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About Me

I am a first year Public Relations student at KPU. I have lived in Vancouver, Canada since moving from the capital city of Colombia, Bogota, where I was born. Natively Hispanic, I am fluent in both Spanish and English. Being in the Diploma in Public Relations program hoping to pursue a Bachelor's in Marketing Management, I indulge in understanding the perspectives of others through communication, observation, and interaction. I credit and am grateful for having a bilingual brain as it contributes to being able to have more unique experiences and exposure to other cultures. I currently work as tutor of Business and English courses at the Kwantlen Learning Centre. I am motivated by the happiness I receive from helping others and hope to have a successful career in the tourism industry where she can put her PR and interpersonal skills to work.

Introduction

Patrick Griffin, Communications Manager at Akzéntz, made contact with my Writing for Media Relations professor, Andrew Frank, and discussed having us PR students craft media relations content for the Canada Nail Cup. A client meeting with Patrick and his wife, Mami, was held January 2015 and that was my opportunity to get as much information from them as possible in order to create the media relations pieces below.

Everything included in this application report for the CPRS Vancouver Student Scholarship was written by myself, including the posters (see Appendix A) that I designed for the upcoming Canada Nail Cup competitions in Toronto and Calgary.

The purpose of the media relations writing is to help the event not only raise the bar for professionalism within the nail industry, but also to increase recognition and awareness of nails and the growth of the nail industry in Canada. Every piece was crafted with the assumption that the Canada Nail Cup will be a reoccurring event from this point forward.

Background

Pat Griffin is the Communications Manager at Akzéntz, a professional nail product company that focuses on research and the manufacturing of high quality, professional nail products. Mami Griffin, his wife, has been a nail designer for half her life and brings with her the experience from her nail services locally, and from Japan.

Aside from the fact that there did not already exist a professional nail competition in Canada, the observation that nails often came secondary to hair in the beauty industry was the catalyst for the creation of the Canada Nail Cup. The Canada Nail Cup is a professional nail competition created and run by Pat and Mami Griffin. (See Appendix B for SWOT Analysis)

This nail competition is an event that will be held starting February 16, 2015 at the Vancouver Convention Centre. The six categories that nail technicians are evaluated on are BLINGED!, Gel Polish, Soak Off Gel Polish, Mixed Media, 3D Gel Design, and Fun Sculptured Nails. Nail technicians are judged by a panel of judges consisting of celebrity guests, nail product experts, previous competition champions, and industry leaders through an electronic point tracking and judging system.

PR Expertise was needed in order to achieve the following goal and objective:

Client's Business Goal:

To establish a higher degree of professionalism and knowledge of the nail industry through customer awareness and service standards and regulations in order to influence the attitudes surrounding professionalism and creativity in the nail industry..

Media Objectives:

- To obtain major media and press coverage from key media in the form of a minimum of 1 newspaper or magazine article within one week following the event on February 16, 2015

Strategy

- Plan and execute a media advisory for immediate release inviting the media to the event and prompting the media to send a dedicated reporter to cover the competition.
- Craft a news release and email pitch to be sent to possible journalists.
- Prepare a media kit including a backgrounder, news release, and biography of a key individual for the Canada Nail Cup.
- Ensure all media relations writing, including design pieces, effectively cover the key messages and proof points created from the client meeting.

Key Messages and Proof Points:

1. The Canada Nail Cup is to be distinguished from other existing nail competitions for it is fun and uniquely Canadian.
 - The categories in which nail technicians can compete in will be chosen by the different sponsors for the event that year, keeping the competition relevant and fun.
 - The event is the only professional nail competition in Canada and each year a different set of judge panels is chosen to promote the diversity and multiculturalism of Canada.
2. The Canada Nail Cup promotes professionalism in the nail industry to both professional and student/novice registrants.
 - The Canada Nail Cup allows for professional or novice registrants to have the opportunity to showcase their talent and nail designs.
 - Winners of the competition will receive an award in the form of a trophy that can be displayed at their workplace, bringing pride and a touch of professionalism to the nail technician's workplace and customers.
3. The Canada Nail Cup is independent and values transparency.
 - As stated on the Canada Nail Cup website, the event is run independently from any media organization or organized trade exposition.
 - The judges will be using an electronic point tracking and judging system as well as evaluating nails without knowing the nail technician behind the nail design in order to judge fairly and justly.

