



Profile

Team Name : Swinburne University of Technology

Campaign name

Play & Grow - See Toys Differently

Campaign background

Let Toys Be Toys is a volunteer based organisation which aims to end the promotion of gendered toy marketing by campaigning primarily on social media. Gendering toys restricts children's play and development which is why Team Swinburne is asking consumers and influencers to challenge the gender marketing stereotypes and focus instead on the skills and best possible learning opportunities a toy can provide a child. Team Swinburne's campaign, 'Play & Grow - See Toys Differently' addresses the issue of gendered toy buying by going to the root cause of why parents buy gendered toys and how to change their thoughts surrounding it.

To understand our audience, we observed, interviewed and interacted with parents to find out their opinions about gendered toys. We also analysed tweets, Facebook groups, researched consumer behaviour and how parents interact with media. We found that while parents do care about their children, they are often tired and time-poor. They therefore need to be educated and reminded at the point of sale, or during their downtime.

Through 'Play & Grow', European parents should be educated about buying toys based on skills rather than their marketing. We expect parents and carers to visit the Play & Grow database to look up toy skills and collate their virtual toy boxes. As a response to the website and education, there should be a wider variety of toys being bought in John Lewis' annual report.

Due to the client being a volunteer-based and having limited funding for promotion, we have proposed a primarily earned media strategy. Our paid advertising campaign will be made financially possible through a partnership with European retail giant, John Lewis. We have created this campaign based on primary research conducted in an Australian market, but backed up by secondary research from global sources.

Campaign summary

Play & Grow aims to change the way people think about toys. To do so, the educational tool Play & Grow ranks toys based on the attributes and skills children need to develop and grow whilst notifying parents about areas that need attention. This shifts the focus of play to learning and exploring skills rather than gendering and limiting the toy selection. We want people to see the skills toys develop, not the packaging, writing or design.

Additional information

N/A

Conducted Research

Primary Research

The primary research methodology was as least intrusive as possible to prevent biased answers or falsely assumed information. Ethnographic research, online interviews and an online Facebook discussion were conducted. No physical or verbal interaction was had during ethnographic research. All interview responses were recorded verbatim from either parent, childcare workers or teachers about their opinion on gendering toys. The question posed for the online discussion was not written like a marketing question and started an authentic discussion about the topic of gendered toys.

- Parents seem to take a greater interest in the marketing of toys as male or female than children
- Most Melbourne mums agree that regardless of packaging or marketing, it's up to the parents to decide what toys the child plays with at least at a young age.
- "Between ages three to five, gender is very important to children, So when children see clearly divided aisles with reinforced gender cues like pink or blue toys, they pay careful attention." - Primary School teacher
- The parents' media usage was primarily television, smartphones and catalogues.

Secondary Research

Pregnancy Birth Baby (2018) states that children are aware of their gender at the age of two or three because of their environment. According to UK researcher Becky Francis, children use toys to both learn and determine their interests and skills. Children are directed towards certain types of play, and provided with certain kinds of toys, which enable girls to develop communication skills and 'emotional literacy', and for boys to develop technical knowledge and skills. This gendering of play restricts educative moments and skill-building. Media and toys being gendered restricts opportunities and relate to the subjects they study at school and furthermore, the professions they undertake. Boys playing with lego and construction toys helps build maths skills which can translate to later life with the low representation of women in maths and engineering jobs. (King, 2018) Parents do make the final purchase decision, however, children do have an impact on buying power (Vasumathi and Banudevi, 2018). Parents state they want more from the media and welcome information about parenting as long as it is from an expert or a reliable source (ZeroThree.org, 2016). According to Speciality Toys Network, 2019, the FUNDamental categories for child development are independent play, cooperative play, development of motor skills, visual learning, creative play, language development, logical thinking and learning through music.

Key consumer insight

1. There are eight categories for child development: independence, cooperation, motor skills, visualization, creativity, language, logic and music.

2. Parents are more impacted by the roles of gender marketing than children - they just want the best for their child

Prioritized objectives

S: Educate parents aged 25-34 to change their buying behaviour and thoughts around gendering toys by using our educational tool Play & Grow.

