



Developing and Evaluating Safe Winter Driving Messages

thembcgroup



CLEAR ROADS

research for winter highway maintenance

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Overview

Clear Roads, through Wisconsin Department of Transportation, contracted with thembcgroup to develop and evaluate safe winter driving messages.

The project was divided into three tasks, plus the inclusion of this final report. The three tasks were:

1. Analyze highway crash data to identify high-risk crash groups.
2. Conduct primary research with identified target audience(s) to measure awareness of other social marketing campaigns, understand the resonance of various message types, and how winter weather information is accessed.
3. From the research, develop a message platform, campaign materials and strategy development for social media distribution channels.

At the committee's request the deliverables were modified to include the development and production of a television commercial; in thirty second, fifteen second and seven second versions. In addition, a Flash™ Internet banner ad was produced in leaderboard and display formats.

The overall findings and conclusion were:

1. The majority of winter weather crashes occur between December and February.
2. The largest majority of crashes involve those, ages 15 -30.
3. The target audience prefers "reality" based messaging.
4. More men than women are aware of other "highway safety" campaigns, yet women are more likely to change their behaviors as a result of those campaign messages.
5. Seven out of ten people surveyed identified "driving too fast" as the primary reason for winter weather driving crashes.

6. Overall awareness of “Ice & Snow Take it Slow” is lower than that of other highway safety campaigns, yet of those who are aware, eight out of ten said that the campaign “changed my behavior and I get the message.”
7. The campaign theme of “Ice & Snow. Take it Slow” should be retained and applying resources to reach those 16-24 will most likely produce the best results toward changing driving behaviors.
8. The target relies on “TV” as their primary source of news and information about winter weather information, yet 40% access the Internet and 35% access TV for specific information about winter road conditions.
9. Maximum benefit can be realized by using local television Web sites as the primary distribution channel.

Project Tasks and Deliverables

Task 1: Poll Clear Roads member states for highway crash databases that are most up to date, contain comprehensive data that allow filtering of crash type, severity, demographic identification of responsible party, road conditions, and weather conditions. Crash data will be selected from 2 or more member states whose data are most robust. Analyze data to identify high risk groups, resultant crash characteristics, and individual driver behavior for crashes that occur when winter precipitation is present or when road conditions are identified as being snow or ice covered.

Crash Data Analysis

Crash data was taken from Illinois (2008) and Nebraska (2007-2008). The data from both states was analyzed according to two main factors: number of winter-related accidents and ages of those involved in the winter-related accidents.

Illinois:

- Total Number of crashes: 408,195
- Total Number of drivers: 695,773

Nebraska:

- Total Number of crashes: 68,146
- Total Number of drivers: 114,328

We defined “*winter related records*” as:

1. Crashes occurring during the months of January through April and September through December.
2. And, crashes during the winter type weather conditions such as: snow, sleet hail, freezing rain and blowing snow.
3. Or, any crash on a road surface with ice, snow or slush.

Number of Winter Related Records:

- Illinois
 - Number of crashes: 66,718
 - Number of drivers: 107,557
- Nebraska
 - Number of crashes: 10,100
 - Number of drivers: 16,047

Key Points from Crash Data Analysis

- Majority of crashes involve drivers between the ages of 15-30.
- Of these drivers involved in winter crashes, only 10% were described as impaired.
- The three most common factors for crashes under winter conditions are:
 - Driving too fast for conditions
 - Following too closely
 - Failure to yield
- Majority of crashes between the ages of 15-30 occurred in urban areas.
- Most winter crashes occur from December to February.

PowerPoint for Task 1 - "Overview of Nebraska Accident and Driver Data"

Note: Click on image to view entire deck



**Clear Roads
Winter Driving Safety
Messaging.**

**Overview of Nebraska
Accident and Driver Data
September 24, 2009**



PowerPoint for Task 1 - "Overview of Illinois Accident and Driver Data"

Note: Click on image to view entire deck



**Clear Roads
Winter Driving Safety
Messaging.**

**Overview of Illinois
Accident and Driver Data
October 16, 2009**



Project Tasks and Deliverables

Task 2: Based on the results from Task 1 and with input from the Clear Roads subcommittee conduct phone surveys and/or focus groups with the target audience in a state that receives frequent snow or ice events. Through group contact, gain an understanding of what delivery formats are most accessible and effective among this group. Probe for information about other public/social campaigns that they remember and the impact on their behavior as a result.