Key Publics to Reach:

- Nail technicians, designers, and artists from around the world with all ages of experience interested in nail health, service, and design.
- Young males and females living in Metro Vancouver who are enthusiasts of all things nails, regularly read beauty magazines, and are considered trendsetters with a weighted influence on those around them.

Key Media to Reach:

- Nails Magazine
- Salon Magazine
- Globe and Mail
- The Vancouver Sun

Execution

An email pitch was written and sent from myself to the Associate Editor at Salon Magazine with the purpose of prompting her about the upcoming Toronto Nail Cup, since the magazine's head quarter is based in Toronto. A media advisory and news release was also created; however they were not released or published.

Email Pitch

Subject: Canada's only, 2nd Annual Professional Nail Competition to take place in Vancouver, Toronto, and Calgary featuring exciting nail design categories.

Dear Ashley,

First of all I would like to congratulate you on your relatively new position as Associate Editor at Salon Magazine. The view from your office that you posted on your blog is to die for.

I noticed that you are passionate for all things beauty and have written many articles specifically on nails. According to IBISWorld, last year it was estimated that the 29, 120 businesses in the Canadian hair and nail industry, which provide employment to nearly 79,000 people, brought in a revenue of \$4 billion.

This February 16, 2015 will be the 2nd annual Canada Nail Cup event in Vancouver and in Toronto on April 27. The event aims to bring attention to nail care, health, and design while at the same time promoting a higher level of professionalism within the nail industry when it comes to nail technicians and their clients.

Contestant winners receive recognition and trophy awards provided by sponsors such as Akzéntz and Swarovski.

The panel of judges includes industry professionals, nail educators, and previous nail contestant champions who will be voting on their favourite nail design from the following categories:

- 3D Gel
- Gel Polish
- BLINGED!
- Fun Sculpture
- Mixed Media

If you are interested in covering the event or conducting an interview with any of the nail contestants or judges, I will gladly give you that opportunity.

Many thanks for your time,

Vanessa Mora
(604) 771-0150
vanessa-mora@live.com

Measurement

Evaluation of these media relations efforts will be an ongoing process following the events end on February 16, 2015. The success of the media relations efforts will be measured by:

- Monitoring the number of hits and impressions received regarding the event.
- Tracking the number of articles/posts that covered the event to see if our media objective of a minimum of 1 article is met and checking the accuracy of the captured key messages.
- Evaluating which and how many media attended the event or provided coverage.

By pitching to journalists, a few other students from my Writing for Media Relations class and I were able to surpass the media objective I had set and received coverage from the following media outlets:

1. Vancouver Sun (Including Video)

<http://www.vancouversun.com/Video+Elaborate+nail+Canada+Nail+Vancouver/10818442/story.html>

2. Vancouver Courier

<http://www.vancourier.com/canada-nail-cup-1.1766381>

3. Globe and Mail

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/life-video/video-manicurists-compete-for-top-honours-at-canada-nail-cup/article23044216/#video1id24083964>

4. LCN Canada

<https://www.lcn.ca/blog/lcn-nail-tech-wins-big-canadian-nail-cup-vancouver-bc>

5. Alberni Valley Times

<http://www.avtimes.net/news/local-news/alberni-nail-artists-finish-on-top-in-canada-nail-cup-competition-1.1771254>

Lessons Learned

Having this real world experience truly opened my eyes to what it would be like working in the industry once I am graduated from my two yearlong Diploma in Public Relations program next year.

Having the opportunity to have a client meeting was unlike any experience I had before. Realizing that sometimes the client you will be working with has no clear vision of the goals or future outlook of their organization, campaign, or event, is often the situation and it has made me learn to prepare accordingly.

