

Public Services & Social Welfare

RSA
Lyle Bailie

The Longer Term Effects Of Seatbelt Advertising 2001-2007

COMPANY PROFILE

Lyle Bailie International Limited was formerly the advertising agency known as McCann-Erickson Belfast, the first McCann-Erickson office in Ireland. It resulted from a management buy-out by its Belfast directors in February 2004. In law it is exactly the same company as its predecessor – only the shareholders and the name changed.

Lyle Bailie's track record for creating and producing public service advertisements throughout the past three decades is reinforced by its reputation for delivering effectiveness. Its evidential case studies have won 32 Effectiveness Awards, including a Gold World Medal in New York, Ireland's ADFX Grand Prix, Euro Effies and IPAs.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Road fatalities in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland have historically been higher than their nearest neighbour, Great Britain. In 2000, road deaths per 100,000 population were at 6 in Great Britain (GB) compared to 10 in Northern Ireland (NI) and 11 in the Republic of Ireland (ROI).

The mix of factors behind GB's lower road death toll included a higher proportion of motorways in GB, the prevalence of high-risk rural roads throughout Ireland, greater traffic congestion in GB, plus cultural differences. However, one of the key factors influencing the higher rates of road fatalities in Ireland was the lower seatbelt wearing rate, especially in the rear. Pre-campaign, the seatbelt wearing rates in ROI and NI were significantly lower

than in GB for drivers and for front-seat and back-seat passengers.

The deficit in seatbelt wearing rates between Ireland and Britain was clearly linked by statistical evidence to higher death rates and higher serious injury rates in collisions.

The challenge was to increase seatbelt compliance and thereby reduce road carnage with a consequent reduction in both its human tragedy and its economic cost to the taxpayer.

The 'Damage' seatbelts campaign was devised as a cross-border campaign, and was jointly commissioned in 2001 by the respective statutory bodies, the Road Safety Authority (formerly National Safety Council) in ROI and the Department of the Environment in NI. Two further extensions of the 'Damage' idea, 'Selfish' and 'Get It On', were added to the campaign portfolio in October 2006.

MARKETING OBJECTIVES

Ireland has a population of just under six million and this means that the single year data on road casualties lacks the statistical bulk for detailed analysis. Therefore, we aggregate road casualty data over five year periods.

A five-year analysis of road traffic casualty statistics revealed that 15-34 year olds were most over-represented, compared to their population share, as killed and seriously injured victims who were not wearing seatbelts in NI.

Analysis of road traffic casualty statistics in ROI identified males 18-34 and females 18-34 as being most over-represented, compared to their population share, as killed and seriously injured victims who were not wearing seatbelts.

For rear seat passengers, the over-represented victims were consistent with all non seatbelt wearing victims in NI. In ROI, those over-represented included 10-17 year olds.

In 2001, for targeting simplicity, the target audience was defined as 16-34. However given the higher over-representation of the younger cohorts, the epicentre of the target audience was 16-24.

In 2006 statistical analysis conducted before the introduction of 'Get it On' revealed no change in the groups most over-represented.

Also in 2006, non-compliance for children of primary school age had been around 16% in NI and 40% in ROI, suggesting that some parents had not been engaged by their moral responsibilities. Given the introduction of the new EU directive on child restraints, parents of primary school children were the defined target of the ‘Selfish’ campaign.

The campaign objectives were:

1. Achieve high levels of awareness, compared to industry norms.
2. Achieve high levels of influence, compared to industry norms.
3. Improve attitudes to seatbelt wearing, compared to pre-campaign benchmarks.
4. Increase seatbelt wearing rates overall and for key targets.
5. Reduce deaths and serious injuries, achieving both human and economic savings.

Those objectives were informed by the overall Road Safety Strategies put in place by the governments in both Belfast and Dublin. Both governments were committed to the reduction of road deaths and serious injuries. Both governments identified higher seatbelt compliance as a major objective of their strategies – through a combination of enforcement measures and education campaigns. The purpose of the education campaigns, through advertising, was to create increased awareness - translated via impact into engagement, involvement and internalisation, whether people are influenced or not influenced by the campaign.

