

Washington State Litter Campaign- A Case Study

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The background features a light gray gradient with numerous thin, vertical, teal-colored lines of varying lengths and positions, creating a textured, rain-like effect. A solid teal horizontal bar spans the width of the image, positioned in the lower half. The text "Why Social Marketing?" is centered within this bar.

Why Social Marketing?

The Need for Social Marketing

While increasing knowledge or concern about the environment are worthy goals, studies have shown that being knowledgeable and/or concerned about environmental issues **does not necessarily lead to action.**

1 Kollmus, A. & Agyeman, J. (2002). Mind the Gap: why do people act environmentally and what are the barriers to pro-environmental behavior? *Environmental Education Research* 8(3), 239-259.

Education and Alteration of Attitudes in Not Sufficient

Not everyone does
what they know is
best for themselves
or the environment.



The need for Social Marketing

We are currently:

- Underestimating the difficulty of changing behavior
- Underestimating the time it takes to change behavior
- Using ineffective models
- Creating programs that lack evaluations
- Measuring outputs instead of outcomes

We should be asking ourselves:

- Are we changing behavior?
- Are we changing resource use?
- Are we changing resource quality?
- Pilot programs are too small to see resource use or quality changes on a measurable scale, so pilot programs should be focused on behavior change.

Social Marketing Steps

- Background and Focus
- Select Behaviors / ROI
- SWOT
- Formative Research- Identify Audience Barriers & Benefits
- Develop a Strategy (4 Ps)
- Pilot Strategy
- Implement Broadly
- Evaluate



**Litter and
it will hurt.**

**REPORT VIOLATORS
866-LITTER-1**

Washington State Litter Prevention Campaign

A case study in the application of social marketing

Background, Purpose, and Focus

Background

- 16M pounds of litter accumulate on state roadways each yr. (interstates, county and state)
- \$4 million spent to pick up for only 25% of the pop.

Purpose

- Reduce litter

Focus

- Roadways

Situation Analysis (SWOT)

Examples of Strengths to maximize (internal)

- Washington State imposes significant fines for littering
- Management priority on litter prevention on roadways
- Typical litterers are: 75% male, teens/early 20s
- About 60% of littering is deliberate
- Littering is more likely to be perceived as okay in places where trash has accumulated and where someone else will pick it up

Situation Analysis (SWOT)

Examples of Weaknesses to minimize (internal)

- State resources to sustain a major media campaign are limited
- Litter is a multi-jurisdictional problem
- Lack of enforcement
- Lack of adequate litter containers in public areas
- Illegal dumping wasn't measured in the litter composition survey

Situation Analysis (SWOT)

Examples of Opportunities to take advantage of (external)

- Litterers are not aware of fines
- Terms litter and litterer have negative connotations
- Major corporations who are “part of the problem” are potential sponsors: fast food, alcohol, tobacco etc.
- Reporting provides a “good citizen” opp.
- General public not aware of magnitude and nature of problem

Situation Analysis (SWOT)

Examples of Threats to prepare for (external)

- Vast majority of citizens concerned about litter, but only a third consider it very important relative to other issues
- Significant amount of litter gets picked up and is therefore not seen
- Litterers are not motivated by environmental concerns
- Messages to litterers who have attitudes of self-entitlement, rebellion, and arrogance will need to be crafted in order to avoid an injunctive norm perception (increasing litter)

Target Audience

- 2 major audiences for the campaign: those who litter (25% of pop.) and those who don't.
- Segments : Motorists or passengers who litter and drivers of pickup trucks that don't properly secure loads (tend to be males 18-34)
- Attitudinal segmentation: targeting litterers “most ready to change”; i.e. “inconvenients” and “ignorants” vs. “willful arrogants”
- Campaign messages also aimed at those drivers and passengers who don't litter.

Litter and It Will Hurt – Prevention Campaign

Three Key Objectives (based on formative research):

- A short-term objective - to create awareness that littering can lead to significant fines and that a toll-free number is available to report littering.
- A long-term objective - to make litterers **believe** their littering will be noticed and they could be caught.
- Long term objective - Influence litterers to dispose of litter properly, cover and secure pickup truck loads, and clean out the back of trucks before driving.

Research and Outcomes - Highlights

- Review of past efforts
- Field research and sampling of litter
- Focus groups w/ admitted litterers (HS and college)
- Telephone survey of the general population re- litter
- A majority of citizens (85% indicated they would call an 800# to report littering)
- Barrier and Benefit Research: What would prevent litter?
Belief that I will get caught, knowing fines, having to pick up litter as a punishment, better free tarps, and having more trash receptacles and litterbags available

Formative Research to Strategies

Product: Toll free hotline and website

Price and Place: Fines (hotline and website are free)

- Roadway signage with 800#
- Piggy-back strategy- litter messages on lottery tickets, driver's Ed. manuals etc.



Formative Research to Strategies

Interventions to make litterers believe that they will be caught

- Letters to litterers signed (based on litter hotline calls)
- Litter emphasis patrols conducted by law enforcement officials
- Publicity featuring stories of people who get caught
- Imposing and publicizing community service penalties for littering
- Window decals, signs and bumper stickers as frequent, constant reminders on the road

Formative
Research to
Messaging
Promotion



*We're looking for litterers.
Are you?*

Litter and it will hurt.
Report violators. 1-866-LITTER-1 or www.litter.wa.gov 
Coordinated by Washington State Patrol and Department of Ecology



Environmentally positive messages, pleas that tried to instill guilt and messages that bolster a sense of civic pride fell flat. In fact, these messages risked hitting their rebellious "hot buttons", encouraging them to litter more.