Throughout the process I learned countless things that I know I will apply towards my future work, but the two most important things that stood out to me were that *1) I cannot control the media*, and *2) client communication/relationship is everything*.

Working with an event that you may think has all the newsworthy pieces needed to catch the media's attention may not always be enough. I was fortunate to have a client that was running an event that was timely, new, and definitely had that aspect of unusualness.

However, it is still up to myself, as the public relations personnel, to find that angle (and maybe have to "re-angle" several times) that will ensure a publication that is beneficial to the client and their goals.

Second, truly understanding what it is the client would like you to achieve is something very crucial to the public relations personnel's efforts. It was clear to me that my client held the majority of the information I needed to help them reach their goal.

Therefore, being able to keep in contact with them throughout my efforts and keeping the communications flowing yet conversational is something that cannot I have learned not to take for granted.

Receiving coverage from media outlets such as the Vancouver Sun and the Globe and Mail is something that will bring awareness to our client's event for the years to come, as well as a tangible form of hard work to look at in the future.

Media Advisory

MEDIA ADVISORY – Vancouver Convention Center to hold Canada’s 2nd Annual Nail Cup Competition.

Canada’s professional nail competition to showcase worldwide nail art talent in Vancouver this February 2015.

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA (February 4, 2015) - Media are invited to attend Canada’s one and only professional nail competition. The Canada Nail Cup will hold its 2nd annual event this year with sponsors such as Akzéntz and Swarovski. The event hopes to enhance technique and creativity of nail design, in order to raise the bar for nail technicians in terms of client service and quality of presentation.

Contestants will race against the clock to create fresh, inventive designs under categories such as BLINGED! and 3D Gel as well as this year’s themes of Frozen and First Nations/Native Culture. There will also be an opportunity for the public to submit their vote for their favourite nail design in the Mixed Media category the day before the event.

Who:	The public, nail technicians and students, industry professionals, nail contestants, nail enthusiasts	When:	Monday February 16, 2015
What:	2 nd annual Canada Nail Cup competition		8:30 am: Setup/Registration 8:45 am – 9:45 am: 3D Gel 9:45 am – 10:15 am: Break 10:20 am – 10:40 am: Gel Polish 10:45 am – 11:45 pm: Break/Judging 11:50 pm – 2:20: Fun Sculpture 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm: Break/Judging 3:00 pm – 3:45 pm: BLINGED! 3:45 pm – 4:15 pm: Break/Judging 4:15 pm: Awards ceremony
Where:	Esthetique Spa International Show, Vancouver Convention Centre 1055 Canada Place, Vancouver, BC V6C 0C3		
Why:	To raise the bar for nail technician’s professionalism in service and presentation		

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Or Visit:

www.canadanailcup.com

News Release

The Canada Nail Cup: Prepare to Be Captivated by a Unique Form of Art

The growth of nail art prompted the creation of Canada's first nail competition, the Canada Nail Cup

VANCOUVER, BC. (March 18, 2015) – Competitors from around the world raced against the clock to produce jaw dropping nail designs at the Canada Nail Cup in Vancouver this past February 16, 2015.

The professional nail competition is only in its second year of running but has already placed Canada on the map in terms of nail competitions. The event is independently run and is Canada's first and only nail competition.

“Canada has finally joined the international arena with a competition they can be proud of!” said Christina Cronk, the Master Educator at Swan Nail Academy in Victoria. Cronk is highly regarded as a nail educator in Victoria and was a part of this year's panel of judges.

The event brought together nail technicians, student and novice, from around the world to share and connect through their experiences, tips and tricks, and upcoming trends for the spring season. This year's categories included Fun Sculpture Nails, 3D Gel, and BLINGED!

Winners were awarded with trophies, certificates, and prizes from established sponsors in the professional nail industry such as Akzéntz Professional Nail Products, Swarovski, and The Academy of Nail Design. For a list of the winners please visit www.canadanailcup.com.

Included in the winner's list was Richmond's Cindy Yuen, who placed first in BLINGED! This category required contestants to incorporate a set of crystals given to them in their designs.