An online survey was conducted with the following objectives:

1. Learn about general awareness of other highway/driving campaigns.
2. Perceived effectiveness of those campaigns.
3. Probe for awareness of other “social marketing” campaigns and their perceived effectiveness.
4. Understand other types of messaging that appeal to the target.
5. Test awareness of perception of the “Ice and Snow, Take It Slow” phrase.
6. Determine if there is an understanding of the most common factor contributing to winter driving accidents.
7. Uncover sources the target relies on for winter-weather driving and road conditions

The survey was conducted online with 490 participants selected from 250 nationwide panels who:

- Were between 16 and 34, with two subsets consisting of:
 - 16-24
 - 25-34
- Were licensed drivers who had driven in poor winter driving conditions e.g. harsh rain, snow or ice

The following methodology was used to conduct the survey:

- Non-probability sampling with heavily modeled, purposive sampling to meet the objectives of the survey.
- A sample frame with pre-defined quotas based on accurate and known demographics such as age, gender and region.
- All panelists were selected from previously profiled and validated online panel respondents.
- Rigorous propensity weights were applied to the quotas to stratify the data to mirror a representative sample of the targeted population.

Executive Summary of Findings

Respondents are very aware of the primary cause of winter driving accidents. Seven out of 10 listed “driving too fast” as the reason for most winter driving crashes.

Of the six road safety campaigns tested, 51% of men were either aware of, or had seen the campaigns and knew them well as compared to 46% of women. Yet, women are far more likely to change their behaviors as a result of those campaigns. 78% of women said the campaigns “changed my behavior and I get the message” compared to 63% of men responding the same. For example, the campaign “Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving, men’s awareness outpaces women’s awareness 41% to 27%. Yet, 67% of those women report that the campaign “changed my behavior and I get the message” as opposed to 46% of men indicating the same.

When isolated to the answer “have seen it and know it well” the six road safety campaigns tested for awareness ranked in this order :

1. Click it or Ticket	78%
2. Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving	34%
3. Give Em’ a Brake	33%
4. Stop Red Light Running	14%
5. Ice and Snow Take it Slow	12%
6. Ride Like a Friend	6%

It is interesting to note that although the overall awareness of “Ice and Snow Take It Slow” is relatively low (about one out of 10 surveyed reporting that they had “seen it and knew it well”), the message’s impact on changing behavior is significant. 81% of that group said that the campaign “changed my behavior and I get the message.” The gender breakdown was 85% female, 78% male.

“Ice and Snow Take It Slow” resonates best with those making less than \$25,000 per year. Those 16-24 are less aware of the campaign than those ages 25-34 and more women are aware of the campaign than men are.

Four out of the five social media campaigns tested resonated best with those with annual incomes under \$25,000.

The five companies/products that produce commercials most appealing to the survey respondents were:

1. Wal-Mart
2. Nike
3. Taco Bell
4. Apple
5. Victoria's Secret

Almost one-half of all respondents said that they prefer "reality" based messaging to all others.

1. Reality
2. Informational
3. Comical
4. Sarcastic
5. Inspirational

Four out of ten people check road conditions each time prior to leaving for their destination during the winter season.

About six out of 10 report that "TV" is their primary source of news and information about winter road conditions, yet 40% access the Internet and 35% access TV for specific information about winter road conditions.

Conclusions

Although awareness of "Ice and Snow Take It Slow" is very low among the target, the message resonates exceptionally well with those who are aware. And because the target recognizes that the primary cause contributing to winter driving accidents is driving too fast, and that the message addresses this specifically, there then is a significant opportunity to impact behaviors and reduce the incidences among the target. In particular, the research indicates that resources applied to reach those in the 16-24 age group will likely yield in the greatest returns.

It is our recommendation that we develop message ideas that can be delivered in "reality" format and that a distribution plan be created leveraging the primary information access sources. There also appears to be opportunity for creating partnerships with retailers whose commercials the target finds most appealing.

PowerPoint for Task 2 - "Top Line Results of Safety and Social Messaging Awareness Study"

Note: Click on image to view entire deck



Developing and Evaluating
Safe Winter Driving Messages

Top-Line Results of
Safety and Social Messaging
Awareness Study

Additional Findings

Further analysis of the research data was conducted to gain an understanding of how the target accesses winter road condition information by:

- Census Region
- Gender and Age
- Education Level
- Income Level
- Marital Status
- Presence of Children in Household

As Clear Roads member states plan their “Ice & Snow Take It Slow” activities, they can leverage this data to prioritize resource allocation to specific targets. For example, the research reveals that 50% of those living in the Midwest check road conditions “each time” before they drive. Additionally the analysis reveals that those with a high school education, earning less than \$25,000 per year are more likely to check winter road conditions “each time” than those with more education and higher household incomes. Therefore, if a member state wanted to reach and affect one or the other of those groups, they have the data to make that decision and can target media channels that best deliver against the specific demographic.

