UWE Bristol

A case study of a social marketing brand: the image of cycling in the UK

Sarah Leonard
Alan Tapp
Fiona Spotswood

Bristol Social Marketing Centre
‘Image of Cycling’ project aims

• To improve the image of cycling
• To encourage people to have a positive emotional reaction to cycling
• To build a positive relationship between ‘cycling’ and our ‘customer’

• To create a cycling brand

Gatersleben and Haddad, 2010; Daley and Rissel, 2011
Research Objectives

- Explore the perceptions British adults have of:
  - Cycling
  - Cyclists

- Four stage research project.
Our partners
The bigger picture

- Branding
- Popular
- Fun

Social marketing aimed at making cycling easier!
Cycling benefits

- Health and fitness
- Reduce congestion
- Environmentally friendly

Gatersleben & Appleton, 2007; Shephard, 2008
Cycling cons

- Poor weather
- Poor facilities
- Dangerous traffic conditions

Build it and they will come?

Scally et al 2011
WHY CYCLING IMAGE?

Gatersleben and Haddad, 2010; Daley and Rissel 2011
In other words…

We aim to create/enhance the positive associations people have of cycling.

Evans & Hastings, 2008; Basu & Wang, 2009
The cycling brand… why?

Encourage behaviour change by creating a new subjective backdrop to decision making.
Research Methodology

• 10 in depth interviews and 9 focus groups (n = 60) in August 2010.
• Sample from Bristol and South Gloucestershire:
  – Non cyclists
  – Lapsed cyclists
  – Occasional cyclists
  – Regular sports cyclists
  – Utility cyclists
Projective & Enabling Techniques

• Psycho Drawing

• Planet Cycle

(Burns, 1979; Gordon and Langmaid, 1988).
Results

“I like being out… It’s my time. You’re out in the sticks. It’s thinking time”

“it's my time”

“clearing my thoughts”

“relaxed state of mind”

“buys you more time”

male utility cyclist
Results

“That’s me with the wind in my hair. I’m happy. I feel I own the road. The sun’s shining. The country beauty. The holiday, the fun element of it. That’s what I get”

female occasional cyclist

"you feel free. A bit like a bird in flight"

"it's fast, free spirt"
Phase 2 - Results

“I’ll be coming home from work. It’s nice to get on your bike after a stressful day. You don’t have to sit in the traffic. It’s a stress buster. It is. It feels good”

male utility cyclist

STRESS BUSTER

"I feel a lot better when I cycle"  "being calm, no stress straight forward"
Phase 2 - Results

“The thing is if you cycle you clearly don’t really have a lot of responsibility. You have time to really cycle and generally enjoy yourself. You can go wherever you want to go”

“fun times”

male utility cyclist

“innocent, fun, relaxed, laid back”

“feel like a kid again”

CHILDLIKE/FUN
Results

“I’ve finished cycling so I’ve got red cheeks. It’s an accomplishment. It’s a release. You shower, get changed and feel really good”

male lapsed cyclist

“an achievement because it's tough”

“I hate the thought of it but afterwards I feel good”
Results

“You bump into more people when you’re on your bike. You wouldn’t say hi to people outside the shop if you were in your car”

female utility cyclist

CITIZENSHIP

“appreciating my environment”

“time at street level”
The Brand Process

- These are the themes from the research that the agency used to produce the brand concepts.

- Freedom
- Achieve
- Stress busting
- Playful/childlike
- Me time
- Citizenship
- Stress busting

A reminder of what it’s all about...
Concepts Tested

People

Fantasy

Type

Biksey
Concept testing

- **7 focus groups**
  - Non cyclists
  - Leisure/occasional cyclists
  - Sports/fitness cyclists

- Check associations
- Images received?
- Gauge audience reaction
Insights

“It’s a little predictable, but I like it. It makes me feel warm towards cycling”

“Aah! That just makes me want to go and ride my bike!”
Insights

“Very clever. Love it. But it doesn’t really want to make me cycle”

“But you’d never see a big pair of shoes like that. Cycling just isn’t like that”
Insights

• Must be within the ‘snap’ point of ‘reality’

• Must have instant comprehension

• Must have instant emotional response
Campaigns

Greater Bristol BETTER BY BIKE
Britain's First Cycling City

Set yourself free at www.betterbybike.info
Our campaign

- Door drops
- Bus backs
- Bill boards
- Bus stops

- Offer based on rich insight from quant and qual research

- Supporting activities and interventions from Cycling City
Thank you!

Sarah Leonard: sarah.leonard@uwe.ac.uk
Fiona Spotswood: fiona2.spotswood@uwe.ac.uk
Professor Alan Tapp: alan.tapp@uwe.ac.uk

Bristol Social Marketing Centre
University of the West of England
Faculty of Business and Law
http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/bbs/research/bsmc.aspx