

BICYCLE
SAFETY
AWARENESS
CAMPAIGN

USER
GUIDE

PUBLISHED BY THE
BICYCLE
TRANSPORTATION
ALLIANCE



WHAT IF



LOOK RIGHT



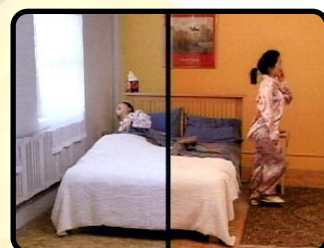
CLOSE CALL



SEE AND BE SEEN



BIKE LANES



WRONG WAY



Foreword

Thank you for your interest in the Oregon Bicycle Awareness TV Campaign. This campaign was created by the Bicycle Transportation Alliance as a Transportation Enhancement project with funding from the Federal Highway Administration and donations by KGW-TV, Grapheon Communications Design, MetaResource Group and many individual volunteers. It features six different public service announcements relating to bicycle safety. These were broadcast on KGW-TV in Portland, Oregon between July 2000 to July 2001.

Altogether, the announcements appeared nearly 900 times over the one-year period, reaching nearly two million viewers in Oregon and southwest Washington. The project also included a web page to reinforce concepts of the campaign, and links to other web sites with information on bicycle transportation and bicycling safety. This web page is still accessible via the Bicycle Transportation Alliance web site at www.bta4bikes.org. Look for the header "Information" on the sidebar of the main page, and click "TV Campaign" below it.

The announcements address several bicycle safety and awareness themes, including:

- Bicycling as a fun and a viable form of transportation
- Bicyclists exhibiting safe and responsible behavior
- Bicyclists and motorists obeying traffic signs, lights and other rules of the road
- Motorists learning respect for the rights and safety of bicyclists

Specific issues and messages include:

- The need for drivers to look right for bicycles before turning or changing lanes
- The need for motorists and cyclists to fully stop at stop signs
- The importance of bike lights and bright clothing when riding in darkness or rainy weather
- The importance of riding on the right side of the road
- The reminder that bike lanes are for bikes, not cars.

In addition to the production and broadcast of the PSAs in the Portland area, FHWA funded a program to distribute the campaign widely to transportation professionals and advocacy organizations for broadcast in cities across the country.

I hope you have reviewed and enjoyed the video tape presenting the six 30-second PSAs as they were originally broadcast. This CD user's guide and a broadcast-quality BetaSP tape were developed and funded solely by the Bicycle Transportation Alliance. The BetaSP tape can be ordered separately from the Bicycle Transportation Alliance.

For further information or additional copies of the tapes, please contact me at (503) 226-0676 or karen@bta4bikes.org.

Sincerely,

Karen Frost
Program Director

Introduction

Thank you for requesting a producer's copy of the Oregon Bicycle Awareness TV Campaign. This document will give you an overview of the campaign and its components, the steps we took to develop them, and the ways you might fund, broadcast and evaluate them in your own community.

The Oregon Bicycle Awareness TV Campaign was broadcast from June 2000 to August 2001 on KGW-TV in Portland, Oregon, serving the Willamette Valley. Our main purpose in developing the campaign was to educate cyclists and motorists about critical safety issues, making the roads safer for both types of commuters. But along the way, we tried to make the case about why these safety concerns should be addressed in the first place: more people should be bicycling, for their own health and for the health of their community. More bicyclists means fewer cars on the roads, lessening pollution, easing gridlocked commutes, and reducing the stress on the transportation infrastructure. In short, getting more cyclists on the roads is good for everyone - including motorists.

So each of these PSAs seeks to accomplish two things: first, they provide important tips on how to bicycle safely; and second, they present bicycling as fun and healthful.

The Bicycle Awareness Campaign package includes a VHS tape with the six 30-second Public Service Announcements (PSAs), as well as a Beta-SP tape of the PSAs in broadcast (though not broadcast-ready – see below) format. Also part of the package is this CD which includes not only this user guide, but web-sized, Quicktime™ movies of all the PSAs as well. The BetaSP tape can be ordered separately from the Bicycle Transportation Alliance.

After your group views the VHS tape and reviews this CD documentation, we hope you'll decide to pursue broadcasting the PSAs in your area. The process can be both lengthy and full of challenges, but the end result – raising bicycle and bicycle safety awareness through the powerful and pervasive medium of television – is well worth the trouble. We've tried to make it as easy as possible, with tips about the process we went through to fund, develop and evaluate our campaign. The broadcast-quality tape of the PSAs is configured so you can personalize each one with your organization's logo and partners. Good luck, and enjoy!

These materials represent the contributions of a number of very creative and generous partners, including the [Federal Highway Administration](#), [Oregon Department of Transportation](#), [KGW-TV](#), [Grapheon Communications Design](#), [MetaResource Group](#), hundreds of volunteers, and of course, the hard-working staff of the Bicycle Transportation Alliance.



MOTORISTS AND CYCLISTS INTERACT IN "BIKE LANES"

The Campaign: How We Did It

Founded in 1990, the Bicycle Transportation Alliance works in partnership with citizens, businesses, community organizations and government agencies to create safe, sane and sustainable communities – one bike at a time. To find out more about what we do, from bicycle advocacy to the Bike Commute Challenge, visit the BTA website at www.bta4bikes.org.

Over more than a decade of bicycle advocacy, we've watched as the number of conflicts increased between motorists and bicyclists – and sometimes their attorneys. We've listened to law enforcement officers' accounts of bicycle-motorist incidents and their tales of frequent misunderstandings between the two parties. And we've even seen misunderstandings take place between police and cyclists, and in the judiciary. Because so few resources and public dialogue exist about the interactions between cyclists and motorists, the interactions between bicyclists and motorists were growing increasingly problematic.

