



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH Final Report

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Study Overview





Background and Objectives

- ◆ McAndrew Company contracted with Shugoll Research to conduct focus group research to test target audience reactions to a pedestrian safety campaign, “Turning Back Time.”
 - The pedestrian safety campaign is sponsored by the Departments of Transportation and Motor Vehicles in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia with participation by law enforcement agencies and public safety officials in the area.
 - The purpose of this campaign is to educate the public about the consequences of not obeying pedestrian safety laws.
- ◆ The research was conducted with area residents including those who reside in Northern Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia.
- ◆ Specific objectives of the focus groups were to:
 - Identify current traffic behaviors and concerns
 - Explore perceptions of pedestrian safety issues
 - Obtain reactions to “Turning Back Time” campaign
 - Explore general and social media habits



Methodology

- ◆ Two focus groups were conducted on January 19, 2012 at Shugoll Research's focus group facility located in Bethesda, MD.
- ◆ The focus groups were conducted in a focus group suite that contains a conference room, built-in audio and video equipment, one-way mirror and client viewing room behind the mirror. The groups were conducted at 6PM and 8PM and each group lasted 2 hours. Each group was comprised of 8 to 10 respondents.
- ◆ Focus group participants were carefully screened to meet the following criteria:
 - Area residents, 18 to 50 years of age
 - Use of various transportation modes including walking, biking, riding a Metro Bus or Metro Rail, and driving
 - Represent a mix of demographic characteristics including racial/ethnic background, education, household income and marital status
- ◆ In addition, respondents were screened to ensure that they are comfortable expressing their opinions in a group or interview and are articulate.

Limitations:

- ◆ The focus group methodology used for this study is qualitative in nature. Because the moderator's guide involves open-ended question areas, the exact wording of each question or the discussion of each question area will vary across groups. This means results are used to develop directions rather than quantitatively precise or absolute measures.
 - The limited number of respondents involved in this type of research means the study should be regarded as exploratory in nature, and the results used to generate hypotheses for marketing decision making and further testing.
 - The non-statistical nature of qualitative research means that results cannot be generalized to the population under study with a known level of statistical precision.

Key Findings



Identify Current Traffic Behaviors and Concerns





Current Traffic Behaviors and Concerns

- ◆ Pedestrian safety is not a top-of-mind concern.

 - "I don't hear a lot about pedestrian accidents. I hear a lot about car accidents. You see car accidents."*

 - "I can't say I've thought about it [pedestrian safety] before you brought the issue up."*

- Rather, area residents are most concerned with:

 - Distracted drivers

 - "I hate to see people texting and driving."*

 - "Absentminded drivers, people who aren't paying attention."*

 - Aggressive driving

 - "My main concern is aggressive drivers more than anything else."*

 - "Speeding is the main thing."*

 - Cyclists

 - "Bicyclists in the road, people trying to pass them and coming into my lane."*

 - "Other drivers passing bikes."*

 - Heavy volume of traffic on major roadways

 - "Beltway is winding and not very safe."*

Explore Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues



Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues

- ◆ **Once the topic of pedestrian safety is raised, area residents acknowledge it is an important safety issue.**
 - Further, several shared stories of their own experiences with pedestrian safety either from the perspective of a pedestrian or as a driver.
 - “It’s [pedestrian safety] always important.”*
 - “As a pedestrian, I feel like a lot of drivers in the city don’t obey the pedestrian rules.”*
 - “I practically get hit like once a week!”*
 - “I was actually worried about getting hit walking to this building.”*

- ◆ **Area residents identified several factors that impact pedestrian safety.**
 - Contributing factors include:
 - Vehicles making right turns on red traffic lights
 - “[Now that you can make a right turn on the red] When there are pedestrians in the crosswalk, they shouldn’t mow them down.”*
 - “Crossing the street with people making a right hand turn. You’ve got the crossing signal, but everybody’s always in a hurry.”*
 - “If you have a green light and you’re making a right turn, you’re not thinking there’s a whole other lane of traffic which is the sidewalk [pedestrians].”*
 - Distracted drivers
 - “Smart phones are definitely a distraction for both pedestrians and drivers.”*



Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues

- Distracted pedestrians

“Driving through GW’s campus area, nobody pays attention if there is a car coming or not, they just walk out into the middle of the street.”

