertising and public relations campaigns designed to help the company repair and improve its internal and external relationships with the African American, Hispanic and Asian communities. Avance's plans, strategies and marketing communication activities were recognized by the organization as the foundation for its ongoing, successful diversity and inclusion corporate initiatives.

Avance Diversity CommunicationsSM

"Avance's early successes in reaching diverse markets led it to seek an exclusive service mark for Avance Diversity CommunicationsSM.

Essentially, Avance Diversity CommunicationsSM is a flexible communications model that helps clients converse and engage with diverse and inclusive audiences. It also helps them appreciate that diversity and inclusion go beyond race, ethnicity, age, class, physical and mental abilities, geographic location and gender. It highlights that diversity and inclusion is about different perspectives, thoughts, backgrounds, work styles and experiences, etc. And, that a diverse and inclusive public, private and/or nonprofit culture values differences, which fosters innovation and drives success."