This Campaign represents one step toward increasing that dialogue. To reach beyond our own small circle of bicycling compatriots and shift public opinion to include bicycling as an acceptable and desirable mode of transportation, we knew we had to address these core issues:

- 1) bicycling is a fun and a viable form of transportation;
- 2) bicyclists must gain respect by exhibiting responsible behavior;
- 3) motorists must understand how bicyclists are properly integrated into the transportation system;
- 4) motorists must show respect for the rights of bicyclists on the road.

This section will give you an overview of how we took these core issues and translated them into the campaign, from brainstorm to broadcast.

Our first decision centered on the media through which to pursue our goals. Though many effective grass-roots, public awareness programs have been implemented by departments of transportation and non-profit organizations in Oregon and across the country, the time has come to create broader regional campaigns to deliver our message to bigger markets in a memorable way. The time has come to really sell bicycling!

What better medium than the omnipresent television? For good or ill, the lives of Americans have been irrevocably changed by TV. The catchy music, the images of attractive people in positions of desirable and attainable status, the repetition, the repetition, the repeti Television sells both the good and the not so good. We want to sell something very good—bicycling!

The Bicycle Transportation Alliance and partners have developed this series of television public service announcements to influence a broad demographic and address safety and lifestyle choices. The BTA would like to offer these PSAs to bicycle advocacy organizations, transportation departments, community groups — anyone who would like to get them on the tube, and to start a change in their community.

Many TV stations are eager to build partnerships with non-profit organizations to bring messages of good health, livability, and community service to their airwaves and establish leadership positions in the market for supporting the good work of citizens. Corporations likewise are willing to support these messages with broadcast dollars to be aligned with good causes.



A GROUP OF RIDERS APPEAR IN "LOOK RIGHT"

Gathering Support

There should be broad support among transportation professionals, bicycle advocates and community leaders for using a TV campaign to promote bicycle safety. Establishing a large group of stakeholders may be useful in generating ideas and developing connections for funding. An interested group will be invaluable in determining what issues should be addressed in the campaign.

- Assemble stakeholders — transportation professionals, bicycle advocates and community leaders.
- Brainstorm ideas and determine what topics you feel should be covered in your campaign. Keep it simple.
- Present the BTA promo tape to your stakeholders for evaluation. Don't feel that you need to use all the spots – a campaign focused on the most critical topics can be more successful.

Funding Our Campaign

We were first introduced to the notion of developing PSAs when a representative of our local TV station, KGW-TV, knocked on our door and presented the broadcast package: we would buy an amount of broadcast time, the station would match the dollars with free broadcasts. At the time, we had no staff resources to seek sponsorship or develop the concepts. And thus, this great idea was relegated to the back burner.

A year later ISTEA was reauthorized to TEA-21 and federal Transportation Enhancements (TE) funding widened to include a bicycle and pedestrian safety education category. So we were ready to go after some big bucks for our TV campaign (minimum grant amount in Oregon is \$200,000). We went back to KGW-TV and opened the discussion to implement a year-long TV campaign. The campaign was funded by the [Federal Highway Administration](#) through the Transportation Enhancement Program.



THE DREAMER GETS SUPPORT ON HIS RIDE IN "WHAT IF"

Finding Your Money

Corporations and public agencies may be very willing to sponsor your PSAs. Health care and insurance companies have a vested interest in reducing injuries and property damage. Your state's health division may be eager to promote bicycle safety to promote good health. Remember, the health care industry understands how we must integrate activity into our daily routine in order to prevent the insidious diseases that are the result of a sedentary life style. Biking does it!

When approaching a potential sponsor, remember:

- You may find one sponsor to support the broadcast of all spots or a different sponsor for each spot.
- Be prepared with a good case when you approach a potential sponsor. It is essential to communicate the benefits of bicycling and the benefits of aligning their company with the messages that promote bicycle safety.
- Use statistics, media articles and personal stories from your city that bring the message home.
- The company's logo will be displayed on the final frame of the PSA. Add value by offering to display the logo on your web site and mention the company in literature that your organization produces.
- Generally corporations will support the PSAs because they:
 - like to be associated with popular causes.
 - want exposure to new customers
 - want to improve their image in the public eye
 - can take a tax write-off
- The Traffic Safety Division of your state department of transportation is responsible for promoting educational campaigns to save lives on your state roadways. This department may have dollars available to develop such a PSA campaign on bicycle safety. Note, however, that they cannot use National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA) funds to buy broadcast time.
- Federal funding through the TE program includes an education category. Partner with your city, county or state to apply for funding. In Oregon, each TE project must be at least \$200,000, but there is a special exemption process to apply for less. Your application will be in competition with other very popular Enhancement projects, so applying for less money than a big construction project may put your project in a more attractive position for funding.



GOING ALONG FOR THE RIDE IN "BIKE LANES"

There is money lurking. Dig for it.

Oregon Bicycle Awareness TV Campaign Budget and Match

	Budget	Match	Total
Salaries and wages	\$24,888		
Volunteer hours		\$5,130	
Employee benefits	\$4,053	\$240	
Office expenses	\$3,226		
Evaluation program	\$34,780	\$5,125	
Writing	\$4,500		
Direction	\$13,500	\$13,500	
Broadcast placement	\$152,139	\$152,139	
Production		\$12,000	
Web site		\$7,200	
16mm film upcharge	\$24,763		
	\$262,069	\$195,209	\$457,278

Approaching a Television Station

The number of commercial time slots that TV stations have available for sale is called inventory. Very popular stations in big markets, where commercial space is easier to sell, will likely have less space available for match; their inventory is low. A station in a medium- or small-sized market may be more eager to work a deal with your organization to match free spots to paid spots because they have more inventory.