THE TASK

The approach was research-led, data-led and psychology-led. Between 1999 and 2007, 28,612 research interviews were independently conducted, North & South, into attitudes to seatbelts, using qualitative techniques for strategy development and quantitative techniques for pre-testing and tracking.

An extensive programme of qualitative research was launched as part of the strategy development pre ‘Damage’ (29th January – 1st February 2001). The research revealed that the target audience felt that the decision not to wear a seatbelt was a personal choice - an act of personal freedom.

The key insight behind their dismissal of seatbelts was revealed as the acute sense of discomfort they felt with the physical and social exclusion which wearing a rear seatbelt generated.

When restrained in the rear of a vehicle they had no control, no freedom and limited self-expression whilst being denied access to the social centre of the car - the front.

They felt diminished and uncool because they were excluded from the action, consequently they rationalised their rejection of rear seatbelts by determining that it was their behaviour, their decision, their life which had no consequence beyond themselves.

Enforcement of back seatbelt wearing was perceived as being weak and inconsistent. Even when detected it was felt you could talk your way out of any further action. This helped the target audience rationalise why back seatbelts were not really necessary and their own choice.

The groups confirmed that their possible motivations for deciding to wear a seatbelt included the prospect of killing a family member or a friend, or the prospect of being seriously disabled for life.

The advertising expectations as uncovered by the research included:

- Powerful dramatisations, fuelled by road safety campaigns they are already exposed to throughout Ireland.
- High degree of realism (abstract visual metaphors did not work because they were not realistic).
- Storyline and build up of engaging characters.
- Depiction of social and physical consequences of non-compliance.

These research findings were consistent with the learnings from neuroscience and psychology.

Powerful dramatisations featuring realistic consequences could act as “somatic markers” to encode emotional memory and influence future decisions, based on the findings of Professor Antonio Damasio.

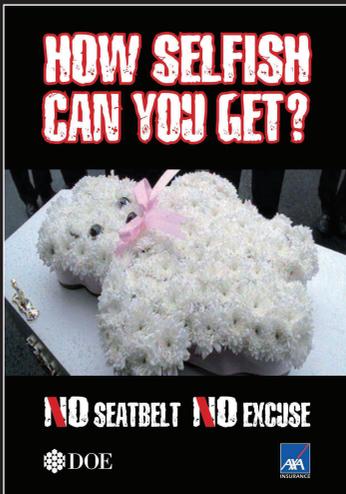
THE STRATEGY

At the heart of the creative strategy was the idea of dramatising the dreadful consequences of being unbelted in a car, in order to create “the memory of a possible future”, as Damasio describes it, and thus influence future decisions about seatbelt wearing.

The creative strategy was also dramatising why the perception, that seatbelt wearing is a personal choice, is wrong – by showing how an individual unbelted



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becomes a human missile, a killer on the loose inside a car. Non-seatbelt wearing had to be positioned as morally inexcusable in order to change the perception that seatbelt wearing is a matter of “personal choice” – “it only affects me”.

The strategy needed to connect with the target audience through internalisation. “That could be me” in the back seat or “that could be me” as a young driver or friend is a desired response. To push home this personal relevance the creative strategy was designed to draw us into the for-real world of the target audience in an engaging narrative style.

The brand, “No Seatbelt – No Excuse”, was chosen to summarise the moral consequences of not wearing a seatbelt – and disprove the perception that a seatbelt is a personal freedom or personal choice.

From 2001, ‘Damage’ used shocking imagery to encode long-term memory and to dramatise the selfishness of not wearing a seatbelt by showing how brain damage and death are the outcomes.

In 2006 ‘Get it On’ and ‘Selfish’ were produced following a programme of 20 qualitative focus groups throughout Ireland (8th February – 4th March 2006).

THE RESEARCH CONCLUDED

- High numbers are wearing seatbelts both in the front and back.
- Evidence to suggest that some 17-24s (and some older than this) are not wearing as much in the back.
- Reminder advertising can win them back.
- ‘Damage’ remains impactful and can motivate people and make them seriously consider their actions.

