



PAN-GRAMPIAN ALCOHOL & DRUG PARTNERSHIPS CAMPAIGN REPORT – “NOT FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION” (NEW PSYCHOACTIVE SUBSTANCES)

Background

The three Grampian Alcohol & Drug Partnerships, Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray came together early in 2014 to develop and deliver a campaign targeted towards raising awareness of issues around new psychoactive substances (NPS), usually referred to as “legal highs” (somewhat unhelpfully) in the popular media.

Campaign Development & Key Message

A previous event held in Aberdeen City hosted by Transition Extreme and funded by Police Scotland and Aberdeen City Alcohol & Drug Partnership allowed an opportunity to engage a broad population of young people (secondary school age and above) around messages regarding NPS, i.e. that legal does not = safe. Young people engaged with the Transition Extreme ‘Academy’ prior to the event came up with the message “not for human consumption” as a play and reference to the packaging and branding of NPS products.

A decision was taken to engage ‘The Big Partnership’ a PR and digital marketing agency with a wide operating base across Scotland with the required expertise and insight in terms of the campaign outcomes. This took the form of a social media approach.

The campaign format was developed with the idea of enticing potential experimental users as customers through creation of bespoke adverts similar to those currently in active use by NPS vendors. All adverts linked to a specially created website – www.legal-highs.org.uk

Target Demographics

Target Audience:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Geographic area of Grampian• Age range 18 – 60• Interests – music, music festivals and various music genre
Adverts used:	<p>3 different adverts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>“Blue 52, Cosmic Dust, Elevator, Hyperspace”</i>• <i>“Tried Legal Highs?”</i>• <i>“Huge Range Available”</i>

Website Homepage

Anyone deciding to show further interest in the advertisements visited the ‘retail’ website were they were presented with the shop window with the full range of products apparently for sale. When clicking on any of the products visitors were then immediately met with the key message for the campaign – “Not for Human Consumption” and with a



further click then redirected finally to an information portal (the ‘MYCREW’ website):

<http://www.mycrew.org.uk/drugs-information/legal-highs>

This site contains more detailed and thorough information on key messages around NPS and specific NPS products including support options that can be easily accessed.

Campaign Deliverables

Over the 5 week campaign period (2nd July 2014 to 8th August 2014), the Facebook advertising campaign reached a total of **121,652** people and resulted in **2,066** clicks through to the website.

Google Analytics Review (Social Media Platforms)

Page Views	Pages Sessions	Average Session Duration	Bounce Rate %
2,795	2.33	01:08	46.38

On average, each user viewed 2.33 pages which equated to 1,572 users clicking through and thus increasing exposure to the 'not for human consumption' key message.

The average time spent on the site was just over one minute which would also suggest that users were taking the time to consider the options on the website given the fact there was not a lot of content on this site.

A follow-up phase was also initiated in order to reveal the purpose behind the campaign to those who had engaged initially, but had thought that the adverts were genuinely selling NPS products.

Campaign Results Summary

The Facebook adverts were targeted to a potential audience of 121,652 with over 2,000 Facebook users clicking on the advertisements and visiting the Legal Highs website (with a total of 1,572 engaged with the 'Not for Human Consumption' key message).

Given the broad base of potential audience and of course that not everyone targeting would display an interest in NPS products, it was interesting to note that nearly a quarter (21% (424) of the overall visitors) to the Legal Highs website subsequently clicked through to MYCREW website.

On average, each user viewed 2.33 pages and spent just over one minute on the site (and with the bounce rate of 46.38% which is strong), demonstrated that the majority of users stayed on the page and didn't leave the website immediately.

Conclusion

The campaign was a completely novel and therefore untested approach with a budget set that reflected a degree of caution. That said, when compared directly with previous ADP sponsored media based campaigns utilising other platforms, the cost effectiveness is clearly high with this particular approach whereby only a single social media platform was employed.

Although the number of those successfully engaged (2,066) in comparison to the overall reach (121,652) appears to show at a very slight proportion (1.69% of overall reach), statistics used by local media provided by the Internet Advertising Bureau suggest an average of 0.08% engagement rate via online advertising. This would suggest, particularly given that respondents had to 'click' through more than once in order to reach the message, that this is a very strong response rate indeed.

This could potentially also be read as a relatively strong response when factoring in as a proxy the broad prevalence estimates of NPS use in Scotland (generally considered to be lower in the adult population than illegal drug use, but often higher in younger age groups). However a degree of caution needs to be exercised in this instance when working with population based estimates and making comparisons with campaign interactions. The campaign will have potentially reached a number of individuals who could be classified as 'curious' as opposed to demonstrating a strong desire to actually purchase NPS products online.

The approach taken was broad enough to have significant reach, but obviously this precluded non Facebook users and others within the overall target population. Value was demonstrated in the ability to reach an audience extremely difficult to target accurately with more conventional or traditional methodology.

The campaign approach has also been effective in providing a useful baseline for measuring deliverables. With a strong ratio of reach/hits and a high level of engagement on the web pages, this provides encouragement for any further campaign development utilising this format.

Initial reports from the Google analytics for the MYCREW webpage also support the reach of the campaign. For example, Aberdeen based 'hits' referred from www.legal-highs.org.uk outnumbered those from the Edinburgh (normally highest) area itself during the period of the campaign. Further analysis and comparative work will be required in order to make fuller conclusions.

Although 134 'negative' comments were received, in the spirit of what the campaign was trying to achieve – these were in fact positive and conducive to the overall message aim. Furthermore it would be difficult to see a situation in which this sort of anti-NPS publicity could be generated free of cost. Other learning points not available until now point to the type of advert most likely to attract interest as well as improving recognition of the demographics of those engaged with the campaign.

The website will remain 'live' over the coming year, and further discussions will take place in terms of refreshing the campaign for a further period during 2015.

Applying learning from the demographics of respondents and the effectiveness of specific advertisements could further the longevity of the campaign message, also taking into account any further policy and legislative developments that may arise regarding new psychoactive substances.

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