

Health & Safety → Health & Safety →  
Health & Safety → Health & Safety →  
Health & Safety → Health & Safety →  
Health & Safety → Health & Safety →  
Health & Safety → Health & Safety →  
Health & Safety → Health & Safety →  
Health & Safety → Health & Safety →  
Health & Safety → Health & Safety →  
Health & Safety → Health & Safety →



## → Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving

Drunk Driving Prevention Campaign Case Study



The "It's Only Another Beer"  
Black and Tan

8 oz. pilsner lager  
8 oz. stout lager  
1 frosty mug  
1 icy road  
1 pick-up truck  
1 10-hour day  
1 tired worker  
A few rounds with the guys

Mix ingredients.  
Add 1 totalled vehicle.

Never underestimate 'just a few.'  
Buzzed driving is drunk driving.



The "It's Not Like I'm Drunk" Cocktail

2 oz. tequila  
1 oz. triple sec  
1/2 ounce lime juice  
Salt  
1 too many  
1 automobile  
1 missed red light  
1 false sense of security  
1 lowered reaction time

Combine ingredients. Shake.  
Have another. And another.

Never underestimate 'just a few.'  
Buzzed driving is drunk driving.



Print Ads (left to right):  
"Black and Tan" and "Margarita"

# Buzzed Driving is Drunk Driving



Outdoor (bottom):  
"Buzzed Driving"

## Success Story

### The Ad Council's "Buzzed Driving Is Drunk Driving" Campaign

#### Background

Drunk driving is one of the most frequently committed crimes in the United States. Drunk driving kills someone in America every 41 minutes, representing nearly 40% of all traffic fatalities. In 2005, nearly 15,000 people died in highway crashes involving a driver or a motorcycle operator with a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .08 or higher.<sup>1</sup> Thousands more were injured.

Since its debut more than 20 years ago, the Ad Council's "Friends Don't Let Friends Drive Drunk" campaign has played a significant role in improving the safety of our roads. In large part due to the PSA campaign, more than two-thirds of Americans (68%) say they have tried to stop someone from driving impaired.<sup>2</sup> Alcohol-related crashes dropped dramatically, reaching a low point in the late 1990s. In conjunction with stepped-up law enforcement, this long-running PSA campaign has changed the social norm. "One for the road" was transformed into "Friends don't let friends drive drunk." It has been one of the Ad Council's most well known and successful campaigns.

Despite these successes, crashes involving alcohol consumption started rising again in 2000. Younger drivers age 21-34, predominantly men, are responsible for nearly 60% of alcohol-related traffic crashes. In response to these trends, the Advertising Council and its longtime partner, the U.S. Department of Transportation's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), decided to refocus the Drunk Driving Prevention campaign. Rather than targeting the intervener, the new campaign would target those most likely to drive impaired. Mullen, the Massachusetts-based advertising agency, was recruited on a pro bono basis to provide strategic direction and guide creative development for the campaign.

<sup>1</sup> Source: *Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS)*, NHTSA, 2005

<sup>2</sup> Source: Ad Council national tracking survey



Drunk driving kills  
someone in America every  
**41 minutes.**

# Reaching the Audience

## Strategic and Creative Development of the Campaign

### Strategic Development

The team set out to study the nature of the problem and the mindset of the target audience. First, they reviewed the data on major trends in drunk driving. Drawing on several research studies, including an exhaustive study by the firm Porter Novelli, a demographic and psychographic profile was developed of those most likely to get behind the wheel impaired. In June 2003, the team conducted a series of focus groups with the target audience in New Jersey and Chicago.

Through this research, the mindset of the target audience became clearer. These young men age 21-34 are mostly well-meaning “average Joes” who don’t intend any harm but continue to drink and drive. Many have driven impaired multiple times in the past without getting into trouble. They tend to feel either invincible or just overly optimistic about the control they have over their lives.

Throughout the research, one theme kept coming up. The most common excuses for impaired driving were “I’m just buzzed” or “I just had a few.” “Buzzed” is part of their vernacular and can signify anything from feeling slightly tipsy to being falling-down drunk. And even when they may have had more than a few drinks in a short period of time, before getting behind the wheel they tend to shrug it off by saying they just had “a few.”

