



**McDonald's**

Choose Lovin'

Jay Chiat Awards 2015

# SUMMARY

Changing negative sentiment in social media is no easy feat. And when you're a brand like McDonald's, it's even more challenging.

Though McDonald's had launched a brand campaign establishing a new belief system that a little lovin' can change a lot, we knew we needed to do more than simply state that belief—we needed to act upon it. So we decided to do just that—add more positivity and lovin' to the world and shift sentiment around the brand as a result.

A simple insight led to a big outcome. Rather than quietly prove that McDonald's lived what it believed, we aimed to take bold action on the Super Bowl—a day when rivalry is at its peak, fans of each team are adversaries, and advertising is loved but advertisers go head to head for recognition as the most memorable spot of the year.

We leveraged that rivalry to prove how a little lovin' could change a lot. Instead of competing against other advertisers, we chose to show both them and our customers some lovin'. As a result, we tackled the negativity and increased positive sentiment for McDonald's to nearly 100%.

Lovin' is how McDonald's won the Super Bowl.

# BACKGROUND

McDonald's US business was facing rough times. Not only were sales down 1% globally with pressure increasing from owner/operators to turn things around, but the persistence of negative stigmas against the brand created an environment of hate that we had to combat.

Our first step was to establish transparency with the "Our Food, Your Questions" campaign, which addressed the burning questions and skepticism consumers had around McDonald's and its food.


Next the brand stated its belief that a little lovin' can change a lot, conquering hate even among enemies. McDonald's also showed proof of this conviction, standing on the side of love, inclusion, and acceptance throughout its long history using its restaurant signs as an example.

Following this statement and proof, we decided it was time to take action. We needed to restore positivity and drown out the negativity — and remind people of what McDonald's stands for, which is choosing the path of love not hate.

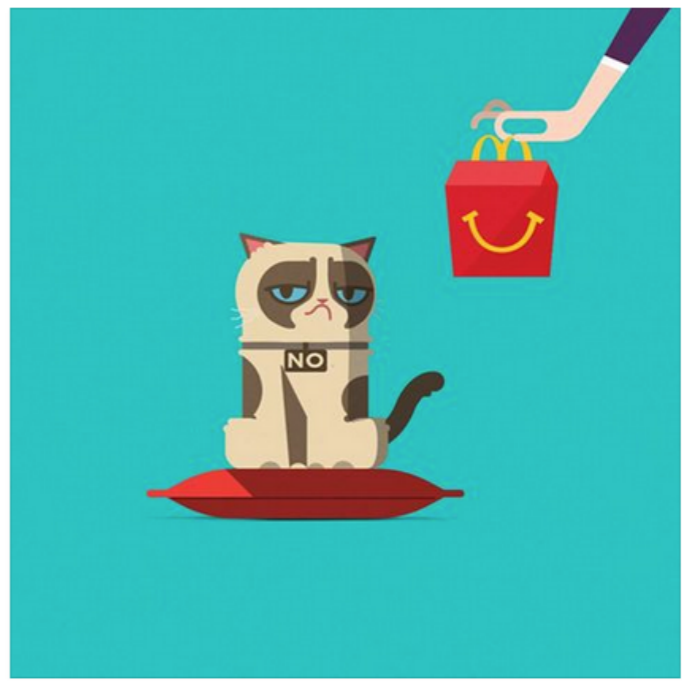
## McDonald's U.S. sales drop for fifth consecutive quarter

by John Kell @johnnerkell JANUARY 23, 2015, 8:30 AM EDT



 **McDonald's**  
January 8 · 🌐

When you choose lovin', being grumpy doesn't stand a chance.



👍 Like    💬 Comment    ➦ Share

Mark Zuckerberg, The Official Grumpy Cat and 98,086 others like this

# THE CHALLENGE

As a large global corporation, McDonald's had become a popular social media target and the brunt of the Internet's jokes and criticism. The perception was that it had become cool to hate McDonald's and consumers weren't coming to the brand's defense.

We did an audit of what consumers were saying about McDonald's and found that it actually wasn't all hate. There was a lesser-heard appreciation for McDonald's in a dialogue dominated by haters.

Our direction was to focus on those sideline supporters—those who were quiet in social media or not yet sharing at all. Our action, we decided, should wake up these voices. But still the corporate giant we were, we knew we had to authentically show that a little lovin' could change a lot.

We determined that the best course of action was to take away the ammunition and give no reason for people to turn negative. Our challenge was simple: how would we make the good louder than the bad, to replace hate with positivity?



# THE BRIEF

BRAND ACT > BRAND AD

Our business had gotten to a place where our customers were giving but not receiving. In our quest to reignite the love for McDonald's, we recognized more than ever that our actions would speak louder than words.

