

Convenience Advertising

Narrowcast delivery of harm reduction messages

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Since 1984, Convenience Advertising (CA) has been operating as a communicative 'narrow cast' medium that uses permanent A4 display sites in toilets (including above urinals and hand dryers) of selected locations to target specific groups with health education messages. (Please refer to message examples below). The medium is practiced successfully in Ireland, New Zealand, United States, United Kingdom, Thailand and of course, Australia. It has been utilised to narrowcast public health messages privately to such diverse groups as, students, travellers, 'at risk' youth, longhaul truck drivers, men who have sex with men, 'disadvantaged' women, injecting drug users, commercial sex tourists, and persons within the work place.

CA uses specially tailored message in locations frequented by the target audience. Messages can be designed to target audiences in gender specific ways. This option often increases the strength and relevance of specific information disseminated in a culturally appropriate manner.

Many evaluations of the strategy have been conducted and consistently high levels of message recall, understanding, usefulness and relevance to the target audience have been recorded.

Once Messages are installed, they are maintained on a 15 day time-certain cycle. This 'maintenance cycle' includes a general up-keep of the messages, replacement of any souvenired/damaged inserts, and the collection of any graffiti or remarks on or around the messages. This data is collated and transferred on to the computerised Ad Management system (CAAMS vl.l) to give the programme managers an overview of the quantitative and qualitative information pertaining to the on-going delivery of their programme on a monthly basis.

Given its pro-active nature, the system has the capacity for rapid and flexible responses to local and community needs within a gender specific context. It is in an ideal position to implement and monitor effective prevention activities. The design of each message can contain specific information that can be used to effect change in behaviour and attitudes.

CA achieves high percentages of recall and is extremely cost effective due to the location of the messages. In observation and mechanical device counting research, carried out by A.C.N. Pty Ltd., it was found that a toilet is used for 2 minutes and 54 seconds. The designated message has a captive 'one-to-one' relationship with its viewer for that period of time.

Incorporating the number of people who use the facilities at a given location every week (eg. Clickity's in Carlton, Victoria, male toilets used 1114 times/female toilets used 1832 times), CA is extremely cost effective. CA is particularly effective for delivering information when the target group, location and message design are successfully integrated.

Given the nature of the private delivery of sensitive health messages in a one-to-one environment, CA is able to reduce the 'third person' effect (the tendency to deflect the influence/effects of a communication off oneself). The messages are designed and located with a specific audience in mind so that relevance and recall are not hindered by mass environmental variables (eg. interruptions, uncomfortable situations etc.).

This narrowcast print media strategy allows the creative director to cater for cultural diversity within and across target audiences: the communication messages can be designed, focus tested/proven and targeted with cultural and linguistic diversities in mind.

As a low key media strategy, CA can be utilised to support, enhance & reinforce high profile media campaigns and help maintain the promotion of products, services and/or public health issues on the national or local agenda. The CA strategy can reach an audience within its community and its cultural context. CA is able to maintain community awareness at grass-roots level via the systems pro-active operational mechanisms and its unique delivery.

CA may be applied as a social marketing technique (i.e. the use of commercial marketing to achieve socially beneficial goals) given that its unique pro-active mechanisms incorporate:

- research into knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of target audience;
- planning and formulation of appropriate communications, objectives and strategies;
- pre-testing and/or focus testing, of proposed communications;
- refining communications;
- evaluation for future guidance, planning, implementation and efficiency.

Ultimately, Convenience Advertising has the proven ability to reach a range of audiences with a range of messages in a cost effective manner.

Safe Sex and Alcohol Use 1996

In 1995 Convenience Advertising (New Zealand) launched a youth-targeted public health education campaign designed to:

- reinforce young people's existing safe sex behaviours and
- increase the likelihood of positive safe sex behaviour among young people at risk of unsafe sex after drinking alcohol.

Face to face intercept interviews were carried out with 800 young people aged 18-28 years in four urban centres. Interviews were reasonably evenly divided between tertiary institutions (53%) and bars/nightclubs/pubs (47%) in the four regions.

