

# TRUST YOUR POWER



## DURACELL'S CAMPAIGN SHOWS THE POWER OF RESILIENCE

BY UREY ONUOHA

**W**hen Duracell launched the “Trust Your Power” campaign in September 2012, the goal was to celebrate those who went beyond their limits, no matter the obstacles. The first ads focused on San Francisco 49ers’ Patrick Willis, a perennial Pro Bowl linebacker who had been raised in a poverty-stricken neighborhood by a single father struggling with addiction. It was an inspirational story that received widespread acclaim from consumers and media alike.

Last year, Duracell struck gold again with the moving story of Derrick Coleman, a fullback for the Seattle Seahawks who relies on Duracell batteries to power the hearing aids he has used since the age of three. He is the first legally deaf offensive player in the National Football League (NFL), a testament to his drive and resilience. Like the Seahawks’ 2014 season, the campaign was an overwhelming success, and would go on to win the grand prize in the People with Disabilities category and overall Best in Show at the 2014 ANA Multicultural Excellence Awards. >>

## A STORY WORTH SHARING

Duracell's integrated campaign kicked off in January 2014, at the start of the NFL playoffs, with an online video and culminated in a TV spot during Super Bowl XLVIII. In the ad, Coleman narrates his own story, explaining what he had to overcome to make it to the NFL. He describes being bullied as a child, getting passed over in the NFL draft, and being told that he should quit. "But I've been deaf since I was three, so I didn't listen," he says in the spot, which ends with Coleman walking down the tunnel to the field, to the roar of Seahawk fans.

"And now I'm here, with the loudest fans in the NFL cheering me on, and I can hear them all."

For Duracell, a Procter & Gamble brand, the Seahawks' victory over the Denver Broncos in the Super Bowl only added to the excitement over the campaign. Jeff Jarrett, marketing director for Duracell, credits its agency Saatchi & Saatchi, New York, for taking the time to learn Coleman's story and tell it faithfully. Only after seeing the story boards the agency pulled together to showcase Coleman's struggles did Jarrett fully understand the significance of the

story and its ability to inspire others.

"After [the Duracell team] and our agency talked to Derrick, we really wanted to tell his story because he and his mother are such genuine, great, friendly, likable human beings," says Jarrett, who has worked for a variety of divisions at P&G the past 17 years, including healthcare and power. "You think about the fact that it must be difficult for someone like Derrick to play the game with a hearing impairment, but until you get to know him and hear his story, you don't know what he went through to get there. That's actually the more important and more inspiring part."

## REACHING A MASS AUDIENCE

From the outset, Coleman's story resonated with Seahawks fans, but Duracell also recognized that it would appeal to a

broader audience. When the online video caught on among non-sports viewers, P&G enlisted the help of its PR agency, Citizen Relations, to take the story to the general media.

Throughout the campaign, particular attention was paid to sharing the video on social channels, including YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, and with bloggers. And with the Seahawks in the spotlight throughout the NFL playoffs, the video maintained its relevance, garnering more than 23 million views and over three billion media impressions.

"I think it was an even bigger hit with the non-sports related media because it was just such a great human interest story and a great inspiration to everyone," Jarrett says. "We've heard a very positive response from the hearing-impaired community that this is the thing that nobody knows about people with their disability — what they have to go through every day just to live a normal life — and they are very happy we brought that to others."

While the video allowed Duracell to capitalize on the Seahawks' magical run to the Super Bowl, the TV spot put the campaign over the top. "The main challenge was timing," Jarrett recalls. "We got the storyboards from Saatchi in late December and we had to get [the TV spot] ready over the holidays to have it ready for the Super Bowl."

Finding a great story that perfectly aligns with a brand's purpose is a win-win for the audience and the brand, says Jarrett of the key lessons from the campaign. "It means the work we've done for the brand has really transcended societal groups," Jarrett says. "It has inspired different groups in different ways, but I think everyone can find something within Derrick's story that impressed them and inspires them to overcome obstacles in their lives. When you can do work for your brand that inspires others like that, that's the best you can do." **AW**

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