



**MASCOTS WITH IMPACT!!**

# Coqui The Chef®

*How a CEO used a Mascot to connect with a young audience.*



**A BAM! Mascots  
Success  
Story!**

# 1

## Tania & Coqui's Adventure

*"Where's the mascot for healthy food?"*  
- Tania Lopez



# Tania & Coqui's Adventure



When Tania Lopez started her journey promoting healthy eating and nutrition to children and families in the Bronx, she had no idea it would take her on such a fabulously exciting journey. From parades to hit TV shows, her journey with her mascot Coqui the Chef® has been an unexpected and thrilling adventure.

In this story, learn how Tania uses a custom mascot to engage children and take her organization to new heights, and how you can follow the same path with your own unique mascot character!

## The Beginning...

With the idea of encouraging discourse around healthy eating and nutrition, Tania took to social media. She created a persona, Coqui The Chef®, (pronounced KOH-kee), based

on a species of small frogs located in Puerto Rico. The coquis are named for the sound they make, a singing “Coqui, Coqui” at night.

***Tania created Coqui with the idea that healthy eating needed a child-friendly mascot.***

*“We have mascots for a lot of the unhealthy food, but where's the mascot for healthy food? I kept looking but i didn't find anything..”*

Once she had her logo, developed by a graphic designer, she was ready to take it further - and so she started the Coqui The Chef® blog. It became a huge hit, and soon her followers were requesting she post more recipes and tips on her blog.

### **Bringing Coqui To Life...**

After building up the foundation of Coqui’s personality on social media, Tania needed a way to bring her brand, and Coqui, to life - especially since Coqui was to be the guest of honor at the Puerto Rican Day parade in 2011.

Tania spent a very long time scouring the Internet, researching how to best present Coqui to an audience, and that is how she found BAM! Mascots.

*“I researched a lot of companies and looked at all of the mascots, and BAM’s mascots looked very well done and they answered all of my questions.”*

Time was running out before the parade, but BAM! Mascots pulled through, delivering a fantastic finished product a few days before Coqui was to appear. The quality surpassed



Tania's expectations, and the mascot costume made Coqui come to life, as a colorful, expressive, and engaging character.

## A Media Frenzy & A Passionate CEO...

But it didn't stop there. Tania is a very unique CEO. She is passionate as are many other



entrepreneurs, but her drive and vision led her to play the role of Coqui herself. Wanting to be on the front lines with the children, cooking the recipes and bringing Coqui the personality she knew he could embody, she donned the mascot costume herself, much to the joy and amusement of her family and friends. A media frenzy ensued! Not only did everyone love the idea of her

organization, but they loved Tania as Coqui, and Coqui The Chef® quickly became well known via various media stations, such as; ABC's The Chew, TLC's What Not To Wear, The Bronx News Channel 12, New York WPIX Channel 11 and The New York Daily News, Radio WNYC and more... Tania says that the media explosion and the public's natural affinity for Coqui, was definitely one of the most unexpected benefits to having a mascot.

## Engaging & Inspiring...

Since then, Tania has taken Coqui to many different events to promote her business. Recently she was at New York Comic Con 2015, which was a huge success!



*“When I first started out with Coqui, there was a lot that we were exploring such as a comic strip... I love Comic Con and I know that it’s a great place for small businesses... people can get to know you and see what you’re all about...I took a chance and rented a table... which was very busy when the mascot was out and not as busy without him.”*

Coqui is fantastic at engaging every audience, and draws in children and adults alike. Tania holds cooking classes, workshops, and parties to promote nutrition and healthy eating. She knew that bringing Coqui to life, and having him present at these workshops and events, would inspire and engage the participants. Just watching the children in her classes and workshops, you can see a spark of something - an interest in what might otherwise seem mundane or unimportant to them. This is why mascots are paramount in the effort to engage, educate, and inspire children and adults.



# 2

## The Benefits of a Mascot

*“They loved the idea, because I actually had the mascot to engage the children!”*  
- Tania Lopez



### Tried & True Benefits to Using a Mascot

For Tania the benefits are endless. She was able to use Coqui to build her brand awareness, bring her idea to life, engage children, and ultimately help her achieve her goal of promoting a healthy lifestyle to children in the Bronx.

Let's explore some of these benefits:

## 1 Build Brand Awareness & Media Exposure

During promotional campaigns, what is more memorable than a well designed mascot with an outgoing and likable personality?

Corporate mascots are often the center of attention at promotional events; inspiring engagement in the media through photographs, TV appearances, print stories, and social media interactions.

