



FOUNTAINS FULL OF PLASTIC WASTE



he negative environmental impact of plastic waste is unquestionable, yet many Slovaks still don't care – our rivers are full of waste. although Slovakia used to pride itself as being a "water empire" due to its high-quality natural reserves of water and springs. In order to help Lidl Slovakia, a long-term proponent of protecting clean rivers, communicate the problem in a bold way, we came up with a shocking

stunt which brought the issue in front of public eyes. One weekend, Slovak citizens in selected cities woke up to their popular local fountains filled with plastic waste, as part of Lidl's "Don't Let It Float" (Let's not ignore it" in a double-meaning translation) campaign.

The aim was to show that every one of us can contribute to a cleaner environment through our daily decisions. The idea of the project was

"better to see once than to hear a hundred times" by which we wanted to motivate residents to reduce their use of plastic waste and promote environmentally-responsible behaviour. If you don't vcare what floats in our rivers, would you care if you see it right in front of you? We reached out to municipalities and local authorities to get permissions to carry out the project and physically place plastic waste in the cities' fountains.























During one weekend, the plastic waste in our fountains and people's reckless behaviour became a muchdiscussed issue. Citizens called police, contacted local authorities, communicated their complaints on social media, and raised questions of who is destroying their neighbourhoods. People were outraged. This confirmed the fact that people do not feel indifferent towards causes when they experience them on a personal level. The explanation followed: "Shocked? This is only a fraction of what we have collected from the Vah and Danube rivers." Our main slogan throughout the campaign where we played with presenting plastic waste from our rivers as a "daily catch", instead of healthy fish on people's plate, was: Caught with pride

in Slovakia's rivers! In total, 1.200 tons of plastic waste had already been collected from our rivers as part of our campaign with Lidl prior to this stunt. Now, we placed a fraction of the collected waste into the fountains. To explain what happened as well as to communicate all the disturbing facts and Lidl's efforts, media briefings together with the project partners - the Slovak Water Management Company and the Mayor of the Bratislava Ružinov District followed. The idea was simple and the execution and the communication proved to be effective.

By the guerrilla activity we leveraged the effect of Lidl's long-term effort and made a lasting statement. We have pointed out a fact that we often close our eyes about

matters we do not wish to see the alarming need to protect our environment. By installing plastic waste in the fountains we drew people's attention to the fact that we are often oblivious and careless about what happens to the plastic waste when we throw it away and that it often ends up in rivers and streams. The results of the project were presented: the volume of plastic waste collected so far, a wide-spread reach on social media, an extensive media coverage (the one day activity earning EUR 120.000 worth of media value), influencer engagement and reinforcing Lidl as environmentally-conscious brand, strengthening the company's engagement in protecting Slovakia's waters. The cost of the activity was close to zero. The emotional impression and aha-moment for many Slovaks - priceless.