Khoros Kudos: Keep Calm and Carry On

Company: Promega Corporation

Background:

Promega Corporation produces the high-tech kits, instruments, enzymes, and other reagents that scientists and technicians around the globe rely on to study genes, proteins and other molecules both in cells and in the environment. While Promega may not be a household name, chances are you have benefited from our work, even if you are not a scientist. This year our reporter assays were used widely in the research and development stages of coronavirus vaccine development, and to date we have provided enough amplification reagents and enzymes to enable testing an estimated 735 million samples for SARS-CoV-2 worldwide.

We believe creativity and connection drive innovation. We celebrate scientific discovery and the creative application of science to solve problems. Interactions with our customers, partners and vendors are central to everything we do, and we value those relationships. We seek and build connections because creative problem solving requires networks of diverse ideas and viewpoints. These same values fueled our pandemic response.

From simple cloning vectors used to address fundamental questions in biology to bioluminescent assays that help us monitor food safety and water quality, we work side-by-side with our partners in academic, industrial and government institutions to bring the best minds to bear on the toughest questions. Since 1978, we have done this all with a steadfast commitment to sustainable business models that protect our environment, inspire, and develop our employees as individuals, support the wellbeing and growth of our communities, and strengthen our relationships with our customers.

Industry: Biotechnology

Name: Michele Arduengo

Title: Social Media Manager

Related URLS:

www.promega.com

www.promegaconnections.com

https://www.youtube.com/c/promega/featured

How did your team shift existing strategy to better engage customers during a crisis?

This pandemic presented a host of challenges for scientists across the globe. Many scientists suddenly found themselves dropping existing projects to work on urgent scientific projects in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Other scientists simply found themselves on lockdown from their labs, meaning huge experimental losses.

These scientists are our customers, and they needed a responsive and trustworthy partner to support their work—from the simple logistics of ensuring a shipment of enzyme would arrive on time, to scaling up sample prep, to setting up entirely new high-throughput workflows and chemistries to meet testing demands—all during a time when travel was restricted. Social media, particularly social media listening, was key to helping us respond to these needs and uncertainty. Social media informed internal and external communications, enabled us to be source of truth in a time of confusion and misinformation, and enabled us to explore and promote unique public/private partnerships that were key to an effective pandemic response.

We listened to the chatter around RNA sample prep, supply chain issues, and other topics related to the coronavirus pandemic that would be of particular interest to our customers and partners. Where we saw an opportunity to jump into a conversation and offer help, we did. Where we saw an opportunity to report how our operations and logistics teams were meeting the unique challenges of the past year-and-a-half to support our customers, we told those stories.



This was our first pandemic Instagram post that spoke to our customers' need for quick turn-around on COVID-19 test reagents. Since January 2019, Promega has provided enough amplification reagents and enzymes to enable testing an estimated 735 million samples for SARS-CoV-2 worldwide. Compared to a year ago, we have experienced an approximate 10-fold increase in demand for both finished catalog and custom products that Promega manufactures and supplies for COVID-19 testing. Production lines that were running one shift five days a week are now working three shifts, seven days a week.



More than 600 employees are on-site supporting product manufacturing, quality, and R&D. We have implemented split shifts, are practicing social distancing and workers are wearing masks. Staff are also restricting movement between buildings on the Promega Madison campus.



In the last year based on historical output, Promega has produced the equivalent of more than 46 years' worth of RNasin® Plus and 20 years' worth of GoScript™ RT Mix for 1-step RT-qPCR and RNasin® Plus. Both products are key reagents used in COVID-19 testing globally.



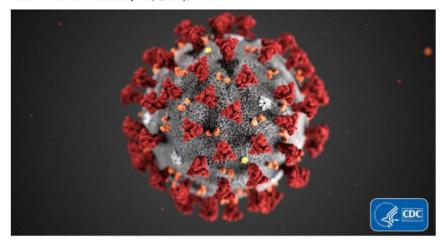
Our technical and customer services teams responded to all kinds of new inquiries and challenges during the pandemic, and customer satisfaction with Promega Technical Services increased from 97 percent to 99 percent during the pandemic!



We also highlighted the exciting work our customers around the globe were doing in their labs in response to the pandemic.



