



PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ADVERTISING CAMPAIGN FOCUS GROUP RESEARCH Topline 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

- ◆ **Most area residents estimate they spend 1 to 2 hours a day in transit.**
 - Per the recruiting specifications, residents rely on various transportation modes including:
 - Walking
 - Cycling
 - Metro Bus
 - Metro Rail
 - Driving

- ◆ **Pedestrian safety is not a top-of-mind concern.**
 - Rather, area residents are most concerned with:
 - Distracted drivers
 - Cyclists
 - Heavy volume of traffic on major roadways

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.
- ◆ **Area residents identified several factors that impact pedestrian safety.**
 - Contributing factors include:
 - Vehicles making right turns on red traffic lights
 - Distracted drivers
 - Distracted pedestrians
 - Jaywalking
 - Poor lighting
- ◆ **Most perceive pedestrian safety as the responsibility of both pedestrians and drivers.**
 - Area residents are generally aware of pedestrian safety laws including:
 - Yielding to pedestrians
 - Crossing a street in the designated crosswalk area versus jaywalking



Perceptions of Pedestrian Safety Issues

- ◆ **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.
- ◆ **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.

Obtain Reactions to “Turning Back Time” Campaign







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.
 - Perceived strengths of the ad include:
 - Shown from the perspective of the victim
 - Reversal of time
 - Music
 - 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.
- ◆ **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.**
 - 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.
 - Further, some question how pedestrian violators can receive points.
- ◆ **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.
- ◆ **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.



Reactions to Campaign Headlines and Subheads

- ◆ Overall, area residents prefer “Protecting Drivers, Pedestrians & Cyclists.”
 - Residents were exposed to three headlines:
 - Stopping Killer Collisions
 - Stopping Killer Pedestrian Crashes
 - 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. Of the two “Killer” headline options, most prefer “Stopping Killer Pedestrian Crashes” because they feel the word “pedestrian” provides important context to the message.
 - 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.
- ◆ Among the subhead options, residents are divided among two options.
 - The following are the three subhead options:
 - Obey pedestrian safety laws or get tickets, fines and points.
 - Obey all traffic safety laws or get tickets, fines and points.
 - Obey ALL traffic safety laws that relate to pedestrian safety or get tickets, fines and points.
 - Residents favor one of the first two subhead options primarily due to their brevity. There is some disagreement regarding the necessity to include “pedestrian” in the subhead if it’s featured in the headline.

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.
- ◆ **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.
 - There is some interest in visiting a Street Smart website for additional information. 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.**

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.