



ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR 2005 – PRE- AND POST-CAMPAIGN EVALUATION

Campaign overview

- The Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) campaign ran from October 2004 to March 2005 to coincide with the introduction of the Anti-Social Behaviour Bill in Scotland. The Bill gave new powers, responsibilities and opportunities for local councils across Scotland to tackle anti-social behaviour problems in their area.
- To be effective the campaign needed to describe how the law applied to the general public and what they could practically do in terms of dealing with ASB. The campaign also sought to educate people as to the kind of problems the new laws are designed to tackle, and encourage those who suffer to report problems and “stand up to anti-social behaviour”.
- The bulk of the campaign activity (which included press, radio and bus advertising, complimented by PR, web and an SMS Text response service) took place in February/March 2005. Additionally, there was also a free leaflet distribution to the majority of households across Scotland which gave information on the change in the law. This also informed the public about council’s enhanced role and new powers for tackling ASB.
- A new research campaign was also launched to evaluate, by performing pre- and post-campaign research, the effectiveness of the campaign. The resulting research report recorded a baseline upon which the PR and advertising campaign could be evaluated.

Highlights

- There was a positive shift in those believing that the government was serious about tackling ASB (from 35% agreeing pre-campaign to 62% agreeing post-campaign).
- There was a shift in those considering that ASB was a serious issue (46% pre-campaign to 53% post-campaign). This, perhaps, reflects the fact that, between October 2004 and March 2005, the media campaign attempted to keep this issue in the public eye throughout.
- Post-campaign advertising awareness (prompted) was 33%.
- The proportion of respondents who felt that they would not have the confidence to confront the kids in their street about their behaviour decreased slightly between the pre-campaign analysis (35%) and post-campaign analysis (31%).
- The proportion of respondents who stated that they would not report ASB if they witnessed or suffered it increased slightly from 11% to 18% between the pre- and post-campaign.
- Although local councils now have greater powers to tackle ASB, 95% of respondents in both the pre- and post-campaign research, possibly because they were not aware of this, stated that they would contact the police as a first option to report ASB.

- In the post-campaign analysis, the advertising message of both “new laws” and “standing up to ASB” were recalled with a reasonable degree of success – 9% “new laws”, 13% “don’t put up with it” and 17% “report things”.

Implications

- The campaign was intentionally “low key” in order to communicate that the law had changed without creating a huge public demand upon services at a stage when services were still being establishing on the ground.
- The point at which post evaluation research was carried out was, unusually, just after the mid-point of the advertising campaign. This was necessary as the possibility of an election prevented post evaluation research taking place after the campaign had finished, (which would be standard practice). In this respect the figure of recall of 33% is particularly healthy against the weight of spend and the earlier, and therefore, less-than-ideal timing of post evaluation recording.
- The research indicated a clear potential direction for the future campaign. The public still believe that the police are the obvious agency to contact regarding anti-social behaviour, rather than local councils. Future work will need to clearly address and educate the public about the new role that councils are adopting.