

ASSA RECOGNITION AWARD 2017

CATEGORY OF RECOGNITION	Strategic Communications Recognition Award <i>Organizations that have pushed the boundaries when it comes to their communications strategy in order to ensure they truly engage with their members using various communication channels.</i>
ORGANIZATION	Social Security System (SSS) Republic of the Philippines
CONTACT PERSON	May Catherine C. Ciriaco Senior Vice President of the Administration Group and Concurrent Officer-in-Charge of the Human Resource Management Group and the Public Affairs and Special Events Division
NAME OF PROJECT	“Buti na lang may SSS!” (Good thing there’s SSS!)
OBJECTIVE AND NATURE OF PROJECT	In 2014, the Social Security System (SSS) launched a two-year brand appreciation campaign dubbed “<i>Buti na lang may SSS!</i>”. Conceptualized mainly from the members’ collective appreciation of the SSS’ relevance and responsiveness in their times of need, it redefined the value of SSS contributions not as mere obligations, but as viable savings for the members’ financial protection, now and in the future. The two-phased campaign, moreover, was designed to help address public confusion and misinformation circulating about the SSS board officials’ alleged hefty bonuses that came in the heels of a plan to increase members’ contributions starting January 2014. In its thematic phase, the campaign sought to restore appreciation of SSS as an institution through the following: a) re-alignment of contribution to savings; b) neutralization of negative perception; and c) promotion of a new benefit-driven slogan. The tactical phase of the campaign, on the other hand, aimed to position appreciation into the context of member’s agenda. It has the following specific objectives: a) reinforce and sustain awareness vis-à-vis appreciation; b) promote priority products; c) amplify advisories; and d) proactive public discussions in mass media platform.

WHY IT SHOULD BE RECOGNIZED	To prevent the deterioration of members' trust in the System, the "<i>Buti na lang may SSS!</i>" campaign was developed. Guided by the strategic focus on "contributions," it centered on strengthening media connections and member relations, as the campaign sought to reassure its members and the public that they could steadfastly count on the SSS' benefit programs in times of contingencies, even when the institution itself once became the target of public scrutiny. Not to mention, the campaign has already achieved positive inroads towards meeting its goal. The SSS ranked second among the top 10 government institutions after receiving a "very good" net sincerity rating of +57 in the 2015 SWS Survey of Business Enterprises for its efforts to fight corruption. It likewise received its first Silver Anvil Award during the 51st Anvil Awards of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines for its efforts to address concerns, respond to criticisms, and gain stakeholders' support through this particular campaign.
SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT	Since its establishment in 1957, the SSS has served as the Filipino people's steady partner in providing social and financial security in their times of need. It also gives constant high regard on its members' opinions, as these views aid the pension fund in ensuring that its services satisfactorily meet expectations. In most instances, SSS proved to be relevant, and at the same time, responsive, hence, the birth of the key phrase "<i>Buti na lang may SSS!</i>", which clearly represents the voice of its members as a whole. As it sought to regain public trust towards the System in a gradual, calibrated process, the innovative campaign underscored the continuing importance of the social security institution in the lives of its members.

“Buti na lang may SSS!”

A Social Security System Institutional Campaign

The Social Security System (SSS), in partnership with the Philippine Information Agency (PIA), the government’s main communication arm, tailored its tri-media institutional campaign around the theme “*Buti na lang may SSS!*” (Good thing there’s SSS!).

Conceptualized mainly from the members’ collective appreciation of the SSS’ relevance and responsiveness in their times of need, the theme highlights the value of SSS contributions not as mere obligations, but as an affordable and wiser way of generating savings for the members’ financial protection, now and in the future.

Launched on the heels of media’s sensationalized coverage about the SSS board officials’ alleged hefty bonuses vis-à-vis the plan for a contribution rate hike during the last quarter of 2013, the two-year initiative veered away from the stiff and traditional approaches of SSS campaigns, as it took a lighter, more engaging method.

To effectively project SSS membership as aspirational, two phases of the campaign were developed — thematic and tactical.

Thematic. Focusing on brand appreciation, the thematic campaign of “*Buti na lang may SSS!*” centered on the word “contribution” as a point of experience to evoke self-realization, thereby making members appreciate the value of their contribution through benefits.

In this phase, SSS devised a strategy that aimed to position contribution as an answer to every people’s desire to generate savings. Key messages of its advertising productions and press releases were communicated in three approaches to its target audiences.