Efforts to detect SARS-2-CoV and treat COVID-19 are ongoing around the world. See how researchers in Brazil have applied lessons learned from the Zika outbreak to the development of a SARS-2-CoV detection assay. http://bit.ly/394iuaX



Our sales and field support staff spent time connecting scientists with each other to maximize resources. They drove shipments of supplies cross country so that COVID-19 testing could proceed uninterrupted and connected scientists within an institution to help get reagents and equipment to the places they were most needed.



"How can I support the global response to COVID-19 when my lab is shutting down?" Many scientists are making new connections and sharing resources during this time of crisis. bit.ly/2QMyh7a
Translate tweet



2:40 p.m. · March 27. 2020 · Khoros Publishing

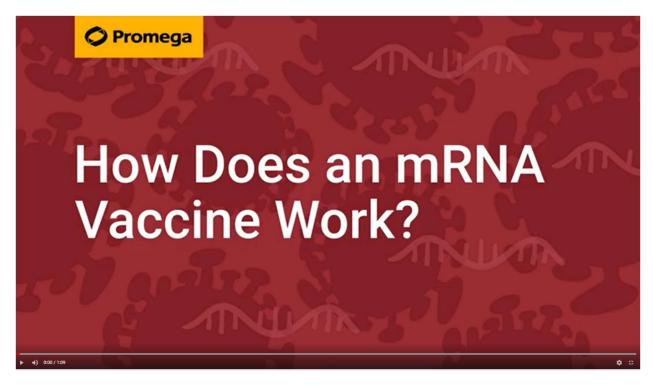
Scientists not only found themselves on the front line of research, they also found their families were coming to them as a "source of truth" in a confusing time. So, in response, we created blogs, videos and social posts to help our customers talk to their families and to provide high-quality, reliable content to individuals who found us in their search for information.



Hand washing is one of those activities that everyone takes for granted until something like SARS-2-CoV emerges. We asked a microbiologist how she washes her hands, and here is the result. #coronavirus #washyourhands



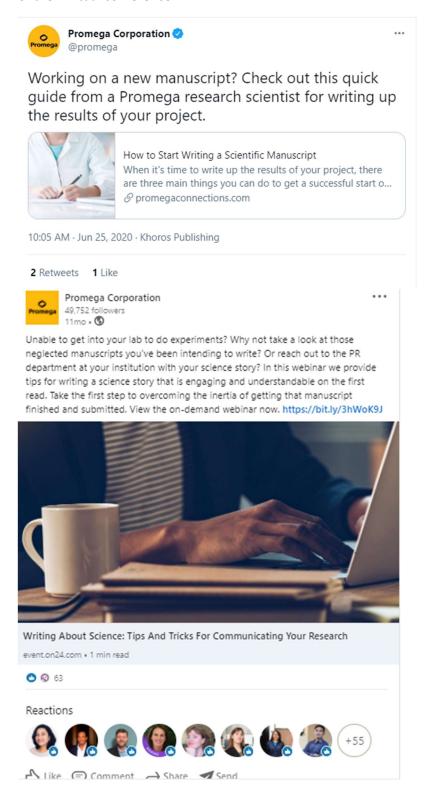
1:30 PM · Mar 10, 2020 · Khoros Publishing



Our YouTube video "How Does an mRNA Vaccine Work?" has become one of our most highly-viewed and commented on videos in a short amount of time.



Because many scientists were unable to head to their labs during lockdown, they were working on scientific manuscripts and grants. We produced a webinar and blog to provide tips on manuscript writing, and we updated existing resources on attending scientific conferences to cover the new animal of the "virtual conference."





The year 2020 has forced us to re-engineer the way we connect with colleagues and peers in the sciences. Many of us are experiencing virtual and online conferences for the first time. So how do you ensure that you are getting the most benefit possible from your virtual conference experience? Our conference organizers at Promega have some suggestions for you: https://bit.ly/3k11Y18



PROMEGACONNECTIONS.COM

Tips for Attendees: Making the Most of a Virtual Conference - Promega Connections

When it was time for non-coronavirus researchers to head back into their labs, we also provided guidance for them based on some of the practices we adopted at Promega to keep our employees safe.



Sewage became a big story during the pandemic when scientists realized that wastewater-based epidemiology could be applied to monitor and predict upticks in COVID-19 cases. We partnered with municipalities and other institutions to help understand the power of this technology and we developed the SARS-CoV-2 RT qPCR Kit for Wastewater for this purpose.

