

NOT-FOR-PROFIT MARKETING

DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT
FIRE KILLS CAMPAIGN 2011-2012

“THE POWER OF A BEHAVIOURAL ASSOCIATION”

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SUMMARY

Fire Kills is a government marketing campaign which aims to reduce the number of people who die in accidental dwelling fires in England. A working smoke alarm greatly increases the chance of surviving a fire, so the majority of ATL activity is aimed at encouraging people to test their smoke alarms. The challenge we faced was reaching a large amount of people on a greatly reduced marketing budget, while also identifying a message which would prompt action without frequent repetition.

This paper presents a behaviourally driven solution which closes the gap between people's best intentions and their actual behaviour in real life. We created a memory prompt and a helpful contextual cue, which research has shown can significantly increase people's likelihood of reaching their goals. In this case, the link was between testing your smoke alarm and changing your clock.

Results have shown that this campaign was seen as impactful, relevant and useful and most importantly it made people over 3 times more likely to test their smoke alarm. From a long-term perspective, this approach has the possibility of reducing reliance on marketing spend to prompt testing, as the date itself becomes a reminder to test.

WORD COUNT: 196

BACKGROUND

Every year, around two hundred people across England lose their lives in accidental fires at home. Tragically, many of these people would still be alive today, had they had a working smoke alarm. Almost 58% of people who died in a fire, did not have a working smoke alarm which raised the alarm to give them that crucial time to escape¹.

The Fire Kills campaign aims to reduce those needless deaths. One of the most effective ways to do this is to encourage everyone to test their smoke alarm and make sure it's working. This simple action carried out on a regular basis, can literally mean the difference between death or survival in a fire.

Our previous campaign "Don't drown in toxic smoke" had been running for several years, delivering one of the highest levels of awareness and the most significant uplift in recognition for smoke alarm testing in recent years². However 2010 saw substantial cuts in government marketing spend with only essential campaigns given clearance to go ahead, and on significantly reduced budgets. In this context, we were briefed to develop a new direction for the campaign.

Our "Toxic Smoke" campaign was an always-on approach with a heavy burst of TV, followed by frequent reminders in a range of other channels throughout the year. It relied on a combination of attitudinal persuasion and tactical reminders to encourage a weekly testing habit. We quickly realised that attempting to replicate the same model on a much smaller scale and without television, would just not work. It required approaching the problem from a radically different angle.

CHALLENGE

Looking at the extent of the task and the number of people we needed to reach, there were two options in terms of targeting. We could either reach a large

¹ Department for Communities & Local Government, Fire Statistics, Great Britain, 2011-2012. Figs based on UK
² C&LG "Toxic Smoke" Campaign Tracking Research, AIA, Dec 2009

proportion of people but on a highly limited number of occasions, or we could narrow focus and speak to a smaller group of people more regularly.

Our first instinct was to prioritise and focus. Analysing the fatality statistics, DCLG had identified five groups of people most at risk of accidental fire in the homes: students, young single mothers, single 45+ men, over 65s and disabled people. However when we dug a little deeper into these vulnerable audiences, we grasped just how diverse they were. They were poles apart, both in terms of current fire safety attitudes, and in terms of media consumption³. Our narrowed focus wasn't so narrow after all.

This led us right back where we started. If a wide-reaching campaign was the best option, this would involve ruthlessly reducing frequency. And this presented the crux of our challenge: what could we say to people which would prompt them to act, having only been exposed to the campaign once or twice?

INSIGHT

There was a good reason previous campaigns had required ongoing communication across the year. It was all down to something called “the value action gap”, a persistent finding that people’s attitudes and intentions often have a very weak relationship to their actual behaviour in real life⁴. In this case, even though 85% of people agreed that “testing your smoke alarm regularly can save lives”, only 47% claimed to test their smoke alarm regularly (at least once a month)⁵. Convincing people that a working smoke alarm was essential was clearly only half the battle. They also needed frequent encouragement before they would actually get up off the couch and do it.

As it turned out, this discrepancy was common across many types of tasks from recycling to eating healthily to quitting smoking. Motivation often wasn't the issue. It

³ TGI GB Q2 2011, Report to CLG “Understanding people’s attitudes towards fire risk” 2008

⁴ Kraus, S. J. (1995). *Attitudes and the prediction of behaviour: A meta-analysis of the empirical literature*. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin.

