

6. CYCLE PROMOTION PROGRAMME

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The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of the responses to the 1999 cycle promotion programme, and advise of other relevant information.

INTRODUCTION

The cycle promotion programme featuring the cartoon character Annabel as its central image first started in the newspapers and television in June 1999. The cartoons had three main themes:

- To associate cycling with the image of Christchurch (hence cartoons about Hagley Park, Bridle Path etc);
- To make drivers aware of situations on the road when cyclists feel most vulnerable, including intersections (hence cartoons about door opening and roundabouts); and
- To encourage cyclists and drivers to respect each other's right to road space (hence cartoons about double parking, and appropriate behaviour at red lights).

Since the programme started, a number of surveys have been done measuring its reception and retention. These surveys have also measured the responses to cycling events (Bike to Work Day, Park to Pier, Tour De City, Active Cycle) and the Press Cycling Page.

CITY COUNCIL QUARTERLY MONITOR

The City Council contracted a market research organisation to add some City Council advertising and publicity questions to a quarterly telephone survey. This particular research was done in August 1999. It surveys 400 Christchurch residents of varying ages.

- When asked to think about publicity or advertising for CCC services, 5% mentioned cycling – similar to other services provided by the Council.
- When asked specifically whether they had seen or heard about the Annabel cartoon on newspaper or TV, 37% claimed to have seen it in the newspaper, 36% claimed to have seen it on TV. This was also similar to advertising for other Council services.

- Those who claimed to have seen Annabel were asked how effective they thought the publicity was. Fifty-two per cent said the newspaper was effective or very effective, 58% said the TV was effective or very effective. Three per cent didn't know in each case.

Overall, the results are very similar to the other CCC services' advertising that was questioned.

This study in August followed the launch of the media campaign on TV and newspaper. These results are considered to be very good by comparison with advertising industry expectations for awareness quoted by AC Nielsen researchers to be 10% to 20% with up to 50% for very big campaigns.

"Effectiveness" is a subjective question, and does not fully reflect the campaign objectives eg. 40% thought the advertising wasn't effective, however the same people recalled the campaign, demonstrating to the promotions team, that it was in fact, effective.

What is most interesting about the Annabel programme though, is at the time of the survey the Annabel programme had been running for only two months.

CYCLING ANNUAL QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

An annual survey measuring attitudes to cycling and cycling issues is carried out in October/November each year. It is a face-to-face survey speaking to 320 people of varying ages, and an additional 115 people of high school age.

- When asked if they remembered seeing or hearing anything about cycling, 7% of the general population and 6% of students recalled Annabel cartoons.
- When asked if they recalled the Annabel cartoon from the TV, 23% of the general population and 59% of the school group said they had. When asked if they recalled the Annabel cartoon from either the Press or the Star, 31% of the general group, and 14% of the school group said they had.
- Also, when prompted, 28% of the general sample and 8% of children recalled the Press Cycling Page. Twenty-nine per cent of general sample and 20% of children recalled the Park to Pier promotion.
- Approximately 50% of both groups said that the Annabel series helps increase respect between cyclists and vehicle drivers, and that it makes them think about children's safety. Approximately 63% of each group said it makes them think about making cycling safer generally.
- Overall, 78% of the general population and 76% of school children recalled some form of cycling promotion.

This study was carried out several months after the launch on TV, and no TV commercials had been to air for over two months. Interestingly 59% of school students still recalled the TV commercials. The cartoon strips in the newspaper recorded an awareness of 31%.

Recall from the school group differed for the newspaper ads, in this case being significantly lower at 14%. These results reflect the media habits of the different age groups and are not surprising, although recall of TV with the school group was exceptional, especially considering several months off air.

Most the significant of the findings of this study were the outcomes on how the public perceive the campaign on key objectives. Fifty per cent said it helped increase respect between cyclists and motorists and think about children's safety. Sixty-three per cent said it makes them think about making cycling safer generally. These are positive outcomes for the campaign that is designed to create a gradual change of attitude in a low interest subject for most people.

AWARDS

The Annabel TV and newspaper programme received four awards at the South Island Advertising Awards in September.

POST-EVENT FOLLOW UPS

Follow up surveys have been done at all cycle events held last year. The events were:

- Bike-To-Work Day – caters for commuters: estimated 500 attended. February 1999
- Park to Pier Ride – family ride day: estimated 1000 attended. October 1999
- Tour de City – children's ride and competition: structured for 90 participants only. November 1999

In all cases, the feedback from those who participated, and (importantly) those that sponsored or promoted, has been overwhelmingly positive. It would be reasonable to expect noticeable increases in numbers in 2000 (given some decent weather)

The 2000 Bike to Work day is programmed for Wednesday 16 February, to coincide with Bike to Work days in other centres, and National Bike Week.

CONCLUSION FROM THE PROMOTIONS PROGRAMME RESEARCH

Quoting from the Quantitative Market Research Report:

“The Annabel publicity on TV and in the newspapers shows that it is effective, particularly in reaching the younger target audience. In contrast, the main sample respondents are receiving messages relating to cycling from a variety of other sources as well.

To date the communications relating to cycling have been a mix of advertising, newspaper features, publicity and events. At this early stage in the communications strategy there are no appreciable changes in cycling attitudes and behaviours evident in the research results. However, with more exposure to campaigns and publicity over time, we would expect to see, in future monitors, trends emerging.”

Essentially, it would appear that the efforts put in to promotions and events in 1999 have been largely preparatory. It is the first year in which there have been efforts combined between infrastructure development, promotion/education/awareness, and activities and events.

Overall the research indicates that the Annabel cycle campaign has launched successfully making people not only more aware of cycling, but also more conscious of safety for cyclists and children.

General public recognition of cycling is a fundamental step in eventually generating attitude and behaviour change.

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairman’s

Recommendation: That the Committee note the success of the Cycle Promotion Programme and support its continuation at the current budget levels.