Risks, rhetoric and reality
Learning from Wheels, Skills and Thrills

Alan Tapp

Bristol Social Marketing Centre
Encouraging skilful driving

• Tell the story of the Lawrence Weston road safety project: **WST .... Wheels, Skills and Thrills**

• Then quickly examine how this maps against **mainstream conventional wisdoms** of our discipline

• And shine a light on **contrasts between the rhetoric and the realities** of social marketing

The Dept for Transport funded this study to explore the use of SM to promote safer driving amongst ‘working class’ young men
What problems did we have to solve #1?
Problems with the nature of the lads

- These young men leave school early, education not valued, often unstable home life
- Feel abandoned by wider society
- Strong bonding and they act as a group
- Driving very important to them
- Chance to let off some steam, fun, euphoria
- BE ONE OF THE GANG

- “Boys: we want you to drive safely”
- Leads to defiance, indifference, why should I care about “you”, you have abandoned me

We collected personal data relating to the cohort. Pre project it was noted that:

- 9 drivers did not complete statutory mainstream education
- 11 drivers had experienced police involvement with their lives
- 4 drivers were subject to YOT orders
- 2 drivers were subject to probation orders
- 2 drivers had previously received a custodial sentence
- 31 drivers had license points
What problems did we have to solve #2?
Behaviour change issues with driving

- Driving is a semi-automatic, habitual behaviour that is rarely engaged with cognitively
- Instinctive, reactive
- Driving fast is ‘easy’ to do – as easy as driving slowly.
- Driving is subject to emotional responses

We collected recent collision data from 34 of our triallists...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Collisions</th>
<th>No of cohort</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>5 drivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>14 drivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9 drivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2 drivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 drivers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2 drivers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The intervention…

Things that don’t seem to work
Let’s have a look at the video…

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDNEROE7aXs
How successful is the programme?

Diagram: indexed scores of 'red' events per hour driven for the accumulated cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Reds/Hr</th>
<th>Reds/hr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>7080</td>
<td>662.658</td>
<td>10.6978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drive-Check</td>
<td>7264</td>
<td>1101.7</td>
<td>7.25166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach 1</td>
<td>10356</td>
<td>1056.69</td>
<td>9.99631</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach 2</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>676.264</td>
<td>5.98775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach 3</td>
<td>544</td>
<td>508.539</td>
<td>2.10024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach 4</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>507.654</td>
<td>2.39077</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach 5</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>79.757</td>
<td>0.55168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach 6</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>438.764</td>
<td>0.86591</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even more miraculous

- So far 20 of the cohort are studying to be advanced drivers
  - Unbelievable outcome of this project...
  - …and they are being taught by ex-police drivers
- ....the irony
Let’s pause and reflect…..

What are the wider implications for our discipline?

1. What does this project tell us about the rhetoric and reality of social marketing?

2. Let’s reflect on what we did and make some observations about ‘text book’ social marketing.

How accurately do these words describe what we do?

- **Rhetoric?**
  - ‘hot’ words used a lot to justify what we do
    - Freedom; choice; equality; community.
  - Words we have used a lot in the project
    - Co-creation; trust; relationships; hope.

- **Reality?**
  - Other words about the project that may be accurate
    - Savvy, streetwise, occasionally secretive, withholding
In social marketing as a whole…
Why does this rhetoric exist?

• Because social marketing exists in a political arena
  – Competing with other disciplines for resources

• Because marketers don’t get hugged at parties
  – We sometimes get attacked… so we get a bit defensive.

• Our persuasion/influence role is open to attack and seen as a bit manipulative
  – So we hide behind nice phrases like ‘customer first’

Social marketers wear two hats
These young men deserve help…

• Have had a tough upbringing
• Come from low income families
• Are quite often victims of crime
• Are surrounded by low aspirations
• Meet social resistance if they break from the pack.

So… Attract and engage

But lets not be mugs….

• Very focused on their own immediate needs
• Not terribly interested in keeping promises
• Have zero levels of empathy with the plight of others

So… Wise up, and persuade
Secondly, let’s reflect on what our project says about ‘textbook’ social marketing…

There were lots of “secrets” to the success of this project

- Tony’s demo drive reduced social risk
- Co-create
- The importance of standing round in car parks
- Stim-response in-car feedback
- social copying of role models
- He drives it like a STOVEK
- Diversionary branding: skills not safety
- Let the little things go
- Picking up ‘tastes’…feeding off the el-dub micro culture…create “stories” for the tribe?
What is the irreducible core? What’s the key insight?

The key to this project has been the ability of the workers on the ground to make continuous finely tuned relational judgements that keep the game going, and then, little by little, to quietly change behaviours.

These judgements are guided by “social marketing instincts”.

The role of the social marketer is to arm the front line workers with the marketing skills to make ‘real time’ judgements, steering the relationships, and steering the behaviour changes.

A new model for social marketing…

• Helicopter pilots balance across competing forces
• Successful social marketers wear two hats simultaneously
• They continuously iterate between
  • Attracting, engaging, rewarding
  • Persuading
Social marketing: the future!

Be politicians!

1. Fight the resources battle – keep the rhetoric going

Be helicopter pilots!

2. Attract, engage and relate
3. And... persuade

What is left when we have gone...
We aren’t going anywhere…

Mark and Ashley setting up a social enterprise

“positive diversionary activities”

Appreciate your time

Alan.Tapp@uwe.ac.uk