Formative Research to Messaging

Information
requested to report
a litterer via the
hotline

Litter and it will hurt.

Report online: www.litter.wa.gov

1. License

Plate number: _____

State: _____

2. Vehicle description:

Color: _____

Make: _____

Model: _____

3. Item littered:

4. Item thrown by:

driver passenger unsecured load

5. Location:

Direction of travel: _____

6. Nearest Town/City: _____

7. Time: _____

8. Date: _____

**REPORT VIOLATORS
866-LITTER-1**

711 (TTY Relay)

Okay, one last time:
This is not a urinal.



Get caught tossing a bottle of urine and you'll pay \$425.
Fines for littering range from \$83 to \$1,000. Remember, Washington
State Patrol has eyes out for violators. (Not to mention their nose).

Litter and
it will hurt.

**REPORT VIOLATORS
866-LITTER-1**

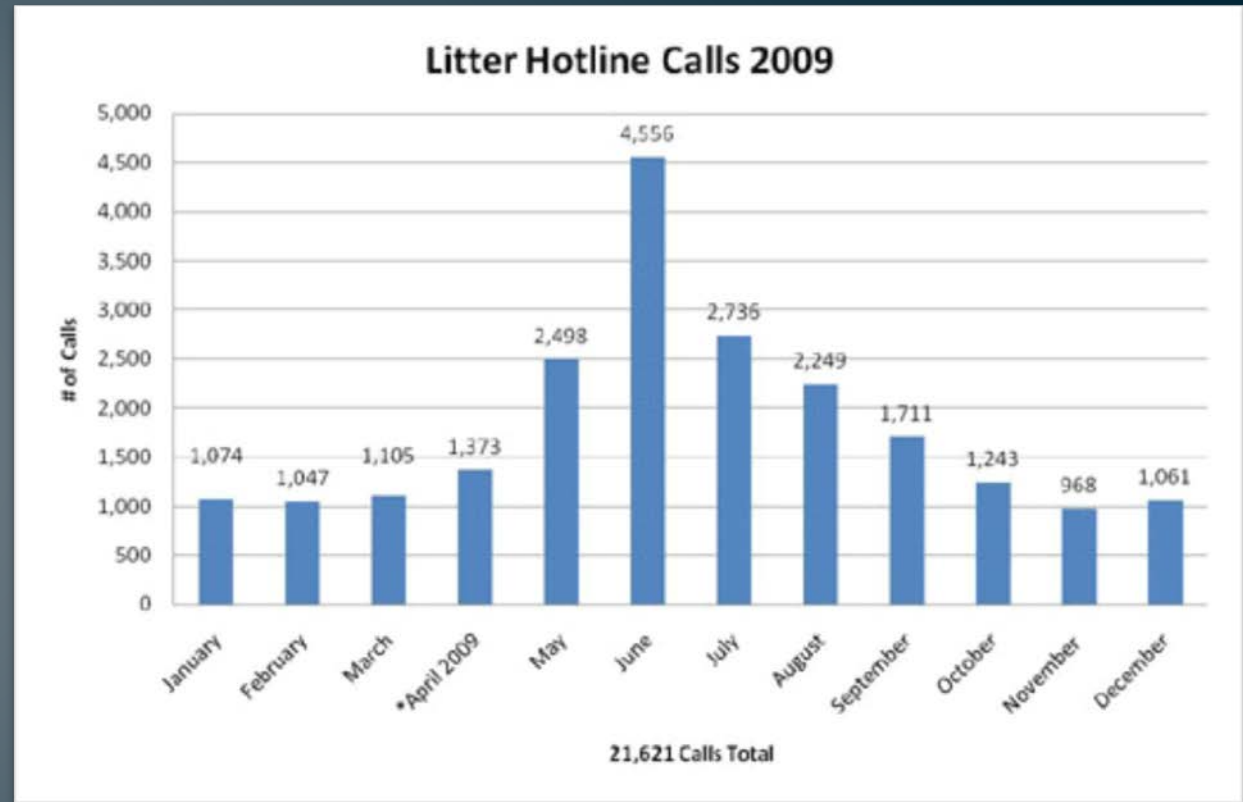
Summary of Outcomes and Evaluation

- Litter is reduced when motorists believe they may be caught and pay significant fines
- People in Washington will report litterers, given the opportunity
- Campaign measured a 24% reduction in litter rate after campaign interventions implemented (measured from baseline litter accumulation- Reduction 8000 to 6000 tons)
- Follow-up surveys of Washington State residents to measure: Awareness of the “Litter and It Will Hurt” campaign slogan, stiff fines associated with littering and the toll-free number to report littering.



Litter Hotline Success

Calls to the litter hotline increased steadily since its debut in April of 2002 - Spike in calls during warm months



References

- Washington State Department of Ecology, Litter Campaign. (2009). Retrieved November 4, 2012, from <http://www.litter.wa.gov/campaign.html>
- *Litter and it will hurt. A Three Year Campaign Plan for the.* Washington State Department of Ecology. Prepared by *Sharp Hartwig, Inc.*,. June 30, 2001.
- Lee, Nancy, & Kotler, Philip (2011). *Social Marketing: influencing behaviors for good reference* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.