Demographics

An even distribution of men and women was attained (50%). A good range of ethnic backgrounds was also achieved, with 15% Maori, 16% Pacific Island and 11% (89) 'other' (Asian, Indian, Fijian). The majority of the sample was aged 18 to 24 years (69%), with 40% aged 18 to 20 years. Most were students (74%) with 16% employed full time. It appears the target group of young people who may be at risk of unsafe sex in conjunction with alcohol use was reached, with 71% having visited a pub, bar or nightclub in the previous two weeks. More respondents reported seeing the signs in pubs and bars (74%) than campuses (53%).

Recall and Acceptability

Prior to being shown copies of the campaign posters, slightly less than three quarters (73%) of respondents reported seeing them. This rose to 76% after being shown the actual messages. Most of the respondents appeared to like the posters (72%), with 80% finding the messages 'convincing'. Most disagreed with the statement 'These posters are embarrassing' (92%). In addition, 83% found the posters 'easy to remembers' and 86% found them 'very eye catching'. Overall, 80% agreed the posters were useful and 87% found the posters a good way of 'reminding people who have been drinking to use condoms to keep themselves safe'.

Usefulness

It appeared that most (93%) agreed that health information on the back of toilet doors was a good method of getting such messages across to young people. Almost three quarters (74%) agreed the poster contained advice they 'would follow'. In addition, unprompted recall of the key health information was relatively high, as the table below indicates.

Health Message	Ν	%
Where to get help for STDs	81	16
Right to choose whether or not to have sex	119	23
Emergency contraception	129	25
Sexual health checkups	77	15
How to use a condom	247	47
The risks of mixing sex with Alcohol	251	48
Reminder of HIV/AIDS	98	19
Reasons for using a condom	223	43
Other	17	3

Unprompted recall of information (N=524)*

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*Multiple responses

The evaluation findings indicate that the *Safe Sex and Alcohol Use* campaign has been highly successful in reaching its target audience, with three quarters of the young people surveyed having seen the campaign posters. The research findings also show a reasonably high level of unprompted recall of the campaign's health messages, particularly recalling the key messages of mixing sex with alcohol.

From:

Fraser, R. and McClellan, V. (1996). *An Evaluation of the Convenience Advertising Safe Sex and Alcohol Use Campaign*. Centre for Research, Evaluation and Social Assessment, New Zealand.

Australia

Workplace Demonstration Project 1995

The Workplace Demonstration Project was a federally funded project sponsored by the Australian Drug Foundation in conjunction with two organisations, the Victoria Police and Ericsson Australia. The program consisted of interventions targeting alcohol and drug problems in and relating to the workplace. The major intervention program was the Christmas Campaign, consisting of the Convenience Advertising approach and party kits (including balloons, coasters, bottle openers, party 'tips'), pay packet messages, noticeboard messages and articles in internal magazines. In terms of awareness, the toilet advertising in each organisation was the most recalled of the methods used. More than four out of five respondents in each organisation noticed the toilet advertising.

Victoria Police

Of a total of 113 respondents, 82% recalled the alcohol awareness messages placed by Convenience. When asked which method captured their attention most, 72% chose Convenience compared to the next highest percentage of 15% for the party kits, followed by 11% for the pay packet messages. The toilet advertising was also the method most likely to make people think about alcohol (57%) with party kits and pay packets mentioned by comparatively fewer respondents (12% : 10%). Three quarters (74%) found the Convenience messages useful and practical, with the main message of moderation having appeared to come through via the toilet advertising. Four out of five respondents (81%) thought the toilet advertising was an appropriate way to convey messages about alcohol.

Ericsson Australia

The Convenience approach reached the highest number of employees, with 91% of the 99 respondents recalling the toilet advertising compared to 46% recalling noticeboard messages and 32%, recalling information in the party kits. Again, the toilet messages captured respondents' attention the most (77%), with other approaches paling in comparison: booklets (6%), party kits (5%), noticeboards (3%). Almost half (47%) found that the toilet messages made them think the most about alcohol (60% in the city offices), with responses to the other approaches below 15%. Again, the majority (78%) found the Convenience messages useful and practical, with 89%, finding the approach to be an appropriate way to convey messages about alcohol.

Toilet advertising achieved strong awareness in both organisations, was the most attention getting of the methods used and made people think most about alcohol. The placement, number and content of posters saw a much more successful outcome for this advertising than for any other method.