- Jaywalking

“I’m guilty of it, too. I cross at places I shouldn’t, but I try to make sure no cars are coming.”

“I guess I can be classified as a bad pedestrian. I’ll cross in the middle of the street instead of going to the light. I’m trying to get where I’m going.”

- Poor lighting

“Drivers don’t see you. I’d carry a flashlight just to be seen.”

- Lack of sidewalks

“There aren’t a lot of sidewalks in Maryland.”

- ◆ **Most perceive pedestrian safety as the responsibility of both pedestrians and drivers.**

- Both pedestrians and drivers are responsible for pedestrian safety.

“It’s not only a one-sided problem. If there is a crosswalk, they both need to stop.”

“I’m on the walking end, so I feel like I’m in the right, but I see that it’s a two-sided thing.”

“I think it should go both ways. I think if the driver is going to get a ticket for not yielding, and if the pedestrian doesn’t follow the signs, they should get a ticket.”



Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues

- Area residents are generally aware of pedestrian safety laws including:

- Yielding to pedestrians

"You have to yield for pedestrians."

- Crossing a street in the designated crosswalk area versus jaywalking

"You have to cross in the crosswalk."

- ◆ **Further, residents are aware of the consequences of disobeying pedestrian safety laws.**

- Most are aware that they can receive a ticket. However, the likelihood of receiving ticket and/or a fine as a pedestrian seems minimal.

"Death is one consequence."

"Accidents."

"I've never seen it happen to anybody, but I guess you can get tickets."

"I do know of a few people who have gotten jaywalking tickets."

- ◆ **There is some awareness of current pedestrian safety campaigns.**

- Several residents recall seeing pedestrian safety messages on the sides of Metro buses and/or onboard Metro rail cars. A few also mentioned signage in crowded pedestrian areas in Washington, DC.

"There's a giant high heel and the car crashing into it."

"On the side of the Metrobus, there is a sign that says to watch for bicyclists."

"In DC, they have those signs about jaywalking and the dangers of it."

Obtain Reactions to “Turning Back Time” Campaign



Board 1



Board 2



Board 3



Board 4



Board 5



Board 6



Board 7





Reactions to “Turning Back Time” TV Ad

- ◆ “Turning Back Time” is attention-getting and well received.

- Area residents respond very positively to “Turning Back Time” and describe the ad as dramatic, powerful, emotional and intense.

“It was a good message and I liked it.”

“It was very impressionable and I found it very attention-getting.”

“I think the way they have it where there’s no sound, just the music and then going into reverse, it kind of got you on the edge of your seat, like what happened to the person lying on the ground? How did they get there?”

“I thought it was impressive. It caught my attention.”

“Emotionally powerful!”

- Perceived strengths of the ad include:

- Shown from the perspective of the victim

“You were the person getting hit. You don’t usually see that.”

“The point of view is good.”

- Reversal of time

“I think that going in reverse time was the thing for me along with the music. It raises your curiosity, like what’s going to happen...just putting the pieces of the puzzle together basically.”

“I said powerful because you think, ‘Maybe, I should have done something differently.’”



Reactions to “Turning Back Time” TV Ad

➤ Music

“I thought the music was appropriate. It’s different music than for other products and you might stop and watch it.”

“Background music is good. I feel like it’s one of those things that I’d be tuned in for.”

- Further, most respond positively to the lack of establishing who is at fault, although a couple express a preference for knowing whether the driver or the pedestrian is at fault.

“It could go either way.”

“I really like that there was no fault because one population would feel really ticked off about it”

“You don’t need to know.”

“For me, I would prefer to know whose fault this was in the first place. It makes it more personal to me and that way I know I can fix what I’m doing. It may be more effective to have two ads: one that it’s blatantly the driver’s fault and one that’s the pedestrian’s fault.”