This information will be helpful for distribution through channels that provide “drill down” delivery such as Facebook pay-per-view and pay-per-click.

PowerPoint for Task 2 - "Detail of Road Condition Information Access Data"

Note: Click on image to view entire deck



Developing and Evaluating
Safe Winter Driving Messages

Detail of
Road Condition Information
Access Data

Project Tasks and Deliverables

Task 3: Based on the information collected and analyzed in tasks one and two, develop a messaging platform and develop three or four campaign materials that build on the “Ice & Snow – Take it Slow” slogan currently in use. Depending on the research findings, campaign materials could include logo, logo redesign, scripting for electronic communications, strategy development for social media distribution channels and print. Flexibility and adaptability will be primary drivers of the platform development, ensuring that future distributions will accommodate a variety of geographic and psychographic needs.

Task 3: REVISED – Develop and produce a TV commercial in a thirty, fifteen and seven second format that can be used for conventional broadcast and as a pre-roll of internet based advertising and sponsorships. In addition, develop and produce a Flash™ banner ad in a leaderboard and display format.

Two TV creative concepts were developed and presented for review. The committee selected “Concept Two” for final production.

Concept One – Guitar Man

Quick fade up from black and our 20 something singer is in the left part of the frame ... he is singing the Ice & Snow song as video of various winter driving scenes play behind. We’ll jump cut to various angles of our singer, placing him in other parts of the frame as the music and video changes. The contemporary tune moves along at a good pace, as do the video scenes. With guitar in hand, our singer is dressed age appropriately, and is wearing a stocking cap that completes the look and feel to connect with our target audience. The song is reminiscent of the styles of Jack Johnson and John Mayer; two of the most popular singers today.

Lyrics

Ice and Snow. Take It Slow.
Miss the crash and the tow.
There’s only one thing you need to know
Ice and Snow. Take It Slow.
The car’s warm and it’s cold outside
So ease the pedal and enjoy the ride.

Everybody’s waitin’ where you’re goin’
And they all know It’s snowin’
Ice and Snow. Take It Slow.
Miss the crash and the tow.
There’s only one thing you need to know
Ice and Snow. Take It Slow

Concept Two – Speedometer

Up from black a speedometer fills the frame. We hear the sounds of a car accelerating ... the speedometer needle quickly moves upward in tandem with the acceleration sound. It reaches about 65 mph. We hear a radio weathercast from within the car that says snow is imminent. Animated snow begins to fall within the frame. We hear the car decelerating and the speedometer needle falls down to around 30 mph. The speedometer fades out within the frame and is replaced with the Ice & Snow logo that fades in. And then to black.

TV Commercial



Flash™ Internet Banner Ad – Display



Flash™ Internet Banner Ad – Leaderboard



Logo Development

The idea of developing a revised “Ice & Snow Take it Slow” logo was explored. Two sets of possible logo treatments were presented to the committee. Ultimately, after a series of discussions, it was decided to retain the original logo and the equity developed since its original deployment

Logo Comps #1



Logo Comps #2



Project Tasks and Deliverables

Task 4: Create a final report that includes an action plan to deploy the messages as well as guidance and advice on how to use the campaign materials most effectively for a statewide and nation-wide campaign. The final report should also include a summary of the work with the focus groups and any key strategies or lessons learned about targeting that demographic audience.

Recommendations

The research identified the Internet and television as the primary sources the target (16-24, under \$25,000 HH income) accesses for specific information on winter weather road conditions. The television commercial and internet banner ads created will allow Clear Roads member states to leverage those findings.

The following are recommended strategies and tactics for effectively reaching the target audience.

1. Local Television

Traditional “on-air” placement and presence on the TV station’s Web site is a preferred combination for reaching the target audience. If budget considerations result in selecting one over another; use the TV station’s Web site. According to the Internet Broadcasting (www.ibsys.com), a leading provider of local Web sites, content and advertising revenue solutions to major media companies, TV sites can outperform newspaper sites in engagement metrics such as total minutes spent on site and time spent per visitor.

Based on the research findings, 40% access the Internet and 35% access TV for specific information about winter road conditions. As a result, it is recommended to leverage a sponsorship of the TV station’s Web site weather page. Use the TV spot as a pre-roll and include the Internet banner ad.

