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Executive Summary | Campaign Highlights

The Think and Drive *public relations and social marketing road safety campaign* was launched in October 2007 as a follow-up to the Niagara-on-the-Lake pilot project conducted in 2006. Research and police data revealed that Niagara region has a higher number of fatal and serious injury motor vehicle collisions (MVCs) per capita as compared to other regions within Ontario.

Pier 8 Group and the RNRSC developed a strategic communication plan that was implemented over the 15-month campaign period (October 16, 2007 – December 31, 2008). The three key communication strategies developed for the campaign focused on: (1) media relations; (2) advertising and publicity; and (3) and interactive/Internet — i.e., website (www.thinkanddrive.net) and social media Facebook group (*Think and Drive Niagara*). Each of these strategies included a variety of supporting communication tactics.

In addition to existing reports and available research, two public opinion polls were conducted – a pre-campaign survey in November 2007 to benchmark awareness/knowledge levels of road safety among Niagara drivers/residents, and a post-campaign survey in January 2009 to measure any changes in awareness and understanding of road safety issues in Niagara, as well as possible changes in driving behaviours.

Think and Drive targeted drivers and road users who reside in all of the 12 area municipalities of the Niagara region, with a particular focus on male drivers in Niagara (i.e., youth and young adults aged 16 to 40 years). The campaign's *four key messages/themes* (i.e., *speeding, driver error/distraction, impairment and rural roads*) were incorporated into final creative strategy for a range of publicity and advertising vehicles (e.g., posters, media publication ads, bookmarks, bus boards, etc.). A series of five educational (posters) ads supporting the messages/themes was created and used to support the campaign's advertising and publicity communication strategy — i.e., posters, publication ads, transit boards, cable public service announcements (PSAs).

During the 15-month campaign, a total of *36,007 key chains* and *32,404 bookmarks* were distributed throughout the Niagara community. Almost *214,000 small flyers* were distributed to Niagara households via utility, hydro and/or water bills, as well as through CAA, Brock University, Niagara College, and to all “first-time” drivers through the Niagara Driver Test Centre, Niagara's only driver examination centre.

Editorial meetings held with members of Niagara's media – Osprey Media, St. Catharines Standard, Niagara This Week, TVCOGECO and Astral Media radio stations – resulted in increased editorial coverage and on-air broadcasting of road safety issues and the Think and Drive campaign, as well as heavy rotation of campaign radio and video PSAs. Partnerships were established to develop radio and television public service announcements.

The total of 144 road safety-related articles were tracked during the campaign – almost 10 articles per month or just under 30 articles per campaign quarter. Banner advertisements and the educational poster series were used in print advertising in Niagara This Week, PULSE Niagara and The Brock Press (Brock University student newspaper). Radio station traffic report sponsorship aired in September and October on two of Niagara largest FM radio stations. Seven Niagara radio stations participated in the PSA program from August to December 2008.

Sixty people attended and participated in a three-hour public meeting on March 26 at Niagara Region headquarters. Attendees were presented with an overview of the campaign and participated in a 45-minute “town hall” focus group on road safety in Niagara. The Think and Drive “wordmark” was also placed on 13 Niagara Region population road signs by Niagara Public Works department in June 2008, providing a lasting, post-campaign reminder.

The Think and Drive website had almost 7,400 unique visitors – total website visitations (including repeat visits) reached 16,050 – just under 1,100 visitations per month by the campaign’s end. Unique visitors and total visitations were highest during the campaign’s fourth and fifth (final) quarters. More than 25 community organizations established links from their websites to the Think and Drive URL.

The *Niagara Road Safety Challenge* attracted 4,700 visitors – 2,664 people completed the comprehensive Niagara Road Safety Challenge. Almost half of all female participants (48.7%) scored yellow or green (pass), compared to 35.5% of male participants. By age, green scores increased and red scores decreased with each consecutive age group. A “portable or travelling version” of the Niagara Road Challenge, was developed in partnership with TVCOGECO, and was signed out to 46 community organizations, schools and agencies.

Think and Drive Facebook group surpassed its goal of 200 members by end of campaign’s second quarter (March 30, 2008) with 330 members. A revised goal of 500 members by the campaign’s end was established in February – on December 31, Facebook group had 561 members.

In the pre- and post-campaign public opinion polls, respondents were asked a series of questions related to changes in their awareness of road safety issues, their knowledge of these issues, and changes in their driving habits over the past year.

The 2009 post-campaign results indicate that:

- 22% of respondents said that there has been a significant or very significant change in awareness of road safety driving issues and 26% had somewhat of a change.;
- 20% of respondents stated that there has been a significant or very significant change in knowledge of road safety driving issues and 26% had somewhat of a change;
- 18% of respondents said that there has been a significant or very significant change in their driving habits over the last 12 months and 19% respondents there has been somewhat of a change;
- More than half or 51% of residents interviewed stated that they have seen or heard of a road safety campaign in Niagara. When asked to name the campaign or program that they became aware of, MADD was most cited by 26%, followed by 21% that named RIDE, 4% cited Arrive Alive, 3% cited each of Think and Drive, and Students Against Impaired Driving.

In terms of the Think and Drive campaign’s key messages/themes – speeding, driver error/distractions, impairment and rural roads – there were:

- Decreases in the frequency of those who drive over the speed limit in both categories measured (i.e., 10 km and 20 km over speed limit);

- Decreases in driving while talking, adjusting vehicle settings and reading; as well as decreases in the number of drivers that daydream and misjudge situations, or drink a cold or hot beverage;
- Decreases in driving after drinking alcohol and when very tired;
- There were slight decreases in driving faster on rural roads and racing.

The poll results suggest that the Think and Drive road safety initiative has had some meaningful impact on the levels of awareness and understanding of road safety issues and safe driving behaviours among Niagara drivers/residents.

Introduction

The following report is a summary of marketing and public relations activities for the Think and Drive (T&D) campaign for the 15-month period of October 2007 to December 2008. The regular monthly “tracking sheets” that were produced by Pier 8 – highlighting specific details of the campaign’s outreach, marketing communications activities, and destination of campaign resources – have been merged and also included in the appendices.