- Research the various packages that each TV station offers for non-profit PSA campaigns.
- Contact the station's public affairs or new business development director who handles public service announcements. Will she yawn and offer to air your tapes in the wee hours of the morning, or will the station air your tapes during *Frasier* or *Oprah*? Will the station offer free production services to create the final identification frame with your sponsor's logo, the TV station's logo (if they give you free spots) and your organization's logo? Will the station offer a package of paid and free spots, if you bring money to the table?
- Show the PSA promo tape to the station's public affairs or new business development director. Bring the Beta tape supplied with this package: this is what the station will use for broadcast, and it will present the PSAs at their best. The original footage was shot on Super 16 film — the standard for producing national TV commercials — and then transferred to Beta.
- Bring money! The station can't offer good broadcast times if you don't pay big money. For example, if your corporate or governmental sponsor can offer \$50,000 to purchase broadcast time, the TV station may offer to match \$50,000 in free air time or may offer to match the number of spots that you will purchase. Be bold and ask for a dollar match. Because the match spots are usually aired at less desirable times, the unit cost is cheaper. Therefore, you'll get more spots for your \$50,000. The free PSA broadcasts will undoubtedly occur at odd hours, but our experience was that we received some good placements too. Last minute cancellations by advertisers may leave a good slot open for your rep to slip in your PSA. Be aware that your free spots may be bumped to other times at the discretion of the station. The paid spots will rarely be bumped.
- The station may be able to suggest some corporate sponsors who would like to be associated with bikes. They may even help put the deal together for you.



ZONED OUT AND IGNORING MIRRORS IN "LOOK RIGHT"

Air times and Frequency

Once you have the deal roughed in, establish clearly when spots will be aired, and what percentage will be placed in prime time: after all, if a PSA is aired in the forest of television and no one is there to watch it, does it really exist?

Sample Frequency, Demographics and Costs of Paid Broadcast Schedule

This table represents the original contract with KGW-TV. The schedule was adjusted during the campaign. Broadcast fees for your local TV station may vary.

Months	Total paid spots	Reach 18 + /Frequency	Reach 25-54 /Frequency	Cost
June with prime time	21	59.3 / 2.0	57.1 / 1.9	\$19,877
July, August with prime	48	72.6 / 28	71.5 / 2.7	\$31,760
September	45	54.0 / 2.7	49.7 / 2.6	\$19,850
Oct-Nov-Dec	81	54.9 / 4.2	42.1 / 4.5	\$25,698
Jan-Feb-Mar	60	51.0 / 3.5	40.5 / 4	\$21,960
April-May	71	57.9 / 4.0	46.8 / 4.7	\$32,994
TOTAL	326			\$152,139

Reach 18+ means the percentage of 18 year olds and older seeing the spots

Reach 25-54 means the percentage of 25-54 year olds seeing the spots

Frequency means the number of times that the population sees the spot in the time frame

Reach and Frequency of the Final Campaign

Over the broadcast year from June 2000 to July 2001,

- 90% of the population age 18+ saw the BTA PSAs at least six times
- 85% of the population age 25-54 saw the BTA PSAs at least five times
- Each schedule had a reach of 45-60% per month or two, so KGW is confident that the market was saturated up to 90%

Schedule of Broadcasts by Month

Here are our suggestions for a broadcast schedule through a year, seen as percentages of the total allocation of paid and match spots you are able to arrange. In general, they track with the prime cycling months during the summer. This is because we felt that these messages would be most effective if people could act on them soon after viewing – in the winter, this is less likely, so the winter schedule acts as reinforcement for the main messages, and heavily favors *See and Be Seen*, the PSA about riding in the dark. By contrast, the summer months are when most people (and especially new riders) are most likely to encounter these safety situations, so we tried to ramp up the saturation during those months. Of course, your climate may require a different strategy, eliminating any broadcasts during the winter while allowing for heavy saturation when the snow melts.

Note that this is a ideal schedule and because of changes through the year, these proportions are only partially mirrored in our actual broadcast schedule.



A SCOFFLAW CONSIDERS HER CHOICES IN "CLOSE CALL"

Suggested Broadcast Schedule of PSAs (percent):

March	7%
April	8%
May	11%
June	13%
July	12%
August	12%
September	10%
October	8%
November	5%
December	4%
January	4%
February	6%
TOTAL	100%

The following tables represent the final broadcast schedule of paid spots at \$153,009 and match spots (free) at a value of \$234,200. Obviously, the TV station was more generous with match spots than originally expected.

Actual Broadcast Schedule Paid PSAs:

Months	Total Paid Spots	Cost
July 2000	36	\$24,677
August	41	\$29,630
September	14	\$9120
October	25	\$7520
November	25	\$7060
December	31	\$11,118
January, 2001	23	\$8075
Feb	19	\$6660
March	27	\$11,359
April	15	\$7000
May	35	\$14,340
June	38	\$16,250
July	1	\$200
TOTAL	330	153,009
GOAL		\$152,139

Actual Broadcast Schedule for Match (Free) PSAs

Months	Total Match Spots	Match Value
July 2000	18	\$5125
August	24	\$8450
September	19	\$6025
October	19	\$14,075
November	41	\$9400
December	47	\$18,575
January 2001	50	\$21,975
Feb	43	\$17,725
March	62	\$20,050
April	126	\$58,400
May	41	\$15,175
June	40	\$21,275
July	34	\$17,950
TOTAL	564	\$234,200
GOAL		\$152,139

Components of the Campaign

With funding in place and a broadcast partner on board, we began the development phase:

- Six 30-second PSAs. In collaboration with BTA staff and KGW-TV, Grapheon Communications Design in Portland wrote, directed and edited the PSAs.
- The PSAs were broadcast from Longview, Washington south to Eugene, Oregon and from the coast to the Cascades from June 2000 to August 2001.
- A web page was designed by Grapheon and maintained on the web site of KGW-TV (www.kgw.com) for the duration of the campaign. The page now resides on the BTA site, including Quicktime™ movies of each PSA. The web site reinforces the concepts of the campaign and provides links to other transportation web sites that offer bike route maps, bicycling safety tips and bike commuting advice.
- An evaluation program, including three in-depth telephone surveys, was conducted to determine the effectiveness of the campaign on public awareness, attitude and understanding of the issues addressed.
- This user's guide and PSA tapes are available to bicycle advocacy organizations, departments of transportation, community organizations and TV stations for a nominal fee to cover administrative and production costs.
- In successive broadcast programs in Oregon, the BTA will communicate the objectives and broadcast timeline with law enforcement agencies throughout the broadcast area. Law enforcement agencies will be encouraged to run safety awareness programs during the broadcast period.