⁵ CLG Fire Kills Evaluation July 2012 (Testing Attitude), AIA Fire Kills Tracking Feb 2010 (Testing Behaviour)

commonly came down to other factors like procrastination, forgetting to do it, second thoughts at the critical moment⁶. And rather than bemoan how flawed we all are as human beings, social researchers have spent the last two decades trying to figure out how we can overcome these shared shortcomings.

This is when we came across the concept of “implementation intentions”. Implementation intentions are a simple plan, where you link a specific time or context to the new behaviour. So for example, “I need to drink less coffee” becomes “When I get a craving for coffee, I’ll drink a glass of water”. Or “I’m going to get fit” becomes “Every Monday & Wednesday at 7pm, I will leave for the gym”. Hundreds of studies have shown that introducing specific details on when/how/where the new behaviour should happen, makes it *much* more likely that people will carry it out⁶. It also increases the likelihood that the new behaviour will become automated in those situations⁶.

These insights led us to a clear opportunity for smoke alarm testing. We could bypass attitudinal persuasion entirely in this campaign, and go straight for a behaviourally driven idea. Instead of increasing people’s motivation to test, we could make it easier for them to act, by giving them a specific time and a helpful memory prompt. The next step was finding the right context to use.

STRATEGY

The strategy was, in hindsight simple. We decided to devote our entire advertising budget to making a strong behavioural link between changing your clocks and testing your smoke alarm. It was a time when many people were already going around their house, in order to put their clocks back or forward. We were just asking them to do one more thing, at the same time.

In concentrating activity into two annual bursts, we could saturate those dates, ensuring that we would cut through with as many people as possible. And unlike

⁶Gollwitzer, P.M, & Sheeran, P. (2006). *Implementation intentions and goal achievement: A meta-analysis of effects and processes*. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*

occasions such as Mother's Day or Christmas which were already cluttered up with advertisers, the Clock Change dates were relatively free from competition, giving Fire Kills the opportunity to own them.

There was another huge benefit in owning these dates. Past campaigns had delivered good recall and effects while active, but once off air their impact would quickly fade⁷. However this campaign worked differently. If we could make the memory link between changing your clocks and testing your smoke alarm strong enough, through repetition year after year, there would hopefully come a time when the *dates themselves* would become the reminder to test, without advertising support. This would greatly reduce our reliance on marketing investment to prompt testing behaviour, and reduce public spending on the campaign. There was also the potential for this new behaviour to become a new social norm whereby testing on clock change day would become both the "done" thing and the "expected" thing, creating a further nudge for people to follow through into testing their smoke alarms⁸.

CREATIVE & MEDIA APPROACH

So the strategic benefits of making the link between changing your clocks and testing your smoke alarm, were many. The creative task was therefore finding the most impactful way to do this.

In print, the execution centred on a powerful forensic image of a burnt clock, as if retrieved from a home which had been on fire. The headlines hinted at the potential loss of life, while also reinforcing the link with the upcoming clock change:

"Some people won't be looking forward to British summer time. It's already too late"

"We all lose an hour's sleep this weekend. Some might lose a lot more"

In the second burst of activity, the print was further refined to place the visual of the burnt clock in the context of a real home, adding even more emotional resonance. In addition, whereas in the first burst only one execution had a direct link to a "victim"

⁷ CLG Fire Kills Evaluation July 2012

⁸ Richard Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein (2008), *Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth and Happiness*

(the child's alarm clock), in the second burst all three images had this added element. The two other images could be inferred to have belonged to an older person and a middle aged man respectively, two of our priority at-risk audiences.

The radio execution worked by lulling people into the false sense that the advertisement was going to be an informational notice about the clock change, before shattering this illusion by referencing all the people who would not be changing their clocks this year, because they had died in house fires.

We also created a video to be used throughout owned media channels like DCLG's and fire and rescue services' social media pages. It echoed the radio, beginning in the guise of an information message about clock change, before the featured clock began to melt and burst into flames.

Every piece of communication, across every channel, ended with the clear and single-minded call to action: ***When you change your clocks, test your smoke alarm.***

The campaign ran over two weeks in total, with lighter activity in the run-up to the clock change weekend intensifying into a concentrated burst around the day itself. Radio set up the idea first, with a mixture of 30 second executions and shorter 10 second reminders. Print was entirely focused on the weekend itself, mostly on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

RESULTS

With a significantly reduced budget (albeit concentrated into a much shorter period), our expectations for the campaign were relatively modest.