1.0 Background | RNRSC

The Regional Niagara Road Safety Committee (RNRSC) was formed as a result of a 2003 Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) community symposium held to address community concern over the high number of serious and fatal motor vehicle collisions (MVC) occurring on Niagara roadways. This integrated road safety committee consists of representatives from the following organizations:

- CAA Niagara (CAA)
- Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS)
- Niagara Region Public Health Department (NRPHD)
- Niagara Region Public Works Department (NRPWD).

Together they developed and implemented a strategic plan to help reduce fatal and serious injury motor vehicle collisions in Niagara by 10% over a 5- year period (2004-2008), using a comprehensive injury prevention approach to road safety that includes education, enforcement, engineering and advocacy. The strategic plan goals are:

- To decrease by 10% the number of serious motor vehicle collisions (MVCs) where factors relating to vehicles are a primary consideration;
- To decrease by 10% the number of serious MVCs where factors relating to driver actions are a primary consideration;
- To decrease by 10% the number of serious MVCs where factors relating to the driving environment are a primary consideration;
- An enhanced ability to effectively share road safety related information among the RNRSC partner agencies and the community.

Niagara region has a higher number of fatal and serious injury MVCs per capita as compared to other regions within Ontario. Analysis of MVC data collected by the NRPS from 1999 to 2003 indicates that speed, impairment, and driver error are the most common causes and/or contributing factors involved in serious and fatal MVCs. Most of these collisions (58%) occur on *rural roads* and 75% involve male drivers. Further analysis of local MVC data collected in 2004 and 2005 indicates results that parallel the baseline data.

1.1 Niagara-on-the-Lake Pilot Project

The “Think and Drive” road safety pilot campaign was launched by the RNRSC in the town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (NOTL) on September 5, 2006 and was in effect until December 31, 2006. The campaign included a social marketing strategy targeted to road users who live and work in NOTL using a variety of tactics including, direct mail, posters, website, media, and community events. Based on the pilot project’s evaluation results, the RNRSC received approval to expand the campaign across the Niagara region.

2.0 Think and Drive Campaign | 2007

The Think and Drive road safety awareness campaign was launched October 16, 2007 across the region of Niagara and was in effect until December 31, 2008. The public relations and marketing campaign was driven by a strategic communication plan developed by Pier 8 and the RNRSC that focused on three key communication strategies: (1) media relations; (2) advertising and publicity; and (3) interactive (Internet). Each of these strategies included a variety of communication tactics that were developed and implemented for the 15-month campaign.

2.1 Communication Objectives

The campaign’s communication goals, established by the RNRSC, were two-fold: *informational* (i.e., awareness and understanding) and *motivational* (i.e., commitment and support). Informational objectives are short-term in nature and focus on increasing the awareness and understanding of the issues/situation amongst targeted audiences. Motivational objectives are more long-term in nature and focus on changes in the (driving) habits and behaviour of targeted audiences.

Informational

- Increase *awareness* among Niagara drivers and road users (with a focus on male drivers) about the Niagara crash problem;
- Increase *knowledge* among Niagara drivers and road users (with a focus on male drivers) about road safety skills applicable to the Niagara crash problem.

Motivational

- Change driver *attitudes* (with a focus on male drivers) such that drivers take personal responsibility for road safety.* (*Increased intentions of the Niagara public to improve their driving and change driving attitudes and behaviours*);
- Change driver *behaviours* (with a focus on male drivers) in order to decrease motor vehicle collisions.

2.2 Target Audiences

The public relations and marketing campaign targeted drivers and road users who reside in all of the 12 area municipalities of the Niagara region, with a particular focus on male drivers (i.e., youth and young adults aged 16 to 40 years, including Niagara College and Brock University students, and Niagara secondary school students). Secondary audiences included all drivers in Niagara.

According to the Niagara Regional Police Service Motor Vehicle Collision Data 1999-2003 Report, male drivers are involved in 75% of fatal and serious motor vehicle collisions (MVCs) attributable to the three most common causes or contributing factors – driver error, impairment and speed. This reflects the ratio of male vs. female drivers involved in fatal collisions in Ontario (male 77% vs. female 23%) and the ratio of male vs. female drivers involved in all collisions in Ontario. There are no definite patterns based on age groups. However, it appears that impairment is more common in younger age groups, that driver error is a problem across all age groups and that speed is a problem for those under 50 years.

2.3 Research & Evaluation

The Think and Drive road safety campaign incorporated three key methods of research and evaluation: (1) public opinion polls of Niagara residents at the beginning and end of the 15-month campaign; (2) a comprehensive interactive online survey during the campaign (i.e., based on the polling questions); and (3) a monthly survey conducted by the Niagara Public Health department known as the Rapid Risk Factor Surveillance System (RRFSS).

In late November 2007, the first public opinion poll was conducted to establish a pre-campaign benchmark of the level of awareness/understanding of road safety issues and the driving habits/behaviours of Niagara residents/drivers. A post-campaign opinion poll was conducted in January 2009, using the same 30 pre-campaign poll questions, as well as six new questions specifically focused on changes in their road safety awareness, knowledge and behaviour, as well as road safety campaign recall (see polling results in appendices). The questions developed for the survey polls were also used in the Niagara Road Safety Challenge. In effect, the online challenge served as a survey of Niagara drivers during the campaign's 15 months duration. *The polling results are contained in separate reports attached to this document.*

2.4 Creative Strategy

The campaign's four key *messages/themes* (i.e., speeding, driver error/distraction, impairment and the Niagara-specific issue of rural roads) were incorporated into final creative strategy for a range of publicity and advertising vehicles (e.g., posters, media publication ads, bookmarks, bus boards, etc.). A series of five educational ads supporting the four key messages/themes was created and used to support the campaign's advertising and publicity communication strategy (i.e., posters, publication ads, transit boards, cable public service announcements).

