

AdvertisingAge

# MARKETING ESSENTIALS

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## CASE STUDY: How Dignity Health Got Consumers to Break the Smartphone Addiction



**Category:**

Social media, digital video, out-of-home

**Vertical market:**

Healthcare

**Agency:**

Allison & Partners;  
Eleven Inc.; R/GA;  
Horizon

**Campaign:**

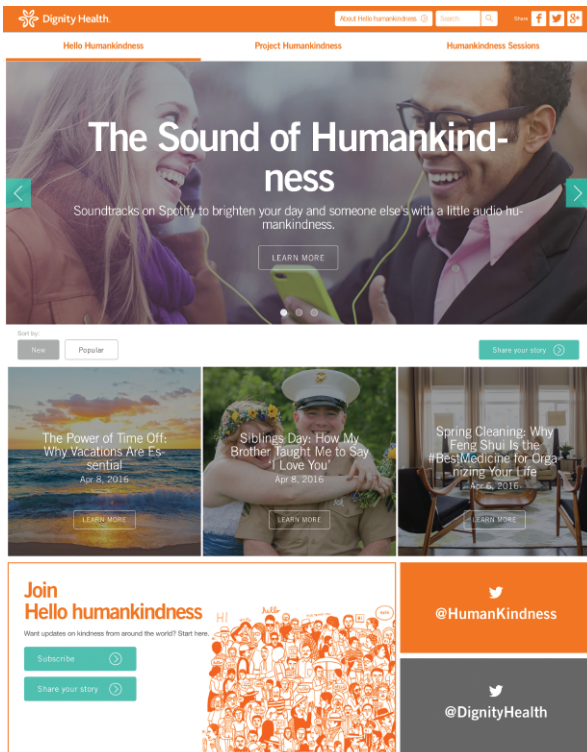
'Take Back Your  
Morning'

**Timing of  
campaign:**

November 2015-  
January 2016

**Summary:**

Convincing people to take back a few minutes at a time every morning to improve their own health and extend the idea that strong social connections can lead to better health.



## THE MARKETING CHALLENGE

It's no secret that consumers are more plugged into personal digital devices than ever before. Most people also know that uber-connected smartphone habits are probably not good for them. But how do you take that not-so-cheerful insight and not only make it relevant, but also turn it into a positive association for a healthcare brand?

Dignity Health, the fifth-largest hospital system in the U.S., had been running an inspirational health and wellness campaign about the power of human kindness and connections called "Hello humankindness," for two years in 2015. The umbrella campaign, still running, illuminates the benefits of human-to-human interactions with the goal of connecting that idea to the compassionate healthcare relationships Dignity Health fosters between its healthcare providers and patients.

"Hello humankindness" is an ongoing campaign for Dignity Health.

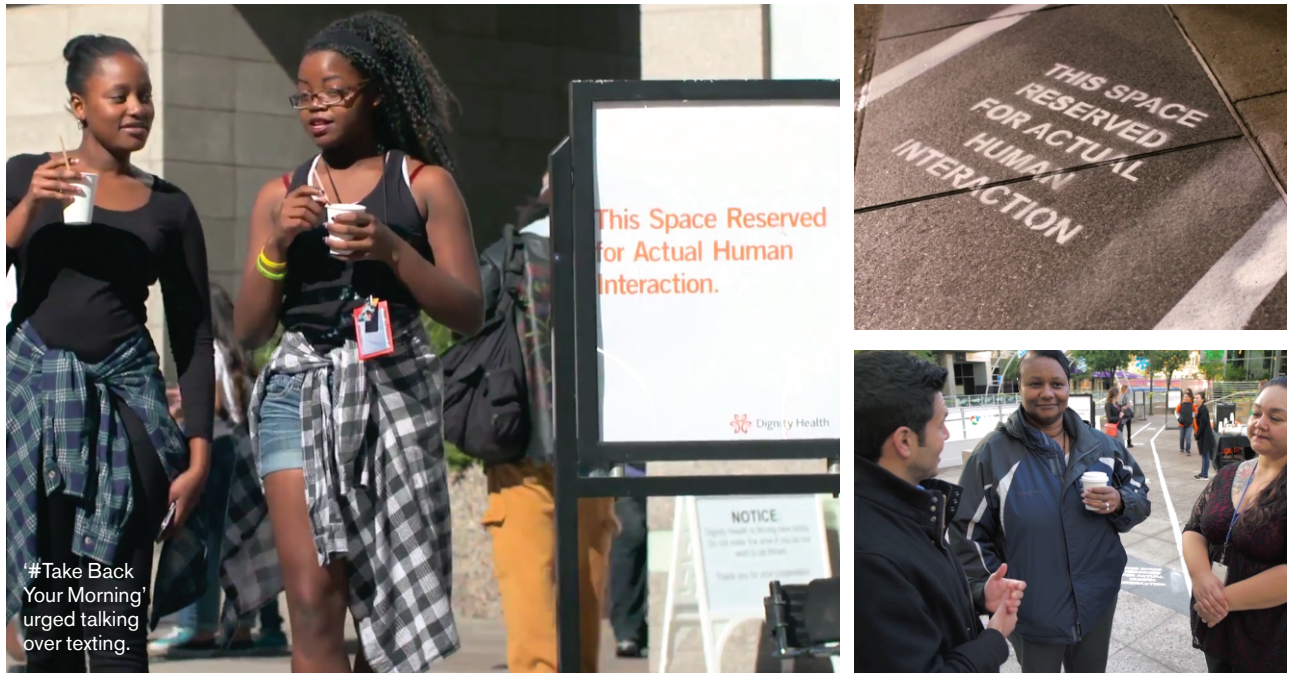
"While medicine can cure, human kindness heals," notes the Hello humankindness website. "We see it working in our hospitals and clinics every day. It's not about being nice. It's about championing a healthier way to approach healthcare."

