Countermarketing in Practice: Strategies from the Truth Campaign
Truth Initiative

Truth Initiative
• Established in 1999 from Master Settlement Agreement (MSA) (formerly American Legacy Foundation)
• Board of Directors: bipartisan group of 6 elected officials, public health leaders

Mission
• Achieve a culture where all youth and young adults reject tobacco

Signature Efforts
• *truth*: first national youth smoking prevention campaign

Evaluation driven
what exactly is countermarketing?

Regular Marketing

Countermarketing:
Marketing principles and techniques to influence non-commercial behaviors that benefit individuals and communities for the greater social good
countermarketing and tobacco control

Tobacco countermarketing attempts to minimize protobacco influences and reduce smoking on a population-level scale – either nationally, or on a state or local level.
exposure to tobacco advertising is widespread

Percentage of middle and high school students who reported seeing advertisements for tobacco products:

- Retail Store: 76.2%
- Internet: 43.0%
- Newspaper/Magazine: 36.9%

Evidence indicates tobacco advertising is associated with youth smoking. 

- Meta-analysis finds that exposure to POS tobacco promotion is associated with:
  - 1.3 times (CI: 1.09 to 1.61) higher odds of smoking susceptibility
  - 1.6 times (CI: 1.33 to 1.96) higher odds of smoking behavior among children and adolescents.
marketing spend for tobacco industry and tobacco control

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tobacco Industry Spending on Advertising and Promotions</th>
<th>Spending for State Tobacco Prevention Programs and National Countermarketing</th>
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<td>$9.5 billion/yr.</td>
<td>&gt;$600 million/yr.</td>
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3 national campaigns unprecedented

FDA targeting at-risk youth (11-17 yrs)

CDC targeting adult smokers

Truth targeting 15-21 yr olds
marketing spend for tobacco industry and tobacco control

- Tobacco Industry Spending on Advertising and Promotions: $9.5 billion
- Spending for State Tobacco Prevention Programs and National Countermarketing: $>500 million
tobacco countermarketing is highly effective

- responsible for 22% of the decline in youth smoking from ‘00 – ‘02
  *2005 American Journal of Public Health

- prevented 450,000 adolescents from smoking initiation nationwide through 2004
  *2009 American Journal of Preventive Medicine

- Campaign recovered its costs, and saved between $1.9 billion and $5.4 billion in medical costs for society.
truth® then and now
truth®

truth is a branded, national, mass media smoking prevention campaign launched in 2000 for youth age 12-17

- Branded peer-to-peer approach
- Multiple Media channels
- Proven effective
truth® in the early 2000s

TEEN SMOKING PREVALENCE

WHAT SMOKING MEANS

TOBACCO IN THE NEWS

MESSAGING

AGE

23%

Smoking = Rebellion

Tobacco is a hot topic

Anti-industry

12-17
TEEN SMOKING PREVALENCE

WHAT SMOKING MEANS

TOBACCO IN THE NEWS

MESSAGING

AGE

truth® in 2014

9%

Smoking = Social

Tobacco is a LOW INTEREST category

Multiple messages focused on denormalization

15-21
media landscape has changed from this...
to this...
GEN Y
BE THE GENERATION THAT ENDS SMOKING.
how do we do it?
the truth® Brand

- Educate
- Engage
- Entertain
- Empower
- Evangelize
Campaign objectives

- To increase campaign-related knowledge, attitudes and beliefs
- To reduce intentions to smoke combustible tobacco
- To reduce initiation of combustible tobacco
- To reduce progression to established combustible tobacco use
create synergy across platforms

Integrated Entertainment

Earned Media/PR

Integrated
Entertainment

Retail & Partnerships

Video Games

Grassroots Music Tour

Television

Website

Social Media & SM Advertising

Online Advertising

Cinema

Video Games

Grassroots Music Tour
Start with a rallying cry

Harness a cultural moment

Engage Recruits

Track and Celebrate Progress

WE CAN BE THE GENERATION THAT ENDS SMOKING.

ENLIST AT THETRUTH.COM

16,288
FINISHERS JOINED.
GET ON BOARD.
start with a rallying cry

STEP 1: Start with a rallying cry

WE CAN BE THE GENERATION THAT ENDS SMOKING.
finishers – rallying cry
harness a cultural moment

STEP 2: Harness culture
facilitate conversations online & offline

Twitter War Room at VMAs
...harness cultural references
72andSunny

CLIENT:  American Legacy Foundation
TITLE:   Truth Left Swipe Dat HD :60
LENGTH:  :60
AUDIO:   Stereo
AD-ID:   ALEG0194000H
DATE:    02/01/15
engage recruits

STEP 3: Engage Recruits

ENLIST AT THETRUTH.COM
engage through partnerships and action

Partnering with Do Something to:

- Educate young people on the prevalence of tobacco products sold in pharmacies
- Enlist youth in the fight against pharmacy tobacco sales
#TakeBacktheShelves

Pharmacies are a trusted source of health information and services. Yet in 2016, 53,566 pharmacies still sell tobacco—the number one preventable cause of death in the US, killing more than 1,300 people each day.

share this stat with friends
track and celebrate progress

STEP 4: Track and Celebrate Progress
progress reports

CVS PROGRESS REPORT

WHY WOULD THEY DO THAT?

WAT

FLORIDA PROGRESS REPORT

FLORIDA JUST RECORDED ITS LOWEST TEEN SMOKING RATE EVER.

SERIOUSLY.

TOBACCO FARMER PROGRESS REPORT

BY EATING MORE HUMMUS.

SMALL TOWN PROGRESS REPORT

HEY, ATLANTA CHARLOTTE DAYTONA BEACH RICHMOND RALEIGH ORLANDO
truth

PROGRESS REPORT
is it working?
summary of preliminary findings to date

Multicomponent evaluation.

78% of all youth and young adults can recall at least one truth ad.

Higher frequency of self-reported truth ad exposure significantly related to increased attitudinal shifts & reduced intentions to smoke.

High engagement on online and digital media.
conclusions

Countermarketing campaigns are effective.

Youth and young adults can be engaged on tobacco control issues if reached in creative ways, including for efforts at the point of sale.

Stay tuned.....
thank you

jcantrell@truthinitiative.org