Several possible “motivators” can cause drivers who engage in risky behaviours to modify their attitudes and their driving practices, including:

- Fear of getting caught (enforcement messages)
- Risk to life and limb (fear messages)
- Risk to the lives of others (especially passengers and loved-ones)
- Awareness of the risk factors (educational messages)
- Social norms and peer pressure (shame messages).

The Niagara Region Road Safety Committee adopted an *educational approach*, one that involves educating drivers about the main risk factors – speeding, impairment, and distracted driving – the cause of most vehicle collisions in Niagara. At the centre of the campaign was a “road safety test” (*branded as the “Niagara Road Safety Challenge”*) that asked drivers to evaluate their own personal driving behavior in relation to a comprehensive list of at-risk or high-risk behaviour. The creative messages developed by Pier 8 complemented the road safety challenge by focusing on some of the behaviours of highest risk.

The creative approach selected for the campaign “put the viewer in the driver’s seat” in the same way that the road safety challenge or the D.U.M.B. car does. The images and messaging were designed to force drivers to visualize what is going on *ONE SECOND BEFORE* a vehicle collision occurs. In each case, our message urges drivers to *THINK* about the risk they are assuming when they engage in very specific kinds of dangerous driving behavior. This approach also allows us to tap into the key elements of the campaign brand, “*Think and Drive – a second is all it takes.*”

This creative solution made extensive use of ironic wordplay and phrases with double meanings that challenge the viewer to pause and interpret the words. The ironic – even sarcastic – tone of these ads was designed to undermine whatever rational basis drivers may have for engaging in risky driving behaviour. The images were dramatic and expressive, to draw attention. Overall, the creative was skewed to younger males, but also resonated with all sectors of the population.

2.4.1 Pre-launch Testing

Approximately 65 people, who represented a segment of the young adult demographic (and the campaign’s target audience), evaluated the five original poster creative concepts. Students at Niagara College and grads of The University of Western Ontario’s post-grad Public Relations Diploma program evaluated the creative concepts and approach. Overall, the concepts proved to be very effective. Each was attention grabbing and respondents found them to be quite original compared to other road safety campaigns. The imagery and headlines were considered strong and effective. Importantly, the concepts illustrated each safety issue in an effective manner and made most of the respondents reflect on their own driving habits.

2.5 Communication Strategies

The Niagara road safety campaign included *three key strategic and integrated* approaches to increase both awareness and education (of road safety issues and safe driving practices):

1. Media relations strategy;
2. Advertising and publicity strategy;
3. Interactive and participation (i.e., Internet) strategy.

Each of these strategies incorporated various communication tactics and/or special events, but also worked in unison to achieve established communication objectives.

2.5.1 *Media Relations Strategy*

During the 15-month campaign, several editorial meetings were held with members of Niagara's media – Osprey Media, St. Catharines Standard, Niagara This Week (Niagara's weekly community paper), and TVCOGECO. Discussions focused on encouraging their editorial participation in the Think and Drive campaign, and presented ideas for feature articles on road safety in Niagara region, and road safety issues in general. A detailed directory of road safety issues was developed for Osprey Media as a complete “editorial opportunities outline” including potential articles and key contacts for articles, FAQs, etc. Much of the suggested editorial content came from studies produced by the *Traffic Injury Research Foundation (TIRF)*.

Editorial meetings held with Niagara This Week, resulted in an extensive interview with Niagara resident and campaign supporter Lucas Hodgson, and a two-page feature article on his personal experience in one of the most severe motor vehicle collisions in Niagara. At the close of the campaign (December 30), St. Catharines Standard published a full-page feature article on the importance of educating young drivers, and included a CAA submission of the top 10 tips to help keep teen drivers crash free.

Overall, media coverage of the Think and Drive campaign and road safety was extensive and consistent throughout the 15-month campaign. The total number of road safety-related articles tracked during the Think and Drive campaign was 144 — almost 10 articles per month or just under 30 articles per campaign quarter. Articles in Niagara's print media covered many provincial and national road safety-related issues in addition to a regional focus, suggesting the high importance and relevance placed on road safety/driving-related issues by the media. News coverage was highest during the campaign's second quarter (41 articles) and fourth quarter (38 articles), reflecting the project team's media focus during the campaign's first quarters, as well as during the summer months (Q4) when motor vehicle collisions are highest in Niagara.

Niagara This Week and *TVCOGECO* played an active role in the Think and Drive campaign. Two video public service announcements (PSAs) were produced by TVCOGECO and Pier 8 Group, and began airing in May 2008 and continued to air in heavy rotation for the remainder of 2008. TVCOGECO also conducted several interviews for *The Source* and other on-air programming.

Concurrently, during the second and fourth quarters of the campaign, more participants completed the online Niagara road safety challenge than during any other period, possibly reflecting the media's ongoing promotion of the Think and Drive website and the encouragement to “*take the challenge,*” in addition to launch of the campaign's external advertising.

2.5.2 *Advertising & Publicity Strategy*

The main function of the advertising and publicity strategy was to build *brand awareness* for “Think and Drive” and to provide subtle educational opportunities. The media included community newspapers, radio, transit advertising and cable television. All visual advertising (i.e., print, transit and cable) used the Think and Drive educational series ads. Radio advertising included traffic report sponsorship and public service announcements.

Print Publications

Niagara This Week was chosen because of its seven zones or localized editions and its total reach (e.g., Friday edition) of 165,000 households across Niagara. A total of six banner ads (quarter-page insertions) were placed in December 2007, and January and February 2008. A final “thank you to the community” ad was also placed in *Niagara This Week* in December 2008.

PULSE Niagara, the region’s alternative entertainment weekly, was selected because of its ability to reach Think and Drive’s target audiences – its key demographic is the 18 to 49 years of age group. *PULSE* distributes 18,000 copies free of charge throughout Niagara and has more than 54,000 readers (e.g., each copy is read by an average of three people weekly). It is distributed via more than 450 outlets including nightclubs, restaurants and popular retailers, as well as dozens of free street boxes. A total of 12 half-page ads and three (3) fifth-page ads were negotiated with *PULSE* and placed in November and December 2007, and March 2008. In support of the Think and Drive campaign, *PULSE* also provided four (4) additional half-page ads *pro bono* during the year.