Dignity Health was looking for a way to extend the campaign through branded content and asked its ad agency partners to leverage the power of the brand campaign. And while "Hello humankindness" was built around the goal "to facilitate and enable acts of kindness," the branded content charge to agencies gave broad freedom to apply new concepts and strategies.

Allison & Partners public relations and Eleven Inc. creative marketing agency decided to focus on the power of connections with a specific look at the connection people have with their phones. The research uncovered a strong connection, although often to the detriment of consumers' health and human relationships. The study found that people checked their smartphones an average of 134 times per day, with 32% admitting their phone use had somewhat or greatly harmed personal relationships. But the pain wasn't only emotional—40% experienced physical discomfort or pain from too much phone use, while 56% had either tripped or physically bumped into another person while distracted by their smartphone.

## THE INSIGHT

Along with the mental and physical health findings, the agency research also uncovered a strong connection to mornings. Whether the phone was being used as an alarm clock or to try to get a jump on work, most people's habit was to reach for it as the first move of the day. Fifty-five percent of people checked their phones before brushing their teeth and 32% checked it before saying good morning to loved ones.



#Take Back Your Morning! urged talking over texting.

"All of these data points led to the idea if you could claim a moment back in time, you could create deeper personal connections. The research gave us a great hook for the earned side," said Cathy Planchard, president of All Told, the integrated marketing division of Allison & Partners. "We narrowed down to what can someone do and focused on Take Back Your Morning as the campaign call to action."

The team realized that convincing people to take back a few minutes at a time every morning—reconnect with family at breakfast, hold a loved ones hand for a few quiet moments or enjoy a chat with a colleague—would not only improve their own health, but also contribute to the overall mission.

## THE CAMPAIGN

"Take Back Your Morning" was created by Dignity's band of agencies, Allison & Partners and Eleven,

along with digital agency R/GA and media-buying agency Horizon, which worked as a team to create the campaign that began with a pledge. The Nov. 2 launch—purposefully chosen for the same date daylight savings added an extra hour—Dignity Health invited people to hashtag #TakeBackYourMorning on social media and pledge to start the day device-free. People were also encouraged to tag a friend and share personal stories and ideas. Twitter and Facebook content was posted from the Dignity team offering ideas, suggestions and health benefits.

A series of online videos were created by Eleven with copy suggesting, "Let's spend less time on our devices. And more time with each other," and intercut with scenes of problematic overuse of phones—a distracted woman walking into an elevator door, an on-the-phone dad ignoring his child, and a baby who dissolved into cries when the phone she's playing with is taken away. The media plan by Horizon was designed and implemented to maximize morning visibility.



The next phase of the campaign literally took to the streets of downtown Phoenix, and Sacramento, Calif., in late November and December. Dignity teams painted white-lined walking lanes labeled “This space reserved for actual human interaction.” The stunt was covered widely across news and social media, generating conversations about too many digital distractions and the cost of sacrificing real interactions.

Through the holidays, the online social media push continued with reminders about the physical and emotional health benefits of spending in-person time with family and friends.

“Human connections actually heal. When people are present to each other—caregivers to patients, or loved ones to one another—the capacity of the human body to heal is that much greater,” said Mark Viden, VP-brand marketing at Dignity Health. “The campaign resonated so well because there’s a cultural tension obviously there. People want to be more engaged with each other and less engaged with their technology.”

## THE RESULTS

- **38,000 social engagements** on platforms Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- **More than 2.3 million video views** total by end of campaign
- **11 million** earned media impressions

The campaign was promoted through Dignity Health’s social media channels, boosting fan engagement to an all-time high. The video shorts resulted in the most engagement across all social platforms, including Twitter and Instagram and Facebook. Dignity Health’s social channels featured 130 posts related to Take Back Your Morning. The posts resulted in nearly 38,000 social engagements and more than 1.5 million estimated social impressions. The top social post on Facebook garnered

more than 8,700 likes, 677 comments and 2,007 shares. Facebook performed as the top channel for engagement, making up 96% of the total social media engagements.

## NEXT STEPS

While the Take Back Your Morning campaign has officially ended—the microsite is still active and occasional social media postings continue—Dignity Health plans to continue to extend its Hello Humankindness campaigns in similar ways.

“Healthcare can be a very serious topic. We think campaigns like Take Back Your Morning allow for a more engaging lighthearted approach to the delivery of health,” Mr. Viden said. “We know that the most sacred encounter you’re going to have is between your caregiver and you. We want to share our mission of healing in a way that is broader than just our industry and allows for, hopefully, a greater societal change.”

## MARKETING LESSONS

**Challenge industry thinking.** Hospital advertising doesn’t always have to feature doctors in white coats and patient testimonials to be effective. Dignity Health took a firm stand to build its re-brand in 2013 around human kindness and connections and pushed out that altruism in marketing—not a white coat in sight.

**Don’t be afraid to “stretch” marketing success.** “Hello humankindness” was working well for Dignity, but branching out into the mobile isolation theme offered an opportunity to resonate with new consumers.

**Make sure agencies work together.** Too often each agency stays silo-ed in its specialty—creative, PR, digital—resulting in discordant campaigns. Planchard said get them together early and often for the effective integrated work.