From:

AMR:Quantum Harris (1995). *Workplace Demonstration Project, Christmas Campaign Evaluation*. Prepared for the Australian Drug Foundation. AMR Quantum Harris, Melbourne: Victoria.

The Netherlands

AIDS Prevention Among Risk-Taking Youth 1995

The project group 'AIDS and Drug Use' of the Netherlands Institute for Alcohol and Drugs (NIAD) has established that HIV/AIDS prevention information and education was not reaching certain groups of young people, namely 'at-risk' youth. These young people were considered at risk not only as a result of sexual practices but also drug use, especially injecting drug use. In conjunction with Foundation Mainline (a user organisation), Rutgers Stichting (the national sexual health clinic) and Convenience Advertising Pty Ltd, NIAD developed a pilot project using the Convenience Advertising strategy. The pilot project's main purpose was to investigate (1) whether the method of *convenience advertising* offers possibilities to reach 'risk taking youth' with regards to safe sex and safe use, and (2) to act as a 'reminder' for the target group; its main function to highlight safe behaviour and convince the target group of the messages' relevance to them.

The messages, with their use of black humour (see below), were placed in 63 locations around Rotterdam, namely coffee houses (some selling both alcohol and marijuana and others offering marijuana only), bars and discos. Five messages focused on safer sex compared to one on safer drug use (a total of six messages per venue). The pilot campaign lasted approximately six months from February 1994. The evaluation was undertaken in sixteen cafes and four discos using qualitative ethnographic field study in combination with quantitative results of a survey (N=280) conducted among visitors to several locations. Primary results revealed how the target group perceived the HIV/AIDS prevention campaign; a relationship between respondent characteristics (demographics and risk behaviours) and the recall of the messages; and the effect of Convenience Advertising on: the sale of condoms (both in stores and venues), the level of condom vending machine installation, access levels to the telephone information service listed on messages.

RESULTS

Demographics

Of 280 respondents, 55% were reached in cafes, while 45% were interviewed at discos. Women were on average two years younger than men (22 and 24.5 years). In terms of living arrangements, one third lived with their parents or other family, another third lived with a partner and/or children and a third lived alone. About 5% said they lived with 'others' or moved frequently. Half of the respondents were in paid work, while received a government allowance. More than one in five indicated they had been contact with police and/or the legal system in the last year (22%).

Drug Use

The majority of respondents used alcohol (84%) and/or tobacco (74%). Use of cannabis was understandably higher among cafe patrons (89%) than those at discos (54%). Ecstasy was used more by disco patrons (34%) than cafe customers (19%), and more often by women (34%) than men (15%). In the previous year, only three people reported not having used a legal or illegal drug. A smaller percentage have used other illicit drugs: 'pills' (18%), cocaine (13%), speed (8%) and LSD (5%,). In terms of injecting, only eight (3%) reported injecting drugs, with only three reporting injecting in the previous year. However, the majority reported knowing one or more persons who injected with more women (50%) than men (25%) reporting knowing others who injected.

Sexual Contact

The majority of respondents reported having sexual contact (83%) in the previous year, with most contact taking place with partners of the opposite sex (98%). Almost half (47%) reported having sex only with their regular partner, with one quarter (25%) reporting different partners. One in ten (9%) reported having sex with both a regular partner and other partners. In considering respondents with other partners, both with or without a regular partner, 61% did not always have safe sex. Of those in cafes, 71% did not always use a condom while 48% from the discos did not always use a condom.

Value of Convenience Advertising

Recall rates topped fifty percent with more cafe patrons spontaneously recalling messages (82%) than those at discos (60%). Prompted recall rates were higher with 91% of cafe patrons and 77% of disco patrons recognising messages. Of 234 respondents, 86% could instantly recall (97% could recognise) the advertised tag line, "AIDS, without a condom you're a bloody dickhead". The fewer posters referring to safer drug use were recalled by less than half (41%), with 76% of these recalling the tag line, "AIDS, without a clean fit, you're a bloody idiot". It should be noted however, that safer drug use messages (only one per venue) were placed in fewer venues as some venue owners were averse to 'hard' drug-related messages.