“I have been to other nail competitions before but none were as creative and fun as the Canada Nail Cup, I am excited for the next competition” said Cindy.

Increasing its popularity, the Canada Nail Cup will hold its next competition in Toronto and Calgary in April and October 2015 respectively.

About the Canada Nail Cup

Founded by husband and wife duo Pat and Mami Griffin, the Canada Nail Cup is Canada's professional nail competition. The event aims to set the bar for professional nail services and to increase recognition for the nail industry. Information available at www.canadanailcup.com.

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Backgrounder

Nail Industry Advancements and Creation of the CNC (Canada Nail Cup)

Nail products such as polishes, gels, hardeners, and tools are used by millions of people around the world. More than ever before there are people that have made adorned nails a regular part of their image. Although it is still common for people to groom and take care of their nails by themselves at home, receiving a manicure has become a more affordable and readily available service to many Canadians (Oropeza, 2000).

Over the last decade, nail art has evolved to become a form of self-expression. As a result of this growing trend, nail salons are more prominent today and it is common to discuss experiences at nail salons with a friend, the purchase of a new nail polish colour, or the sharing of photos of a freshly done manicure on social media (Nails Magazine, 2015).

Impact of Social Media in the Advancement of the Nail Industry

Social media has revolutionized the way we share information and increased our reach to just about anyone around the world. More visual-based social media platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, and YouTube have contributed to the advancement of the nail industry. These platforms have changed the way people see, do, and understand nails.

According to Nails Magazine, nail art is “one of the top five most tagged items on both Pinterest and Instagram” (Nails Magazine, 2015). Since these platforms enable the sharing of images and even video, more people are able to learn from the various styles and techniques that exist and take current ideas to the next level. This learning and sharing has created an online community of people, professional or novice, who genuinely enjoy all things nails. This is why the nail industry has received such a significant increase in terms of revenue, careers, and recognition (Spa and Clinic, 2015).

Nail Art as a Form of Self-Expression

A few decades ago, a simple nail art design and a pop of colour could have been considered a bold move. Today, self-expression through nail art is in many ways a lot more powerful than through hair or make-up. As a result, nails have become an outlet for expressing one’s personality through the use of colours, textures, and shapes.

Since hands and nails are often considered a more personal and almost intimate area of a person, the products, tools, and techniques used to create that final design brings significance to such a small surface, and is sure to spark a conversation between people no matter where they go.

Health Concerns in the Nail Industry

An issue that is often less discussed as openly is the lack of public knowledge about nail health care and the potential, hazardous consequences of using low quality nail products or receiving service from an inexperienced nail technician. Unsanitary nail practices can lead to nail infections and diseases (Jefferson, 2012). Realizing that these consequences can be avoided by the sharing of information between nail technicians calls for a better future where people can continue to beautify their nails while still caring for their health.

Creation of Canada's First Professional Nail Competition

The growth of the professional nail industry and the necessity to promote a higher standard of professional service while encouraging creative talent are the factors behind the creation of the Canada Nail Cup.

The Canada Nail Cup is a professional nail competition founded by husband and wife, Patrick and Mami Griffin. Patrick graduated with a Public Relations degree from Kwantlen Polytechnic University and is now the Communications Manager at Akséntz, a leading nail product company. Mami is a nail technician who has been working with nails for more than 15 years. Together they decided to create Canada's first professional nail competition to further help advance the nail industry within Canada.

What the Canada Nail Cup Offers

The event gives nail technicians the opportunity to physically gather together and demonstrate their technique and creativity through different nail categories:

- 3D Gel
- Gel Polish
- BLINGED!
- Fun Sculpture
- Mixed Media

These categories challenge contestants to think outside the box and apply their nail designs within a time constriction. This forces the contestants to think on their feet in terms of selecting the correct tools and products that can help them achieve what they envision to be their final design. At the same time, the Canada Nail Cup provides the chance for nail technicians with differing backgrounds to share their inspirations, ideas, and techniques with one another. It is also an advantage for a contestant to receive recognition in their category and take home the pride that comes with winning an award.

