Either You Drink or You Drive (Italy)

Scope of Good Practice

The "Either You Drink or You Drive" campaign was launched by AssoBirra in 2009 to contribute to preventing the risks associated with the misuse and abuse of alcohol when driving. In 2010 – given the appreciation of the partners, institutions involved and public opinion – the campaign was repeated

and implemented after the new highway code, which allows a 0 percent blood alcohol level for drivers with less

than 3 years of experience and for individuals below the age of 21, went into effect.

The Problem Addressed by the Campaign

Car accidents are a serious public health issue throughout the world. At that time, in Italy, an average of 633 car accidents, with 14 casualties and 893 injured, took place each day. 1 out of every 5 casualties was under the age of 25. The social cost of these accidents amounted to € 30 billion annually. Alcohol or drugs contributed to causing 1 accident out of 3 (over 200 each day).

Background Research

During the first edition of the campaign, in just six months, more than 200 000 young drivers were reached and sensitized: about 40 percent of those who had learned to drive in that period. In the period that followed the campaign, there was a decrease in drunk driving violations (-9.8 percent compared to 2009) and road accident casualties (-1.6 percent accidents, -10.3 percent casualties and -1.1 percent injured compared to 2009). These good results encouraged a second implemented edition of the campaign.

Strategy

The strategy chosen by INC was to talk directly with the young people where they learn to drive (driving schools) and where they form their opinions (university); with the instruments that are the most coherent with their sources of information (digital PR campaign and presence on social media); with a language that promotes responsibility instead of prohibition (deterring young people from drinking through prohibition is useless and counterproductive). To increase the message ' s impact and diffusion, the following partners were involved: Unasca, Italy ' s most representative association of driving schools and automotive consulting firms; and 9 of the most representative Italian universities.

Creative

A 60-minute class about alcohol and driving was held in 3,000 driving schools, complemented by an info kit (containing a brochure and an instructor ' s handbook on the alcohol and driving class aimed at driving school staff, and a poster aimed at student drivers to be displayed in driving schools) and by the distribution of alcohol self-testing kits to newly licensed drivers in 11 cities. In the 9 universities, in dedicated info stands experts from Unasca answered students ' questions on the highway code ' s new regulations and volunteers handed out free

alcohol self-testing kits and informational leaflets. In driving schools and universities, 6,000 tool kits, 20,000 alcohol self-testing kits and 20,000 informational leaflets were prepared and handed out. To reinforce the messages of the campaign, a microsite was created on www.beviresponsabile.it, the AssoBirra website on responsible consumption of alcoholic beverages. To launch "Either You Drink or You Drive," two national press conferences were held, involving institutions, opinion leaders and the media. The campaign was supported by intense online and offline press office activities. A buzz and a viral campaign were also conducted in order to promote word-of-mouth attention to the issue of alcohol and driving through the web.

Media

The campaign was supported by intense press office activities. Media coverage reached over 300 articles and mentions on major nationwide and local newspapers/periodicals, radio and TV. The audience that was reached is estimated at over 70 million 'opportunities to see.'

Impact

Approximately 500,000 young people were made aware of the issue of alcohol and driving through a 1-hour class on the risks related to the abuse and misuse of alcohol. 59 percent appreciation of the initiative, as far as goals, methods, instruments and the promoter ' s role were concerned (source: a survey conducted on a representative sample of the target audience by an independent research firm). In the period that followed the campaign, there was a decrease in drunk driving violations (-9.8 percent compared to 2009) and road accident casualties (-1.6 percent accidents, -10.3 percent casualties and -1.1 percent injured compared to 2009).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Promoted by an industrial sector to be granted the sponsorship of the " Gaining Health " government program, this campaign received the support of Ministry of Health, Ministry of Transportation through ministers ' and government representatives ' attendance of the campaign ' s presentation events. Following the campaign, the Italian Government decided to include a set of questions on alcohol and driving in driver ' s exams and to propose the inclusion of a class on alcohol and driving in drivers ' education courses mandatory. It was presented as a commitment to the European Alcohol & Health Forum (a discussion platform in the field of public health and health

care that brings together politicians, decision-makers, representatives of interest groups, and experts coming from government and administration, business and industry, civil society and science and academia). Today, also thanks to this campaign, Italy ' s brewing industry has become a point of reference for the government when making decisions on alcohol-related issues.