It appeared the messages were mostly understood, with 74% of men and 60% of women finding them 'clear and intelligible'. More than one third found the safe sex messages relevant. "But I mean, if you really are smitten, and you think tonight is the night and you see the thing displayed, then you think: oh yes, I'll have to get some condoms" (male, 19 years old in cafe).

It also appears that the campaign was successful in reaching its target audience. Respondents who had recently used illegal drugs (mostly ecstasy and cocaine) had taken note of the messages more often than those who had not used harder drugs in the last twelve months (94% : 75%). In addition, those who had different partners and did not always use a condom also recalled more messages than those who did not have unsafe sex (93% : 82%).

Outcomes

At the start of the campaign, seven venues housed condom vending machines. Stimulated by the campaign, eleven additional venues also installed machines. Ethnographic evidence suggests also that condom sales within venues increased considerably. Surprisingly, there had not been a reported increase in phone calls to the drug service advertised in messages. However, this may be a result from the comparatively low number of drug related messages and the low relevance of the drug messages to the sample as messages were placed in cafes catering to 'soft' drug use.

The positive response of the recognition of the messages, combined with the more qualitative data from the ethnographic fieldwork and the unstructured interviews clearly indicates that through the *convenience advertising* medium, a very great number of youth who frequent the night life circuit can be reached.

From:

Blanken, P. and Tenholter, J. (1995). *Convenience Advertising as a medium for AIDS-Prevention Among "Risk Taking" Youth : Evaluation of a Pilot Project.* NIAD: The Netherlands.

Convenience Advertising's unique form of narrowcasting information and education can be used to target specific audiences in private, gender specific locations. We take pride in expanding the dissemination of health and welfare information. Below are the areas into which Convenience Advertising will be exploring in our overall goal to reduce societal harms and improve the health and well-being of the community.

I. Women's Health

- sexual health
- breast cancer
- pregnancy
- body image/eating disorders

II. Child Welfare

- immunisation
- child abuse and neglect
- child health
- suicide

III. Ethnic Communities

- migrant youth
- legal rights
- alcohol and drugs
- gambling
- health information

IV. Work Care

- alcohol and drugs
- stress
- safety

V. General (includes ongoing activities)

- HIV/AIDS Prevention
- Sexual health
- Alcohol and drugs
- Hepatitis C
- Immunisation
- Gambling
- General Health issues

I. Sexual Health 1989-1996

Fraser, R. and McClellan, V. (1996). An Evaluation of the Convenience Advertising Safe Sex and Alcohol Use Campaign. Centre for Research, Evaluation and Social Assessment: Wellington.

Client: Public Health Unit, Central Regional Health Authority, New Zealand *The campaign was successful in reaching its target group, was acceptable and supported by them, and 92% agreed that this method was a good way of getting such messages across to young people. The campaign was effective across ethnic, gender and regional groups.*

Garland, R. (1996). Review of Convenience Advertising's Safe Sex and Alcohol Use Campaign. Ron Garland Market Research Consultant: NZ.
Client: Public Health Unit, Central Regional Health Authority, New Zealand The campaign has reached 76% of the target population; it has delivered substantial comprehension and agreement with the messages as well as a significant "call-to-action" from 18-28 years olds to protect their sexual health.

O'Beirne, M. (1996). A Report on an Assessment of a Pilot Programme Aimed at Youth from Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Areas. University of Ireland.
Client: The Health Promotion Unit. Department of Health, Eire.
Results suggest that young people from the target group ... do "read and remember" the posters and that the Convenience Advertising medium can play an important role in educating young people about the risks associated with unsafe behaviour.

Myhre, S. (1996). Evaluation Report: Gay Men's Health Crisis Inc.'s Narrowcasting HIV Prevention Campaign Targeting Gay and Bisexual Men. Educational Message Services: USA.

Client: Gay Men's Health Crisis Inc., New York

It is evident from the data that the campaign successfully reached a significant proportion of the targeted audience and also attained impressive recall and recognition rates. A notable percentage reported changes in awareness, attitudes and behaviours related to sexual activity ... and indicate that the campaign has had a profound impact on the targeted community.

