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ETHICAL BRANDING AND MARKETING (ROUTLEDGE ADVANCES IN MANAGEMENT AND BUSIN...)

responsible, and patriotic company. The strategic communication plan consisted of several elements: establish proactive government relations efforts to facilitate a Cipro contract, communicate directly with the public through advertising, educate the media about Bayer's commitment, educate healthcare professionals on the appropriate use of Cipro, and develop communication channels for patients and consumers (Holmes, 2002).

Bayer's strategic approach went into motion within days. Bayer executives engaged in proactive government relations to secure a Cipro contract. Bayer global CEO Helge Wehmeier and the President of Bayer North America Wolfgang Plischke went to Washington, D.C., without an invitation, to meet with government officials and to show commitment, urgency, and efficiency. They met with the Director of Homeland Security Tom Ridge and members of the US Congress to provide reassurance of Bayer's commitment. They were in constant communication with US Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Tommy Thompson and other

US government officials, assuring them and the public of Bayer's resilient commitment and production capabilities. Bayer executives made numerous television appearances, made daily phone calls to editors and reporters, and launched an internal campaign for "Bayer cares," distributing American pride buttons, US flags, and t-shirts to employees.

Bayer also donated two million tablets of Cipro to US health workers and first responders, and 200,000 tablets to the Canadian government (Fuhrmans & Winslow, 2001; Holmes, 2002). It followed with a media blitz of press releases, interviews by Bayer executives with major newspapers, and stories regarding Bayer's production efforts. This helped create the image Bayer wanted to convey of supply and safety for the US people. To reassure the US public, it placed full-page ads in major newspapers such as *The New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Miami Herald*, *Palm Beach Post*, *the Financial Times*, and some local papers, at a cost of \$3 million. The message was that "You can count





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