The TV spot has been supplied in 30, 15 and seven second versions. Most TV stations use a 15 second pre-roll.

Two Internet banner ads have been supplied. One is a *Display Ad* (300W x 250H) and the other is a *Leaderboard* (728W x 90H). These are 2 of the most common sizes for Internet Ads. Each Ad is saved as a SWF file (a type of Shockwave Flash file). This is a common file type used when submitting Internet ads to your particular local news site/other specialty website. Since every website has different submission requirements, we have provided 2 different forms. Each file will be 15 seconds long and the file size is max 40k. The Display ad and Leaderboard will each come in two forms: one in which the ad will loop three times and then stop on the “Ice & Snow” logo and the second, the ad will loop continuously. We have also included the source file for this Flash video. Having this will allow each state to embed their own click tag, and therefore customize the ad to “click through” to each state’s designated “Ice & Snow Take it Slow” Web page.

Video Pre-Roll Example



The screenshot shows the WKBT.COM website interface. At the top, there are navigation links for HOME, NEWS, WEATHER, SPORTS, VIDEO, BEST OF, ENTERTAINMENT, COMMUNITY, WKBT, JOB SPOT, MARKETPLACE, and LIFESTYLE. A video player is embedded on the page, displaying a pre-roll advertisement for Harlem Foodfighters. The ad features a basketball player and text: "HARLEM FOODFIGHTERS", "ONLY AREA APPEARANCE FRI, APR. 2 • 7PM", and "La Crosse Center". A red box highlights the video player's progress bar, which shows "00:04 / 00:15". A red arrow points from this box to a red-bordered text box on the right that reads "Fifteen Second Video Pre-Roll".

Leaderboard Ad Example

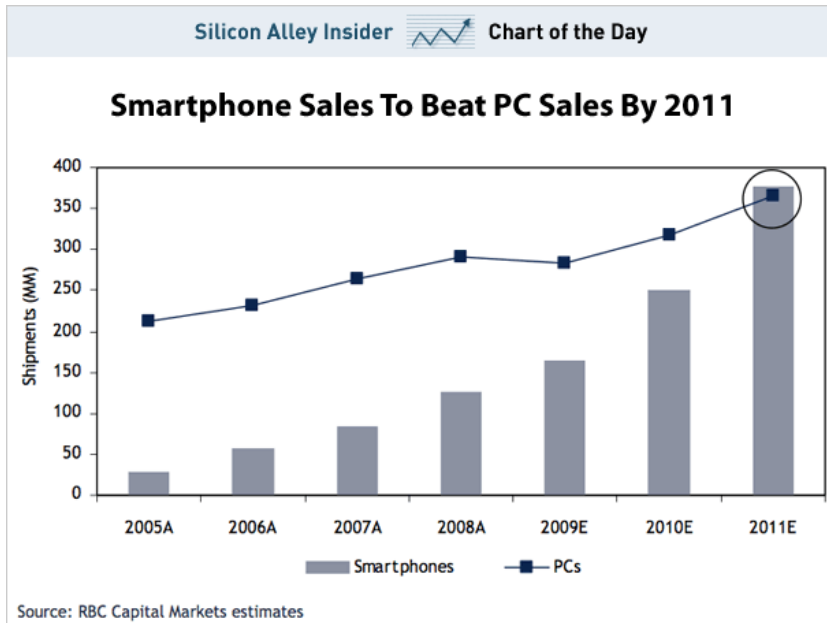
The screenshot shows a website with a leaderboard advertisement at the top. The ad is for BFGoodrich tires, offering a \$50 gift card for buying 4 tires. To the right of the ad is a "Leadboard Ad" label with a red arrow pointing to the ad. Below the ad is a weather forecast for Madison, WI, showing a temperature of 52° and "Partly Cloudy" conditions. The website navigation includes links for HOME, NEWS, WEATHER, SPORTS, ENTERTAINMENT, HEALTH, EDUCATION, AT HOME, MONEY, AUTO, TECH, FEATURES, and ST. MARY'S. The main content area features an interactive radar map, a radar grid with links for Wisconsin, Great Lakes, Central Plains, and U.S. Radar, and a video section with thumbnails for various news and weather videos.

