
Executive Summary

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DUI: The \$8,866 Hangover

Prepared for

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Executive Summary

BBC Research & Consulting (BBC) was retained by the Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT) to evaluate the effectiveness of the DUI: The \$8,866 Hangover campaign.

Background

Crossroads Managed Care, a Pueblo non-profit organization, received a CDOT grant in January 2000 to develop a pilot project that would decrease impaired driving by lower-income men between the ages of 21 and 34. Crossroads named the overall project “Smart Roads.” Additional CDOT funding provided for assistance from BBC Research & Consulting and Cactus Marketing Communications in developing and implementing this community-based campaign. Other Pueblo community partners, particularly the members of Drive Smart Pueblo, served as local community coalition members.

The campaign “DUI: The \$8,866 Hangover” was developed to communicate the “total cost” of a DUI. Previous research with the at-risk audience found that most believed that the financial implications of a DUI would be less than \$500.

The campaign coordinated paid and free media with community activities in an effort to convey the consequences of a DUI. These efforts attempted to reach all members of the at-risk group through:

- Television advertisements;
- Radio advertisements;
- Billboards;
- Newspaper advertisements; and
- Community outreach.

Evaluation Methodology

The long-run purpose of the campaign is to reduce the incidence of impaired driving crashes in Pueblo County.¹ Because of the severity of the problem in Pueblo, it may require years of community efforts and visible enforcement before the impaired driving crash rate decreases. In the nearer term, measuring the awareness of the campaign indicates whether the message reached the intended audience.

¹ The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is evaluating the impact of this program on impaired driving crashes in a separate research effort.

BBC conducted a telephone survey and focus groups to measure awareness of the campaign and to compare attitudes and perceptions of impaired driving with available benchmarks. BBC also interviewed members of the coalition for their feedback.

Key Findings

Campaign awareness. The campaign message appears to be reaching a large proportion of the at-risk audience — Pueblo County men ages 21 to 34.

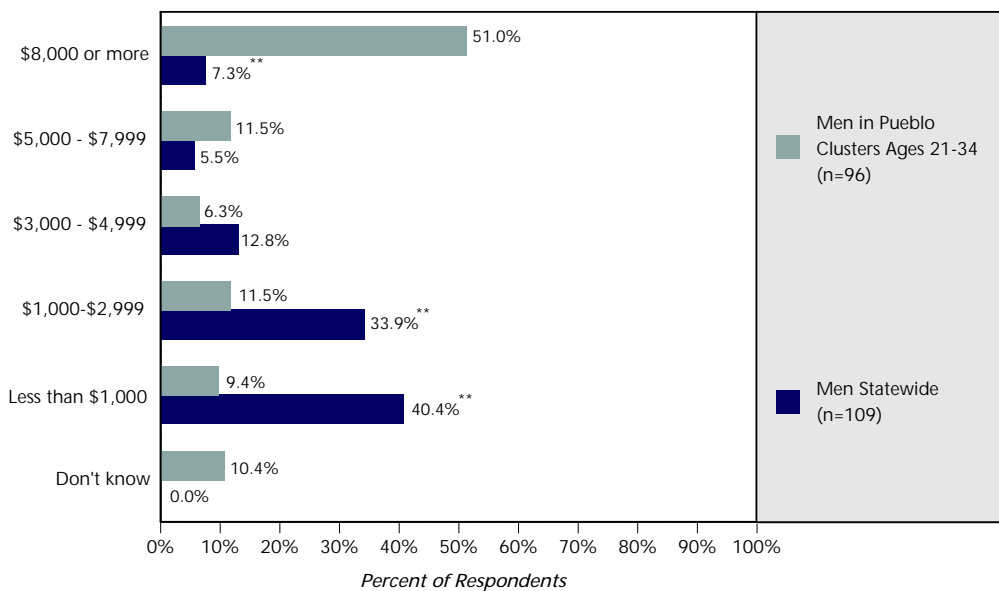
- In the recent telephone survey, over one-half of the at-risk group respondents recalled efforts in Pueblo to curb drinking and driving. These respondents frequently cited \$8,866 Hangover billboards as an example of these efforts.
- The specific message, The \$8,866 Hangover, was frequently recalled by the at-risk group in the telephone survey. Many focus group participants were very familiar with this message.
- About one-half of the at-risk group recalled the answering machine PSA.