How the Judging Works

In order to win first place in a contestant's respective category, they must receive the highest possible score on a criteria used by the panel of judges. Once the time allotted for a certain category is over, models sit behind a curtain with the judges on the other side of this curtain so as to avoid bias.

The aesthetic appeal, cleanliness, and visible technique of the nail design are a few of the factors taken into consideration by the judges when awarding points. It is expected that an electronic point tracking and judging system will be used in the upcoming Toronto Nail Cup event.

A Contestant's Experience

Many are surprised to know that Sukura McLawson, a contestant in the Vancouver Canada Nail Cup works payroll Monday to Friday but owns and operates a studio where he provides nail services Saturdays and Sundays. McLawson travelled all the way from Scottsdale, Arizona to participate in this competition. Although this is his fourth nail competition, this is his first ever international competition.

McLawson is excited to know about the existence of the Canada Nail Cup event and for having the pleasure of competing in Vancouver. "Our industry was getting so stagnant, and everyone around me kept feeling like they were burnt out, I am happy to know that nail competitions like this exist for everyone interested in the art of nails to learn from one another and to grow from it, you will definitely see me at the Toronto Canada Nail Cup!" he says (S. McLawson, personal communication, February 16, 2015).

Future of the Canada Nail Cup

With the boost of the professional nail industry not showing any signs of decline, the Canada Nail Cup hopes to continue to provide exciting opportunities to its participants and evolve into an even more credible, professional nail competition that can keep up with the millions of people who have access to social media, nail products and services, and are interested in using nails as a form of self-expression. (See Appendix C for references)

Biography of a Key Individual (Nail Contestant at the Vancouver Canada Nail Cup)



Jessica Vero was born and raised in Richmond, BC with her parents and younger brother. Right after her high school graduation, in 2003, Jessica began training in the makeup artistry program at Blanche Macdonald.

After the completion of this program she worked in the movie industry as a special effects and airbrush makeup artist. She enjoyed the exhilaration of working in the movie business but was in search for work that was more consistent.

In 2004, following a suggestion from her boss, Jessica returned to Blanche Macdonald and enrolled in the Nail Technician Program. Since then, she has been doing nails for 10 years.

Soon after graduating as a nail technician, Jessica accepted work at a nail salon. She was fortunate to work alongside two professional nail technicians, learning from them and improving her techniques. It was at this point that she recognized her love for the creative outlet that is nail art. She really enjoys her work and the relationships she is able to build with her clients.

In 2009 Jessica created Jessica Vero Nail Design, a salon to expand her business. This gave her the opportunity to become more independent and encompass her passion for nail art while still being able to continue her love for artistic expression through makeup.

From December 2011 to the end of November 2012, Jessica posted pictures of 365 different nail designs on her blog. Her following began to increase and people would even comment on her photos and suggest designs. Jessica considers the launch of her blog and her 365 days nail art challenge to be her biggest accomplishment so far.

In 2013, Jessica decided to compete for Nails Magazines Next Top Nail Artist, an international, online nail art competition, and placed as a semi-finalist. After this competition, Jessica got the inspiration to become a nail educator for Hand & Nail Harmony, a nail product company.

Last year, Jessica traveled to the company's head office in Brea, California where she completed the intensive week long training to become a Bachelor Nail Educator. With this title, she will remain up to date with the highest level of training and product knowledge as well as educating other nail technicians on Gelish soak off gel polish and a large range of acrylic and hard gel products.

Jessica has been recognized in the media by the Vancouver Sun and the Vancouver Courier. Her nail designs have also been highlighted by Nails Magazine and shared throughout social media in the form of Instagram photos and YouTube step-by-step nail tutorials. Up to this year, Jessica has attended several nail competitions with the Canada Nail Cup in Vancouver being her favourite thus far. She is excited to bring her creativity, passion, and talent for nail art to the Canada Nail Cup in Toronto this year. (All information was gathered through a face-to-face interview between myself and Jessica)

Appendix A – Toronto and Calgary Posters



APRIL 26 & 27, 2015 TORONTO NAIL COMPETITION

The Canada Nail Cup presents...