Display Ad Example

The screenshot shows a website with a display advertisement for Carrier heating and cooling systems. The ad is titled "live comfortably and save..." and offers "Up to \$3,325 Cash-Back Rewards" with a federal tax credit. The ad includes a video player for "Koplien's Daybreak Forecast" and a weather forecast for Milwaukee. The weather forecast shows a temperature of 49° and "Partly Cloudy" conditions. The ad also features a "Factory Authorized Dealer" logo and a "Carrier" logo. A "Display Ad" label with a red arrow points to the ad. The website navigation includes links for FORECASTS, MAPS, BLOGS, WEATHER FUN, INTERACTIVE TOOLS, ALERTS, and CLOSINGS. The main content area features a "STORM TEAM 4" logo, a "MILWAUKEE WEATHER CENTRAL" header, and a weather forecast for Milwaukee.

2. Smartphone App

Intersecting with the target through Smartphone access will be increasingly important. It is anticipated that smartphones will beat PC sales in 2011.



According to ComScore, 51.4 percent of smartphone users are under the age of 35. A whopping 57.7 percent of touch-screen users fall within that age range. ComScore also found that 20.6 percent of touch-screen users range in age between 18 and 24.

It's recommended that an App be created for accessing Clear Roads member DOT "Ice & Snow Take it Slow" or road condition web pages.

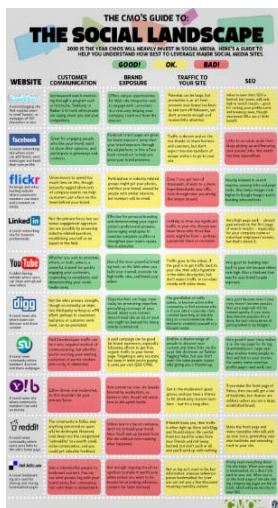


Mobile Roadie (<http://www.mobileroadie.com/>) offers an affordable App development solution. It features an easy interface and content management tool, multi-language support, push capabilities, no ads and is available in an iPhone and Droid versions. Mobil Roadie manages submission to Apple and Droid. It's a \$500 set-up fee with an additional \$29 per month. Consideration should be given as to whether the App takes the user to a portal listing links to member DOT pages, or create state specific s App for direct access to that state's page(s.)

3. Social Media



Leveraging the full complement of social media tools can increase awareness among the target. Based on the primary target identified in the research, Facebook, Twitter and YouTube are ideal channels to create connections and impact behaviors. It is noted that several Clear Roads member states are using some of these tools currently. State DOTs, such as Ohio, have set up separate twitter accounts by metro area. It is recommended that each member state consider engaging social media.



This "Social Media Cheat Sheet" is an excellent guide to how to best leverage social media sites. The PDF can be downloaded at:

<http://www.cmo.com/sites/default/files/CMO-SOCIAL%20LANDSCAPE-R5.pdf>

The following are several recommended social media strategies that can be implemented by member states.

Facebook- Reaching a specific target is now possible through Facebook’s pay-per-click or pay-per-impression advertising program. For example, if you wanted to create an ad targeting females aged 16-24 in a specific geography, Facebook will take you through a step-by-step process in to accomplish this. <http://www.facebook.com/ads/create/?osrc=1> Begin by selecting a destination URL (the Web page the target will see when they click on the ad), a title for the ad, and then text for the body of the ad. You will have the option to upload a picture. From there, you are taken to the “targeting” section where you can select the geography in which the ad will be displayed (can select country, state and cities), demographic of who sees it (male/female, ages, relationship status and language spoken), likes and interests and finally their education and work background.

Note: Some Clear Roads member states are using Facebook currently for general highway information. We recommend adding the ‘Ice & Snow Take it Slow’ logo to any posts that are specific to winter weather driving alerts.

YouTube – As the second largest search engine in the world, YouTube can be leveraged to increase traffic to Web sites and is an excellent vehicle for engaging audiences in an “interactive” manner. As a means to engaging the target early on as they become licensed drivers, consider conducting a PR program with local school districts. Challenge driving-age students to create their own thirty second “Ice & Snow Take it Slow” commercial. Create a YouTube channel and have the students upload their work to the channel. Here are instructions for creating and editing a YouTube channel.

<http://www.google.com/support/youtube/bin/topic.py?topic=16546>

Leverage the partnership with the TV stations by having their personalities judge the submissions. Interchange the winning student’s commercial with the “Ice & Snow Take it Slow” commercial as part of your placement plan. Make sure to use YouTube’s tagging feature to

increase awareness of the videos.

<http://www.google.com/support/youtube/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=55769>

Twitter – Twitter is ideal for quick updates (limited to 140 characters) and can be a powerful tool to disseminate information timely and build a community of followers. As stated earlier, states such as Ohio are using Twitter and have separate accounts for metro areas. A similar strategy can be implemented to create “Ice & Snow” Twitter accounts.



research for winter highway maintenance

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