Issues Addressed in the Six 30-second PSAs

What If? – As a sleepy and hapless car commuter fumbles with his car keys, he fantasizes about the freedom of riding a bike to work instead. By the end of the PSA, his dream becomes a reality.

Key messages:

- Signaling
- Stopping at a stop sign
- Wearing a helmet



CLICK IMAGE TO PLAY

Look Right, See Right – A zoned out, inattentive car driver uses only his mirrors to check for traffic, but he grows increasingly unsure about whether he's seeing everything on the road around him. Sure enough, as he drifts into the right lane, a shout from a pack of bike riders finally prompts a look over his right shoulder, where he sees riders he hadn't seen in his mirrors.

Key messages:

- Double check the road around you with a look over your right shoulder before changing lanes.



CLICK IMAGE TO PLAY

Close Call – After a car driver thinking about drifting through a stop sign stops just in time to avoid a cyclist, that rider contemplates the same infraction. Coasting toward a stop sign, the road looks clear, but she can't be sure and applies the brakes just in time. Whew!

Key messages:

- Cars *and* bike should stop fully at all stop signs and stop lights
- Wearing a helmet



CLICK IMAGE TO PLAY

See and Be Seen – Her friends may think she's crazy, but one cyclist says she actually enjoys riding in the rain and darkness of early morning because she's appropriately dressed and easily seen by other traffic. As she arrives at her executive bike parking space, we see she isn't crazy at all.

Key messages:

- Wear bright clothing
- Wear reflectors
- Use a headlight
- Use a taillight
- Dress in waterproof clothing
- Wear a helmet



CLICK IMAGE TO PLAY

Wrong Way – There's a right way and a wrong way to ride down a street – with traffic or against it, and we watch through split screen as the same cyclist tries both ways. As the good rider winces at how the bad rider ends her ride, the consequences of each strategy couldn't be clearer.

Key messages:

- Don't ride on the wrong side of the road
- Wear bright clothing
- Wear a helmet
- Pay attention when you're riding



CLICK IMAGE TO PLAY

Bike Lanes – A curmudgeon grumbles to his weary spouse about bike lanes as he attempts to avoid congested traffic by swerving into one – only to find he and his wife transformed into riders. Bike lanes are indeed only for bikes.

Key messages:

- Don't drive or otherwise swerve into bike lanes
- Wear a helmet when riding



CLICK IMAGE TO PLAY

Implementing Your TV Campaign

Once you've assembled your partner team, you'll need to make a fundamental decision: whether you'll use our PSAs and modify the credits or create your own. Ultimately, this may be a budgetary issue, since simply adding your credits to some or all of the PSAs we've supplied will be dramatically less expensive than creating your own. But even if you are able to secure the appropriate funding, you'll also want to consider the time you have to devote to the project – which will be substantial – and how much of a production budget and/or match your broadcast partner is willing to provide.

Even if all these ducks are in a row, there's the question of quality. If you have access to a talented director or editor, or your broadcast partner has staff who produce work which is creative and innovative, then your money will be well spent. Your PSAs will tell your story evocatively, and your message will be credible. If not, you may be facing an uphill battle to achieve what you have in your mind's eye.

This is not to say that you shouldn't do it, however. That's why we've divided this section into two parts: customizing our PSAs or creating your own. Whichever you choose, you'll find the process extremely educational and eye-opening.

Good luck, and... Action!

Using Our PSAs

The quickest and easiest way to get a bicycle safety and bicycle riding message on the air is to choose a few of our PSAs and modify them for your own use.

The enclosed Beta SP tape contains broadcast-quality versions of the six PSAs. You're certainly free to use them without modification, but you may want to swap out the logo credits and add your own or those of your sponsor or broadcast partner. To anticipate this, we've laid down two versions on the tape: first, all six PSAs, as we broadcast them; then, the six PSAs with credits masked out so you can insert your own. Your broadcast partner should have no trouble laying in new logos, but here's an overview of how the credit inserts will work:

Close Call and **Wrong Way**: simply mask in your credits below the tag line.

For the **other PSAs**, the process is a little more complicated, but not forbiddingly so. They involve two dissolves: first, a cross dissolve from the action to the headline (usually Decide to Ride); then, a few frames later, the logos fade up underneath the head. In the modified PSAs, we've retained the first dissolve to the headline, so that once the head is up and the action is out, you can mask in a second fade of your logos just below it.

In the PSAs which have the tags at the end, we recommend a 10-frame fade to black.

In general, make sure any type you use matches what's existing. As with any campaign, using common components across a number of spots ties them together in the mind of the viewer, and reinforces the campaign's message.



ON THE SET OF "CLOSE CALL"

Producing Your Own PSAs

If the BTA TV Campaign doesn't address the issues that are primary in your region, you may want to start from scratch and produce your own spots. To make spots that really communicate – which tell a story instead of listing bullet points – you'll want to work with the highest caliber production partners you can find and afford. This could be your actual broadcast partner, or it could be someone else.