Reactions to “Turning Back Time” TV Ad

- ◆ The ad conveys a dual message: 1) it reminds viewers of the importance of pedestrian safety, and 2) it informs viewers that area law enforcement officers will be issuing tickets and fines.

- The ad reinforces the importance of pedestrian safety and informs viewers of the consequences.

“Be cautious, use good judgment, pay attention.”

“It’s kind of like your life could change in an instant, kind of thing.”

“I thought it was effective because there are two approaches to it: if you don’t obey traffic lights, you could get a ticket. On the other side, you might not get a ticket, you might get by or you might injure someone.”

“It was really saying that this could happen. You really could hit someone or you could get hit. When you’re walking or driving, you really don’t think anything is going to happen.”

“Just [showed] the necessity of prevention and safety.”

“The biggest message, and they repeat it, was the police are enforcing pedestrian safety.”

“One, police are going to be out monitoring pedestrian safety, and two, as a driver you have to be more alert and more cognizant of what’s going on around you.”

“The takeaway that I got was that there are going to be people out there ticketing for these issues.”



Reactions to “Turning Back Time” TV Ad

- Some residents, however, struggle with the transition from the emotional story depicting the severe consequences of disobeying pedestrian safety laws to the enforcement message. These residents find the transition too abrupt.

“The cop at the end took away from the ad. It was a very impressionable emotional [message], and then it like popped out with this fake cop. To me, it would have been more dramatic to have a black screen with just text. To me, that cop at the end was sort of tacky and took away from the commercial.”

“I totally agree!”

“If you wanted to convey the image of a cop, maybe you could use a symbol like a badge versus an actual person.”

- Some suggest the loss of life is more motivating than tickets and fines.

“I think the focal point should be more along the lines of lives are at stake. Because tickets, for some people, are not really a deterrent enough to care. The fact that you may kill someone, that’s a lot more serious.”

“If I’m caught drunk driving, eventually that can go away. That can come off my record eventually. If I kill someone, that’s real permanent.”

- Further, some question how pedestrian violators can receive points.

“How does a pedestrian get points?”

“Pedestrian can get tickets, but I don’t know about points.”

“Does anyone know a pedestrian safety law that gives you [as a pedestrian] points?”



Reactions to “Turning Back Time” TV Ad

- ◆ Few recall the Be Street Smart website address and several note that they would be interested to read the laws relating to pedestrian safety.

- Currently, the ad does not include a call to action to visit the website.

“What is the website?”

“Send me to the website. You could be ticketed for not knowing this stuff.”

“That was the difficulty for me at the end. You’ve done a great job of getting my attention. You got me emotionally entangled, but I don’t really know what the rules are that you’re talking about.”

“I need to know what’s on the website and why it would appeal to me. I think most people are not exactly sure what the pedestrian rules are, when you can cross the street and when you can’t, and when you might get a ticket for jaywalking.”

- Consumers expect to see the following type of information on the website:

- Description of pedestrian safety laws by jurisdiction

“Right now, when crossing the street, I look both ways because it’s the cautious thing to do, not because the law will get you or something.”

- Consequences of breaking pedestrian safety laws

“Maybe list the consequences of breaking the law, like getting a ticket for X amount of dollars.”

“You could have a link for the different cities or areas.”



Reactions to “Turning Back Time” TV Ad

- ◆ Many note that the ad will motivate behavioral changes on a short-term versus long-term basis.

- With regard to behavioral changes, many note that the ad will effectively raise their awareness and that they will be more alert to pedestrian safety for awhile. Several even described that they would look around intersections to see if there are any police present before engaging in an unsafe behavior (e.g., jaywalking). However, these residents expect they will not remain vigilant about pedestrian safety issues over the long run.

“I think if I saw this on TV, I would remember it. And if I’m walking around, it would make me more aware of it [pedestrian safety].”

“To look before you cross. I think after seeing this commercial, at least for a while, I would be a little bit more conscious of where I was walking. I don’t know how long I would do that, but it would definitely make me more conscious.”

“I’m left wondering, okay, what am I going to do differently?”

