University Relations/Enrollment Management

5-2-2019

2019 Bystander Awareness Campaign

University Relations

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BYSTANDER AWARENESS CAMPAIGN
Background
Anyone Collective, a creative agency based in Los Angeles, was tasked with developing a campaign with an anti-hazing focus. However, that grew into a broader awareness campaign that can be used across multiple campus-related situations, all to help students feel more empowered to take ownership of each other’s well-being.

They developed two versions of the campaign: Why Wouldn’t You and Would You each with a different look and feel. University Relations wanted to determine which of the two campaigns better communicates the message, so they wanted to conduct some student focus groups. The focus groups were exposed to a collective number of boards intended to be represented of each campaign.

Target
Students from a variety of states and majors were recruited to take part in the focus group. Graphic design majors were excluded since they might be considered “experts” when evaluating the campaigns and might have unduly influenced other students in the group. Seniors were excluded as well because they might not be as engaged as the other participants.*

The groups were split by gender to determine if they would evaluate the campaigns differently.

*Due to a last minute cancellation, one participant was a senior and will be attending graduate school at WVU
Nearly all the students preferred “Would You” to the “Why Wouldn’t You” campaign. It’s better liked because it is thought to be more effective in conveying a message of empathy and empowerment to act when another is in need. The message is presented in a more direct, creative, realistic, and compelling way.

Together, the boards were also said to present a more cohesive campaign than “Why Wouldn’t You,” and they cover a broader spectrum of issues as well. If the messages appears in various ways (i.e. boards) around campus, students would be able to recognize it as a single campaign.

The visuals are very compelling as well. The use of faces makes it more relatable and difficult to ignore because it feels more personal; the students pictured could be their peers. Unlike “Why Wouldn’t You,” this campaign leaves little to interpretation as to what students are expected to do. The incorporation of a link helps provide the call to action that is missing in the other campaign. Lastly, it’s a much quicker read that works well for busy college students.

That said, there are a few opportunities for improvement: a) Ensure the visuals are in sync with the messages; b) Ensure that the font is large enough.
“Would You” Campaign
This campaign would likely get the best exposure in high traffic areas such as the Mountainlair, residence halls and libraries and places where they are captive audiences such as PRT and bus stations, elevators, the Crossing, the Rec Center. However, some male students felt it would be effective in lesser traveled areas as well – places where a student might likely find themselves in an unwelcome position – such as the breezeway to the downtown library, etc., and it would not have to fight for attention.

“Why Wouldn’t You” Campaign
The “Why Wouldn’t You” campaign is said to be rather weak in communicating the message that students should help someone when they observe something inappropriate. It fails to convince someone to take action and does not specify what action(s) they should take. While it depicts some troublesome situations, it does not provide any direction as to exactly how a student can help. Each board appears very specific, rather than part of a whole campaign.

While some student found it graphically appealing, they believed the message was “more of the same.” In fact, several students thought it looked like something they had been exposed to in high school. Some male students suggested it felt accusatory and confrontational. They also thought that it pushes responsibility to students; the University seems to distance itself.
DETAILED FINDINGS
Seven female and six male students participated in the focus group. They represent the following classes, states and majors.

**Females**
- Freshman – Ohio – Biochemistry
- Freshman – NJ – Mechanical/Aerospace Engineering
- Sophomore – Ohio – Business Management
- Sophomore – WV – Exercise Physiology
- Junior – PA – Management Information Systems
- Junior – MD – Civil Engineering
- Senior – Ohio – Political Science/Criminology

**Males**
- Freshman – PA – Aerospace Engineering
- Freshman – MD – Biomedical Engineering
- Freshman – OH – Psychology
- Sophomore – WV – Political Science
- Sophomore – MI – Industrial Engineering
- Junior – MD – Mining Engineering
Overall Campaign
This campaign seemed to easily convey its intended message. When asked what the main message might be, students gave the following responses:

- “Speak out against something wrong” - Female
- “Bystander intervention” - Female
- “Don’t be racist or let other people be racist.” - Female
- “Speak up on injustice.” - Male
- “It really makes you think about what you, personally have done to help a situation and if I did or didn’t, what could I have done.” - Male

Two students had a different take:

- “Embrace your individuality and don’t be ashamed of what others might be saying about you.” - Female
- “It's got a domestic violence vibe about it.” - Male
Overall Campaign
Students were subsequently told what the desired intention of the campaign was and asked to rate the effectiveness of the campaign in conveying this message:

The campaign is intended to remind students what it means to be empathetic to others, as well as mindful. It’s also intended to help students feel more empowered to take ownership of each other’s well-being and act responsibly.

