

# Dobson Case Competition, 2020

## Client Background

Founded in 2002 in Boulder, Colorado, Crocs Inc. emerged to provide active people with a comfortable, durable, long-lasting shoe. With a patented plastic design, Crocs are easy to slip on and off, comfortably spongy, airy, and resilient in many environments: puddles, beaches, and operating and living rooms. Croc stock is on the upswing. Crocs Inc. has captured strong 'footholds' in Asian, North American, and Australian markets. COVID-19 has not infected Croc sales either. Growth projections are confident. One reason behind Crocs' success is a 'youthquake' that saw young people, particularly Genz, move away from high-heels and polished leather Oxfords towards leisurewear, sneakers and sandals. Once dismissed as ugly by high-fashion tastemakers, Crocs represent a rebellion from elite beauty to democratic comfort.

Crocs' clever in-house marketing team delivered success, by using a shoestring budget compared to competitors *Nike* and *Adidas*, to orchestrate credible celebrity ambassadors like Drew Barrymore and Post Malone, and launched customized designs funded through cross-promotion, like the *KFC* chicken Croc in China. But most of all, Crocs Inc. profits are up due to strategic social media content that constantly surprises youth and on-going meaningful engagement with audiences. BuzzSumo analytics reveal that Crocs' use of TikTok and free Croc giveaways to hospital workers has fuelled youth engagement with the brand. And nowhere has youth engagement been stronger, or more promising, than in Canada.

## Task

The Crocs marketing team seeks a campaign that targets 18- to 24-year-old Canadians and builds upon Crocs' social media success. Data shows that Canadian youth have been particularly receptive to Crocs and the brand's surprising, light-hearted, and humorous social media content. So too did young Canadians appreciate Crocs involvement with health care workers. Crocs Inc. feels an external Canadian creative agency is best poised to provide relevant insight into Genz culture. Crocs wishes to hear fresh ideas for a TikTok challenge campaign to invoke brand engagement. While optional, Crocs is not adverse to discussing giveaways or ideas for a customized Canadian Croc, yet, the social media campaign is most important.

## Problem

Crocs Inc. walks a tight rope between circulating a stream of funny, captivating media engagements, and reinforcing the idea that Crocs are functional, trustworthy, and authentic. They like cutting-edge content but don't want to seem shallow or just a fad – they want to be cool without losing those bedrock traits. In the middle of a global pandemic, brand messaging must be particularly thoughtful. This campaign also must be sensitive to any possible negative responses provoked by increased public awareness of the brand. Youth, for example, are concerned for the environment and plastics in particular. Be ready for that negative feedback.

## Details

To succeed at this task requires an in-depth understanding of the target, 18-24-year olds. Evaluators want to understand your strategic approach and how it will win the target audiences' attention. What are you saying and how are you saying it? How will the messages prompt brand engagement? Where will your messages circulate? Make your chosen thinking and tactics clear. The campaign will run for one year. The launch date of this campaign is open, but a rationale for your group's timing of events is expected.

You are not expected to develop specific budgets; rather we trust you to produce ideas and tactics that are 'reasonable' from a budget perspective. However, judges are interested in:

1. The slice of a 100% promotional spend pie you plan to allocate to each medium/platform or activity
2. Why you've chosen this promotional configuration
3. The role you assign each medium

Crocks will cover reasonable expenses, but campaigns that are as thrifty as the in-house team's past successes, makes use of Crocs owned media (e.g. website, Facebook, etc.) and earn media shares, mentions, and retweets are welcome.

## Deliverables

- Positioning statement
- Target psychographic information (explain where and how this information was obtained)
- Persona for your target
- Campaign name
- Mock-ups of creative design
- Tactics - develop a minimum of 3 major activities over the course of one year.