“Some people won’t take it very seriously. I know some people that still text and drive. And when they see a police car, they just put it down and once the police car drives by, they’re texting again or talking on the phone.”

“I might double check to make sure no cops are around, but that’s about it.”

- A few suggest dramatic statistics may motivate their behavior.

“I’d like to see X amount of people died [due to pedestrian collisions]. A better way would be to say one in five people are hit by a car every year because that makes it more realistic. Or one in every 15 seconds.”



Reactions to Campaign Headlines and Subheads

- ◆ Overall, area residents prefer “Protecting Drivers, Pedestrians & Cyclists.”

- Residents were exposed to three headlines:

1. Stopping Killer Collisions

2. Stopping Killer Pedestrian Crashes

3. Protecting Drivers, Pedestrians & Cyclists

- While “Killer” is extremely attention-getting, many reject the strong negative imagery associated with the word and they feel the message is more targeted toward drivers.

“Stop Killer Collisions makes me think of car crashes.”

“I would like number 2 if they didn’t use the work ‘killer.’ I think the word ‘fatal’ is more appropriate.”

“The word ‘fatal’ speaks to me a little bit more [than killer]. It’s more serious to me.”

“Number 1 is vague. It doesn’t tell me what kind of collisions you are stopping.”

“It’s too dramatic.”

“Killer collisions seems like it’s geared towards the driver because they’re the one who obviously would be doing the killing.”

- Of the two “Killer” headline options, most prefer “Stopping Killer Pedestrian Crashes” because they feel the word “pedestrian” provides important context to the message.

“I like this one best. It relates to drivers and pedestrians as opposed

“It’s good, but not catchy. If it could somehow be catchier – maybe an acronym or something.”



Reactions to Campaign Headlines and Subheads

- Those who prefer “Protecting, Drivers, Pedestrians & Cyclists” respond positively to the descriptive and all inclusive nature of the headline. Although the headline is all encompassing and descriptive, several note that it is too wordy and not memorable.

“I like that one because it’s inclusive. It’s inclusive of not only drivers and pedestrians, but bicyclists as well.”

“Number 3 – it’s all encompassing.”

“Explains the issue more.”

“It’s too wordy, too long.”

- ◆ **Among the subhead options, residents are divided among the first two options.**

- The following are the three subhead options:
 1. Obey pedestrian safety laws or get tickets, fines and points.
 2. Obey all traffic safety laws or get tickets, fines and points.
 3. Obey ALL traffic safety laws that relate to pedestrian safety or get tickets, fines and points.



Reactions to Campaign Headlines and Subheads

- Residents favor one of the first two subhead options primarily due to their brevity.

"I like number 1 best. I think it relates to drivers and pedestrians, as opposed to #2 which is just the driver. I think pedestrians should be included in this decision, too, not just drivers. Pedestrians should also obey all traffic and safety laws."

"I picked number 1. It's just short, to the point, brief."

"Number 1. It's more active. It actually draws myself to the idea that it's pedestrians laws."

"Number 2 tells you more sides of the issue."

"It's important to have the word 'pedestrian' in these."

"I like number 2 because its more broad, not just pedestrian, but all safety rules including traffic. Number 3 has too much wording for me."

"Number 3 is just too long."

- There is some disagreement regarding the necessity to include "pedestrian" in the subhead if it's featured in the headline.

"I chose number 1, but it definitely depends on the heading. If the heading says, 'Stop Killer Pedestrian Crashes', than 'Obey pedestrian safety...' sounds redundant. If the whole point of the campaign is to emphasize the often overlooked pedestrian safety laws, then specifically saying 'pedestrian safety laws' is important."



Reactions to Campaign Headlines and Subheads

- One consumer suggested an alternative headline: Obey pedestrian and traffic safety laws or get fines, tickets and points.
- A couple also suggested adding the phrase “or worse” to the ending. For example, *Obey pedestrian safety laws or get tickets, fines and points or worse.*

“I think ‘or worse’ adds a lot of impact and would make me think more.”