‘Selfish’ had to emotionally engage parents by dramatising the immoral selfishness of not ensuring that their children are correctly restrained in the car. This continued to build on the “selfish” proposition to win the moral argument regarding child restraints in the light of the new legislation.

‘Get it On’ was launched to reinforce the fact amongst younger drivers and passengers that wearing your seatbelt is the cool thing to do.

COMMUNICATION ACTIVITY

Television was chosen as the core media channel for the launch of each of the Seatbelt campaigns. Previous case studies and research findings which proved the unmatched potency of television in changing attitudes quickly meant that TV was selected as the main awareness driver for each Seatbelts campaign. Longer edits were used in the launch phase of each campaign to communicate the detail of each edit and to involve the target audience in the campaign narrative.

The Seatbelts campaign launched on the 13th June 2001 with the full length Damage edit. The objective of the first burst was to establish awareness quickly, followed by a second burst at the end of August / early September targeting the back-to-school / back-to-college / back-to-work period.

The media objectives were to make the core target audience AWARE of the campaign and to INTERVENE with this audience at “Point of Danger” situations, when they should be wearing their seatbelt.

The 60 second advertisement was shown post 21.00 hours. End break and first-in-break positioning were upweighted going into movies, dramas and football to negate the turn off / switch over factor.

In addition to TV activity the advertisement was also shown in cinemas across NI in films with a 15 or 18 certificate rating. Cinema was utilised between the launch and second bursts of activity over five weeks and strategically targeted the big summer releases, upweighting coverage of the young adult audience.

In addition to TV and cinema activity “Point of Danger” radio was used to reach motorists as they travelled in the car. Other ‘Point of Danger’ activity included branding on car park barriers and petrol pumps.

From the above analysis, in NI 98% of young adults had been exposed to the campaign and in ROI 96% of young adults had seen the ad at least once across the duration of the campaign. Once these high levels of awareness had been achieved new edits were introduced to take the Seatbelts campaign to the next phase.

‘Get It On’ and ‘Selfish’ were then developed for separate target audiences. A media channel analysis was conducted on TGI against all media available in the marketplace against adults 16-34 (NI & ROI) for ‘Get It On’ and against all media available in the marketplace against all adults (NI & ROI)

for ‘Selfish’. This revealed that television (90% and 92% reach respectively) was the most effective medium at reaching both audiences.

It was necessary to prove that these media were also cost efficient, thus cost per thousands (CPT) were analysed.

The campaign launched on the 3rd October 2006 with a roadblock strategy. In order to achieve optimum reach all available TV stations were used. Budget was allocated as per each station’s share of viewing.

Strict monitoring was used throughout the ‘Get It On’ and ‘Selfish’ campaigns to ensure optimum reach and stand out against each of the target audiences.

The decision was taken to run the second bursts of ‘Get It On’ and ‘Selfish’ as separate campaigns at different time of the year. ‘Get It On’ ran again in July 2007 targeting the festival/ summer period and ‘Selfish’ was on air throughout September 2007 targeting the back-to-school period.

An effective frequency model was used to set the TVR weights per burst and per year. The role of overlap TV ratings across the border of NI and ROI was factored into the weightings (approx. 15% of the NI campaign was viewed in ROI).

Outdoor formats such as bus rears (Get It On) and garage forecourt prime sites (Selfish) were later used as additional “point of danger” reminders. Analysis of the TV activity for both campaigns in NI and ROI established that high levels of coverage had been achieved.

Activity Summary – 2001 to 2007

Media total	€3,959,489.00
Damage Production	€690,950.00
Get It On/ Selfish Production	€557,700.00
Research including tracking	€263,900.00
Total Campaign Expenditure	€5,472,039.00

Inclusive of agency costs. VAT extra.

All media and creative activity were integrated and synergised, handled by the road safety team at Lyle Bailie International.

THE RESULTS

In wave after wave of tracking from 2001 to 2007, the seatbelts TV campaigns achieved awareness and influence scores which significantly outscored industry norms.