With this understanding of the target audience, the team set the following objectives for the campaign:

- To inspire discussion about the dangers of driving “buzzed”
- To prevent impaired driving by defining the feeling of being “buzzed” as a reason not to get behind the wheel

### Creative Development

Mullen produced a compelling advertising campaign that adhered closely to the strategy. Multiple ads were developed for television, radio, billboards and other out-of-home venues, the Web, newspapers and magazines. Television spots depicted various scenarios featuring young adults who were clearly drunk, and then contrasted them with onlookers who were impaired but not obviously drunk. The ads concluded with the lines, “It’s easy to tell if you’ve had way too many. But what if you’ve just had one too many? Buzzed driving is drunk driving.” Radio ads took a similar approach, describing embarrassing scenarios where it is obvious someone has had too much to drink. Print ads gave recipes for making drinks such as a margarita, but added ingredients such as “1 false sense of security.” The print ads conclude with the lines, “Never underestimate ‘just a few.’ Buzzed driving is drunk driving.”

#### TV Spot:

“Karaoke”



**Man sings while spilling his drink and stumbling.**



**Voiceover:** It’s easy to tell if you’ve had way too many. But what if you’ve just had one too many? Buzzed driving is drunk driving.

## Evaluating Ad Effectiveness

As with all Ad Council campaigns, the ads required approval from the Ad Council's Campaign Review Committee, a peer review group consisting of top executives in the advertising industry. In addition, in August 2005 boards and scripts of the ads were presented to a series of focus groups of the target audience in Boston and Chicago. Feedback from the focus groups was largely positive. Young male respondents found the PSAs clear and relevant.

Finally, a quantitative copy test of the produced TV PSAs was conducted in November 2005, prior to the campaign launch. The study, fielded by Lightspeed Research, was conducted online among 305 men age 21-34 nationwide. After viewing an ad, respondents were asked a series of evaluative questions about it. The results echoed the earlier qualitative feedback. A large majority of respondents said that the ads were clear, memorable and motivating. About 7 in 10 (69%) agreed that "this ad makes me think twice about driving when I feel 'buzzed' from alcohol."

## Campaign Launch

The first phase of the campaign launched in December 2005—appropriate timing, since drunk driving crashes spike during the Christmas–New Year's week. The Ad Council distributed the ads to more than 28,000 media outlets nationwide. A range of ads was produced in a variety of media formats, including television, radio, print, Web, out-of-home and alternative media. As with all Ad Council PSA campaigns, media is not planned or bought; instead, the campaign relies on media outlets to donate time and space for the ads. In addition, the Ad Council's Media team marketed the campaign to media companies through several forms of outreach.

Through a special agreement, the Outdoor Advertising Association of America (OAAA) committed to placing more than 8,000 "Buzzed Driving" billboards and 100 vinyl bulletins nationwide, with a concentration in areas with higher rates of impaired driving fatalities.

The Ad Council's PR team led several other activities to get the word out through the press. A localized "Bites and B-Roll" package, featuring sound bites and video footage, was distributed to TV stations. Local NHTSA spokespersons were made available for interviews. The Ad Council also developed Web streaming video packages customized for local viewing. Finally, in partnership with the North American Precis Syndicate, the Ad Council distributed a mat release (a prepackaged newspaper article) to more than 10,000 suburban daily and weekly newspapers.

## Television Bureau of Advertising: Project Roadblock

The Ad Council partnered with the Television Bureau of Advertising (TVB) to create a "roadblock" of the TV PSAs during the month of December. The TVB worked hard to encourage its network of local broadcast TV stations to donate airtime to the PSAs in December, particularly during the week between Christmas and New Year's. Through different forms of outreach, the TVB secured commitments from more than 600 television stations in nearly 200 markets.



## 2006 Redistribution and Roadblock

The ads were redistributed in July 2006, including one new TV spot in Spanish. In December 2006, the TVB again led a "Project Roadblock," leading to an even higher level of commitment from local TV outlets.

# Creating Change

## Evaluating Campaign Impact

### Campaign Evaluation

As with all Ad Council campaigns, multiple tools are used to assess the campaign's effectiveness and impact.

### Estimated Donated Media

In terms of support from the media community, the campaign has been a top performer at the Ad Council. From late 2005 to late 2006, the campaign garnered nearly \$80 million (estimated) worth of donated media. Radio garnered a large share of media donations, but support in other media was also strong. Of particular importance, the TVB roadblocks in December 2005 and December 2006 were responsible for a total of \$6.8 million of TV support during those concentrated one-month periods. In December 2005 alone, the TV spots aired more than 21,100 times on 638 stations in 179 markets.