Explore General and Social Media Habits





General and Social Media Habits

- ◆ Residents rely on out-of-home media for information relating to traffic safety.

- While area residents use a variety of media channels for general information, most associate traffic safety messages with out-of-home media channels including transit and outdoor.

“Sides of buses.”

“Billboards.”

“Metro train.”

“Radio – I always listen to the radio when I’m in my car.”

- Those searching for traffic safety information will turn to the internet.

“Websites.”

“If I’m looking for something on safety, it’s going to be Google.”

- ◆ Social media is used for connecting with others and/or entertainment rather than safety information.

- Although many indicated they would turn to the Internet for traffic safety information, most reject the notion of “friending” a Street Smart Facebook page or following the organization on Twitter.

“I use Facebook to monitor my son.”

“I’m not looking for that [traffic safety information] on Facebook.”

“I’m looking for pictures, entertainment.”



General and Social Media Habits

“I would see no reason to friend bestreetsmart.net.”

“I wouldn’t friend them. I think the best solution would be to try and integrate it with something else like Google Maps or something.”

- There is some interest in visiting a Street Smart website for additional information. As noted previously, area residents are interested in learning:
 - Pedestrian rules and laws by jurisdiction
 - Tickets, fines and points by jurisdiction

◆ **Awareness of QR codes is relatively high, although few have actually used them.**

- A few indicate they have used QR codes.

“It’s convenient if you need some information and you don’t have time to read, you can just store the data in your phone.”

“I’ve used it for recipes and things.”

“I’ve seen them before and I’ve tried them, but I don’t really understand what happens. I have an iPhone, but I don’t know how to use QR codes.”

“I’ve seen them, but I haven’t used them.”

Implications and Recommendations



Implications and Recommendations

The research findings reinforce the need for a campaign as the issue of pedestrian safety is not top-of-mind among area residents. The campaign will serve to heighten awareness of the importance of pedestrian safety and motivate compliance to safety laws.

The following recommendations are based solely on this research:

1. Consider how best to transition from the emotional story to the enforcement message.
2. Reevaluate the law enforcement visual imagery in the last scene.
3. Consider revising the outdoor headline so that it is short and memorable.

Appendix A: Respondent Profile





Respondent Profile

	Total (n=18)
Age	
18-24 years	6
25-29 years	3
30-39 years	4
40-49 years	5
Transportation Methods*	
Walk	9
Ride a bike	0
Ride a bus	4
Take Metro Rail	11
Drive a car	11

Q.2: Which of the following groups includes your age?

Q.3: On a typical day, which of the following modes of transportation do you use?

* Respondents were allowed to select more than one answer.



Respondent Profile

	Total (n=18)
Marital Status	
Single, never married	9
Married	5
Living with significant other	3
Separated/divorced/widowed	1
Education Status	
High school graduate	1
Some college	5
College graduate	6
Some graduate school	1
Graduate or professional degree	5
Gender	
Female	6
Male	12

- Q.6: Now, for our records, what is your marital status?
- Q.7: What was the last grade of school you completed?
- Q.14 Record gender:



Respondent Profile

	Total (n=18)
Employment Status	
Employed full-time	15
Employed part-time	1
Homemaker	0
Student	1
Retired	0
Not employed right now	1
Residence	
DC	7
Maryland	6
Virginia	5

Q.8: What is your employment status? Are you...?

Q.11: Where do you live?



Respondent Profile

	Total (n=18)
Ethnicity	
White	11
African-American/Black	5
American Indian or Native American	0
Asian	0
Hispanic or Latino	1
Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander	0
Other	1
Annual Household Income	
\$30,000 to just under \$34,999	0
\$35,000 to just under \$44,999	2
\$45,000 to just under \$49,999	3
\$50,000 to just under \$74,999	4
\$75,000 to just under \$99,999	5
\$100,000 to just under \$150,000	2
Over \$150,000	2

Q.12: In our survey we want to make sure that all ethnic groups are represented. Which of the following categories best describes your ethnic origin? Would you say...?

Q.13: Which of the following categories includes your total annual household income before taxes?