An event of a lifetime; the Toronto Nail Competition! Professional and novice nail technicians from around the world unite to share their inspirations, ideas, and techniques with others who share the same passion for all things nails. Race against the clock and think outside the box to win in this year's categories for the opportunity to receive recognition and take home a prize from our sponsors. Register now and attend a fun-filled day!



Canada's Professional Nail Competition

—
“ANYBODY CAN
DO NAILS,
IT TAKES AN

ARTIST
TO BE A
NAIL
TECHNICIAN”

—
Categories
3D GEL
BLINGED!
FUN SCULPTURE

—
Sponsors
Akzentz
Swarovski
Nail Tech
Valentino

—
**DOWNTOWN METRO
TORONTO
CONVENTION
CENTRE**

255 Front Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5V 2W6

www.canadanailcup.com



OCTOBER 25 & 26, 2015

CALGARY NAIL COMPETITION

The Canada Nail Cup presents...

An event of a lifetime; the Calgary Nail Competition! Professional and novice nail technicians from around the world unite to share their inspirations, ideas, and techniques with others who share the same passion for all things nails. Race against the clock and think outside the box to win in this year's categories for the opportunity to receive recognition and take home a prize from our sponsors. Register now and attend a fun-filled day!



Canada's Professional Nail Competition

"ANYBODY CAN DO
NAILS,
IT TAKES AN

ARTIST
TO BE A
**NAIL
TECHNICIAN"**

Categories
MIXED MEDIA
ONE HAND GEL
FUN SCULPTURE

Sponsors
AKZENTZ
AMORE ULTIMA
SWARVOSKI
VALENTINO

CALGARY BMO CENTRE
HALL D

1410 Olympic Way Southeast
Calgary, Alberta

www.canadanailcup.com

Appendix B - SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

1. **Judging Method:** Using the electronic point tracking and judging system is a strength for the Canada Nail Cup because it sets it apart from other professional nail competitions. This method of judging ensures that votes and ratings of nail technicians are not misplaced, resulting in more accurate, fair judging.
2. **Judge Panel:** The panel of judges for the 2015 competition bring forward a variety of perspectives within the nail industry. The judge panel includes previous nail contestant champions, nail industry professionals and nail educators.
3. **Location and Sponsors:** The event will be held at the Vancouver Convention Centre, a building known for its state-of-the-art, green design and competition winners will be awarded with trophies sponsored through companies such as Akzéntz and Swarovski.

Weaknesses:

1. **Lack of Industry Awareness, Reputation, and Credibility:** Because this event has only occurred once before, it has yet to receive recognition and be considered as a credible competition throughout North America and other parts of the world.
2. **Volunteers:** Low numbers of volunteers present at the event creates the weakness or disadvantage of not having photographs of the event, as well as slowing down tasks such as setting up and ensuring that the event carries on smoothly.

Opportunities:

1. **Popularity of Nails in Social Media:** The growing popularity of “do it yourself” nails in social media applications, such as Instagram with links to blogs, brings about an opportunity to receive exposure on nail design and information through these mediums.
2. **Bloggers:** Along with social media, the rising numbers of followers that regularly read blogs about overall beauty and health can increase the importance of the Canada Nail Cup and its media objective.
3. **Expansion:** Being the only professional nail competition in Canada gives this event the opportunity of becoming the most recognized worldwide nail competition in Canada and is an opportunity that can be taken in the future.

Threats:

1. **Competition:** Being in the early stages of developing, the Canada Nail Cup is in a vulnerable position compared to those nail competitions with a greater following such as competitions in Toronto, and the United States.
2. **Minimal Resources:** Resources in terms of helping hands and advertising or promotional resources is minimal and can be a threat to the event if sponsor companies no longer feel the reward of being involved with the event.
3. **Low Attendance Rate:** The number of attendees can pose a threat to the event if they do not show consistency or rise throughout the years because they can be considered determinants of whether the event continues to run or not.

Appendix C – References for Backgrounder

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