

CASE STUDY: Roads & Traffic Authority

“Pinky” Campaign



Background

Young male drivers are over-represented in speed related fatal crashes and the higher end of speeding offences. Many factors are thought to contribute to this including inexperience, poor risk perception, impulsiveness, sensation seeking and showing-off.

While previous anti-speeding campaigns had provided drivers with information about the risks of speeding or highlighted the likelihood of being caught, this campaign adopted a fundamentally different tact – a social approach. It put the issue back in the hands of the community by empowering them to increase the social unacceptability of speeding.

The Issue

Each year around 200 people, about 40 per cent of the annual road toll, are killed in speed related crashes on NSW roads. This proportion has changed very little in the past decade.

Young drivers are over-represented in these numbers; 17-20 year olds make up only six per cent of all licence holders and 21-25 year olds make up only eight per cent of all licence holders, yet each group accounted for 17 per cent each of all speeding drivers involved in fatal crashes between 2002 and 2006.

Speeding is predominately a male problem; 85 per cent of drivers involved in fatal speeding crashes are males.

Young drivers are also over represented in high range speeding infringements. P-platers represent seven per cent of licence holders but account for:

- 34 per cent of speeding infringements 30km/h and above.
- 41 per cent of speeding infringements 45km/h and above.

Challenges & Objectives

The challenge was to develop a campaign that would have high impact and cut-through with young males and garner support from the wider community to make speeding socially unacceptable.

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Challenges & Objectives (continued)

The campaign aimed to:

- Increase the social unacceptability of speeding.
- Undermine the perceived pay-off for speeding (peer approval).
- Empower the community to encourage drivers not to speed.

Target Audience

The primary target audience was male drivers aged 17 to 25. However, the campaign was designed to reach the wider community as well, empowering people to discourage speeding behaviour among young male drivers.

The Solution

The creative approach was to undermine the perceived pay off for speeding. For young male drivers, speeding is exciting and fun; associated with power, masculinity, freedom and status. It is part of their culture. The campaign focused on making speeding 'uncool'. It also served to provoke a timely public debate and galvanise the wider community behind a move to make speeding socially unacceptable.

The design was simple; while young guys think they're being a 'man' by speeding, behind their back the wider community and even their peers, think they are a jerk, trying to compensate for a personal deficiency. The design was articulated using a well-known gesture – the 'pinkie' – to undermine and emasculate the speeder's behaviour. This is further reinforced by the tag-line 'Speeding. No one thinks big of you'.

Research

Concept research results overwhelmingly supported the creative concept across all age groups and gender.

The 17-25 year old males reported:

- The TVC was powerful and the message takeout was on strategy.
- The 'Pinkie' idea would catch on.
- The ad had the ability to change driving behaviour.
- The concept was a welcome change in road safety advertising.
- It was relevant because everybody speeds – it's not just talking to the small minority who are involved in fatal crashes.
- It put the issue back into the hands of the community.

The wider community reported:

- Something needed to be done and their response to the ad was positive.
- They understood young people don't like to be preached to, or for issues to be over dramatised.
- Take-out message was clear and on strategy.
- They did not find the ad offensive.

The "pinkie" gesture created a way for the whole community to come together to demonstrate their disapproval – family, friends and peers alike – showing the social unacceptability of the speeders' action. Critically it delivered this message in a youthful way detached from formal authorities.

The Role of TV

The campaign was rolled out using state-wide television supported by cinema, outdoor and print advertising.

The use of television was central to creating an immediate and far reaching effect among young drivers and the broader community.

RTA's Acting Manager of Road Safety Marketing, Russell Watsford says the commercial's distinctive music track, slow-motion techniques, clear character roles and iconic images exploited television's inherent benefits.

"Because TV stimulates more of the audiences' senses, it most easily creates the passage to that part of the brain responsible for emotional responses and long-term memory.

"Young males are becoming less casual and more purposeful viewers, but with selected targeting, comprehensive reach is still easily achieved and within a few weeks awareness of the campaign was over 60 per cent.

"TV remains the only mass medium that can successfully reach and engage with a wide range of viewing audiences."

Results

This campaign built on and extended the gains of previous speeding campaigns. The TVC and its anti-speeding message received widespread attention both locally and overseas. In fact, the commercial has generated interest from across the world including the US, UK, India, Japan, Italy, France, Singapore, South Africa and Israel.

Evaluations show the campaign effectively reached young male drivers and also the wider community; certainly one of the most effective road safety campaigns in NSW history.

Latest tracking focusing on young males reports the campaign has achieved 96 per cent awareness with the underpinning message - that speeding is not cool - gaining saliency. The campaign continues to engage the young audience with significant increases of the ad being convincing and believable. It has also been strongly endorsed with 74 per cent of respondents reporting it will be effective in encouraging young drivers to slow down.

76 per cent of people surveyed believed the campaign increased community awareness about speeding and understood the campaign's clear anti-speeding message.

Perhaps most revealing was that 61 per cent of young males surveyed believed the campaign had the power to make them think about their own driving behaviour.

Who

Client:	Roads and Traffic Authority
Creative Agency:	Clemenger BBDO
Media Agency:	Customedia & Mediacom