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Staples, Do Something Launch Back-To-School Event

by Sarah Mahoney, 25 minutes ago

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School may be barely out, but Staples is kicking off its school-supplies drive with a new social-marketing campaign, in the hopes of getting teens to spend part of their summer drumming up donations for needy kids.

The campaign, a partnership with DoSomething.org, a group that connects teens to volunteer activities, was put together by Mr.

Youth, a New York-based social-marketing agency, and uses Grammy-winner Ciara as a spokesperson.

"Teens are extremely important to us for the back-to-school season, and what attracted us to DoSomething was the way that group inspires teens to take action," says a Staples spokesperson. "We hate the idea of a teen having to go back to school in September without the supplies they need. And in this economy, we felt it's important to help teens put the spotlight on need right in their own communities." The event debuted last year, with American Idol Jordin Sparks acting as spokesperson.

Because DoSomething.org targets teens 13 to 19, Staples chose to make social technology the core, including a Do Something 101 Facebook Fan Page and a viral "Adopt a Pack" Facebook application, which allows users to spread the word by creating a virtual bag that is sent to friends, who then "stuff" them with the 11 most-needed school supplies.

"The Facebook application is our way to get the word out to teens, so they can tag friends and get them involved, too," says the spokesperson. The campaign also includes a sweepstakes, which will launch in early July, with winners traveling to New York to join Ciara at the backpack-stuffing event.

Teens can drop the supplies they collect at their nearest Staples store from July through September, and customers can contribute by donating \$1 at any registers, with 100% of proceeds benefiting local teens in need. (Each Staples store is matched to a local educational and not-for-profit organization serving disadvantaged youth.)

In addition to the PSA and in-store signage, support for the effort includes online banners and blogger outreach.

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