

'It's easy as' social media, ... or is it?

What did we do?

As part of the Australian Government's 2020 COVID-19 funding, the Fight Food Waste CRC received financial support intended to be spent immediately and locally to stimulate the economy.

In considering how to use this funding, we were very aware that Australians were experiencing food and grocery panic buying/hoarding issues at the time, a trend that was likely to lead to increased levels of food waste and also wasted money. This led to us working with leading Australian creative agency Saatchi and Saatchi to develop a national food waste digital campaign full of tips and tricks – Fight Food Waste – 'It's Easy As'.

Sharing is caring!

After running this digital campaign on Facebook and Instagram, we have learned a lot! We have more questions than ever, but we're sharing some of our key lessons now and look forward to discussing these with you in the future!

What do you really need?

A solid strategy

Our research already told us that Australians don't recognise food waste is a big issue yet. So our campaign phase one hit them with the big facts, and then in phase 2 engaged with specific tips and tricks to reduce food waste in the home in a really simple and tangible way.

Whilst similar campaigns for climate change have struggled to engage given the distant and invisible nature of climate change, reducing food waste is an immediate benefit to the household budget and is physically noticeable.

Don't target your audiences

Unlike the old marketing saying 'know your audience', you don't want to narrow your audiences too much when selecting socials interest groups to target. Our best performing interest groups were 'Cooking enthusiasts', 'Environmentalists', and 'Gardeners' – surprisingly 'Money savers' did not perform well which was contradictory to what we knew about motivating factors to reduce food waste.



Less is more

A 'less is more approach' was the recommended framework to properly test out in future campaigns. With so many creatives 'in play' at the same time, we did not have an even distribution of engagement across the audiences. There is a lot of this wrapped up in the elusive social media 'algorithm', however next time we should give each creative more of a chance rather than competing against ourselves! Recommendations are to 5-6 creatives at any given time. After a reasonable amount of time, swap out those under-performing creatives.

To ask a question or not?

There is definitely scope for further investigation around the performance of questions in copy, as well as combining imagery and copy. It would be useful to draw on the particular experience of those who have run food waste consumer education campaigns in the past, what have we collectively learned and what does this mean for future campaigns? This is more than the behaviour chance research targeting particular behaviours, it about communication, marketing and advertising. What can we learn from these disciplines about reaching the hearts and minds of Australians?

Be 'always on'

By being ready to be always on, campaigns 'drop in' for a two-months burst throughout the year, particularly at known food-waste occasions such as holidays, Xmas and Easter. This will remind people not to waste food and be in the front of their mind.

Opt for a more organic feel

Keeping paid-for posts looking more like standard posts in a newsfeed rather than sponsored ads is a good idea, especially for new campaigns. The carousel-style ads call for a more engaged audience, so are likely to perform better once campaign has been in market for longer. We did wait until phase two to roll these out however that was still only 4 weeks after we started which is not a long time to be in-market.

“To ask a question in creative copy or not to ask a question in creative copy ... what was the question again?”



Next steps?

While we are not even close to having all the answers yet, the Fight Food Waste - 'Its Easy As' campaign has given us more success than we forecast and it has also given us some very valuable lessons for the future.

You can follow us on socials and we're always looking forward to hearing from you in the comments section. Speaking of comments, we'll be producing some further research from the comments of this campaign in the near future!

