

ProTeam, American Lung Association are Exposing the Dirty Truth About Indoor Air Quality



Partner Overview

ProTeam is a leader in lightweight backpack vacuums that are used in a variety of institutions, but most notably in schools, colleges and universities. ProTeam is a subsidiary of Emerson, a diversified global manufacturing and technology company.

ProTeam's goal for partnering with the **American Lung Association** and joining the Proud Partner licensing program is:

- To promote the importance of indoor air quality with an educational partner that is a well-known and respected clean air advocate. Together, the two partners are championing clean indoor air so that everyone can breathe easier.

Backstory

“ProTeam's partnership with the Lung Association goes all the way back to 2002 when we were a newer company and looking for partners that wanted to help us change the industry by making indoor air cleaner,” said **Jacalyn High**, Director of Marketing at Emerson.

ProTeam's product was different from other vacuums on the market.

“First it's a backpack vacuum that you wear,” said Jacalyn. “Most people grew up with the old upright vacuum that you push and pull. Our vacuum also has more filtration so it picks up more particles and really improves air quality.”

ProTeam was confident they had an outstanding product - but it was new to the marketplace. The company wanted to partner with a reputable organization that understood the value of a product that produces cleaner indoor air.

“Of course we wanted to partner with the American Lung Association,” said Jacalyn. “They're nationally recognized. Everybody knows who they are, and they have a reputation for doing good for the environment.”

“Partnering with the Lung Association and having their logo on our packaging and product was a huge boost to our brand in 2002,” added Jacalyn.



Strategic Approach

ProTeam's partnership with the American Lung Association includes:

- After a thorough company and product review by the Lung Association, ProTeam uses the Proud Partner logo on its packaging, product and in approved multimedia promotional materials.
- The Lung Association and ProTeam have partnered to create educational resources for schools, commercial buildings, etc. on the importance of clean indoor air and how vacuuming can help.
- The Lung Association and ProTeam have partnered to create social campaigns around clean air awareness events and days, including World Asthma Day.

“One of the first projects we worked on together was to create an educational pamphlet for a Lung Association program called the Asthma-Friendly School Initiatives. One part of the pamphlet addressed how vacuuming could play a role in making schools more asthma-friendly.”

— Jacalyn High, Emerson

ProTeam.

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Results

“Like every business, ProTeam has competitors so buyers have plenty of options for who they buy from,” said Jacalyn. “However, being a Proud Partner has strengthened ProTeam’s business position.”

The key is the American Lung Association brand and the high regard in which people hold it.

“Technical specifications about the product are important to share and have a role in sales conversations,” said Jacalyn. “But when you tell a prospect that an organization like the Lung Association partners with our company, to mutually promote indoor air quality, it really gets their attention. It stands out.”

The longevity of the American Lung Association and ProTeam partnership was an asset during the pandemic when there was greater focus on indoor air quality.

“The fact that we had been partners for so long - nearly two decades - and talking about the importance of clean indoor air says something about our commitment to the issue,” said Jacalyn. “We weren’t just jumping on the issue because of the pandemic, and that elevated our credibility in the marketplace.”

“Having the American Lung Association Proud Partner logo on our product definitely gives ProTeam an advantage when buyers are comparing companies. To be clear, the logo isn’t an endorsement. But it does validate our shared commitment to clean air.”

— Jacalyn High, Emerson



Partner Insights

For companies that are considering partnering with a nonprofit, ProTeam shared their advice for a successful partnership.

1. **Think long-term.** “Over the past twenty years we’ve never paused our partnership with the Lung Association,” said Jacalyn. “It’s a relationship that just compounds in value year after year. Short-term thinking doesn’t work with most things, and certainly not with cause partnerships. Take the long view.”
2. **Use the partnership to educate consumers.** “The Lung Association brand is too valuable to waste on transactional sales tactics,” said Jacalyn. “A reputable nonprofit brand earns attention and trust with consumers, which is an opening to educate them about the problem you can solve. For ProTeam, that means teaching people about poor quality indoor air and how our vacuums can make it better.”
3. **Don’t choose a charity, choose a partner.** “The partnership we have with the American Lung Association is win-win and work-work,” said Jacalyn. “We both share marketing ideas to help each other, and if an issue arises we work to solve it quickly and with the interests of both partners in mind.”



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