The Brock Press, the Brock University student newspaper, was also included in both the advertising and publicity, and media relations strategy. Published weekly from September to April in tabloid format at a circulation of 10,000, Brock’s only student newspaper informs and entertains over 17,400 full and part-time students, plus approximately 1,600 faculty and staff. A total of five half-page insertions were placed in *The Brock Press* during September and October 2008 when students were returning to school.

Radio

The radio component of the Think and Drive campaign began in early August 2008 with the sponsorship of traffic reports on Astral Media radio stations – 97.7 HTZ-FM and CHRE-FM 105.7 EZ-Rock. Traffic spots alternated between the two radio stations from the week of September 8th to the week of October 3rd. The audience profiles of the radio stations selected best reflected the campaign’s target audiences. Radio station 97.7 HTZ-FM has a listener audience of 56,375 in the St. Catharines-Niagara region (243,000 listeners in the station’s full coverage area); 64 percent of listeners are male, and 72 percent are 18-44 years of age, reflecting the Think and Drive campaign’s primary audience. Although the EZ Rock audience is not skewed to younger males, combining these two stations extended the reach to other segments of the population.

A series of three public service announcements (PSAs) was produced during the fourth quarter of the Think and Drive campaign and began heavy rotation on several Niagara AM and FM radio stations for the remainder of the year (August to December). The seven radio stations participating in the PSA airing included:

- CKTB 610 AM
- 97.7 HTZ-FM
- 105.7 FM EZ-ROCK
- GIANT 91.7 FM
- Z101.1 FM

- 105.1 FM The River
- CFBU 103.7 FM (Brock University radio).

Following the launch of the radio PSAs and traffic reports sponsorships, visitor traffic to the Think and Drive website peaked. The highest number of website visitations occurred during the fourth and fifth quarters of the campaign.

Transit

The final component rounding out the external advertising and publicity strategy included transit ads in St. Catharines, Niagara Falls and Welland. The Think and Drive educational series posters were used on the transit “bus boards” (i.e., external back of the bus). Niagara Falls (Lamar Advertising) ran six bus boards from August to September 2008, and also kept the ads in place *pro bono* during the month of October. St. Catharines and Welland (StreetSeen Advertising) ran nine and five bus boards, respectively, during the period August to October 2008.

2.5.3 Interactive & Participation Strategy

The main function of interactive and participation strategy was to encourage dialogue about road safety in Niagara, and to enhance Niagara drivers’ road safety knowledge. By encouraging a friendly competitive and fun element, and offering attractive prizes, the intent was to motivate people to visit the Think and Drive website and participate in the interactive components (i.e., Niagara Road Safety Challenge and Motor Vehicle Collision Map).

Other features of the website included an events and activities section (e.g., highlighting upcoming Think and Drive or related road safety events in Niagara); information resources (e.g., FAQs, news releases, media coverage, marketing resources, campaign backgrounders); as well as links to key road safety organizations and related websites. Niagara Helicopters, Young Drivers of Canada and CAA provided the prizes.

Website Traffic

The Think and Drive website traffic was consistent throughout the 15-month campaign; several “spikes” in visitor traffic occurred following the launching or implementation of different campaign tactics and/or events (e.g., external advertising, distribution of resources, media coverage and community events). More than 25 community organizations established links from their websites to the Think and Drive URL.

Total unique visitors reached 7,362; total visitations to the website (including repeat visits) totaled 16,050 – approximately 1,100 visitations per month during the campaign. Unique visitors and total visitations were highest during the campaign’s fourth and fifth (final) quarters. The website components that attracted the highest visits included the online Niagara Road Safety Challenge (4,700), the Motor Vehicle Collision map (3,154), the road safety articles in the “Drivers’ Forum” section (2,857) and the video PSAs (1,454).

While visitor traffic to the Think and Drive website was generally consistent throughout the campaign, occasional “spikes” in website traffic occurred following key campaign events and/or marketing/media efforts, including:

- Post-campaign launch (October 16)
- Post Think and Drive Niagara Facebook Group launch (November 21)
- After the December 3rd snow storm and throughout the weeks prior to Christmas break
- January 30 – February 1, 2008 (post-distribution of flyers in St. Catharines, Grimsby, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Pelham, and through CAA, and extensive media coverage)
- Week of February 26 (post-mailing of utility flyers in Welland, Grimsby and through CAA, and extensive media coverage)
- Before and after the March public meeting (which received extensive promotion and media coverage during this time period)
- Following the April 25th road safety news coverage in Niagara This Week
- Prior to and following the Victoria Day long weekend
- Prior/during the Canada Day holiday weekend
- Following the launch of the re-branded website (mid-July)
- Last week of July following the launch of bus ads, radio PSAs
- Brock University and Niagara College outreach/promotion (September 2008)
- Launch of external advertising and PSAs (buses, radio, print media)

Community Participation and Support

Several community organizations, public institutions and member municipalities of Niagara Region established website links on their own websites to www.thinkanddrive.net, including

- CAA Niagara website homepage (www.aa1.com)
- City of Niagara Falls (www.niagarafalls.ca)
- City of Port Colborne (www.city.portcolborne.on.ca)
- Niagara Parks Commission employee website
- Fort Erie Library (www.forterielibrary.on.ca)
- Grimsby Minor Hockey (www.grimsbyminorhockey.ca).
- Lakeport Secondary School
- Niagara Region (www.regional.niagara.on.ca/home.aspx)
- Niagara Regional Police Service website main page (www.nrps.com/main.asp)
- Niagara College (http://www.ncsac.ca/outside_resources.html)
- Niagara Falls City Hall internal broadcast website for employees
- Notre Dame Secondary School web page (<http://notredamewelland.com/school/index.htm>)
- Pelham Community Policing Committee (www.pelham.communitypolicing.ca)
- Pelham Town Hall (www.pelham.ca)
- Port Colborne Public Library (www.portcolbornelibrary.org)

- Town of West Lincoln (www.westlincoln.com)
- Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake (www.notl.org)
- Town of Thorold (www.thorold.com)
- Township of Wainfleet (www.township.wainfleet.on.ca)
- St. Catharines Community Policing Committee (www.vaxxine.com/sccommunitypolicing)
- St. Francis Secondary School
- Water and Wastewater Pipeline newsletter to the Region's Employees
- Welland Safe Communities Partnership (<http://welland.safecommunities.ca>)
- Your Niagara.ca (www.yourniagara.ca).