The media campaign appears to be reaching those most at-risk for drinking and driving in Pueblo.

Changes in attitudes. The campaign has been successful in communicating the financial cost of a DUI. One-half of at-risk men reported that a DUI would cost them over \$8,000 compared with *only* 7 percent of men statewide. Before the campaign, most of the at-risk men in Pueblo would have said the cost was less than \$1,000 (based on pre-campaign focus groups).

Exhibit ES-1.

How much do you think a DUI costs?



** Statistically significant difference at the 95% confidence level.

Note: This question preceded all mentions of the DUI: The \$8,666 Hangover campaign.

Source: BBC Research & Consulting summer 2001 telephone survey. State data is from the Colorado sample of the 2001 Northwest Denver Telephone survey.

There were no consistent, significant changes in attitudes toward drinking and driving or use of designated drivers among men in the at-risk group based upon telephone survey results. For the most part, men in the at-risk group reported negative attitudes toward drinking and driving and positive attitudes toward use of designated drivers before and after the campaign. Focus group results suggest that the campaign message may have had an impact on reinforcing these attitudes for some at-risk men, particularly those with greater financial responsibilities.

Changes in behavior. Eventually, lower rates of drinking and driving among the at-risk group should result in lower alcohol-related crash rates for this segment of the population. Because the campaign is in its early stages, and because of the lag in CDOT's collection of crash data, it may be several years before this analysis can be done. Questions included in the telephone survey only indirectly gauged actual drinking and driving behavior.

Recommendations

Based on focus group and telephone survey analysis, as well as interviews with members of the Smart Roads coalition, BBC has developed a set of recommendations for participants in the Smart Roads campaign.

Recommendations for CDOT. CDOT should be more engaged in the Smart Roads project:

- *Continued project support.* Although just in its early stages, the Smart Roads project appears to be achieving some success. CDOT's grant to Crossroads should continue.
- *Focus the contract tasks on the at-risk group.* After several months of activities heavily targeting teens (e.g., the Alive at 25 program), CDOT asked the coalition to refocus their efforts to men ages 21 to 34. CDOT should ensure that the contract tasks and language are specific to the at-risk group to the exclusion of teens.
- *Participation in meetings.* Several coalition members suggested that CDOT become more directly involved with the Smart Roads project. For example, the CDOT manager for this project should more frequently attend the coalition meetings.
- *Closer review of ongoing activities.* CDOT should give more attention to the specific activities of the Smart Roads campaign. Several Smart Roads activities did not focus on the at-risk audience.

Recommendations for Crossroads Managed Care Services and fellow coalition members. Crossroads should continue to drive home the DUI message through use of local media. Additional recommendations include:

- High schools should be eliminated as a focal point of the Smart Roads campaign; and
- Health fairs and professional conferences should be eliminated as a focus for the Smart Roads campaign because these events do not attract the at-risk audience (some college health-oriented events may still be appropriate).

Focus on the at-risk audience. Because the project is directed toward Pueblo County males ages 21 to 34, Smart Roads should specifically address this at-risk group. The Buzzing and Tooling Program and attendance at events like the Street Road show and Motorcycle rally are examples of such activities. Crossroads should discontinue activities under this grant that are not focused on the at-risk group.

Involve additional community leaders. Presently, the coalition members primarily represent insurance companies and government agencies. Increasing representation to include local businesses, perhaps soliciting the help of the Chamber of Commerce, would go far to ensure inclusion of the entire community in the Smart Roads campaign. This would also give businesses an opportunity to become better acquainted with the message and activities of Smart Roads. Organizations that should be targeted for recruitment include local churches, employers of the at-risk population, and local business owners (especially bar and tavern owners).

Improve marketing of Buzzing and Tooling Down The Road. Although participation by businesses has been low, this program is well suited to the at-risk audience and should be continued. BBC concludes that this program has not been well-marketed. Specific improvements include:

- Rewrite the invitation letter sent to businesses and use Smart Roads letterhead (discussed in detail in Section IV of the report);
- Follow-up with employers after the letter is sent; and
- Better use available media to promote the program.