Using a 1-10 scale, where 1= does not do a good job and 10=does a great job, they rated it as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
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<tr>
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<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.5</td>
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“I gave it a 9. Each one portrays a different version of the message. I like graphic design and it caught my attention; it might catch other people’s attention. I thought it was easy to read and the placement of the words was effective.” – Female

“It’s an 8. I understand the direction they are going in but wonder if some of them are too specific. It seems to be communication ‘if you see something, do something, rather than show empathy toward each other in the Mountaineer community.” – Female

“I gave it an 8.5 because I thought it was thought provoking.” – Male

“I feel like the two yellow ones look like every other poster on campus. They’ve got the same colors and the same font. It looks like what’s outside the Mountainlair.” – Male
Descriptive
The following chart notes the number of students who chose those words to describe the “Why Wouldn’t You” campaign.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Draws attention</td>
<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persuasive</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The usual</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
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<td>Realistic</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clear</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intelligent</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediocre</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informative</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irritating</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WHY WOULDN’T YOU

Clarity
A few of the boards were said to be confusing for the following reasons:

- “The words and the message don’t align.” - Female
- “It looks more like a help hotline than be empathetic to each other. It caught my eye as interesting, but I don’t know if it really matches the description of what it is supposed to convey.” - Female

Relevancy
When they were asked how relevant the campaign is to them, a few mentioned that it’s more like something you’d see in high school – an anti-bullying campaign.

“I feel like if you see someone getting bullied, you should help. Don’t just be a bystander and watch it. The one with the helping hand made me think of buying first.” - Female

“None of them made me thing about someone who was not being bullied or discriminated against. I didn’t think about someone who needs help or something like that.” - Female
Creativity
Some graphics were thought to be commonplace. They were said to be more of the same.

The females preferred the images/graphics that look similar to other things WVU might post on campus. They argued that if it looks like it came from the University, they would read it. If not, they would pass it by.

“It’s not the usual thing that appears on campus. It’s provocative and grabs your attention.” - Male

Males, on the other hand, thought the images with white space stood out. It’s not the usual thing that appears on campus. While they also find the images provocative, what’s missing is the knowledge of what students can do to help.

“It’s not the usual thing that appears on campus. It’s provocative and grabs your attention.” - Male
Creativity
Overall, the campaign does not give a call to action. It prompts students to act but it doesn’t mention how they should do something. They need to know what is behind the hashtag. However, one student noted that the quote does provide a call to action.

Some thought the quotes might be effective, while others believe that busy students would not take the time to read them.

The females preferred the boards with text to those with graphic images. The presentation looks more representative of WVU. However, those might look too similar to the things WVU already puts out.

“It’s not the usual thing that appears on campus. It’s provocative and grabs your attention.” - Male

Female students argued that this campaign “screams” WVU, and students want what they are comfortable with. One RA noted that students are turned off reading something they don’t notice to be part of their school.
Why wouldn’t you

Female students argued that this campaign screams WVU, and students want what they are comfortable with. One RA noted that students are tuned off reading something they don’t notice to be part of their school.

“Maybe you can remind students about medical amnesty and use this to do so.” – Female

Female message. “You have that moment of ‘Do I get involved? Is this just some drunk townie or is that a student? Is that someone who is sick, falling over or dying?’ I don’t see it like that. I see it as someone who is sick, falling over or dying.” – Female

Female message. “I went to the library downtown one night and found a drunk girl who was a freshman with an older guy. I put her there and she was quick to point out that a student might be afraid to step in.” – Female

Female message. “It’s important to note that freshmen are likely to avoid a conflict. They may not be comfortable confronting someone or pointing out a worrisome situation that may implicate themselves. One student suggested that there be an anonymous app where a student could report something.” – Female
WHY WOULDN’T YOU
Female students argued that this campaign “screams” WVU, and students want what they are comfortable with. One RA noted that students are turned off reading something they don’t notice to be part of their school.
Overall Campaign
This campaign is also thought to convey the following message well, as the faces in this campaign personalize the message and makes it more memorable.

The campaign is intended to remind students what it means to be empathetic to others, as well as mindful. It’s also intended to help students feel more empowered to take ownership of each other’s well-being and act responsibly.

In terms of the effectiveness of communicating the message, more females than males gave it a higher rating.

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WHY WOULD YOU

Clarity
Similar to the other campaign, some of the boards in this campaign are nonsensical or unclear:

- The emotion on his face is out of sync with the message that he might need help. This could also be an ad more anything (glasses, hair stylist, etc.)

- This graphic list seems to imply that some issues are more important than others.

- The faded faces seem to diminish the importance of people in the message. It give anonymity to the issue.

The text should be larger.
Creativity

The use of faces in this campaign is perceived as being different from past campaigns the University has run and appears to more realistically convey the message.

One student suggested that the swatch on this board be tailored to the message. For instance, if the message is about hazing, then the swatch should cover her eyes rather than her mouth.

“This one implies how someone tries to contain themselves on a topic rather than speak out on it. It says will you support them if they come out with that story rather than say, ‘No, that didn’t happen.’”
- Male

“I see those types of things a lot...especially on the banner on High Street.”
- Male

The suggestion was made to intermingle some pics of prominent figures from WVU in this image because it may draw more attention. Intermingling them suggests that it could happen to anyone.
One student recounted how other campaigns have fallen flat and that indicates that the University has to put more effort into it.

"An example is the mental health campaign. They'll run hard with it for a couple of weeks, and then it just flew under the radar. I think it's important to make it known, plastered on campus and on the emails...that it is part of the schema, the missions of the University."