Niagara Road Safety Challenge

Central to the Think and Drive website was the implementation of the Niagara Road Safety Challenge, a comprehensive self-evaluation that challenged the participant's knowledge of road safety issues in Niagara, and their high-risk driving habits and behaviour. The secondary purpose was to gather qualitative research about driving habits among Niagara residents by gender, age group and municipality throughout the duration of the 15-month campaign.

The challenge included questions on each of these three main causes of motor vehicle collisions in Niagara – speeding, impairment and driver error (distractions) – as well as some Niagara-specific road safety issues. The challenge was presented as an interactive survey where each participant who completed the challenge received an overall score and an opportunity to enter their name for prize draw.

Online Niagara Road Safety Challenge Scoring

Once a participant has completed the online road safety challenge, they were given their total point score, identified by one of three colour categories (i.e., green, yellow or red). To pass the Niagara Road Safety Challenge (i.e., get a “green” score), participants had to obtain a minimum of 164 points (out of a maximum of 208 points) or 80 percent. A “red” score indicated that their road safety awareness and driving practices require great improvement. A “yellow” score indicated better driving practices, but required improvement. *(Note: Highlights of the Challenge results are presented on pages 14 to 16.)*

A “portable or travelling version” of the Niagara Road Challenge was developed in partnership with TVCOGECO. Three editions of the “game-like” version of the online road safety challenge were available to community organizations and events, secondary schools, etc. The portable version was branded the *TVCOGECO Niagara Challenge*. A total of 46 organizations signed out the portable road safety challenge during the campaign.

Motor Vehicle Collision Map

The second interactive component of the Think and Drive website was the *Motor Vehicle Collision Map* of Niagara Region. In any given year there are about 50-60 serious or fatal motor

vehicle collisions – the collision locations were mapped for the year 2006. Using flash animation, each collision in Niagara appeared as an expanding white dot on the map as it occurred, starting January 1 and going to December 31. An audio “ping” was sounded each time a dot appeared. The entire animation took one minute. The purpose of this map was to illustrate, in a dramatic fashion, the widespread incidence of Niagara’s serious and fatal crashes.

Social Media – Facebook | Think and Drive Niagara

The fastest growing social media network in North America, Facebook allows people to keep in touch in a way that has never previously been possible. Within Facebook, users can share conversations both public and private, personal histories, photographs and videos, favourite music and art, and, most importantly for this discussion, shared social issues and causes. The Facebook St. Catharines-Niagara network has grown to almost 70,000 members. A search of Facebook revealed that there are three pages of groups promoting “drink and drive” messages, seven groups promoting M.A.D.D., and almost 400 groups worldwide promoting road safety.

Pier 8 Group established a Think and Drive Facebook group in November 2007 and acted as the group administrator during the campaign. As membership increased, group members were asked to become officers and participate actively, involving the moderating of a discussion topic, promoting the group and/or cause within the larger Facebook community, and creating “content” through research.

Facebook provided Think and Drive with an opportunity to promote safe driving in Niagara in an organic and interactive manner previously unheard of. The goal was to have a total of 200 members by end of campaign’s second quarter (March 30, 2008), this goal was reached by late January and by end of the campaign’s second quarter, the Facebook group had 330 members. A revised goal to have 500 members by the campaign’s end was re-established in February. At the end of the campaign, the Facebook group had reached 561 members, surpassing all expectations. Some of the benefits that Facebook brought to the Think and Drive campaign included:

- An increase in overall awareness of the Niagara Think and Drive campaign on a local and regional level, particularly amongst youth and residents who have been affected by motor vehicle collisions;
- A direct link and an increase in visitor traffic to the Think and Drive website;
- Creation of a provincial, national and international awareness of the regional campaign, presenting Niagara as a proactive leader in road safety;
- An easy way to provide a forum for discussion topics within the Think and Drive Facebook group;
- Real time measurements for results – we could see at a glance how things were growing;
- Ability to promote special events, to the “group” and to the entire St. Catharines-Niagara Facebook network;
- A well-accepted venue or channel by young people – the primary audience of the road safety campaign.

2.5.4 *Marketing Communications Resources*

The Think and Drive campaign utilized a variety of marketing resources to help raise public awareness of the campaign and to drive people to the campaign website. Resource items included key chains, bookmarks, various small flyers for mailing with utility bills, etc., posters, golf and t-shirts, and decals for Niagara and partner vehicles.

The overwhelming majority of campaign resources created for ‘give-a-ways’ were distributed during the first and second quarters of the 15-month campaign to both kick-start the campaign launch, raise awareness and help drive traffic to the Think and Drive website.

During the 15-month campaign, a total of 36,007 key chains and 32,404 bookmarks were distributed throughout the Niagara community. Almost 214,000 small flyers were distributed to Niagara households via utility, hydro and/or water bills, as well as through CAA, Brock University, Niagara College, and to all “first-time” drivers through the Niagara Driver Test Centre, Niagara’s only driver examination centre.

Direct Mail

The municipalities and municipal utilities that actively supported Think and Drive campaign through the distribution of campaign information flyers include the following:

- CAA Niagara
- Canadian Niagara Power (Port Colborne and Fort Erie via hydro bills)
- Grimsby and St. Catharines and Thorold chambers of commerce
- Lincoln residents via tax bills
- Niagara Driver Test Centre (flyers)
- Niagara-on-the-Lake, Port Colborne, Pelham, Fort Erie and Niagara Falls
- Pelham residents via tax bills
- St. Catharines via water bills
- Town of Grimsby | Grimsby Power
- Welland Hydro Electric.