- Meet with public affairs or new business development directors of a few stations to learn their procedures for PSA development and broadcast. Once again, if your organization can bring in a sponsor to purchase airtime, the station may match the amount in airtime AND offer free production of the PSAs.
- Ask to see tapes that the production department has created for other non-profit organizations or public entities. Do their spots look like they will be able to tell your story compellingly? Are they interesting or memorable? Would you watch them a second or third time?
- If you don't have confidence in the abilities of the production department of the TV station, you might consider supplementing their efforts with those of your favorite creative services company, especially if they'll work pro-bono. In our case, Grapheon Communications Design, wrote, directed and edited the PSAs, while KGW acted as producer and assembled the production team. The BTA benefits from an extraordinary collaboration with the creative director and principal of Grapheon who has nurtured the BTA image from our founding eleven years ago.

You would be fortunate indeed to find such a relationship.

Whomever you work with, make sure the roles and responsibilities of each team member are spelled out from the very beginning. Who will write, direct, or edit? Will you be the producer, or will that fall to the production partner? When are the review cycles? Who has the last word? If the station is contributing production, how much time have they allocated to your project in each phase?

If your production partner does offer production help as part of its match, that will be very hard to resist, especially once you price an independent production house. But the following notes should help you understand the process whichever route you choose.



BEING A LITTLE CLOSER TO IT ALL IN "WHAT IF"

First, some terms:

Pre-production is the time you spend preparing for the actual shoot. This can include script development, meeting with crew, finding and renting equipment, auditions, catering arrangements and more: in fact, everything up until the camera is unpacked at the beginning of the shoot.

Production is the time you spend actually shooting, from setting up the camera equipment and lighting, to breaking down the set at the end of the day.

Post production (or simply "post") is everything that happens after you shoot until your PSA goes on the air.

In general, pre-production is cheap, while production and post are expensive, so the more energy and brainpower you invest in pre-production (tight script, location scouts, meetings with crew, etc.), the cheaper, shorter and more efficient your shoot and edit will be. Don't short-change pre-production.

The **Executive Producer** in general is in charge of the production of the PSA as a business: finding the money and making sure it's appropriately spent.

The **Producer** is also concerned with how the money is spent, but he or she is closer to the actual day-to-day production of the piece. In a small production like this, the producer not only manages the budget and coordinates the production team and talent, but also makes sure that team has everything it needs to run smoothly, from equipment to cold drinks.

It may be that your broadcast partner is comfortable with taking the producer role (and of course, they know the business), but it's unlikely that they will feel their responsibilities extend as far as providing meals for the crew. Our recommendation is therefore twofold: your broadcast partner will have valuable skills, experience and contacts, so make use of them and let them work for you. On the other hand, remember that the broadcaster will have a certain number of dollars and hours in mind when they agree to produce your spots: the more you can do, the more time they'll have to do the little things that will take your PSAs up a notch or two in terms of quality.



LOOKING A LITTLE LIKE A PRODUCER IN "BIKE LANES"

Pre-production

The Script

This is where it all starts. Developing a PSA without a tight script is like building a house without a blueprint: it can be done, but it's more likely you'll get the end product you envisioned if you have one in hand.

If you're considering writing or helping to write the script, know in advance that developing one for a 30-second piece is no easy task: you'll need to balance your fantastic ideas with your budget, the patience of your crew, and what you can realistically fit into half a minute. So, as you begin this creative process, here a few things in mind.

You'll probably want to start with your core objectives, a list of issues you want to address, like bike lanes, stopping at lights, and so on. Once you have a nice, long list, admire it for a moment because this should be the last you ever see it. To achieve the maximum effect, each 30 second PSA should address no more than 2 issues, or 3 if they're all related. The more you cram into each PSA, the more difficult it will be to grasp and less people will be able to remember.

To see what we're saying, spend an evening watching commercial television, but this time, mute the programming and not the commercials. Take notes about which ones you like, which make you laugh, which have storytelling techniques you think work. Try not to bring your preconceptions to the exercise: try to look past the actual message (which you might find distasteful) at the way they conveyed that message – we found car ads especially enlightening.

As you're watching – and as you develop your scripts – keep in mind the old writing maxim “show, don't tell”. Think about it from the audience's perspective: how would you respond to a long list of bullet points whizzing by on your screen, or some talking head lecturing you on point after point? You'd be asleep or on your way to the cupboard for a stiff drink.

So, think metaphorically. Think of situations or story lines that bring the issues you want to address to the forefront. In our Look Right PSA, for instance, the motorist stares straight ahead and drives through an urban environment totally devoid of other people or vehicles, reinforcing the point of the PSA that if you don't actually turn to look, you might think you're alone on the road when you aren't.

To be truly educational, your spot should show the audience what you're trying to achieve so they can envision themselves as taking part in the situation. If all you do is tell them, by contrast, they can't imaginatively participate, making it less likely your message will stick. In short, balance the education with some entertainment, the medicine with a little sugar. And remember you have just 30 short seconds: no more than 1-2 concepts!

Finally, you'll want to keep in mind your production limitations and write to them. Scripting a street scene with thousands of cyclists and name-brand actors is a fine idea, but not one you can accomplish on your budget. In general, your enemies are time and money, so any components of the script which eat up too much of either should be rigorously scrutinized.

- Specify as few locations for your scenes as possible; moving a crew around burns up production time. Sometimes, simply pivoting the camera around gives you essentially a new location.



STARTING OUT THE RIGHT WAY AND THE “WRONG WAY”

- Specify lightly trafficked locations or those which don't require working around lots of non-crew people. Relatedly, tighter shots with just one or two people are much quicker to shoot than wide shots.
- Specify as few actors and extras as possible. Coordinating lots of people burns up time and takes longer to shoot.

Some other considerations:

Film versus Video

If you watch commercial television, you've probably noticed a difference between commercials for local businesses (car dealerships, for instance) and national brands (car manufacturers, beers, laundry detergents, etc.). Of course, the difference has a lot to do with budget: national brands have larger budgets to invest in locations, talent, and post-production effects, while local commercials (again, in general) are often produced in-house by television stations in exchange for airtime buys, so the budgets and time devoted to them are comparatively small.