Since the narrative around McDonald's wouldn't change without a bold move, whatever we did would have to be big. And what bigger day to do something as brand than on the Super Bowl?

Inspired by the simple insight that the Super Bowl is the single day of the year that consumers care about advertising just as much as advertisers do, we knew it was the perfect forum to begin walking our talk.

But what we told our teams was, **we needed a brand act, not a brand ad.**

If it wasn't worth sharing, it wasn't worth doing. And if we were going to say that a little lovin' could change a lot, then we needed to demonstrate just what we meant.

Rather than just creating a commercial, we wanted to incite action. And not just on our part by a one-sided sweepstakes. We wanted to create a value exchange that radiated the notion of lovin' beyond what we could say on our own and do our part in adding more positivity to the world. The idea had to be big, but also genuine.

# THE IDEA

We believed there was no better way to genuinely prove the lovin' from McDonald's than to go back to founder Ray Kroc's belief that the more you give of yourself, the more you'll receive. So we decided to give away a lot.

The Super Bowl gave us the unique opportunity to leverage the single day of the year that the average person actually cares about advertising, and our goal was to extend the positivity beyond what we could do with just one commercial.

So instead of competing against other advertisers, we chose lovin', and celebrated them in social media and through a giveaway of every product advertised. In doing so, we created a wave of positive amplification that reached far beyond the three and a half hours the game was broadcast.



# GAME DAY

As brands aired their spots during Super Bowl 49, McDonald's sent positive tweets about each commercial while also giving away a prize related to every single advertiser. Entering to win was as easy as retweeting our lovin' posts.

We aimed to reach the 87% of consumers who say they use a second screen while watching TV. And since 72% of Twitter's users tweet during live broadcasts, we engineered a real-time activation to speak to the 114 million Super Bowl viewers as they watched the game. Of those, we knew some would be skeptics, so we designed the promotion to focus on positivity and lovin' to the point where even the haters couldn't hate. Since Twitter was at the heart of the creative execution, paid media was implemented to broaden reach and drive traffic to follow @McDonalds on Twitter.

Our planning team worked closely with the media agency and Twitter to develop a paid media strategy that teased the sweepstakes pre-game on Twitter and Facebook. Post kick-off, we utilized strategic audience targeting based on the brands advertised. By targeting relevant but broad interest groups, we gained awareness efficiencies by leveraging the earned reach of individual retweets to further spread awareness and participation. One-to-one responses to all comments on social strengthened engagement, and all channels drove to the sweepstakes landing page, where consumers could find more information and easily enter.

The sweepstakes was teased just before kick-off, and entries were accepted up until 11:59pm PST. Winners were selected at random in the following weeks, and prizes ranged from luxury vehicles and trips, to an avocado.



# THE LOVIN' RESPONSE

Our campaign strategy was to trend organically without using a campaign hashtag, and instead engage consumers through a sweepstakes so audacious that it had never been done before. In the end, we awarded 56 prizes and compressed the volume of a multi-week promotion into just one night while making advertising history.

McDonald's earned 410k entries and 1.2 million retweets in just nine hours—becoming the **most retweeted brand ever** in a single day. McDonald's held the most brand mentions of any advertiser on Twitter, and overwhelmingly won the share of competitor conversation at 83%.

But most importantly, it meant that we created mass awareness and achieved our goal of spreading positivity: we shifted the attitude toward the brand with an increase in positive sentiment by 96%, while decreasing negative sentiment by 31%. As a result, McDonald's proved a little lovin' can change a lot.

96%↑

increase in positive sentiment

Negative sentiment decreased

31%↓

83%

of competitor conversation was owned by McDonald's on 2/1/2015

23%

share of brand conversation for #SB49

@McDonalds was the **most retweeted** brand in a single day on Twitter



# THE LOVIN' RESPONSE

Not only was the reaction from consumers tremendously positive, so was the attention from the Industry. McDonald's was crowned by Twitter as the best in the Super Bowl, and the activation was quoted in AdWeek as "genius." Other brands even reciprocated and helped amplify the positivity.

On a day of rivalry, in an environment of doubt, for a brand that is notoriously prone to hate, we made sure McDonald's embodied the spirit of its founder Ray Kroc by adding positivity to the world not just for itself, but for millions of people across the country – demonstrating just how far it can go when you *Choose Lovin'*.

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Coca-Cola @CocaCola · 43m  
We're lovin' how @McDonalds is doing their part to make the world more positive. Together we'll #MakeltHappy. GoMakeltHappy.com  
173 284

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.@McDonalds is about to make someone's drive-thru experience one hell of a ride.  
  
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