Key Publicity Locations

Several community organizations, agencies and local businesses actively supported and/or partnered with the Think and Drive campaign through a variety of methods (e.g., posters, flyers, key chains, t-shirts, etc.). Community supporters included:

- Avondale Food Stores (85 locations)
- Centennial OSAID group
- Gale’s Gas Bars (25 locations)
- Grimsby community and Ontario Early Years Centre staff
- Niagara Ice Dogs
- Niagara Healthy Babies clients
- Niagara Regional Police Service *RIDE program (Dec 2007)*

- Niagara Region companies, bars/nightclubs, restaurants, and other organizations (50)
- Niagara elementary and secondary schools through the “Drive Safe” initiative (14)
- Pelham Canada Day Parade
- Provincial OSAID conference
- Port Colborne Early Years staff
- St. John Ambulance
- Various secondary schools, elementary school nurses, public libraries, and not-for-profit agencies throughout Niagara
- Welland OEYC
- Welland Rose Parade.

The Think and Drive “*wordmark*” was also placed on 13 Niagara Region population road signs by Niagara Public Works department in June 2008.

Community Public Meeting

A public meeting for Think and Drive was held on March 26 at Niagara Region headquarters with much success. Approximately 60 people attended and participated in the three-hour event. In addition to some key issues and messages relating to Think and Drive, attendees were presented with an overview of the campaign’s objectives, as well as some of the research going on behind the scenes. A prototype of the “live” Niagara Road Safety Challenge was presented at the meeting to determine its potential, and the project team facilitated a 45-minute road safety information-gathering session.

3.0 Highlights of Online Niagara Road Safety Challenge

The Niagara Road Safety Challenge was launched in October 2007 and continued throughout the 15-month campaign. At the end of each month, the accrued results of all participants who completed the challenge were analyzed according to four sets of demographics: (1) gender; (2) age; (3) municipality, and (4) gender and age. While 4,700 people visited the Niagara Road Safety Challenge, 2,664 people actually completed the comprehensive quiz.

3.1 Gender

Respondents by gender group — Almost half of all female participants (48.7%) scored yellow or green, compared to 35.5% of male participants, suggesting that female drivers may have a greater awareness and/or understanding of road safety issues and less at-risk driving behaviours. These results underscore the fact that male drivers are involved more motor vehicle collisions than female drivers.

Table 3. Road safety challenge responses by gender. Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

GENDER	Total Responses	% by Gender	Green Score %	Yellow Score %	Red Score %
Male	1,007	43.5	20.1	15.2	8.2
(within gender)			46.2	35.0	18.8
Female	1,309	56.5	29.1	19.6	7.8
(within gender)			51.5	34.7	13.8
TOTAL	2,316	100	49.2	34.8	16.0

3.2 Age

Respondents by age group — Overall, green scores increased and red scores decreased with each consecutive age group. More than one-third of respondents 16 to 24 years of ages had red scores. In the 65+ years of age group, 80% had green scores, 5% red. These results seem to reinforce the notion that road safety knowledge and driving habits may improve with age and experience; the decreasing yellow scores may also suggest decreasing “uncertainty” also with age and experience.

Table 4. Road safety challenge responses by age. Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding. While the online challenge included eight age category groups, the final results have been compressed into four categories.

AGE GROUP	Total Responses	% by Age Group	Green Score %	Yellow Score %	Red Score %
16-24 (total group)	319	13.8	5.2	3.6	4.9
(within age group)			37.7	26.1	35.5
24-44 (total group)	845	36.5	14.7	14.8	7.0
(within age group)			40.3	40.5	19.2
45-64 (total group)	928	40.1	21.6	14.9	3.7
(within age group)			53.9	37.2	9.9
65+ (total group)	224	9.6	7.7	1.5	0.5
(within age group)			80.2	15.6	5.2
TOTAL	2,316	100			

3.3 Gender + Age Group

Both males and females in the 16-24 years of age groups had the highest percentage of “red” scores. Only in this particular age group are female red scores higher than their male counterparts. Red scores decreased with each age group. Female green scores are higher than their male counterparts in all age groups except 65 year or more, where the results dramatically shift to a 2:1 male to female green score ratio – suggesting a possible change in awareness and/or driving behaviour amongst older female drivers. Females green scores in the 45-to-64-age group are almost twice the scores of their male counterparts.

Overall the online challenge results provide a measure to track possible trends within specific demographic groups, and the need for ongoing social marketing campaigns focusing on road safety education and safe driving behaviours.

Table 5. Road safety challenge responses by gender and age

Age	Total Responses	% of Total by Age	% of Total Male (age group)	% of Total Female (age group)	% of Male Green	% of Female Green	% of Male Yellow	% of Female Yellow	% of Male Red	% of Female Red
16-24	319	13.8	42.7	57.3	14.8	22.9	12.8	13.5	15.1	21.0
25-44	845	36.5	42.2	57.8	15.6	24.1	15.5	24.8	10.8	9.3
45-64	928	40.1	40.9	59.1	19.2	36.1	17.0	18.5	4.6	3.8
65+	224	9.6	65.7	34.3	51.8	29.8	10.1	3.2	3.9	1.2
TOTAL	2,316	100								

NOTE: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

3.4 Municipality

Results by municipality group were not analyzed as the participant numbers are too small to determine any meaningful trends or comparisons.

Niagara-on-the-Lake respondents scored the highest number of green scores (62.5%) and one of lowest red scores. This may reflect the fact that Niagara-on-the-Lake was the site of the Think and Drive pilot project in 2006, and the community’s level of awareness of road safety issues may have increased as a result. Pelham and West Lincoln respondents had the second highest percentage of green scores as well as lowest red scores. Wainfleet had the highest percentage of red scores (37.5%), following by Fort Erie (24.7%) and Grimsby (23.5%). However, all three of these municipalities also had green scores of 50% or more.