But where the overall look and feel of the pieces are concerned, the big difference between local and national commercials is that local spots are shot on video, while national ones are shot on film. Because you see what you're getting as you shoot, and the shots are ready to edit virtually the moment the tape pops out of the camera, video is much quicker and inexpensive to produce and post-produce. Film, by contrast, requires expensive equipment, experienced professionals behind the camera, and post-production processing and transfer to video, so it can be substantially more expensive.

If it's so expensive, why do it? The short answer is that it just looks better. Video can capture fewer colors, and a much smaller range of them in each shot, so it can look harsher, overly sharp or pixelated. Film has a much larger and richer color gamut (especially at night), and even though it is not as hyper-sharp as video, it *feels* crisper because it's closer to the way our eye sees things. Even if you shoot on film and transfer to video (as you must to show your piece on TV), film looks better.

That's why we decided to shoot our PSAs on film: so they'd look better and capture the stories more richly, and so they'd have the feel people associate with a national product, not a local one. We were lucky, because a cameraman at KGW had some experience shooting film and was interested in the project. He did an excellent job, but as a bonus, his time was covered in the station's production budget. Our production costs therefore were limited to film and equipment rental.

When it came time to transfer the film to video, we worked with a post-production house that offered a discounted rate for public service projects. The catch was that your transfer could happen at odd hours and be cancelled at a moment's notice. For some PSAs, we had the flexibility to take advantage of this generous program, for others, we did not.

If you decide to shoot your PSAs on film, see if your broadcast partner has or knows of someone who has experience shooting 16mm film (we recommend looking at sample of each candidate's previous film work – their “reel” – before deciding). If not, you may want to talk with a production company or local ad agency to see if there is a shooter in your area who may like your project enough to donate some of his or her time. Otherwise, you can expect a good camera operator and a camera rental to start at about \$2500 a day (depending on your area).

Your budget and timeline may simply not allow you to shoot on film, and that's okay. In the end, how you tell your story is more important than the media through which you tell it. With



SHOWING THE BENEFITS OF FILM IN “SEE AND BE SEEN”

careful attention to lighting, careful shot selection (that is, nothing with too great a tonal range, like white neon sign on a dark night) and an experienced professional behind the lens, you can get a great-looking product for a great price on video.

Sound

Hand in hand with the way your visual image looks is the sound you link with it. You may have noticed in our PSAs that with the exception of *Bike Lanes*, there is almost no dialogue: the words that you hear are either in voiceover, or are simply one to three word lines spoken by one actor. That's because dialogue is expensive and time consuming. Dialogue requires:

- much more rehearsal
- much better actors to pull off convincingly
- more shooting time (more takes until it's right)
- more staff (a sound person in addition to a camera person)

If you're shooting on film, dialogue and sound in general also require "sync sound". On video, the sound goes directly into the camera and is married with the image there; in film, it is taped at the same time but independently. A famous image from film production you're probably familiar with is the "slate", the hinged board that someone snaps in front of the action before every take. That snap is used in part to marry the sound to the image in post. You can imagine that this slows down shooting and requires an extra level of preparation, professionalism, and post production cost.

So, if you can develop scripts which have sounds that don't need to line up perfectly with the action (general traffic noise, for instance), your script will be easier and cheaper to shoot. Just before editing, you can find sound effects to enliven your piece, and record the voiceover in a studio at the station.



UNSYNCHED CONTEMPLATION IN "LOOK RIGHT"

Storyboard

Once you've got a few scripts in hand, spend a few minutes making a storyboard. This is essentially the script in picture format, with each shot drawn from the perspective in which you think it should be shot. If you can't draw, even stick figures will work.

This critical tool will help you see if your script actually works from the camera's perspective, but it will also help your production partner see what you're seeing. With it, they can begin to budget the production of your piece in time and money, and can wave you off any difficult or expensive shots.

Production Meeting

If you have any role in the creative leading up to the shoot, you'll want to make sure you're a part of a pre-production meeting. This is a good time to present the script and storyboard if you have them, but in general, it's a time where all the kinks are worked out in advance of taking out the camera and burning some stock. Make sure everyone understands what you're trying to achieve, and if the production team isn't all from the same company, make sure everyone is talking to one another. If there are problems associated with the PSA, this is the best time to encounter and solve them. This time is infinitely less expensive than when the cameras start rolling, so take advantage of it. Don't just ask if they can execute the script, ask what problems they foresee, and any suggestions they might have to fix them.

Production (shooting)

This is clutch time. If you don't get it on tape or on film, you won't see it in the final edit. But if you've done your prep well, and you've worked closely with the production staff so they know what you want, the day should go smoothly.

You'll usually be an observer, but remember that you're the client: you're paying the bills, ultimately, so the buck stops with you. That doesn't mean you should be a prima donna, acting like a petulant child and demanding the unreasonable. But it does mean that to get the best product and the smoothest day, you need to be respectful but alert. These people are professionals, but if you think something's being missed, if an unforeseen opportunity presents itself, or if you simply don't understand how what's being done will deliver what you put into the script, it's your duty and responsibility to ask questions and get answers. Again, let the crew do what it's been trained to do best, but stay alert to make sure you get what you want.

Remember, of course, that filmmaking is an imperfect art. What you get from a day of shooting is unlikely to match the depths of your imagination as translated into your script. In general, you have only so much time, so much equipment and so many bodies to accomplish what you set out to do, so don't just settle for good enough: expect it. This is especially true if you don't have the experience to know how great "good enough" will look in the final product. In fact, you'll be surprised – with a good crew – how great the end product looks compared to how makeshift it seemed in front of the camera.

Again, this is an issue of trusting the crew to deliver. For instance, too many takes rarely improve the performance, and they sap the strength of the crew; besides, they'll take away time for really important shots later. As producer, your overriding job is to get the script in the can.

Your station will ask for each person on screen to sign release forms.



