2015-2016 ALCOHOL SOCIAL NORMS CAMPAIGN

We began by identifying statistics from the Missouri College Health Behavior Survey. These statistics were then taken to focus groups to evaluate student responses.

We created several variations in the statistics, by changing key words in order to get a message that sounded or felt different, but still had the same meaning.

We contacted student organizations and Greek Life in order to set up focus groups, where we utilized a mixed-method approach to getting the results we needed.

We gave each student a sheet with the list of statistics, and we showed a single statistic (and its variations) at a time on a projector. We then asked students, what they thought the message was trying to say, how the message felt (aggressive, calm, supportive), as well as asking them to check which message they liked the most on their sheet of paper.

This resulted in two types of data. We had Quantitative data from the favorite messages selected by each participant. We also had Qualitative data from the discussions and reactions of students. For example one of our Sororities reacted as if a statistic was completely false when they first saw it. However one member spoke up and mentioned how we have a large campus, and they are not experiencing what everyone else is experiencing. This is exactly what we want out messages to do, to challenge the perceptions of our students. Therefore, this particular statistic showed promise thanks to the qualitative response we were able to receive.

After running our focus groups, we were able to narrow down which particular versions of our statistics were working the best.

Social Norms Messages:

81% of UCM students do not drink and drive.

77% of UCM students drink 0-4 drinks when they party

91% of UCM students did not let alcohol interfere with tests or assignments in the past year
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77% of UCM students did not experience a blackout or memory loss in the past year as a result of alcohol consumption

**BRANDING**

Simple and straightforward, the branding needs to be reminiscent of UCM’s branding.

We had a variety of options available to have our campaign visually branded. Partners in Prevention’s Eric Filcoff is a very talented designer and a wonder to work with. As a design student, we could have had one of our interns brand this for us. Our University Relations department is in charge of all things design related to UCM.

We chose to utilize our University Relations department due to their expertise in branding for our University.

Your particular university may have similar options, fewer, or completely different. Pick what makes the most sense for you and your campus.

**WHAT DO WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO?**

Three primary actions that we want students to take after seeing our advertisements are:

1. **Think about their drinking choices and how it affects their academics (cognitive dissonance)**
2. **Drink Less**
3. **Use Risk Reduction habits**
   
   (Risk Reduction - any change in behavior that reduces the chances of hurting yourself or others.)
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[Risk Reduction - any change in behavior that reduces the chances of hurting yourself or another person; in alcohol, this is anything that helps reduce any negative side effects of drinking.]

Our messages should encourage these three actions, without actively saying these things. The students should be able to read the message and come to this conclusion on their own.

MEDIA MATRIX

Touch Points:
Each of our messages should be seen by students 7x for optimum exposure.

After a student is exposed to the messaging 7x times, they are more likely to remember the message without seeing it.

Saturation:
The media matrix helps us evaluate how well the message is being circulated to students. By charting what methods we are using, we can be sure to cover every option within our means. The more saturation and variation in formats, the better exposure we get to students.

Visual Representation:
Not only does the media matrix help plan strategically, it's also an effective way to visualize your campaign so that it is easier to understand, track, and communicate.

Color Coding:
We can visualize each message easily by color coding them, and using colors to mark where each message is being exposed. Color is quicker and easier to recognize and understand than having long lists or words.

Students have three primary motivators for change behavior, in this order:

Academics
Avoiding Sickness
Saving Money

When we are crafting our messages and slogans, they need to appeal to these factors. The first two are in line with VSAP’s Risk Reduction approach to alcohol usage, by appealing to students’ academic concerns and desire to avoid sickness, we can help encourage students to make good decisions when consuming alcohol.
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Encourage students to make good decisions when consuming alcohol.

Saving Money is not a focus of this Social Norms Campaign.

P.I.E.

When crafting messages for students that encourage them to make decisions in behaviors, these messages have to meet these three standards. The messages and images have to encourage the students by making the messages positive. This means that negative imagery, scare tactics, and similar things cannot be used. These simply prevent the students from receiving the actual message, and it can even create defensiveness to the campaign.

They also have to be inclusive and allow the students at UCM to feel some type of connection to the advertisement so that they can begin to relate, and ultimately experience cognitive dissonance with the intended message and their current behaviors. The message has to appeal to a wide audience of UCM’s diverse campus.

The messages need to be empowering, so that the students who are already exhibiting the intended behaviors feel good doing so, and those who make a change feel good making that decision.

HOW ARE THESE ACTIONS GOING TO HELP STUDENTS IMPROVE THEIR LIVES?

Students are not going to make a change unless this change shows a positive improvement on their lives. We need to give them a reason. Based on the primary motivators, the message needs to convey the idea that as a result of changing their behavior, they can potentially receive these benefits:

1. get better grades
2. build better relationships
3. have more fun
4. reduce sickness
5. etc.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND IMAGES

Dan Riley spoke about the usage of people in social norms imagery, and generally you want to avoid people due to the possibility of having someone who is a known high profile drinker, which could inadvertently discredit your message to students. Other schools have used photographs of well-known statues and features of campus to tie the campaign into their school atmosphere while maintaining credibility.

However, a look at any other major advertising campaign will show that they nearly always utilize people as the primary piece to their advertising. Think Dove or Nike, both campaigns are interested in changing perceptions and habits of their customers. This is because people are relatable. When we are talking to students, they won’t feel a connection to the message unless
utilize people as the primary piece to their advertising. Think Dove or Nike; both campaigns are interested in changing perceptions and habits of their customers. This is because people are relatable. When we are talking to students, they won’t feel a connection to the message unless they can imagine another student or themselves actually being part of it.

A solution to this problem that works with both ideas is the usage of large groups of people in campus locations, where the people’s faces are not the primary focus of the photograph. People will still feel connected to the UCM community and other students, while maintaining the important anonymity that Dan Riley Mentioned.

We don’t want to use specific populations of students unless we are targeting that portion of the student body purposefully and individually.

WHAT NEXT?

After establishing these guidelines, you can now begin to craft your content and messages that will be on your posters. It is much easier to go to a designer and tell them, we have ____ and ____ to say, and we need these designed similar to ____. This will give the designer a good idea of what they need to create, and ensure a smoother process for both sides.

BUDGETS

You can also use your completed media matrix to begin working on your budget in relation to your proposed campaign. You can list out each method of saturation, and price it out much easier when you have a visual representation.

You then want to work with your designer to create a variety of designs and formats to fit your campaign and get everything printed and ready to put up around your campus.