In terms of participation rates by municipality relative to its population as a percentage of Niagara region’s total population, West Lincoln and Wainfleet had fewer participants, which could be related to Internet access in rural Niagara. All other municipalities were fairly representative of their respective percentage of the Niagara region total population.

Table 6. Challenge responses by municipality

MUNICIPALITY	Total Responses	% by Municipality	Green Score %	Yellow Score %	Red Score %	Adjusted * %	% of Niagara Population
Fort Erie	179	7.7	3.9	1.9	1.9	8.9	7.0
(within municipality)			50.6	24.7	24.7		
Grimsby	117	5.1	2.6	1.7	1.2	5.8	5.6
(within municipality)			51.0	33.3	23.5		
Lincoln	91	3.9	1.9	1.5	0.6	4.5	5.2
(within municipality)			48.7	38.5	15.4		
Niagara Falls	384	16.6	7.7	6.0	2.8	19.0	19.2
(within municipality)			46.4	36.1	16.9		
Niagara-on-the-Lake	56	2.4	1.5	0.7	0.3	2.8	3.5
(within municipality)			62.5	29.2	12.5		
Outside Niagara	295	12.7	5.4	5.0	2.4	0.0	0.0
(within municipality)			42.5	39.4	18.9		
Pelham	77	3.3	1.9	1.0	0.4	3.8	3.7
(within municipality)			57.6	30.3	12.1		
Port Colborne	78	3.4	1.5	1.4	0.5	3.9	4.2
(within municipality)			44.1	41.2	14.7		
St. Catharines	705	30.4	16.5	10.1	3.9	34.9	31.2
(within municipality)			54.3	33.2	12.8		
Thorold	66	2.8	1.4	1.0	0.5	3.3	4.2
(within municipality)			50.0	32.1	17.8		
Wainfleet	19	0.8	0.4	0.1	0.3	0.9	1.5
(within municipality)			50.0	12.5	37.5		
Welland	232	10.0	4.7	4.1	1.3	11.5	11.7
(within municipality)			47.0	41.0	13.0		
West Lincoln	17	0.7	0.4	0.3	0.0	0.8	3.0
(within municipality)			57.1	42.9	0.0		
TOTAL	2,316	100%				100%	100%

NOTE (Adjusted %): Road Safety Challenge participants from outside of Niagara Region have been removed to reflect Niagara Region residents/participants only. Last column illustrated each municipality's percentage of the total Niagara Region population compared to each municipal population participating in online road safety challenge. Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

4.0 *Highlights of Public Opinion Polls*

Pre-campaign and post-campaign telephone opinion polls were conducted in November 2007 and January 2009, respectively. Both polls included the same road safety awareness and knowledge questions, Six additional questions were designed for the post-campaign poll to track any possible trends or meaningful changes in awareness or understanding of road safety issues in Niagara, as well as any observable beginnings of changes in driving behaviours. Respondents were also asked about their awareness of any specific road safety campaigns.

4.1 *Demographics*

The demographics of the pre- and post-campaign polls were similar in terms of their municipality. The most significant differences in respondents by municipality were in Lincoln and St. Catharines. The post-campaign poll had twice as many respondents from Lincoln (9.1% of total respondents) compared to the pre-campaign poll (4.5%); the post-campaign poll had approximately one-third fewer respondents from St. Catharines (21% of total respondents) compared to the pre-campaign poll (31%). By age group, respondents were similar in nature, however, the 16 to 24 years of age group did have fewer total respondents in the post-campaign poll (2.4% vs. 1.5% of total respondents). By gender, the post-campaign poll had a higher number of female respondents (58%) compared to the pre-campaign poll (52%).

4.2 *Summary of Responses | 2009 vs. 2007 Polls*

- An equal number of respondents in the pre- and post-campaign polls agreed that they are safer drivers than their peers.
- There were decreases in the frequency of those who drive over the speed limit in both categories measured (i.e., 10 km and 20 km over speed limit).
- There were slight decreases in driving faster on rural roads and racing.
- While there was no change in the number of people who get angry or upset with other drivers, fewer participants drive when angry or upset.
- There were drops in the number of drivers that daydream and misjudge situations.
- There were drops in the areas of driving while talking and while adjusting vehicle settings.
- There was a drop related to driving while reading.
- Fewer drivers said they drive while drinking a cold beverage or a hot beverage.
- There were decreases in driving after drinking alcohol and when very tired.

4.3 *Post-Campaign Changes in Awareness, Knowledge and Habits (2009)*

Respondents were asked as series of questions related to changes in their awareness of road safety issues, their knowledge of these issues, and changes in their driving habits over the past year.

- 22% of respondents said that there has been a significant or very significant change in awareness of road safety driving issues and 26% had somewhat of a change.

- 20% of respondents stated that there has been a significant or very significant change in knowledge of road safety driving issues and 26% had somewhat of a change.
- 18% of respondents said that there has been a significant or very significant change in their driving habits over the last 12 months and 19% respondents there has been somewhat of a change.
- More than half or 51% of residents interviewed stated that they have seen or heard of a road safety campaign in Niagara. When asked to name the campaign or program that they became aware of, MADD was most cited by 26%, followed by 21% that named RIDE, 4% cited Arrive Alive, 3% cited each of Think and Drive, and Students Against Impaired Driving. Both MADD and RIDE are well-established road safety campaigns with substantial advertising funding and community presence, and therefore, are top of mind among residents.

4.4 Perceived Top Causes of MVCs

In both poll surveys, respondents were first asked what they felt were the top causes of fatal and serious motor vehicle collisions. Up to three responses were accepted from respondents.

In November 2007, speeding was the most cited response (26%), followed by impaired driving (17%), distracted driving (10%), careless driving (10%), poor road conditions due to weather (9%) and the use of cell phones (8%). Post-campaign data in January 2009 also revealed similar findings among the top three responses with speeding (23%), followed by impaired driving (18%) and distracted driving (13%) being most named. Other responses included poor road conditions (12%), careless driving (12%), aggressive driving (5%), inexperience (2%), and driver error (2%).