Yet recall of the Clock Change campaign has been steadily growing with each instalment - from 27% in November 2011, to 30% in April 2011 and 34% in November 2012⁹. This compares extremely favourably with recall of the highly

⁹ C&LG "Clock Change" Advertising Tracking Research, IPSOS, Nov 2012

effective previous campaign, despite the significant reduction in media weight & frequency. Based on recall per £ spent on media, the new campaign was over 3 times more memorable:

Table 1: Campaign Recall

	<u>This campaign</u>	<u>Previous Campaign</u>
Budget	980K	£3.1m
Recall (peak)	34% ⁹	32% ¹⁰

Recall¹¹ has undoubtedly been driven by the highly emotive and resonant creative executions:

Table 2: Radio Impressions vs Radio norms¹²

	<u>'Clock Change'</u>	<u>RAB Radio advertising norm</u>
<u>Mean score (out of 10)</u>		
The advert stands out	7.7	6.0
Its advertising I'd remember	8.1	6.0
It speaks my language	8	5.8
It's clear & easy to follow	8.7	6.9
It's informative	8.5	6.6

Table 3: Campaign Impressions & Communication¹³

	<u>Radio</u>	<u>Print</u>
<u>% of recognisers agreeing that:</u>		
The ad is powerful or shocking	72	71
The ad is a useful reminder to test my smoke alarm	88	81

¹⁰ C&LG "Toxic Smoke" Campaign Tracking Research, AIA, Feb 2010

¹¹ We have two sources of tracking. RAB which looks at radio only, and IPSOS which looks at the campaign as a whole. For simplicity, we have shown the results from each study for one burst only, but the creative out-takes are consistently strong across all executions and bursts.

¹² Source: RAB Radio Gauge. Base: 536 Commercial Radio Listeners. April 2012. 2nd campaign burst.

¹³ Source: C&LG "Clock Change" Tracking, IPSOS, March 2012. Base: Radio 381; Print 182. 2nd campaign burst.

The ad reminds me to test my smoke alarm when changing my clocks

54

49

"It had a brilliant twist in it. I thought it was an advert for the clocks changing and it was quite a shocking way of revealing that it was actually a fire prevention advert. I think it's a brilliant idea to learn to check your fire alarm when you change your clocks and I will definitely take this advice on board."

"People forget to test their alarms so it is a good idea to get people to do it when the clocks change"

Source: RAB Radio Gauge (April 2012)

But awareness and involvement are only relevant if people were actually taking action as a result.

They were. The campaign has proved to have a high behavioural conversion rate: On average across all three bursts, 28% of people who recalled the campaign went on to test their smoke alarms when the clocks changed – whilst only 7% of people who didn't recall the campaign tested theirs¹⁴. To put it another way, the campaign made people more than three times more likely to test their smoke alarm.

It helps to think of this in terms of real people, in real homes that are vulnerable to fire.

The campaign was recalled by 30% of the tracking sample¹⁴, equating to 16.8 million people in England¹⁵. 28% of people (15.7m people) claimed to have tested their smoke alarm when they changed their clocks, which compares to an average testing rate of 7% amongst those not exposed to the campaign¹⁴. This suggests that 11.8m people were prompted to test their smoke alarms when the clocks changed, as a result of seeing the advertising.

¹⁴ Source: C&LG IPSOS Tracking, Nov 2012. These figures are based on the average across the three bursts.

¹⁵ Based on a population of England of 56.1m people, from the UK Office of National Statistics, March 2011

It feels uncomfortable to put a financial value on a campaign that aims to save lives. But given it is funded by taxpayers, it might be appropriate to consider the economic benefit, alongside the enormous human benefit, that working smoke alarms afford. The HM Treasury Green Book refers to calculations by the Department of Transport that puts an economic value of £1.65m on a life¹⁶. With a total ATL campaign budget of £980K to date, if only one life was saved as a result of 11.8 million extra people testing their smoke alarm on clock change day, this looks like money well spent.

Given that in fact, between 2010/2011 and 2011/2012, deaths from accidental dwelling fires have dropped by 12%, both the fire and rescue services and the Fire Kills campaign, can feel very proud of their efforts.

WORD COUNT: 2,094

¹⁶ HM Treasury Green Book