



ASEA
Australian Speak Easy Association



Global campaign launches to tackle the harmful language around stuttering

Find the Right Words, created by VMLY&R, aims to change public perception and start a new conversation about stuttering.

A global campaign, created by VMLY&R and in collaboration with Stamma and Wikipedia, launches to change the public's perception of stuttering. "Find the Right Words" aims to start a new conversation around harmful biased language, one which has never entered the public eye when it comes to stuttering.

Between 1-3% of adults stutter, yet the condition is commonly misunderstood, and people who stutter are often perceived as "weaker", "less confident", and "less able". While these characterisations are usually unconscious, they can profoundly affect the lives of people who stutter, from careers to social lives and mental well-being. This bias also infects the language used to describe the condition, as well as their lives and accomplishments, when after all, it's just how someone talks.

Working closely with the community at Wikipedia, Stamma and VMLY&R edited misleading language used on the platform to describe those who stutter. These included historical entries like that of Lewis Carrol, but also household names of today such as Ed Sheeran and Emily Blunt.

Jimmy Wales, Founder at Wikipedia, added: "No one should feel like they are worth less as a person because of something they cannot change. The project really speaks to the nature of Wikipedia, not just as a learning tool, but as an ever-evolving platform that needs to accurately reflect the world we live in."

The OOH and global social campaign shows the language used on Wikipedia to describe people that famously stutter, before and after editing took place. The campaign also includes a film documenting the project, narrated by actor, podcaster and Hip-Hop icon, Scroobius Pip, a fellow person with a stutter.

The ASEA also launches Editorial Guidelines to create lasting change and enable everyone to find the right words when thinking or speaking about stuttering. We hope the guidelines can set an example in the publishing, creative, recruitment and education sectors.

Stamma in the UK, the National Stuttering Association in the USA, the Canadian Stuttering Association, and the Irish Stammering Association are also supporting "Find the Right Words" campaign, giving the message a truly global reach.

"Find the Right Words" launches with an online film and a social and OOH campaign in the run-up to International Stuttering Awareness Day on Thursday 22nd October.



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Vikesh Anand, National President of Australian Speak Easy Association, said, “I grew up thinking stuttering was wrong, and fluency was right. Over time, I’ve come to the realisation that stuttering is not wrong or right but just different. It doesn’t mean I’m nervous or less intelligent. It’s just the way I talk.”

Daniel Liakh, Creative at VMLY&R, commented: “I’ve been stuttering for as long as I’ve been talking. What helped me overcome the shame of talking differently are the facts and information around what stuttering actually is. With this campaign we hope to get more people to understand how to talk about something that can be pretty hard to talk about.”

-ends-

Credits –

Client: STAMMA

CEO: Jane Powell

Web Editor: Steven Halliday

Agency: VMLY&R

Chief Creative Officer: Laurent Simon

Creative Director: Adam Noel

Creatives: Dan Liakh & Josh Croston

Account Director: Elliot Duck

Strategist: Ollie Chakraverty

Producer: Joseph Walker

Senior Designer: Dominic Frain

Production Company: Scissors & Glue

Director: Chris Daw

Producer: Joseph Walker

VO Artist: Scroobius Pip

Sound Engineer: Aaron Croston

Composer: Dan Liakh

Australian Speak Easy Association

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National Stuttering Association

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About the Australian Speak Easy Association

The Australian Speak Easy Association is Australia's peak body that supports and advocates for people who stutter. Please visit speakeasy.org.au for more information.

About Wikipedia

Wikipedia is a multilingual online encyclopedia created and maintained as an open collaboration project by a community of volunteer editors using a wiki-based editing system. It is the largest and most popular general reference work on the World Wide Web.

About VMLY&R

VMLY&R is a global brand experience agency that harnesses creativity, technology, and culture to create connected brands. The agency is made up of nearly 7,000 employees worldwide with principal offices in Kansas City, New York, London, Sao Paulo, Shanghai, Singapore and Sydney. VMLY&R works with client partners including Colgate-Palmolive, Danone, Dell, Ford, Diageo, Pfizer and Wendy's. For more information, visit www.vmlyr.com. VMLY&R is a WPP company (NYSE: WPP).