Myhre, S. (1996). Evaluation Report: HIV Prevention Narrowcasting Campaign Targeting Gay and Bisexual Men in Massachusetts 1995-1996. Educational Message Services Inc.: USA

Client: AIDS Action Committee Inc., Boston MA

Unprompted recall of 71% and a total awareness of 91% was achieved. Over two thirds reported increased awareness, and a positive influence on sexual behaviour.

AGB McNair (1995). Evaluation of the Travel Safe Thai Pilot Program Report. AGB McNair: NSW.

Client: The Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services

A total awareness of 73.5% was achieved among men frequenting sex clubs in Thailand. Awareness and message recall rates are high among bar patrons who also judge the campaign to be both appropriate and personally relevant.

Blanken, P. and Tenholter, J. (1995). Convenience Advertising as a Medium for AIDS Prevention Among "Risk Taking" Youth: Evaluation of a Pilot Project. Addiction Research Institute: Rotterdam.

Client: The Netherlands Institute for Alcohol and Drugs

The positive response of the recognition of the messages, combined with the more qualitative data from the ethnographic fieldwork and the unstructured interviews clearly indicates that through the convenience advertising medium a very great number of youth who frequent the night life circuit are reached.

Addiction Research Institute (1995). Addiction Research Institute Annual Report 1995. Addiction Research Institute: Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

A review of an evaluation for Convenience Advertising's AIDS program for the National Institute for Alcohol and Drugs 'Convenience advertising as a medium for AIDS prevention among high risk youngsters'. 91% of youth visiting the 'drug cafes' noticed the campaign.

EMS (1995). Evaluation report: San Francisco AIDS Foundation's Narrowcasting HIV Prevention Campaign Targeting Gay and Bisexual Men. Educational Message Services: USA.

Client: San Francisco AIDS Foundation, California

One respondent replies to the continuation of the program: "Definitely. It's one of he most innovative and clever campaigns I've seen them do. It really does reach a lot of people".

Institute for Market Research (1994). Evaluation of Convenience Advertising AIDS Prevention Posters. Institute for Market Research: Germany.

Client: The Bayern States Ministry for Work and Social Order, Families, Women and Health

Total awareness was at 72% with the majority (over half) understanding the messages, finding the idea a good one and being reminded to practice safe sex.

O'Beirne, M. (1994). Evaluation of the Convenience Advertising Medium and HIV/AIDS Sexual Health Educational Programme in Further Education Colleges and Universities in Northern Ireland. University of Ireland.

Client: Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland

Mugford, S. (1994). Harm Reduction and Stimulant Drug Use on the Highways: An Evaluation of Convenience Advertising of Information for Long Distance Truck Drivers. Qualitative & Quantitative Social Research: ACT.

Clients: The Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services and the Australian Drug Foundation

A total recall rate of 95% was achieved. The data strongly indicate that the campaign was highly successful ... and very large majorities thought the campaign was worthwhile and relavant to the industry.

Stancombe (1994). Qualitative Research Findings: Young Heterosexuals. The 1994
Communication Environment in the Context of Sexually Transmitted Diseases including HIV/AIDS. Stancombe Research and Planning Pty. Ltd.: NSW.
Clients: The Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services
The communication has successfully made the use of condoms and other safe sex practices more fashionable, "cool" and acceptable, establishing safe sex as the norm amongst this target group.

O'Beirne, M. (1994). Presentation of Comments Made by the Respondents in the Evaluation of the HIV/AIDS Sexual Health Educational Programme. Health Promotion Agency: Ireland.

Client: Health Promotion Agency for Northern Island

- O'Beirne, M. (1994). Evaluation of the Convenience Advertising Medium and HIV/AIDS Sexual Health Educational Programme in Further Colleges and TAFES in Northern Ireland. Health Promotion Agency: Ireland. **Client: Health Promotion Agency for Northern Island**
- AGB McNair (1993). Evaluation: Information for Travellers 'Travel Safe' Campaign. AGB McNair: NSW.

Client: The Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services Total awareness of 44% was achieved among travellers. The campaign relative to its budget achieved high levels of awareness and a high degree of acceptance ... almost half found the campaign personally relevant.

