

Finding the keys to successful public health campaigns promoting healthy weight and lifestyle to adults

Quantitative and qualitative audience testing research

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Disclosure of Interest: Authors are/have been employees of organisations involved in the development, implementation and/or evaluation of three of the ads (Toxic fat, Piece of string, Measure up) included in this analysis.



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Quantitative testing

Project team: Helen Dixon, Maree Scully, Sarah Durkin, Emily Brennan, Trish Cotter, Sarah Maloney, Blythe J. O'Hara, Melanie Wakefield

Aim

- Assess audience reactions to existing public health TV ads promoting healthy weight and lifestyle
- Determine which ads have the highest levels of
 - perceived effectiveness
 - message acceptance
 - argument strength
 - emotional impact

Method

- Online survey
- 3,313 Australian adults aged 21-55 years
- Participants randomly assigned to view and rate four of eight ads related to a specified lifestyle topic: weight, diet or activity



Healthy Weight Ads

Graphic



LiveLighter
Toxic fat
(Australia)

Animation



Become a
swapper
(Australia)

+ testimonial



Take life on
(Scotland)

- testimonial



Measure up
(Australia)

Depicted scene



Piece of string
(Australia)



Full monty
(Scotland)



Correctly
identified
(USA)

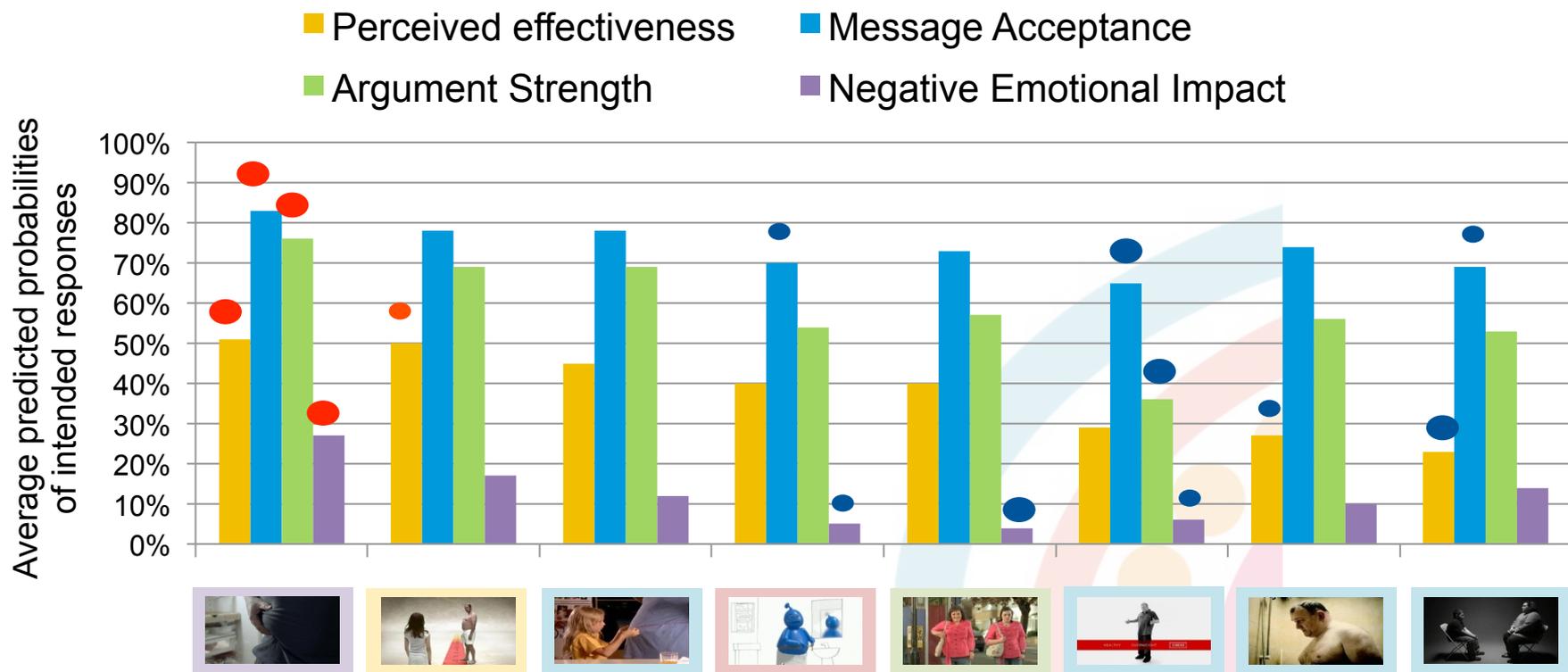


Why am I fat?
(USA)





Responses to weight ads



Qualitative Testing

Method:

Project team: H Dixon, M Murphy, M Rose, M Scully, T Cotter

24 focus groups:

- 179 participants, split by sex, ed., life stage, location

Ad streams:

- Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, Weight

Each ad evaluated for:

- Attention
- Identification
- Communication
- Effect

Analysis & Reporting – recording, transcriptions, coding, thematic content analysis.



Target audience variations

Health status

- People furthest from recommendations needed basic information:
 - To encourage them to get started (**what** and **how** messages).
 - Tended to be the ads that provided a range of examples of simple ways to incorporate activity and healthy eating into their lives (*Swap it*).
- People closer to recommendations:
 - Needed hard hitting messages to motivate them to make sufficient changes to reach the recommended goals (*Live Lighter, Measure Up, String*).
 - Tended to respond better to **why** and **who** messages.



Personal relevance

Execution style

Animation (*Swap it, Change4Life*) ...

- Most impact on those furthest from weight, diet, activity goals
- ‘What’ and ‘How’ messages
- Non-judgemental.

Graphic ads (*Live Lighter*)

- Conveyed that this is a serious topic that everyone needs to take notice of
- Greatest impact on those not aware they need to change

Because you're not using real people I think it connects to people a bit more because they don't feel compared. (F, YA, Low, Reg)

I like that because I feel for a lot of lazy people it would seem quite effortless. (M, YA, Low, Metro)

It's a cartoon, I'm not going to listen to a blue condom! (M, YA, Mid, Metro)

Eventually it sunk in and I gave up the smokes, so maybe this might work. (F, Par, Low, Reg)

I think we need more of that type of advertising...yeah in your face, in relation to weight. (M, Par, Mid, Metro)

I think it needs to have that shock factor to make us sit up and listen. (F, Par, Low, Reg)

Conclusions

Campaign development

- ✓ **Campaigns need to be developed strategically**
- ✓ **Ads most effective with most people**
 - 'Why' ads – typically graphic & hard-hitting
- ✓ **Ads most effective with those far from the health goals**
 - 'How' and 'what' ads - animation can be useful
- ✓ **Campaigns and ads need clear communication objectives**
 - singularity of message tends to be more effective

