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Pints for Prostates Reaching Millions of Men with Health Message Using the Universal Language of Beer

News Articles, Donated Ads and Events Urge Early Prostate Cancer Detection

Charlotte, N.C. – The idea of delivering a health message over a pint of beer might be a little unorthodox, but for an organization focused on getting men to have regular PSA tests and share information about the importance of early detection of prostate cancer, it is proving to be highly effective.

Us TOO International Prostate Cancer Education and Support Network, a not for profit group founded and governed by prostate cancer survivors that works to support, educate and advocate for men with prostate cancer and their families, partnered earlier this year with a 47-year-old Charlotte, N.C., prostate cancer survivor to launch Pints for Prostates. The awareness campaign is designed to get a message about prostate health to men in a fun and non-threatening way. So far the campaign has reached more than 10 million people with a simple message: get your PSA (prostate specific antigen) test.

“Our mission is to educate and empower men and their family members so they take an active role in their health care. One in six men is at risk of developing prostate cancer during their life time and early detection through the monitoring of PSA levels and regular check-ups is critical to getting the disease under control,” said Thomas Kirk, President and CEO of Us TOO International. “To be honest, we thought the idea of a communications program using beer would help us reach some underserved populations, but we did not realize how effective the program would be in its first year.”

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The symptoms of prostate cancer rarely show before the disease has progressed, but a simple PSA blood test can serve as an early warning and save men's lives.

Approximately 200,000 cases of prostate cancer are diagnosed in the U.S. each year, more than the number of new breast cancer cases in women. However, prostate cancer does not get the same level of media attention as breast cancer and most men never discuss the subject with friends or family. Pints for Prostates is designed to reach men with a health message in a non-traditional way.

“Pints for Prostates is an awareness campaign designed to reach men through the universal language of beer. Early detection is the key with this disease and we wanted to find a way to get more men to ask for a PSA test from their physicians,” says Rick Lyke, a senior partner with marketing communications firm Eric Mower and Associates and drinks journalist who was diagnosed with prostate cancer in February. After successful prostate surgery in April at Northwestern Memorial Hospital in Chicago, Lyke contacted Us TOO International about the concept for the Pints for Prostates campaign.

The campaign has taken off from there. A number of beer-related publications have donated ad space, including All About Beer, DRAFT magazine, the seven regional Brewing News newspapers, Imbibe, Beer Advocate, Celebrator Beer News, Bartender Magazine, Modern Brewery Age, Beer and Beer Northwest. Also donating full-page ads are regional editions of major consumer magazines, including Time, Newsweek, U.S. News & World Report, The Week, Sports Illustrated, Details, GQ and Men's Vogue. Several breweries and retailers have stepped forward to make donations and host events for Pints for Prostates, including Rogue Ales, The Flying Saucer Draught Emporium, Carolina Beer, Rock Bottom Restaurant & Brewery in Charlotte, Dogfish Head Brewery and others.

As part of the outreach effort during October, Pints for Prostates will have booths at the World Beer Festival in Durham, N.C., (Oct. 4); the Fall Beer Festivals in Austin, Texas, (Oct. 4) and Fort Worth, Texas (Oct. 11); and Great American Beer Festival in Denver (Oct. 9-11). Nearly 60,000 beer fans are expected to attend these combined events.

News coverage about Pints for Prostates has appeared in a number of daily newspapers, on several broadcast outlets and in beer related publications. Approximately 50 websites have reported on the campaign and many have run banner ads driving consumers to the Us TOO International website for more information.

“This started out as a grassroots campaign and it has been encouraging to watch it grow as people and organizations get involved,” Lyke said. “Men can tell you about their favorite IPA (India Pale Ale), but few know about their PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen). Pints for Prostates is helping to bridge that gap and reach men who might not otherwise visit a doctor or ask for a PSA test.”

Us TOO Board Chairman, prostate cancer warrior and support group leader Jim Kiefert says, “Early diagnosis is essential. When I was 50-years-old a PSA test was the first step in my successful battle with prostate cancer. Pints for Prostates is helping to reach millions of men and some of Us TOO’s 325 local chapters are getting involved with special events held around the country as part of the effort. We are very encouraged by the way the beer industry is getting involved to help get this critical health message to more men.”

For more information on the program please visit www.ustoo.org/pints.

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