How A New SARS-CoV-2 Wastewater Testing Kit is Helping Campuses Reopen

POSTED ON DECEMBER 7, 2020 BY JOHANNA LEE

@ EDIT

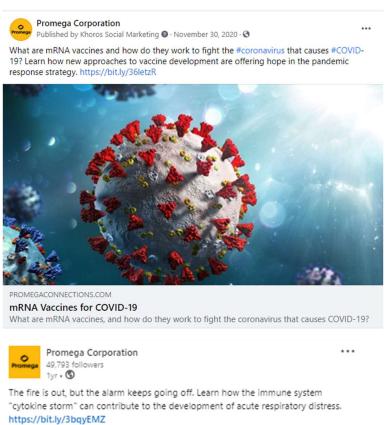


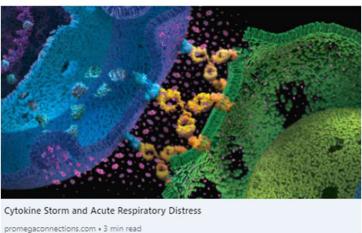
The fall of 2020 was like no other, especially for universities. The COVID-19 pandemic hit most of the world in the spring, forcing schools and businesses to close. For months, people worked from home and schools switched to online classes. When fall came, universities had a difficult decision to make. Do they have students and staff come back to campus for in-person classes? With students living together in close proximity in dormitories, an outbreak could quickly get out of hand. How can the university monitor and control the spread of the virus to ensure everyone's safety?

This was when Robert Brooks started getting calls. He's the Technical Director and Operations Manager at Microbac Laboratories in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. Microbac is a network of privately owned laboratories that

Becoming a Counterpoint to Misinformation

Misinformation coming from a variety of media proliferated during the pandemic. We wanted to provide accurate scientific content for our customers and community. Using Khoros Intelligence, we continued our practice of monitoring trending content for scientific publications that our customers read, and we also used Intelligence to monitor conversations around aspects of the coronavirus conversation such as sample preparation, RNA extraction, testing, and serology. Additionally, we provided basic science content through blogs and videos about how vaccines work and other general interest topics.





What operational processes did you create or change?

Public Private Partnerships Formed

Public Private partnerships were key to serving our community to help with COVID-19 testing during the first stages of the pandemic and with vaccine roll out to front-line workers at later stages. These new partnerships between multiple commercial and government entities maximized the expertise of all, bringing creativity and understanding to solving major challenges. In addition to working with partners to provide COVID-19 test reagents, Promega also used its Madison-based Wellness Center to help with community vaccination efforts.

State of Wisconsin sent this bulletin at 03/30/2020 11:03 AM CDT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 30, 2020 Contact: GovPress@wisconsin.gov or 608-219-7443

Gov. Evers Announces New Public-Private Partnership to Increase COVID-19 Laboratory Testing Capacity

MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers today announced a new public-private partnership among Wisconsin industry leaders to increase Wisconsin's laboratory testing capacity for COVID-19. Prior to today's announcement, the Wisconsin State Lab of Hygiene and the Milwaukee Public Health Lab were leading the Wisconsin Clinical Lab Network labs to bring additional COVID-19 testing online.

The new partnership now includes laboratory support from Exact Sciences, Marshfield Clinic Health System, Promega, and UW Health. These organizations, along with the Wisconsin Clinical Lab Network, will now share knowledge, resources, and technology to bolster Wisconsin's testing capacity.



MPD Acting Chief Vic Wahl gets first dose of coronavirus vaccine at Promega

FITCHBURG (WKOW) -- It was a moment of hope, as Acting Police Chief Vic Wahl prepared to get his first dose of the coronavirus vaccine Wednesday.

"I think, like many of us, I'm sort of hoping that the vaccination start here is kind of light at the end of the tunnel," he said.

Wahl is among about 500 Madison Police Department staff members getting the vaccine during a two-day clinic at Promega's Fitchburg wellness center.

Even as we move away from the COVID-19 crisis, we are forming partnerships to address other issues, such as delays in important cancer screenings, that have happened as an effect of the pandemic.