Your brand will become more recognizable as your audience starts to identify your mascot with your services, increasing brand loyalty and top-of-mind awareness.

Coqui The Chef® clearly demonstrated this benefit as soon as the first media outlet picked up his inspiring story.



## 2 Engage Your Audience

With a mascot to promote your product or service, you can engage better with families and children, giving them an incentive to learn more about your services, and increasing sales at the same time. Unlike salespeople or a spokesperson - a mascot builds trust and rapport immediately.

A mascot is eye catching, inspires curiosity, and is hard to tune out. This is evident in the way that Tania uses Coqui to inspire and engage young children into being passionate about their health, nutrition, and the environment.



### **3 Promote your core values**

Your organization is unique, and you will have your own vision, goals, and values. Let your mascot promote these values and your company's vision will shine through the personality and backstory you create. Tania did this by creating a friendly and amicable character who loves family, and cooking healthy nutritious meals.

### **4 Inspires Curiosity About Your Brand**

When promoting your brand, you will notice that your mascot gets A LOT of attention. People gravitate towards things that are out of the ordinary. A mascot will let you stand out in a sea of regular sales-pitches. A well designed mascot with a personality that matches your organization's core values will drive curiosity about your brand. Tania showed us this benefit when she participated at New York Comic Con 2015, and drew a curious crowd to her table when Coqui was out and interacting with participants.

### **5 Offers a Unique and Effective Educational Tool**

Children are impressionable, and naturally gravitate towards mascots. This provides a unique educational opportunity.

If your mascot is celebrating and demonstrating the positive behavior and attributes you are trying to teach - children are sure to follow suit, just like the children laughing and learning in Coqui's cooking classes.

## 6 Builds Trust and Rapport

Nothing inspires trust and rapport quite like a cute, lovable frog in a chef's hat!

## 7 Offers an Edge When Applying for Grants

Tania says, *"I applied to a few grants to test [the brand] out. They loved the idea because I actually had the mascot to engage the children versus the other companies without..."*

With a mascot you can show your potential investors something solid and tested.



# 3

## Mascot Advice From Tania & BAM! Mascots



### Advice For Organizations Wanting to Use a Mascot

Tania has some special advice for anyone wanting to utilize a mascot in their business; “Let the CEO wear the mascot!”. Tania believes in being on the front lines and experiencing the power for yourself. Of course, you don’t need to wear it all the time!

BAM! Mascots gave Tania plenty of tips on how to best play the part of her character. “BAM gave me a lot of instructions on what to do, what not to do.. like how to approach people with it, how to walk with it, and I thought it was great! I didn’t know any of that...”

BAM! Mascots gives every client who purchases a custom mascot costume a Care and Performer Guide. Here are a few tips.

## 5 Mascot Performing Tips

- 1 Always have your mascot work with a spotter.** The spotter can guide and protect your mascot if necessary, especially when the mascot head limits the performer’s peripheral vision.
- 2 Have the performer exaggerate movements.** Normal gestures can be lost on an audience when in a larger than life costume.
- 3 Give each child / person equal attention.** No one likes a mascot who plays favorites!
- 4 Never take off the mascot or any of the pieces in front of the audience!** Find somewhere private to change in and out of your costume, so the magic and illusion of your character isn’t destroyed. This can be especially disappointing for small children.
- 5 Never initiate physical contact with children,** respect everyone’s personal space, and always hug from the shoulders as opposed to the waist (this can be inappropriate for adults and children alike).

Performing in a mascot is an *art* and takes practice and patience as you learn the do’s and don’ts. Once you have mastered the art of mascot performance, you will be ready to really reap in all of the amazing benefits that a mascot can bring to your organization - especially when it comes to engaging with children!

We can learn a lot from Tania’s story with Coqui. She epitomizes an organization successfully represent their brand with a mascot to achieve their goals.



BAM Mascots is a custom mascot company. Our goal at BAM Mascots is to create a partnership with all our clients, by providing excellent service and expert advice, in all the design and manufacturing stages.

From concept to creation, BAM Mascots has worked with many leading global brands, small businesses, sports teams, entertainers, and schools.

## Contact Us

1-877-858-4226

[www.bammascots.com](http://www.bammascots.com)

[info@bammascots.com](mailto:info@bammascots.com)

BAM! Mascots Inc.  
3214 Wharton Way,  
Mississauga ON L4X 2C1  
Canada

For more information about Coqui The Chef®  
contact Tania Lopez [coquithechef@gmail.com](mailto:coquithechef@gmail.com)

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