| ESTIMATED DONATED MEDIA TOTALS<br>December 2005 – December 2006 |                     |
|---|---------------------|
| Medium  | Donated Media (\$)  |
| Radio   | 42,387,000          |
| Broadcast and Cable TV  | 15,409,000          |
| Out-of-Home   | 12,115,600          |
| Interactive   | 5,474,900           |
| Newspaper and Magazine  | 1,416,000           |
| Alternative Media   | 392,700             |
| Public Relations (News stories)                                 | 2,746,300           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>  | <b>\$79,941,500</b> |

#### Data Sources

TV: SIGMA, a product of Nielsen Media Research  
Radio: Verance and Mediaguide monitoring services  
Newspaper & Magazine: Burrelle's clipping service  
Out-of-Home, Alternative, and Interactive: Self-reporting by media companies  
Public Relations: PR Trak

### Press Coverage

News reports about the 2005 campaign launch extended the campaign's reach to 49 million people, generating more than \$6 million in publicity value. The campaign was also covered by 932 local broadcast news programs on 336 television stations in 168 markets. It was featured on such high-profile programs as ABC's *Good Morning America* and CNN's Headline News channel. Additionally, the "Buzzed Driving" campaign was highlighted in radio segments throughout the country. ABCNews.com was among several high-traffic news Web sites that featured the campaign. Among print outlets, press coverage generated more than 300 newspaper articles in 24 states, reaching a circulation of over 16.5 million readers.

### Tracking Survey Results

The Ad Council fielded a benchmark tracking survey immediately prior to the campaign launch in December 2005. Follow-up surveys were fielded in January 2006 and January 2007, immediately following the December TVB roadblocks. Each survey included a national sample of 800 adults, including 500 general market adults and 300 men age 21-34. To qualify, respondents had to be frequent drivers and drink alcohol at least occasionally. The survey tracked awareness, relevant attitudes, and self-reported behaviors over time.

Results from the January 2006 survey, immediately following the launch, demonstrated the campaign's impact in the short term. Results from the second follow-up survey, one year later, were even more impressive:

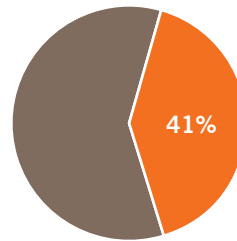
→ **Awareness of the campaign:** Approximately one-third of all adults (35%) recalled seeing or hearing the campaign's ads. Four in 10 men age 21-34 (41%) were aware of the campaign.

## Conclusion

- **Opinion of the campaign:** Of those aware of the campaign, approximately 9 in 10 men age 21-34 (89%) called the advertising extremely/very/somewhat effective.
- **Importance of the issue:** There was a significant increase in the proportion of men age 21-34 who called themselves “extremely concerned” about the issue of drunk driving, from 22% in 2005 to 29% in 2007.
- **Behaviors over the holiday season:** A growing number of respondents reported that they thought twice about drinking and driving during the holiday season. In early January 2007, 10% of all adults, and 17% of men age 21-34, said that in the past few weeks they had decided to NOT drive after they had been drinking. These results were even higher than similar results measured in January 2006.
- **Ad effectiveness:** Those who were aware of the “Buzzed Driving” campaign were significantly more likely to report that they had “recently” refrained from driving after drinking (74% ad aware vs. 55% not ad aware); “recently” stopped an impaired friend or family member from driving (48% ad aware vs. 35% not ad aware); and “recently” discussed the risks of impaired driving with friends or family members (68% ad aware vs. 46% not ad aware). While the PSAs cannot claim to be the sole motivating factor behind these behaviors, it is likely they played a large role.

In conjunction with law enforcement, as well as other national and local public service messages, the “Buzzed Driving” campaign has done a remarkable job in the arena of drunk driving prevention. The “Friends Don’t Let Friends Drive Drunk” message to interveners has been thoroughly ingrained in the American psyche, and the new “Buzzed Driving” message, with its primary focus on the impaired driver, is tackling the problem with a new approach.

The “Buzzed Driving” campaign succeeded primarily because it has set the right tone and it has delivered an engaging and hard-hitting message to the target audience. The use of the term “buzzed” was key to the campaign’s early success. By reaching as many people as it did—and by continuing to gain momentum—the campaign has undeniably played a role in saving lives.



**Men Age 21-34**  
(n=351)

### Recalls Campaign PSA

Four in 10 men age 21-34 recalled seeing or hearing at least one Buzzed Driving PSA. Of these, 74% reported that they had “recently” refrained from driving after drinking. Among those who did *not* recall the Buzzed Driving advertising, a significantly lower percentage—only 55%—reported that they had “recently” refrained from driving after drinking.



The Advertising Council, Inc.  
[www.adcouncil.org](http://www.adcouncil.org)