



What Makes a Successful PSA Campaign?

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Quality

People remember a dramatic or entertaining spot which is beautifully produced. This does not mean that high budget PSAs are always the most effective. Simplicity sometimes works best. But the intelligence, sensitivity, and imagination reflected in that 30 or 60 seconds does much to influence the public perception of the sponsoring organization, and the importance of the issue.

Variety

Use different arguments, characters, tones, and bits of information, and allow programmers to rotate spots so that they do not become annoying to viewers. The most successful campaigns approach different parts of you, hit you in several different ways.

TV, radio, websites, brochures, pamphlets, comic books, signage, posters, refrigerator magnets, tee shirts, etc. reinforce each other in a campaign.

Words, images, statistics, testimonials, that appeal to self-interest, the public good, your family and friends are most effective. Messages designed to change the most deeply seated prejudices, habits, and beliefs take time. Sudden massive behavior changes are very rare.



Repetition

Research indicates that the more often the audience hears or sees the message, the more likely they are to get it, and campaign planners should use a wide variety of media to deliver the message, since they all have different strengths and weaknesses.

Hispanics are becoming the largest minority, and prefer to be addressed in their native language. Every ethnic culture has its unique range of values, prejudices, interests, filters. If your budget does not permit doing production in both English and Spanish, at a minimum be inclusive in your packaging or promotional efforts.

Attractive Promotional Materials

Media gatekeepers are more likely to air material which gets their attention, presents the messages in words and images, and persuades them to sit down and listen to or view your PSA. Use a powerful design, and if possible, integrate the messages of the campaign into it.

Strong Marketing

Newsletters, blast emails and post card notifications will help get some usage. Add an articulate and persuasive phone call and you will get more. Add a call from a powerful local community representative noting the importance of the PSA to the local community, and you will do even better.

Thorough Evaluation

It is good to have the numbers telling you when PSAs were used, how many, where and their value. But qualitative assessments are very valuable too - things such as how many people took the call to action in your campaign are equally as important.

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