

## UpFront

Community Advocacy and Policy Development

### The Client

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### The Challenge

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Cancer is on the rise in all western countries, and Canada is no exception. As more people are diagnosed with various forms of the disease, there is immense pressure on the public healthcare system to carry the load even as treatment options grow more expensive. At the same time, there are concerns that cancer care is not delivered equally well to everyone who needs it and that problems of coordination and lack of information sometimes make patient experiences more distressing than necessary.

The Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation (CBCF, Ontario Chapter) undertook an innovative project to address all of these problems together. Through focus group and survey research, and an extensive scan, it became clear that bold new steps were necessary to make cancer prevention and early screening public priorities and that by anchoring breast cancer care in the lived experience of women with a diagnosis, the healthcare system could be more equitable, efficient, and sensitive to individuals' needs.

### The Solution

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It's one thing to have a bold vision, and quite another to turn it into a practical plan. The CBCF's design supplier, Pivot Design, recommended that Stratcom be brought in to help the Foundation bring together the community of cancer survivors and caregivers to generate a credible plan of action.

## UpFront - Community Advocacy and Policy Development

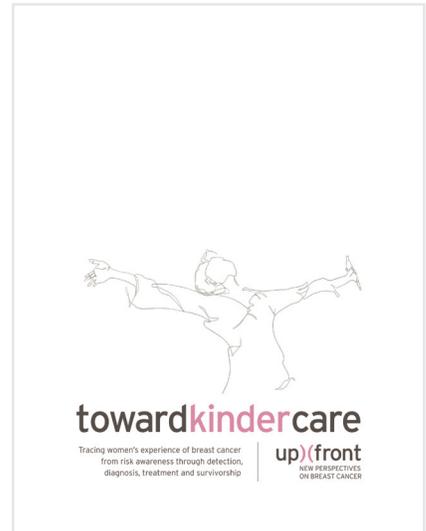
Step one was to generate a comprehensive campaign plan that united community consultations, activist mobilization, media relations, policy development, and government relations. Stratcom and Pivot together developed the project name and tagline—UpFront: New Perspectives On Breast Cancer.

Working as part of a team that included scientific advisors and experts in community health promotion, Stratcom also oversaw province-wide public discussions in which research findings were discussed and validated by survivors and their caregivers. This extensive feedback confirmed the original concerns about equity, lack of coordination, and the overwhelming need for a better prevention strategy in the Ontario cancer care system.

## The Results

With recommended actions drawn up by policy experts, Stratcom also conducted the final step of the project, which was to consult a range of professional healthcare providers and draft a plan of action—strategies for everything from screening mammography to post-treatment care.

Through the experiences of patients, caregivers and healthcare providers, governments and policymakers now had the framework to develop new strategies to address breast cancer and improve care thanks to UpFront: New Perspectives on Breast Cancer. ❖



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