

FOLEY'S NY PUB

PR TEAM: Foley's NY Pub and JRM Communications (New York)

CAMPAIGN: The Bar that Banned *Danny Boy*

DURATION: March 5-April 2, 2008

BUDGET: Less than \$5,000

When Foley's NY Pub signed with JRM Communications on March 3, St. Patrick's Day was right around the corner.

The pub also planned a pre-holiday karaoke party on March 11, leaving little time for a PR initiative. With a slew of Irish pubs competing for business, JRM wanted to create an "ownable" event to set its client apart.

Foley's NY Pub grabs media attention by banning song

STRATEGY

A Google search showed that *Danny Boy* was voted among the 25 most depressing songs. With the knowledge that the media would be looking for Irish-themed stories, the team spawned the idea to ban the song for the month. At the karaoke party, customers would win a free pint of Guinness for singing a different Irish song.

"It was taking cultural icons and combining them into one, fairly harmless controversy," says John Mooney, principal at JRM Communications.

TACTICS

Mooney pitched the AP on March 5 and a story appeared within hours. Soon after, reporters were contacting Foley's as much as Mooney was conducting media outreach. He also secured a segment on *The Colbert Report* on St. Patrick's Day.

RESULTS

The story was covered by more than 800 publications around the world, with additional broadcast coverage on BBC, RTE, and other outlets.

Customers sought out Foley's to see the bar they'd heard about. The pub enjoyed the most successful month of March ever.

"Surprised is not the word. Shocked," says pub owner Shaun Clancy. "Until the day Foley's no longer exists, we'll be the bar that banned *Danny Boy*."

FUTURE

Foley's brought *Danny Boy* back with a party on April 2 and plans on using the song in its PR for St. Patrick's Day again next year.

Tonya Garcia