Appreciation setting	Thematic message	<i>Buti na lang may SSS!</i> (Good thing there’s SSS!)
Perception setting	Tactical message	<i>Aming kontribusyon, ipong nagbibigay proteksyon!</i> (Our contributions are savings that give protection!)
Quality setting	Reinforcement message	○ <i>Kontribusyon ay ipong mas may pakinabang</i> (Contributions are savings that are beneficial) ○ <i>Maaasahang proteksyon sa panahon ng pangangailangan</i> (Reliable protection in times of need)

Tactical. The first half of 2015, meanwhile, saw a shift from thematic to tactical executions, highlighting specific products and benefits in communication initiatives.

While it is true that the members' general awareness on the SSS' programs and privileges are considerably high, the SSS still found the need to increase people's knowledge on SSS membership in general. It utilized television as a main communication medium complemented by radio and social media.

The communication plan for this phase of the campaign was divided into two parts: "*Usapang SSS*" (SSS Conversations) and the Loan Restructuring Program (LRP).

The Campaign as an Advertising Tool

Conceptualized were several promotional materials like thematic print ads, radio plugs, TV commercials (TVCs), billboards, and tactical posters, which were utilized in all SSS branches nationwide. First table below shows the summary of developed promotional materials for the thematic phase of the "*Buti na lang may SSS!*" campaign, while second table shows the publicity executions for the campaign's tactical phase.

Type	Output (Thematic Phase)
TVCs	An omnibus TVC aired in 70 local cable stations and TV sets in 30 seaports nationwide, and five TVCs with subtitles for cinema release aired in 50 Baclaran-bound buses for free.
Radio Plug	A radio plug promoting the SSS' micro-savings AlkanSSSyas Program aired in 94 local radio programs anchored by PIA.
Billboards	Anniversary (SSS' 57 th founding year) and high-traffic billboards were posted for at least one year in all branches and installed in high-to-moderate traffic areas in Quezon City, Cebu, and Davao, respectively. (Annex A)
Print Ads	Anniversary supplements were published in major dailies. (Annex B)
Social Media	Videos on AlkanSSSyas, SSS Flexi Fund, SSS PESO Fund, sickness benefit, and employer compliance were posted in the agency's official Facebook and YouTube accounts. (Annex C)
Posters	A total of 3,000 pcs of posters in 10 varied designs were printed for in-branch exposure. (Annex D)
Button pins	Some 1,500 pcs of button pins were distributed among frontline personnel in 262 SSS branches nationwide.
Media Placements	SSS paid advertising spaces in television, radio, print, cinema, and even in social media, wherein it sponsored stories and geo-targeted branch announcements reaching a total of 22.5M paid impressions.
Type	Output (Tactical Phase)
Campaign Materials	Posters and print advertisements about the LRP titled " <i>Tulong ng SSS,</i> " as well as tactical billboards and posters for the " <i>Usapang SSS</i> " were developed.

Media Placements	30-second radio commercials (RCs) titled “ <i>Usapang SSS</i> ” and “ <i>Tulong Miyembro</i> ” and a TVC titled “ <i>Buti</i> ” were produced. Likewise, out-of-home LED TVs were set-up in 13 airports and six seaports; 28 bus rear advertisements on the LRP were installed in various bus companies; and four billboards were mounted in high-to-moderate traffic areas in Metro Manila. Breakthrough tactical executions also included segment and portion buys in TV stations such as TV5’s <i>Aksyon sa Umaga</i> and PBA Governor’s Cup, GMA-7’s <i>Pepito Manaloto</i> , and PTV4’s <i>Good Morning Boss</i> .
Usapang SSS Microsite	An official client service portal aptly named “ <i>Usapang SSS</i> ,” with Open Social Media and Exclusive Virtual Forum features was developed for public interaction and engagement. (Annex E)
Social Media Management	Facebook Live titled “ <i>Usapang SSS Live</i> ” was pioneered among government institutions (Annex F) and information-laden #SSSFAQs and #ButiVibes containing positive quotes were constantly posted in social media.
Media Monitoring	Through the assistance of media intelligence group Isentia, SSS-related coverages in national print, TV, and radio outlets were monitored. Said company’s media monitoring and analysis tools services served as data resource base for the SSS to analyze media conversations and quickly identify appropriate interventions for issues and developments.

The Campaign as a Public Relations (PR) Tool

Restoring the public’s appreciation of SSS is a gradual, calibrated process. Hence the last quarter of 2014 focused on below-the-line communication activities:

Media Partnerships	
➤	Engagement of top SSS officials in media forums to discuss with influential PR practitioners its social security programs and the institution’s financial status. (Annex G)
➤	Sponsoring of radio programs to immediately clarify issues related to the pension fund. (Annex H)
➤	Holding of regional press conferences to report to the local media the highlights of the System’s accomplishments.
➤	Conduct of media rounds to touch base with executives of various media outfits.
➤	Hosting of media fellowships to introduce executives to media personalities.
➤	Conduct of media monitoring to facilitate PR evaluation and identify the average favorability of stories in terms of media content.
➤	Preparation of a quarterly external PR plan to align topics for press releases and TV and radio interviews with the report on issues monitoring.

