



MMA CASE STUDY

I Will Listen

Campaign Summary

To break the shame and stigma negatively associated with mental illness, The New York City chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness empowered people to broadcast a message of acceptance to their social networks. “I Will Listen” ran across all the most popular social media networks and was aggregated on the NAMI NYC Metro website, making it easier for people to connect.

Strategy

Objective and Context:

The New York City chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) wanted to break the stigma of mental illness and begin a more positive conversation. People affected by mental illness think it's something to hide because discussing mental illness is often taboo in families, friendships, schools, and the workplace. The shame surrounding mental health is profoundly damaging because it prevents discussion, diagnosis, and treatment that works as well or better than treatments for other health conditions like heart disease or cancer. The problem is that the conversations taking place about mental health often blame the victim, which perpetuates the stigma and isolates those affected by mental illness.

Target Audience:

Most anti-stigma campaigns focus on getting victims of the stigma to stand up and fight for acceptance. NAMI NYC Metro took a different approach. It let people affected by mental health issues know they had a place to turn where they would not be judged. Rather than just reaching out to the one in four people who suffer from mental illness, the brand reached the four in four people who can make a difference by targeting their friends, family, and colleagues to inspire a more positive conversation.

Creative Strategy:

The idea was to turn the world's biggest social network into the most accessible support network so people who need help can find friends to talk to who won't judge them.

Three simple words can make the difference: I Will Listen.

I Will Listen empowers people to broadcast a message of acceptance to their social networks. Friends who need help will then know where they can turn. Participation was made easy, as the campaign was activated across Instagram, Twitter, Vimeo, YouTube, and Facebook. People joined the movement using their preferred social networking platform. All content was aggregated on NAMI's Facebook page, pulling in videos, photos, and text to make it easy for people to connect. In addition to the grassroots social campaign, candid 30-second stories ran as PSAs on the CBS television network, on NAMI's YouTube channel, and on its web site.

Execution

Overall Campaign Execution:

I Will Listen is the first campaign for the New York City chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness. A soft launch with limited creative and exposure was deployed in order to test the appropriateness and discoverability of content on social networks. It was an ideal platform, as it was quickly discovered and people began to participate right away.

As a non-profit offering a wide range of support services across all socio-economic categories, the NAMI has an understandably limited budget. A grassroots digital campaign was an achievable goal, and mobile was a key channel to realize success. Mobile made participation in the movement completely accessible. Every social platform includes mobile, and the website is responsively designed using a customized WordPress template to keep costs down.

By taking an agnostic approach to social networks and platforms, customizing where needed and using infrastructure that existed where possible, NAMI magnified its reach and made sure people could join the movement in whatever way they were most comfortable.

Mobile Execution:

I Will Listen inspires people to make a promise and post it to their social networks. Mobile is key to the creation of this content. Just about everyone has a camera on the phone in their pocket, and the ability to make a video and post it to their social network of choice. Further, mobile is key to participation. With 60 percent of Internet access on mobile and 71 percent of mobile users accessing social media (Adobe 2013 Mobile Consumer Survey), NAMI ensured that mobile was at the heart of its grassroots campaign.

Results

From school shootings to the rise in suicide, mental illness is portrayed as an epidemic in the media. The stigma surrounding mental illness cannot be overstated. It is the highest indexing stigma in America, ahead of obesity, homosexuality, and alcoholism. Today one in four Americans are affected, yet this stigma keeps them silent.

Messages of acceptance inspired 350 news articles about the campaign, including features in the *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Huffington Post*. I Will Listen trended at No. 4 nationally on Twitter. The campaign has been joined by 41 other non-profits and leading employers like Credit Suisse, Liberty Bank, PWC, and Deutsche Bank, and student groups at more than a dozen universities, including Penn State University and the University of Florida.

I Will Listen has garnered support from surprising and inspiring voices. The message has resonated with parents of the Sandy Hook shooting tragedy, who have made I Will Listen videos. Other strong voices include actress Muriel Hemingway, author Andrew Solomon, and Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter. Their powerful, emotional stories have inspired thousands to contribute their own voices. The campaign has raised more than \$400,000 from organizations including the Scattergood Foundation, and inspired contributions like the free television media provided by CBS. Best of all, the message is resonating with the families, individuals, and organizations that the National Alliance on Mental Illness helps every day.

Source

"I Will Listen." 2014 MMA Smarties Global Bronze Winner Social Impact/Not for Profit; North America Silver Winner Social Impact/Not for Profit. Brand: NAMI NYC Metro. Lead Agency: JWT New York.