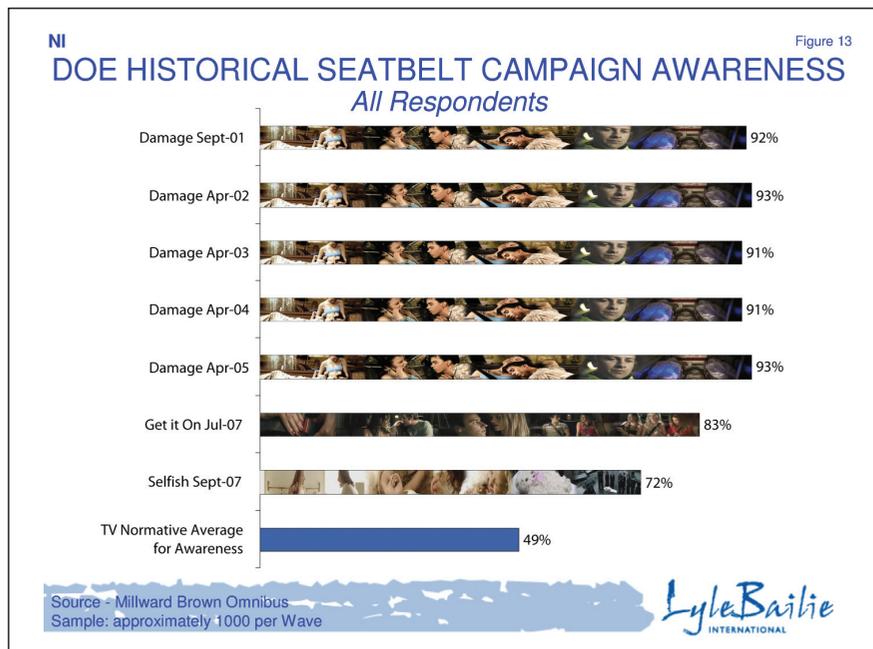
Awareness of ‘Damage’ among the primary target audience peaked at 97% in NI and 96% in ROI – almost double the industry norm.

Among the wider target audience of all adults awareness levels peaked at 93% in NI and 95% in ROI – over 44 percentage points above the industry norm (See figure 1).

The extent to which the primary target audience found the campaign influential peaked at 96% in NI. This is 50% higher than the NI influence norm for TV advertising.

An influence peak of 95% in ROI exceeds the influence norm by 35 points. In ROI the average score for “influenced me a lot” at 60% is over five times higher than the norm for any TV advertising.

Fig. 1



All adults influenced in NI peaked at 94% and 95% in ROI, exceeding TV advertising norm by 53 points and 45 points respectively. In both cases, the scores for “influenced me a lot” dwarf the “any TV advertising” norm.

Attitudes have significantly improved since the introduction of the seatbelts campaigns.

Among 16-34s strong disagreement with the statement ‘to wear a seatbelt or not is a personal choice because it does not affect other people’ has improved by 54% in NI. There has been a 25% improvement in ROI.

These attitudinal improvements, led by high awareness and influence scores, are supported by actual behaviour changes.

NI’s seatbelt wearing rates have continuously lagged behind GB rates until this year – NI now has the highest driver, backseat and front seat published wearing rates in the UK (See figure 2).

The biggest increases in ROI seatbelt wearing rates are in:

- All backseat wearing rates – up from 20% in 1999 (before the launch of ‘Damage’) to 84% in 2007.