Media Relations

In person	➤ Implementation of the so-called in-branch campaign and the establishment of a “<i>MaBUTing araw po</i>” greeting among frontline SSS personnel to create a recall on the benefit-driven slogan; ➤ Resolution of various SSS complaints or cases referred by media; and ➤ Conduct of nationwide stakeholders’ dialogues to solicit inputs from members on how the agency could further improve its services. (Annex G)
In social media	➤ Institutionalization of a daily content management strategy to maximize the potential of Facebook as a tool to provide timely response to people’s inquiries, complaints, and feedback.
In traditional media	➤ Adoption of a feedback mechanism that significantly turns negative complaints and feedback into positive publicity by bringing satisfaction to target publics via phone and television interviews, as well as through newspapers and tabloids, specifically in opinion and service-oriented columns.

All these initiatives were implemented to prevent the deterioration of members’ trust in the System, following the negative impact of media’s sensationalized coverage of the increase in member contributions and the supposed exorbitant bonuses of SSS commissioners.

Ad Campaign Evaluation

The first phase of the “*Buti na lang may SSS!*” communication campaign was proven to have raised peoples’ (especially of non-members) awareness on the benefits of SSS membership.

In an evaluation study, which was conducted by PIA, nationwide survey results revealed that most member-respondents or 34 percent agreed with the statement that SSS is a reliable institution and that they are grateful because their SSS contribution gives financial protection in times of need.

Meanwhile, 33 percent of the respondents cited that being an SSS member has many benefits, 15 percent were aware of the need to pay contributions regularly and on-time to avail of SSS benefits, while 14 percent were aware that SSS members receive benefits upon retirement.

For SSS members and employers, they understand the mandatory requirement of SSS in their jobs and the need for SSS deductions. Most non-SSS member-respondents, on the other hand, said that they would like to sign-up for membership because of the

benefits the institution offers, particularly the retirement pension and security protection provided to the family in times of contingency.

In general, the SSS advertisement's message was found understandable by most of the respondents. A large number of them even recalled that the message was on the benefits of SSS members, encouraging membership in SSS, as well as the ability of SSS to provide security in times of contingency.

For the second year, PIA was again commissioned by SSS to evaluate the tactical campaign ("*Usapang SSS*" and LRP) and find out the current and potential members' knowledge about its benefits and privileges.

Based on a one-shot survey, majority or 61 percent of the respondents were aware of the SSS advertisement, with 80 percent of them saying they have seen it on TV, 20 percent have heard of it in radio, and 18 percent have viewed it in TV segments.

Moreover, majority of the respondents said the message of "*Usapang SSS*" was easy to understand. In fact, 62 percent revealed they recalled the message more than the visuals, talent, and music.

PR Campaign Results

At the height of the media flak in the first half of 2014, 85 articles or about 23 percent of 371 total news items about the SSS were tagged as negative. For the given period, SSS had issued 57 news releases, appearing six times on average in various dailies.

However, treatment of news about the SSS significantly improved after the campaign's implementation. Negative stories plummeted by nearly half to only 42 articles during the second semester of 2014. With a total of 708 monitored news items, the pension fund notably closed the year on a positive note, as half of these stories were considered favorable to SSS and 32 percent, neutral. SSS news releases likewise continued to see print amid the negative issues being hurled against the agency.

In social media, negative sentiments (80 percent of almost 29,900 comments analyzed) permeated the SSS Facebook page at the onset of the campaign due to its moderators' non-responsiveness and inactive participation. A year after the campaign's implementation, the satisfaction rating increased by 56 percent (from seven percent in October 2014 to 63 percent in October 2015), anger comments were reduced by 70 percent (80 percent in October 2014 to 10 percent in October 2015), and neutral comments grew by 14 percent (13 percent in October 2014 to 27 percent in October 2015).

