Social Marketing
An Introduction

Elizabeth Gregory
Associate Professor and Extension Communications Specialist
Texas Cooperative Extension
Targeting: The Key to Marketing

Knowing your audience—really knowing them—and creating messages and products that appeal to them.
In what might seem—to adults—like the silliest campaign in history, Lee Jeans used an 80-year-old doll to reposition its brand with teenagers.

The situation

Lee realized they were losing market share with young people, so they put together focus groups representing the target audience to find out what was wrong.

The teens in the focus groups said Lee Jeans were “Mom’s jeans”—how uncool is that?

What they did

Lee asked the teens to review some potential slogans, ad concepts, etc., and recommend the ones they thought would be most attractive to kids like themselves. The kids recommended:
- featuring the Buddy Lee doll/character;
- removing the Lee patch from the back of the jeans;
- and calling the jeans “dungarees,” which they thought was reminiscent of James Dean coolness.

So what happened?

Lee followed all of these recommendations, with the result that orders for juniors and young men’s departments increased 100 percent over the previous year.

The lesson?

Taking the time and making the effort to really understand your target audience pays off.

Targeting works!
MAGIC EVERY "SINGLE" TIME®
The Dairy Fairy makes Kraft’s ads “tastier” to moms.

The situation
Kraft used focus groups of their target audience—moms, the people who buy groceries—to test a new series of ads for Kraft Singles. The moms said the ads, which featured a male announcer and focused on the fact that kids don’t get enough calcium in their diets, made them feel guilty—definitely not the emotion Kraft wanted to evoke.

What they did
Kraft re-made the ads, featuring a female announcer and adding the Dairy Fairy, an animated, winged cow, to lighten the message.

So what happened?
Kraft Singles solidified their position as the dominant brand among sliced cheese products.

The lesson?
Test not just your product, but your messages and communications tools as well, to make sure they have the right effect on your target audience.
With the help of an animated fish, McDonald's keeps an aging kids’ product new for new generations of kids.

The situation

McDonald's introduced the Happy Meal in the early 1970s, and it became an immediate hit, pressuring all the other fast food restaurants to offer kids’ meals, too. The problem is the challenge of keeping a kid-oriented product popular— not many things have the staying power of Barbie or Tony the Tiger.

What they did

McDonald’s keeps the Happy Meal constantly current by tying it to current kid-oriented trends, whatever is hot in a child’s universe—in this example, the latest Disney movie.

So what happened?

Even thirty years later, the Happy Meal is still incredibly popular, a rare achievement in the volatile kids’ market.

The lesson?

It takes work to stay current with your audience’s interests. You have to keep studying them, keep finding out what appeals to them.
Social Marketing

Using the techniques commercial organizations use to market their products, to get people to change their behavior in positive ways.
These campaigns, and many more like them, have used national advertising and mass media to promote behavior change.

But social marketing can work on the local level, too.

Whether nationally or locally, the key characteristic is the same—absolute focus on your audience.

Understand everything you can about them, and it will pay off in positive changes and successes for them and for Extension!
Just for fun, quiz yourself!

How many of these social marketing ad campaigns do you remember?

1. How does the following Ad Council slogan end: “Drinking and Driving Can...”
   - Cause Accidents
   - Land You in Jail
   - Kill a Friendship
   - Damage Property

2. “A Mind is a Terrible Thing to Waste” is the slogan for which campaign:
   - Peace Corps
   - Learning Disabilities
   - United Negro College Fund
   - Family Literacy

3. What is the longest running Ad Council campaign?
   - Forest Fire Prevention
   - Drunk Driving Prevention
   - Seat Belt Education
   - American Red Cross

4. How does the following Ad Council slogan end: “Peace Corps: The Toughest Job You'll Ever...”
   - ...have.
   - ...love.
   - ...want.
   - ...do.
5. How does the following Ad Council slogan end: “Loose Lips.....”
   ....sink ships.
   ...pass gossip.
   ...prevent forest fires.
   ...just say no.

6. What is the name of the female icon whose image helped The Advertising Council to recruit two million women into the wartime industry?
   Susie the Riveter
   Roberta the Riveter
   Ruthie the Riveter
   Rosie the Riveter

7. Which character's likeness was used on the initial Forest Fire Prevention PSAs?
   Smokey Bear
   Mighty Mouse
   Bambi
   McGruff the Crime Dog

8. Which of the following phrases was McGruff the Crime Dog's signature slogan?
   Only You Can Prevent Crime
   Stop Crime in its Tracks
   Do Away with Crime
   Take a Bite Out of Crime
Answers: How’d You Do?

1. Drinking and Driving Can Kill a Friendship

2. United Negro College Fund

3. Forest Fire (now Wildfire) Prevention

4. Peace Corps: The Toughest Job You’ll Ever Love

5. Loose lips sink ships.

6. Rosie the Riveter

7. Smokey Bear

8. Take a Bite Out of Crime