Fig. 2

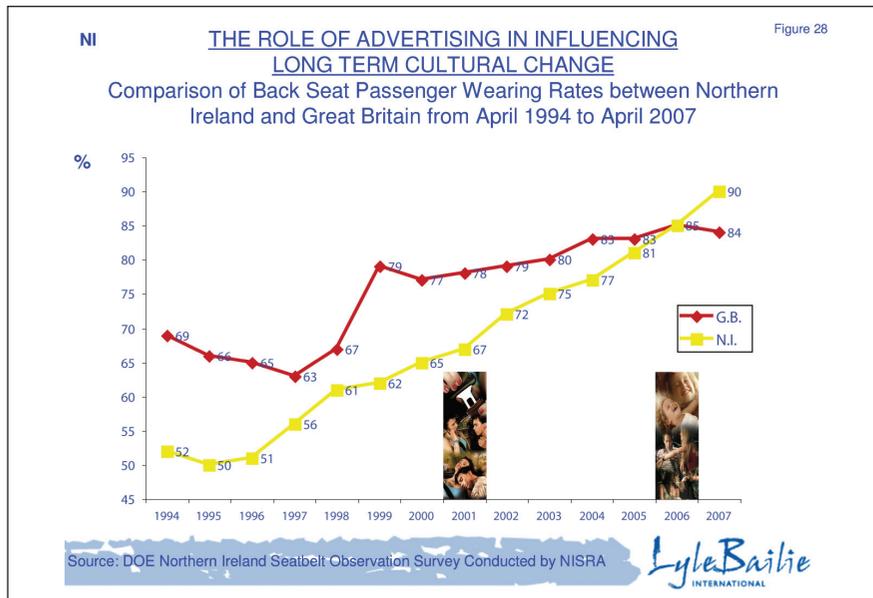
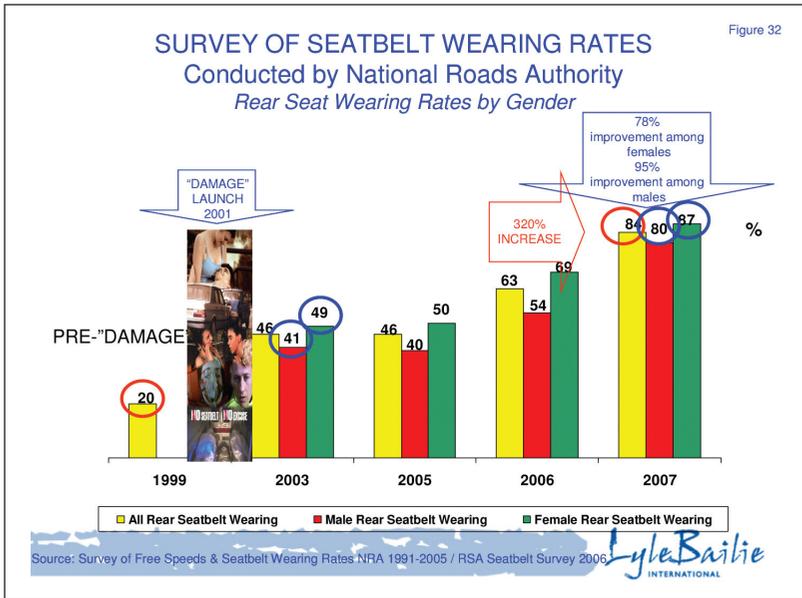


Fig. 3



- Driver wearing rates – up from 55% in 1999 (before the launch of ‘Damage’) to 88% in 2007.
- Overall wearing rates 88%, up from 57% in 1999.

The campaign resulted in a reduction in the number of deaths and serious injuries without seatbelts. Post-campaign deaths and serious injuries without seatbelts fell by 1132 people (see Figure 3).

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

Post-campaign deaths and serious injuries without seatbelts fell by 29% in NI (310 people) and 46% in ROI (822 people).

In relation to all road deaths, in 2007 in NI the toll fell to the lowest on record (equalling 1947). In ROI, road deaths fell to their second lowest level in 44 years.

Additionally, road deaths per 100,000 have closed in on the UK, at 6 in NI and eight in ROI.

Northern Ireland

During the six years pre-launch of the seatbelts campaigns, 1065 people were killed or seriously injured while not wearing a seatbelt. In the six years post-launch, the number of deaths and serious injuries fell to 755.

Republic Of Ireland

During the six years pre-launch of the seatbelts campaigns 1775 people were killed or seriously injured while not wearing a seatbelt. In the six years post-launch, the number of deaths and serious injuries fell to 953.

The public's perception of the most influential factors in saving lives on the roads has been used to calculate the proportion of the €491.9 million economic saving (NI and ROI combined) which can be attributed to each of the influential factors.

Road safety TV ads came out on top.

Based on the economic saving of €491.9 million, the road reduction payback of the TV ads as a "very influential" factor in saving lives is €6.19 million.

The Seatbelts advertising campaigns cost a total of €5.47 million between 2001 and 2007. With a payback figure of €86.2 million the return per euro invested is €15.75.