M: Play & Grow website visits and profile creations - 1000 social media pledges shared.

A: Reach 1% of the 514 million Europeans aged 25-34 with our social media/video campaign with 5 million visitors to the Play & Grow website.

R: Organic social media promotion, an earned media campaign, publicity stunts and pro-bono endorsement keep the cost down.

T: 5 million visitors to our website by January 2021. Awareness of campaign in January 2021 at 50%.

Proposed strategy & tactics

Although the average age of first childbirth in Europe starts at 27, Play & Grow - See Toys Differently includes a younger audience to start building awareness in new parents with children under school age and the next generation of parents. Team Swinburne has chosen to target parents who don't have children at school yet, because once a child enters school, media and peers begin to influence behaviours, interests and the types of toys children want. Neuroplasticity of a child's brain is most malleable between the ages of 2-4, key ages to influence their skill building and cognitive development. Parents are time poor and just want the best for their child, so targeting them at point of sale while browsing for toys is the best way to encourage change. Parents are just looking for guidance and reinforcement that they're doing the right thing. Promoting the Play & Grow tool through online social groups, mum influencers and bloggers gives parents reinforced parenting guidance while still being easy to access and personalised. By partnering with John Lewis, the Play & Grow - See Toys Differently campaign can use in-store advertising to reach parents at the crucial deciding moment, can leverage the marketing team of John Lewis and start European discussion around toy sales. Christmas, Hanukkah and New Years are period of high toy sales and running the campaign before these times gives the best opportunity for action to take place during toy purchasing.

Campaign Evaluation

The impact of the campaign will be determined through a public/consumer survey conducted in the second half of January, to parents who have seen, noticed or have come across the campaign while shopping or browsing social media. We can also measure the effectiveness of the campaign based on playandgrow.org website visits, analytics and insights on our video on social media and the comments and publicity received through our Instagram ambassadors sharing our social media pledge.

Creative brief

What's the Problem?

Gender Marketing of toys limiting the skill development of children

What do we want?

Parents to think about toys they're buying their children and how it could affect their futures

Who are we targeting?

Future parents and parents 25-34 with kids younger than school age.

What do they think?

Know about gender marketing but they are buying what their children want, what is easiest

What will they think?

They will view skills their child's toys develop and make purchase decisions based on skill building.

The USP is...

Play & Grow is an online educative toy database that ranks toys by the skills they develop in children, enabling parents to create a virtual toy box and get a holistic view of the skills their child is learning.

This is true because...

Providing parents with an educative online database tool that rates toys on their skills encourages parents to buy based on knowledge.

What media will we use?

Website accessible from a variety of platforms, POS displays, earned media, features on department store website, online influencer channels.

And we will create...

Play & Grow - a free, educative online database which helps parents to see toys differently.

Creative execution

Play & Grow links to children and toys and how they influence each other. Our tagline and call to action See Toys Differently makes audiences aware of the behavioural change campaign. Our campaign is colourful, visually striking and assigns a colour to each of the eight fundamental skill categories in child development, the rest of the design components are clean and neutral. The website is a tool which can be leveraged in partnerships with department and toys stores, including in their own promotional media. The simplicity of the design translates well onto tags, social graphics, other websites and posters.

Media plan

1. Launch of Play & Grow Website
2. Lucky Dip plain wrapped toys publicity stunt filmed
3. Social media pledges released
4. Influencer endorsement
5. Department store aisle tags and posters launch
6. Filmed publicity stunt launched of lucky dip style plainly wrapped toys with Play & Grow stickers and skill ranking posted on Let Toys be Toys social media channels.
7. Social media pledge to gift your children well-rounded set of skills for the future
8. Social media influencer endorsement and pledges from accounts like Guilty Mother, Mother and Baby and Katie&Baby.

Following the campaign, awareness surveys will be conducted in the later half of January

See uploaded Campaign Plan for detailed Media Plan.

Media

- [Play](#)
- [Play and Grow - See Toys Differently CAMPAIGN PLAN Team Swin](#)
- [Play and Grow - See Toys Differently PITCH Team Swinburne.pdf](#)