Table 7. Perceived top causes of motor vehicle collisions

Cause	2007	2009
Speeding	26%	23%
Impaired driving	17%	18%
Distracted driving	10%	13%
Careless driving	10%	12%
Poor road conditions due to weather	9%	12%
Use of cell phones	8%	n/a
Aggressive driving	7%	5%
Inexperience	3%	2%
Driver error	4%	2%
Poor infrastructure/maintenance	3%	n/a
Driver fatigue	1%	n/a

4.5 MVCs by Location | Time of Year | Gender

Respondents were asked a series of aided or prompted questions related to issues around fatal and serious motor vehicle collisions. They were first asked *where* they most occur, then in what *time of year* they occur, and which *gender* is most responsible for these accidents.

In the pre-test research conducted in November 2007 46% of Niagara Region residents were of the opinion that most fatal and serious collisions occur on highways, while 31% said rural roads and 15% urban roads. 8% of respondents either did not know or were unsure. Post-test findings were similar with 44% naming highways, 31% rural roads, 14% urban roads, while 10% did not know.

Pre-test data found 51% claiming that most of these collisions happen in the winter months compared to three in 10 (30%) that cited summer months. Only 6% said in the fall, 2% during the spring and 11% did not know. In the post-test 50% also said winter, 31% summer, 5% spring, 4% the fall and 10% were unsure.

November 2007 research revealed that a 59% majority felt that males were the cause of most serious collisions compared to 6% that cited females, while 25% said both sexes are involved in collisions equally and 10% did not know. Fewer respondents or 52% stated that men were more involved in serious accidents during the post-test research, with more or 30% naming both sexes equally. 6% said women and 11% had no opinion.

4.6 High-Risk Driving Behaviours

Respondents were asked to disagree or agree with the statements “Younger drivers (16 to 24) are at greater risk of having motor vehicle collisions.” And “I am a safer driver than my friends or peers.” A two-thirds majority (67%) agreed that younger drivers are at a greater risk of having motor vehicle collisions in the pre-campaign poll while seven in 10 (70%) said the same in the post-campaign poll. An equal number of respondents in both the pre- and post-campaign agreed that they are safer drivers than their peers.

Respondents were asked a series of questions related to their driving habits, and asked to respond using a scale of 1- never, 2-almost never, 3-sometimes, 4-often or 5-very often. “In general, when driving how do you do each of the following?” The results of both the 2007 pre-campaign and 2009 post-campaign polls are summarized in Table 6 on the following page. Any observable trends or slight change in responses that could be meaningful have been highlighted in blue for the 2009 post-campaign results; 2009 responses also have arrows indicating the change in frequency (increase vs. decrease) for any issue/behaviour in the “never” and “often/very often” responses.

Driving issues/behaviours highlighted in yellow are “speeding-related” issues; those highlighted in green are related to “driver error or distractions”; and those highlighted in orange are “impairment-related” issues.

Table 8. Comparison of driving habits 2007 vs. 2009

		2007			2009		
	Road Safety Issue/Behaviour	Never	Almost Never/ Sometimes	Often /Very Often	Never	Almost Never/ Sometimes	Often /Very Often
		Speeding	Drive more than 10km over speed limit	15%	51%	33%	22% ↑
Drive more than 20km over speed limit *	48%		46%	5%	56% ↑	37%	7% ↑
Run a yellow light	23%		71%	5%	26% ↑	67%	7% ↑
Run a red light	92%		8%	0%	92%	7%	0%
Drive aggressively during poor weather	85%		13%	1%	85%	13%	2%
Drive less cautiously in good weather	40%		47%	12%	43% ↑	48%	9% ↓
Drive faster on rural or country roads	44%		44%	12%	48% ↑	41%	11%
Race with another driver	96%		3%	1%	98% ↑	2%	0%
Tailgate another driver driving too slowly	76%		23%	1%	78% ↑	21%	1%
Driver Error/Distractions	Drive when very angry or upset	52%	44%	4%	53%	43%	2% ↓
	Get angry or upset with other drivers	26%	63%	11%	26%	64%	10%
	Daydream or let your mind wander	38%	58%	3%	46% ↑	50%	4%
	Misjudge a driving situation	30%	68%	2%	38% ↑	62%	0%
	Drive without wearing a seatbelt	90%	9%	0%	90%	7%	3%
	Drive while talking to passengers	4%	51%	44%	5%	56%	40% ↓
	Drive while moving around or reaching for something	38%	57%	5%	41% ↑	54%	5%
	Drive while smoking	81%	7%	12%	75% ↓	11%	14% ↑
	Drive without wearing prescription eyewear	96%	3%	1%	95%	4%	1%
	Drive while using laptop/handheld device	97%	3%	0%	96%	4%	0%
	Drive while adjusting vehicle settings	17%	64%	18%	24% ↑	57%	19%
	Drive while looking at outside objects	17%	67%	16%	11% ↓	68%	21% ↑
	Drive while reading	87%	13%	0%	94% ↑	6%	0%
	Drive while using a cell phone w/o headset	64%	30%	6%	59% ↓	33%	8% ↑
	Drive while drinking a cold beverage	41%	48%	11%	45% ↑	47%	8% ↓
	Drive while drinking a hot beverage	38%	44%	19%	42% ↑	43%	15% ↓
	Drive while eating	48%	48%	3%	52% ↑	44%	4%
Drive while combing hair/shaving/makeup	93%	7%	0%	96% ↑	3%	1%	
Impairment	Drive after taking medication	73%	22%	4%	71% ↓	21%	8% ↑
	Drive after drinking alcohol	70%	30%	0%	75% ↑	24%	1%
	Drive after using recreational drugs	97%	3%	0%	98%	1%	1%
	Drive when tired	31%	66%	2%	35% ↑	62%	3%