Continue to work with local bar owners. Smart Roads staff should continue to cooperate with bar and tavern owners and significantly expand the pool of businesses displaying campaign materials. Campaign messages delivered at the point at which the at-risk group begins drinking may increase use of designated drivers or alternative means of transportation. Bar owners can be a very important part of overall implementation of this campaign.

Recommendations for campaign marketing and media efforts. Recommendations for the marketing and media of the Smart Roads campaign include examining the at-risk audience in more detail and increasing the Pueblo community focus in media messages.

Continue delivery of the DUI: The \$8,866 Hangover message to the older, married segment of the at-risk audience. Current media campaigns have excellent recall with the at-risk audience and general Pueblo residents. However, recent focus groups revealed a subtlety within the at-risk audience (males, ages 21 to 34). Those that were younger and unmarried did not feel the ads would make an impact on their decision to drink and drive. The older, more settled segment felt the ads would influence their decisions.

From our research, we recommend that the Smart Roads campaign continue the \$8,866 Hangover message, but target it even more to the 26 to 34 year-old segment of the at risk audience who may be married and have more responsibilities.

Refine the message for the young, single segment of the at-risk audience. As noted above, the focus groups suggest that the younger, single men in the at-risk group may not respond as much to the \$8,866 Hangover message. Most do not have a mortgage or other substantial debts. Some view the financial costs of a DUI as high, but not a deterrent. For some, there is no worry of loss or sacrifice associated with paying the financial price of a DUI.

The Smart Roads campaign should consider developing a second DUI message that communicates the “costs” of the DUI in terms important to these younger men. Based on focus group results, impact on one’s “ability to chase girls” from not being able to drive may be one of these costs.

Emphasize the “home-grown” nature of the campaign. Past focus groups have shown that at-risk men are very connected to their community and proud of local organizations and activities. CDOT campaigns have benefited from a community pride stance (e.g., Montezuma Clicks campaign). Focus groups found that the at-risk audience did not think that the DUI: The \$8,866 Hangover campaign was a Pueblo activity. Establishing a sense of ownership within Pueblo could boost the campaign’s impact on the at-risk audience and increase local organizations’ participation in program activities (e.g., Buzzing and Tooling). Establishing the campaign as a Pueblo-sponsored effort, rather than that of an outside organization, could bolster sponsorship as well.

Recommendations for law enforcement. Enforcement of drinking and driving laws is a critical component of a successful program. Focus group participants saw enforcement as inconsistent. Though this may be unavoidable, the at-risk group was aware of times when enforcement was lower than others. One participant said, “I think the cops are pretty lax about it, except for the designated holidays with the Heat Is On program. I’ve done it for many years and never been caught.” Another remarked, “Don’t just do holidays, don’t just do weekends, be there all the time.”

The State’s LEAF program provides funds to Colorado cities and counties to augment local DUI enforcement. However, fiscal year 2001 was the “off-year” for City of Pueblo participation in this program. Enforcement may have decreased as a result.

Coalition members see continued law enforcement involvement in the Smart Roads campaign as beneficial. Some members suggested that law enforcement play a slightly different role in Smart Roads community events. For example, at informational booths during celebratory events like the State Fair, officers may want to consider dressing in casual clothes in order to remain approachable. Uniformed officers may inhibit some individuals from approaching the booth for information. A more casual approach would encourage an informational, encouraging atmosphere rather than a punitive atmosphere.

Summary

While some of the implementation of the campaign has been ineffective or off-target, the core message of the financial consequences of a DUI has reached the at-risk group. The campaign has dramatically changed Pueblo men's perceptions of the financial impact of a DUI. A strong message with effective use of media can educate young men on the consequences of drinking and driving.

The question remains as to whether understanding the real costs of a DUI will change drinking and driving behavior among the at-risk group. It is far too early in the campaign to gauge changes in behavior, but focus groups with 26 to 34 year-olds suggests that the message could have this effect. BBC recommends that the campaign consider a non-financial consequence of a DUI in communicating with Pueblo men ages 21 to 25.

Further monitoring will be necessary to determine whether this pilot program has achieved its desired goal — reducing impaired driver crashes in Pueblo.