Kitzinger, J. (1993). Report on the Research Project to Evaluate AIDS-Related Advertising in Further Education Colleges/Universities in Scotland. Glasgow University Media Group: Scotland.

Client: The Health Education Board for Scotland

68% recalled seeing at least one of the adverts and 45% reported some kind of interaction about the adverts. Respondents found them easy to understand and an effective way of getting across a safer sex message.

O'Beirne, M. (1992). Evaluation of the Convenience Advertising Medium and Health Promotion Unit Messages. Department of Health: Ireland. Client: Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland

There was a very high recall rate for the messages. The results indicate that the medium is a good disseminator of information to people and that people do notice the messages, even when they have been infrequent visitors to the premises where messages are displayed, with three messages selected as being most informative, memorable and useful.

Commonwealth of Australia (1992). The Senate Weekly Hansard. Parliamentary Debates. Thirty-sixth Parliament, first session, fifth period. No. 8, June 1992. In a tendering process with four contenders, Convenience Advertising was the successful agency. It was chosen as the only company which could offer national coverage; its rates also offered the best value for money.

Jackson, A. and Lindsay, J. (1992). Evaluation of the National Gay and Bisexual HIV/AIDS Education Campaign 1991. HIV/AIDS Socio-behavioural Research Unit, School of Social Work, University of Melbourne: VIC.
 Client: The Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services The recognition rate was 85%. Overall, the campaign was successful as measured by reach, recall, recognition and comprehension ... the dual placement strategy of print

advertisements was successful and should be maintained in future campaigns.

Mugford, S. (1991). Evaluation of the Convenience Advertising Strategy for AIDS Messages on Irish University Campuses. Department of Sociology, Australian National University: ACT.

Client: The Health Promotion Unit. Department of Health, Eire.

Recall rates of advertisements for safer sex ranged from 29% to 58%. Responses included that the messages were easy to understand, useful, novel in their treatment of AIDS and easy to remember. This is a very clear demonstration of the efficacy of the strategy in another context and confirms the positive evaluation reached in earlier studies.

Mugford, S. (1990). Evaluation of the Convenience Advertising Strategy for AIDS Messages on Two University Campuses. Department of Sociology, Australian National University: ACT.

Client: The Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services *Recall rates reached 83%. Taken together, the results display the strongest case for the efficacy of this simple advertising strategy for effectively narrow casting to target groups.* Mugford, S. (1989). An Evaluation of the Convenience Advertising Strategy. Report on the Halls of Residence Study. Department of Sociology, Australian National University: ACT.

Client: The Commonwealth Department of Health & Family Services

Recall rates of 63-78% were achieved. It was concluded that if one chooses to pursue an advertising strategy in the AIDS area then ... the "Convenience Advertising strategy" is a valuable and viable option.

II. Drug Use

- Mugford, S. (1993). Message in a toilet. International Journal of Drug Policy, 4(2): 135-145. The results clearly demonstrate the capacity to 'narrowcast' specific messages tailored for a given clientele. This is better than broadcasting to a wide range of potential audiences, risking either offence or irrelevance ... this is a very clear demonstration of the efficacy of the strategy.
- Mugford, S. (1992). Harm Reduction and Communication: the Convenience Advertising Strategy. Paper presented at the Third International Conference on the Reduction of Drug Related Harm 1992. Department of Sociology, ANU: ACT.
 In all cases, the level of recognition of the adverts and the recency with which they were recalled as being seen, along with other data on risk, on location accuracy and so forth, speak of an extremely effective strategy.

III. Alcohol Use

AGB McNair (1996). Convenience Advertising and the RTA Drink Driving Campaign: an Evaluation. AGB McNair: NSW.

Client: The Roads and Traffic Authority, NSW

A total awareness rate of 88% was reached with male bar patrons. Over half found the messages effective, useful and personally relevant.

AMR: Quantum Harris (1995). Workplace Demonstration Project: Christmas Campaign Evaluation Quantitative Report. AMR: Quantum Harris: VIC.

Client: The Australian Drug Foundation, Victoria

The messages contained in the main elements of the campaign ... appear to have come through clearly, particularly those in the toilet advertising. The placement, number and content of posters saw a much more successful outcome for this advertising than for any other method.