As to the daily content management strategy implemented in the SSS FB page, table below shows the analysis that the more SSS engaged its netizens in informative discussions, the more inquiries SSS gets. With the SSS becoming an engaging tool for

communication, more people are talking about, seeing, sharing, and re-posting its FB posts. See below comparative quantitative analysis of SSS FB statistics:

FB Analytics	October 2014	October 2015
Likes	973,560	1,260,000
Unliked your page	2,200	4,600
People Talking about SSS	14,980	32,590
Impressions	3,500,000	9,400,000
Stories Created	126,229	189,658
Number of Users	114,199	149,957
Reach of Content	800,060	4,380,000
Engagement	9.33%	14.05%

Conclusion

The two-phased “*Buti na lang may SSS!*” campaign proved to be an effective strategic communication campaign for it has successfully addressed adverse criticism and gained greater support from its stakeholders, external consumers, communities, special interest, or advocacy groups. Up until today, there is a constant growing appreciation from members and non-members alike that SSS contributions are like savings that earn interest and gives financial protection in times of need.

Annex A:

Billboard/Print Ad

BUTI NA LANG MAY SSS!
AMING KONTRIBUSYON,
IPONG NAGBIBIGAY PROTEKSYON



**Kontribusyon ay Ipong
mas may Pakinabang.**
**Maaasahang Proteksyon
sa Panahon ng Pangangailangan.**
Sickness, Maternity, Disability, Retirement,
Death and Funeral Benefits



SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM

www.sss.gov.ph
Email: member_relations@sss.gov.ph
 [PhilippineSocialSecuritySystem](#)

Supplement

[illegible]

Annex C:

Videos in social media



Annex D:

Posters



Annex E



 usapangsss SSS forum site for public interaction and engagement.			
Quick links FAQ		My.SSS Directory Videos Advisories Register Login	
SSS Forum Index		It is currently Wed May 04, 2016 10:32 am	
SSS INFO	TOPICS	POSTS	LAST POST
 Social Security System The Philippine Social Security System is a state-run, social insurance program in the Philippines for workers in the private sector, wage earners as well as self-employed persons. It is implemented in accordance with the Republic Act No.1161 as amended under Republic Act No. 8282, better known as Social Security Act of 1997.	13	13	Ano ang tungkulin ng miyembro... by ForumAdmin G Tue Mar 29, 2016 9:17 am
SOCIAL SECURITY BENEFITS	TOPICS	POSTS	LAST POST
 Maternity Benefit a daily cash allowance granted to a female member who is unable to work due to childbirth or miscarriage.	9	11	Re: Epekto ng hindi pagbibiga... by AdminMRD G Mon May 02, 2016 2:50 pm
 Sickness Benefit a daily cash allowance paid for the number of days a member is unable to work due to sickness or injury.	9	9	Mga alituntunin sa pagpa-file... by ForumAdmin G Tue Mar 15, 2016 5:18 pm
 Disability Benefit a cash benefit granted either as a monthly pension or a lumpsum amount to a member who becomes permanently disabled, either partially or totally.	6	6	Ano ang mga forms na kailanga... by ForumAdmin G Wed Mar 16, 2016 2:22 pm
 Retirement Benefit a cash benefit granted either as a monthly pension or a lumpsum amount to a member who can no longer work due to old age.	7	7	Mga kailangang dokumento para... by ForumAdmin G Wed Mar 16, 2016 2:32 pm
 Funeral Grant Benefit a funeral grant is given to whoever paid for the burial expenses of the deceased member	4	4	Mga Kailangan sa Pagpa-file n... by ForumAdmin G Wed Mar 16, 2016 2:57 pm
 Death Benefit a cash benefit granted either as a monthly pension or a lumpsum amount to the beneficiaries of a deceased member	12	12	Saan maaaring isumite ang ben... by ForumAdmin G Wed Mar 16, 2016 2:42 pm

Annex F



Untitled

Welcome to #UsapangSSS!

51k views

37:56

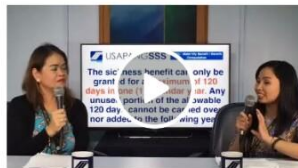


Untitled

Welcome to #UsapangSSS!

263k views

55:48



Untitled

Welcome to #UsapangSSS!

63k views

36:13



Untitled

Welcome to another episode ...

50k views

53:46



Untitled

Welcome to #UsapangSSS!

30k views

44:02



Untitled

Welcome to #UsapangSSS!

40k views

35:12

Annex G



SSS chief at ECOP meeting



SSS chief holds talk with Roxas City employers

Annex H



BUTI NA LANG MAY SSS with
JUPITER TORRES and Ms...

YouTube app - 9 months ago



BUTI NA LANG MAY SSS with
SUSIE BUGANTE & JUPITER...

YouTube app - 9 months ago



BUTI NA LANG MAY SSS with
SUSIE BUGANTE & JUPITER...

YouTube app - 9 months ago



BUTI NA LANG MAY SSS with
CECILLE MERCADO & JUPITE...

YouTube app - 10 months ago



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