THE SLATE FROM "CLOSE CALL"

Post Production (editing)

We were fortunate to be able to take the raw (but transferred to video) footage we shot and do a fairly polished edit (a “rough cut” or “offline edit”) of each PSA on a Non Linear Editor (or NLE, such as Final Cut Pro or Premiere) before the station did the final cut. This allowed us to take the time we needed to fine tune the PSA and coax its story out of the raw footage. Then, we took a precise log of the cuts we used and in what order to the station for final compilation (the “online” edit) for broadcast.

We can’t stress enough how important the edit is. If pre-production and production are where you find the words and write them down in a list, the edit is where you arrange them into a story. If your script is tight and you shot with a good director, your edit should come together smoothly. But inevitably – at every professional level – a few components that sounded great in script and looked nice when shot may not quite work once placed with other clips; alternately, odd bits or takes which didn’t seem to work on set sometimes fit perfectly into the edit.

The critical thing to remember about your situation is that you have the most investment in the outcome of this project, so you need to be as integral a part of the edit as you can be: make sure you’re there for at least the final edit. Your broadcast partner, by contrast, is running a business, and will allot only a certain number of hours to edit your piece together (in our case, 3-1/2 hours for each). If you are not prepared, this can be a tense experience, and may require compromises you are not comfortable making because there simply isn’t enough time to experiment.

The Paper Edit

If you don’t have access to an NLE or edit facility of some kind before final compilation, take the time to do a paper edit. Here’s how it works:

Get your broadcast partner to make a dub of the raw footage onto a VHS tape so you can review it on a home VCR. Not just any dub, however. Every frame of the footage you’ve shot will have a number attached to it. This is called “timecode”, and it’s essentially an address for each frame that editors will use to start and end clips. So, if possible, ask the station to “burn a timecode window” into the footage you’ve shot. This black strip with numbers in it will obscure part of the footage (ask them to put it in a corner), but it will allow you to be very precise about which footage you want and in what order.

Then, go through and log the footage. As you watch, the numbers will whiz by, but if you push pause, they’ll freeze. Write down the timecode at the beginning and the end of each clip, along with any comments you may have about them (“Take 1, good except for the end”, etc.). This is most easily accomplished in a spreadsheet or word processing program, but you can do it on paper, too. For a paper edit, you don’t need to be super precise with the number you write down: just get as close as you can and your editor can take it from there.

Once everything’s logged, try re-arranging your list of the preferred clips into the order you indicated in the script. The footage will almost always be out of order from the script; that’s because it’s usually more efficient to group similar shots together when shooting and sort them out in the edit. You won’t be able to see the clips on your list in order on screen, but with a little imagination, you’ll



POST PRODUCTION TRICKERY FROM “WRONG WAY”

be able to get a feel for the flow. Ask yourself if the clips flow into one other, if they develop the story, if the performances seem genuine.

Once you have your paper edit, research and assemble any sound effects you need to integrate into the final product and present them with the timecoded edit. This will allow your editor to get the PSA roughed in fairly quickly so you'll have time to tinker and fine tune.

Approach your edit session the same way you approach your shooting day. You'll be working with an experienced professional to edit your piece, so pay serious attention to his or her suggestions about the flow of the piece and whether it works. If nothing else, your editor has never seen the piece before, so he or she will approach the PSA with a fresh set of eyes, just as your audience will once it's broadcast.

At the same time, you are the client and this is your vision, so don't let an editor try to belittle your contribution and get you to take something you really don't want. As with working with a crew if you are new to production, you are the novice, and they will know a lot more than you. Don't ignore that experience, but don't let anyone get away with "that's just the way it's done" without a reasonable explanation. Just take a deep breath, relax, and ask them to explain it in layman's terms.



ONE TAKE EDITED OUT OF "SEE AND BE SEEN"

Of course, there's acres more to learn about the film and video production process, but unless you envision this as your life's work, the notes above should give you enough background to talk intelligently (if humbly) with your production partners. If you're curious to learn more about the business from beginning to end, here are two excellent books you may want to borrow or buy:

Filmmaker's Handbook: A Comprehensive Guide For The Digital Age, by Steven Ascher
(Plume Books).

Independent Feature Film Production: A Complete Guide From Concept Through Distribution,
by Gregory Goodell (St Martins Press).

But have we improved attitudes toward bicycling?

The evaluation analysis indicates that the Bicycle Safety Awareness Campaign as delivered in Oregon was successful in that it met most of the initial goals, had a respectable recall rate, garnered a few positive changes in attitude and awareness, and had significant attribution of the changes to the campaign.

Summary of Results from the Bicycle Safety Awareness Campaign

For the midcourse of the Bicycle Safety Awareness Campaign, net recall of the campaign was 7.0% and at the end, the net recall was 12.6%. Positive changes in attitude and awareness were observed regarding driving around bike lanes, stopping at stop signs, and riding safely in the dark and rain. The number of people learning something from the campaign was 26.5% for the midcourse survey and 26.8% for the final survey; an indication that a significant portion of viewers learned from the campaign.

Achievement of Campaign Goals

The original goals of the PSA campaign as prepared for the grant proposal are outlined below.

- 1) There will be an increase of 30 percentage points in the number of motorists and bicyclists in the TV broadcast area that have reasonable knowledge of motorist and bicyclists rights and responsibilities.
- 2) 70% of all motorists and bicyclists seeing the campaign will have a positive or very positive response toward bicycle transportation and bicycle riders as legitimate and valued users of the road.
- 3) 80% of those bicyclists seen the campaign will have a positive or very positive response about the rules of the road and understand their responsibility to ride safely.
- 4) 60% of those motorists seeing the campaign will have a positive or very positive response to the rights of bicyclists and understand how to drive safely around bicyclists and bicycle lanes.

Interpretation of the survey results suggested that most of the campaign goals were achieved successfully. The first goal to increase knowledge turned out not to be possible, given that people's self-reported knowledge level was already fairly high.

