

AMEC International Communication Effectiveness Awards 2016 Entry Form Template – Measurement Agencies

Category: Best measurement of a public sector campaign

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Client: NHS Blood and Transplant

Objectives/Brief

NHS Blood and Transplant (NHSBT) is a Special Health Authority. It provides a wide range of services to the NHS that save and improve lives. The authority encourages people to donate organs, blood, stem cells and tissues. It also ensures that a safe and adequate supply of blood and blood components is delivered to hospitals across England and North Wales. Each year, donors give around 3,500 organs and two million blood donations. These contributions save and transform countless lives. Research shows that:

- On average, three people a day die in need of an organ donor.
- One organ donor can help as many as nine people.
- Every blood donation can help up to three people.

The communications team at NHSBT run a series of campaigns every year to raise public awareness of blood and organ donation. In June 2015, as part of National Blood Week, NHSBT launched the 'Missing Type' campaign. This was in response to the following facts:

- There has been a 40% reduction in new donors coming forward over the last decade.
- 204,000 new volunteers needed to come forward in 2015 to help meet patient needs.
- Half of NHSBT's current donors are over the age of 45.
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic people (BAME) make up 14% of the eligible donor population in England and North Wales, but only 5% of them have given blood in the past 12 months.

The main objective for the 'Missing Type' campaign was for 40,000 new volunteers to register as blood donors during June 2015. There was also a special focus on trying to get more blood donors from two key target audiences: young adults and ethnic minorities.

To achieve this target, NHSBT created a PR strategy to raise public awareness of their research findings, and to reveal the decline in new donor numbers. Central to this strategy was a social media campaign which won Engine, the PR agency responsible, a Masters of Marketing award. The idea was to remove the letters 'A', 'O' and 'B' (all blood types) from recognisable names, places and brands, and encourage both individuals and organisations to create social media content in response to this.

The campaign involved a number of partner brands including Odeon Leicester Square, Waterstones in Trafalgar Square and the street sign on Downing Street. These high-profile organisations helped launch the campaign by removing letters from their signs in the run-up to National Blood Week. In addition, NHSBT issued a series of press releases to promote hard-hitting facts about blood donation and promoted patient stories through case studies (*see Appendix 1*).

Strategy

The measurement programme needed to gauge success in the three key areas below:

Pre Campaign:

1) Raising awareness about the decline in new blood donors coming forward to donate

The research NHSBT did before the campaign determined the messages they wanted to be picked up. This included the hard-hitting fact that if not enough new people donate blood and these types go missing in years to come, there won't be enough blood available when patients need it. Case studies were also promoted with a focus on patient survival stories. These patients came forward to raise awareness about the decline in the number of new blood donors and to urge people to register.

What we helped the client to measure:

- Were the PR tactics used (eg press releases and case studies) working?
- Were the messages being picked up by key journalists and reported in the right way?

2) Prompting people to donate and getting people to encourage others to donate

An important metric for NHSBT was to make sure that once people were aware of the need for new donors, they knew where to go to register. NHSBT set up a series of calls to action including their website, telephone number, YouTube and Facebook pages in order to get people to register as a blood donor. They also encouraged the public to take the discussion online and encourage others to register.

What we helped the client to measure:

- What percentage of articles featured a call to action?
- Which calls to actions achieved the highest success?

Post Campaign:

3) The effect on their target audience groups

During National Blood Week, NHSBT monitored the number of people that registered to donate blood and released statistics on the results of the campaign. These results were used to formulate a second set of messages (post National Blood Week). Gorkana also received internal blood registration figures for all UK adults, young adults and ethnic minorities throughout June and compared these results with the volume of mainstream and social media coverage over time, so we could see what coverage was driving registrations. Social media spaces were also monitored throughout the campaign to find out what conversations were happening outside of the campaign and who the key influencers were.

What we helped the client to measure:

- Was the success of the campaign reported on?
- Was there any direct relationship with registration figures and mainstream/social coverage?
- How many people were talking about the campaign on social media?

Execution/Implementation

We created a programme which measured both media outputs and audience outcome that were aligned to the campaign's objectives.

All mainstream coverage was coded by experienced analysts to ensure metrics such as message delivery and favourability were tracked accurately and effectively. Social media coverage was monitored by Gorkana's social media tools, capturing mentions across multiple channels. The analysis focused on

overall outcomes as well as specific PR tactics which enabled us to evaluate which parts of the campaign worked well and which could be improved on.

Before the campaign launched, NHSBT formed relationships with journalists from different regions in order to gain a wide range of local coverage. Our report showed NHSBT the volume of coverage achieved in each region and which key journalists were driving coverage for that region. This allowed them to work out which areas of England and North Wales were underperforming and which media contacts they should target going forwards (see *Appendix 2*).