Funds raised from the "Get Your Rear in Gear – Madison" event will go to UW Carbone Cancer Center

Madison, WI USA. (May 10, 2021)

Serious runners and casual walkers alike are invited to join a month-long **Get Your Rear in Gear®** - **Madison run/walk** virtual event during May to raise money and awareness for colorectal cancer screening efforts. Colorectal cancer is the nation's No. 2 cancer killer, but it is up to 95% preventable with

New Products Released

Our Research and Development group is key to our pandemic response. Both the Lumit Dx SARS-CoV-2 Immunoassay and SARS-CoV-2 RT qPCR Kit for Wastewater during the pandemic in response. Additionally, R&D and regulatory groups worked to submit many of our products for Emergency Use Authorization for coronavirus testing, and multiple Promega instruments and kits have been added to EUAs for SARS-CoV-2 testing and multiplexed SARS-CoV-2/Influenza A and B tests.



GoTaq® Probe 1-Step RT-qPCR System is an approved master mix option for the CDC's 2019-Novel Coronavirus Real-Time RT-PCR Diagnostic Panel that is available through the CDC's Emergency Use Authorization. Learn more: bit.ly/2xBHPv3

Translate tweet



3:06 p.m. · April 1, 2020 · Khoros Publishing

Communications External and Internal

In addition to blog and social communication on COVID-19 related topics, we developed key web pages to help scientists working on pandemic research projects quickly find the reagents they needed to conduct their research. We used Khoros Intelligence to monitor the trending language around the pandemic in the scientific community to ensure that we had the appropriate keywords for SEO on these pages: for instance, the scientific name of the virus changed from 2019-nCoV to SARS-CoV-2 during the first month of the pandemic—as the trending keywords changed, we updated our own language on the web, in our blogs and in social media posts. These pages are still continually reviewed and updated as the pandemic progresses, and different research efforts are needed.



Communication across our global company was coordinated by a network of small teams that included operations, corporate affairs, marketing services and other stakeholders. The communications support team coordinated activities across all areas of the company, with representatives on the other teams and an "always on" newsroom mentality, particularly at the beginning of the pandemic. Information about trending topics and new content that marketing services was developing to support the pandemic response was included in weekly global company emails.

What success metrics did you use to determine if your shifts in strategy and process had desired outcomes? What were those quantifiable outcomes?

Our coronavirus social media has included 965 posts since January 2020 (and still counting, because we are still in this) across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, and the Promega Connections blog. Followers of our social media accounts have increased by 40 percent during the pandemic, and the average post engagement for the coronavirus posts is double the median for all other campaigns that were running over the same period. Our coronavirus posts drove a significant number of new visitors to Promega.com, with traffic peaking in July 2020. The visitors who came from these posts tended to spend an above-average amount of time exploring the web site.

To address questions around how our coronavirus response efforts were working, our digital marketing team began producing a highly popular digital marketing report, initially weekly beginning in Q1 2020. This report has evolved through feedback to become a standard report, now produced every two months. The report also inspired the creation several "self-serve" dashboards for internal clients, including a PowerBI report that pulls in social media analytics directly from Khoros Marketing.

We formed an Instagram team to help us build stronger connections with our followers and deliver on our channel strategy. The focus of this small team and the content created has driven follower growth on the Promega Instagram channel by 21 percent since June 2020, with an overall increase in engagement of 204 percent, and an increase in average post engagement of more than 1000 percent.

Our average response rate to inbound social media was 1 hour 12 minutes during the last 18 months.

Blogs, new web pages and trending social media content were shared through an internal weekly COVID-19 email. The social media content we developed was made available for our global branch accounts in the content center in Khoros marketing.

Blogs with coronavirus-content were five of our top 10 high-performing blogs during the last year to date.

Our YouTube video, "How Does an mRNA Vaccine Work?", became one of our most highly viewed and commented on videos since its release on the channel in December 2020.

In the world of virtual events and tradeshows, LinkedIn lead generation posts were our top source for new marketing leads in 2020 virtual event campaigns, and LinkedIn was the #2 source of traffic to our event resource pages on our website, showing that our decision to promote these events and pages to highly targeted audiences through LinkedIn was effective.

Source	Percent of Referral Traffic to Event Page
Direct (email, virtual tradeshow platform)	59%
LinkedIn	19.8%
Google	19.1% (indicates good SEO for these pages)

As an external measure of the quality of content we were creating, several of our Promega Connections blogs received recognition from the editors at <u>Science Seeker</u>. During pandemic we saw an increase in earned media and requests for interviews for a variety of external publications.