- 1) About 85% of motorists and bicyclists have a positive or very positive response to questions about motorist and bicyclists rights and responsibilities. However, there has been no detectable increase or decrease in knowledge of motorists or cyclists over the campaign.
- 2) About 72% of all motorists and bicyclists seeing the campaign have a positive or very positive response toward bicycle transportation. About 89% of all motorists and bicyclists seeing the campaign have a positive or very positive response to understanding the rights and responsibilities of bicycle riders.
- 3) About 47% of bicyclists seeing the campaign have a positive or very positive response about the rules of the road and 95% say they understand their responsibility to ride safely.
- 4) About 88% of motorists seeing the campaign have a positive or very positive response to the rights of bicyclists and 91% also believe that they understand how to drive safely around bicycle lanes.



LOOKING WITHOUT STOPPING IN "CLOSE CALL"

Evaluation Approach

The basic approach for evaluating the impact of any media campaign is to start with a baseline survey, conducted before any of the campaign PSAs are aired. Then a second survey is conducted after the campaign is completed. Any differences in the responses to these two surveys provides campaign impact information. In addition, a midcourse survey can also be used to understand how the campaign is meeting goals during the midpoint of a long-term campaign.

Random telephone surveys are generally considered to be the most cost-effective and accurate approach for collecting survey data. Responses from mail surveys, on-the-street interviews, calls received at information centers, or the number of web page views are not particularly random and can't usually be considered as meaningful, although they can support conclusions reached from a telephone survey.

Many people are not aware that approximately 5,000 telephone calls are made to complete enough surveys (more than 400) to provide statistically significant results for a survey. Collecting and organizing this information over a short one to two-week period usually requires an experienced market research firm, dedicated to the task.

The geographic area for the random telephone survey needs to be considered carefully. Rather than a survey of urban areas alone, or the entire state, the area for the survey should reflect the broadcast coverage of the media outlets being used, including cable distribution. The sampling should also be proportional to population of individual cities or counties.

The sources for survey sampling usually is random digit dialing to represent the general population and perhaps an additional sample source to provide an understand of the bicycling stratification might be added. These could include members of cycling organizations or participants of local cycling events.

Final Suggestions

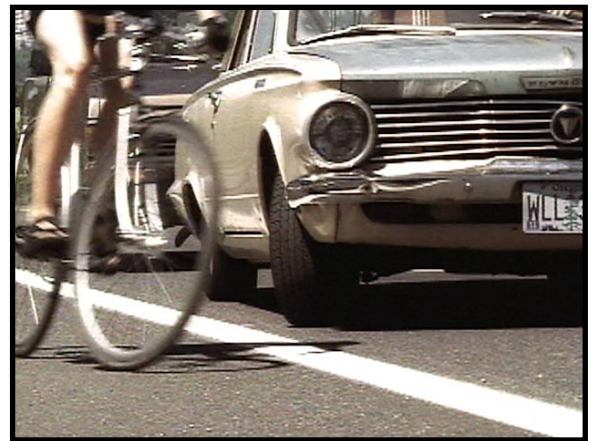
In addition to the specific recommendations noted above, some other general recommendations for future public service television campaigns are outlined below. A number of these were adapted from papers available on the Public Service Advertising Research Center web site (<http://64.225.58.93/>).

Concentrate on most effective messages – A campaign might consider using fewer spots, especially if the media budget were limited. The campaign could perhaps concentrate on those spots that seemed to be the most effective in Oregon: PSA 1 – “What If?,” PSA 2 – *Look Right, See Right*, and PSA 6 – *Bike Lanes*.

Be in it for the long-term – Most public service campaigns of this sort are intended to change behavior or attitudes. These campaigns are not acted upon by people in the same way that they react to other television advertising (for those, they buy the products). Because of this, a campaign with a long-term commitment is often required in order to be effective.

Coordinate with other market actors – Some research suggests that combining enforcement or other incentives along with informational or educational campaigns can be more effective than any one approach alone. The support of a campaign by law enforcement, automobile associations, advocacy groups, or local authorities can also provide opportunities for free media attention.

Have a media strategy – Don't just place campaign spots with the times and programs that are affordable or without consideration of who is watching at those times. Instead place spots strategically to reach the target audience.



VEERING INTO THE “BIKE LANES”

Determine the best time to air – Seasonal variation in bicycling is well understood, but variations in availability of spot times on television stations also needs to be considered when placing campaign spots. During some times of the year there may be more availability of “free” spot placement. Some campaigns might be able to take advantage of this.

Frequency and budget – Television can be a very effective medium but it is also very expensive. Don’t expect that two campaigns with the same budget will have the same results on different media. An underfunded campaign on television may not be as effective as a properly funded campaign on radio or in print.

Have all campaign materials prepared beforehand –

Although this campaign had the best intentions to prepare spots according to an desirable schedule, the inevitable delays compromised uniform airing of all the messages. Of course, some messages will be seasonal (riding in the dark and rain) and bicycling behaviors typically vary throughout the year so advocacy messages might be focused during spring and early summer.

Evaluate the campaign – Include from the beginning formal evaluation of the campaign. Evaluation results will be much appreciated (or even required) by sponsors and funders, and will be useful to the advocacy groups using this broad media approach for the first time (or the tenth) in planning even more effective efforts. Evaluation can point out additional issues that may need to be addressed or messages that for some reason are not effective. And of course, an evaluation will provide concrete evidence that your efforts are making a difference.



THE DREAMER IMAGINES HIS RIDE IN “WHAT IF”

Thanks for Reading

The Oregon Bicycle Awareness TV Campaign has been great fun to produce. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance is very proud to make it available to you.

Please direct any questions and comments to:

Karen Frost, Program Director

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RIDING OFF INTO THE SUNSET IN "WHAT IF"



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WWW.BTA4BIKES.ORG

CREATING SAFE, SANE, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES (ONE BIKE AT A TIME)

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