Another section of the report focused understanding the relationship between the media coverage aimed at key audiences and the resulting blood registration figures for those audiences. To understand whether audiences had been targeted effectively, we integrated market research that we had conducted with YouGov (a survey of 10,000 people, representative of the UK population) which enabled us to identify specific audiences such as ethnic groups and young adults and the media they were exposed to. This enabled us to calculate the reach of the coverage to these audiences. We were then able to correlate this with the resulting number of registrations for each audience day by day as the campaign developed (see *Appendix 3*).

To work out the effect that social media played in influencing people to register and donate, we also evaluated key conversations that were being discussed across social media spaces and identified key influencers driving social content. We also compared the relationship between mainstream and social coverage to understand if a rise or dip in social activity was in anyway related to the cause and effect that PR activity was having on the public.

Effectiveness

NHSBT generated some very successful results within mainstream and social media. Volumes for mainstream coverage saw a threefold increase on last year's results due to the huge buzz created by the social media campaign (19,749 mentions across social media spaces during June 2015).

Message delivery, which was a key metric for NHSBT, increased by 16 percentage points to 97%. It became clear that the strong stats NHSBT used were crucial in forming an effective news hook for the campaign. This was reflected in the Gorkana evaluation report. The message that 40% fewer new volunteers had come forward to give blood last year compared to a decade ago featured in 78% of all content, while the message that 204,000 new volunteers needed to come forward featured in 63% of all coverage. These research figures informed NHSBT's subsequent strategy and the organisation continues to use them to garner support for campaigns.

As mentioned previously, it was also crucially important that people knew where to go to register as a blood donor. Website analytics showed that between 5 and 14 June, 10,933 people visited the main campaign page, and 1,805 people (16.5%) clicked through to book an appointment to give blood. This resulted in just 90 appointments (a 5% conversion rate). This led NHSBT to investigate whether there were enough appointments available for the public or if people were being notified that their local clinic operated a walk-in system to give blood. These learnings are being used to inform future campaign activity in order to improve the conversion rates. Overall, NHSBT concluded that investing more time and resource into web analytics would be useful going forward given all the insights and learnings it provided during the missing type campaign.

The part of our evaluation report illustrating which media tactics worked well was also used to inform future planning. One of the key insights for NHSBT was the effectiveness of a press release to regional/local media to highlight the number of people who had signed up in the area compared to the same period last year. This was an experimental PR tactic which resulted in a great response from the local media, producing 83 articles in total, leading NHSBT to employ this again when launching subsequent campaigns.

A key learning was also gained through the second campaign press release to national and regional media. The release focused on the results of a survey about people's knowledge of their own blood group and random facts they were not likely to know. The media failed to respond to this because they were still covering the national and regional story from the initial launch. This led NHSBT to be more flexible with their pre-planned media tactics and re-evaluate the timings for each activity.

The social media element of the campaign also did exceptionally well. Our data showed that Facebook accounted for over 46% of total referring traffic, and 29% of total referring traffic was from Facebook mobile. This statistic will be used to justify why additional budget should be allocated to optimise web pages for mobile audiences when launching future campaigns. NHSBT also concluded that they should allow more time in planning social media campaigns in order to be as creative as possible and allow more resource for manual twitter outreach, which aided support for the campaign from major brands and influencers. This was a more effective way for supporters to convey the correct message and hashtag (see Appendix 4).

The integration of data on donor registrations with data on media coverage provided a range of important insights. We showed that there was a direct correlation between mainstream/social coverage and new donor registration across June 2015 with registrations peaking on the 5th – the day the main story of the campaign hit the media.

We also used data obtained from a survey of 10,000 people across the UK to compare the relationship between mainstream media and the percentage of coverage reaching the BAME and young adults audience groups. We then used correlation analysis to identify key trends and patterns. Findings revealed a strong correlation with the young adults audience group on 8 June when NHSBT gained coverage in publications including Metro.co.uk and Yahoo (when 46% of this target audience were reached). The most effective part of the campaign to reach the BAME audience group was on 5 June, when NHSBT successfully targeted 70% of the BAME audience. It seems likely that the BAME PR activity which was launched on 5 June explains this spike.

Ultimately the main aim of the campaign was to get people to donate blood. Results revealed that:

- From 1 June to 21 June 2014 registrations were 22,489; for the same period in 2015 they were 46,756. The total for June was 56,877.
- From 5 to 14 June 2014 BAME registrations were 1,390; for the same period in 2015 they were 2,113 - a 141% increase. The highest responses came from the Indian and Black Caribbean communities.
- In 2014, 3,442 young adults registered; in 2015, the same group had 7,856 registrations.

Andrea Ttofa, Head of Media and PR at NHBT says Gorkana's analysis has been indispensable to their success:

"We see Gorkana as a vital ingredient of our campaigns. Their evaluation reports give us a real understanding of both the media, social media and, more importantly, the business impact of campaigns such as #MissingType and valuable insights for future activity. Knowing what works well and taking learning forward is vital as the media and social media landscape is constantly changing and we absolutely must constantly evolve to ensure we publicly promote donation as effectively as possible to continue saving lives."