



Category: Transport or Automotive Campaign

Company: Vision Express

Entry title: Eye Tests Save Lives

Brief and objectives:

Vision Express' 'EyeTestsSaveLives' campaign was launched in 2015 to raise awareness of good eye health to safeguard UK roads. In 2017, it built upon previous campaigns, encouraging drivers to prioritise eye testing with a focus on Road Safety Week (RSW).

Objectives:

- Develop and place in media at least two case studies showing the real impact of poor driver sight and why more needs to be done to educate motorists, achieving 100% brand mention;
- Promote free tests, increasing online bookings by 20%;
- Use social media via #EyeTestsSaveLives to encourage conversations and spread the message, with 50% increase in engagement.
- Spearhead a Government awareness campaign to make eye health a road safety policy priority, resulting in tangible change.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

Vision Express' RSW campaign was influenced by research, which points to a potential safety crisis for Britain's 5million-plus population who drive for work, revealing that driving over 25,000 miles a year is reportedly the third most dangerous job in the UK, behind deep sea diving and coal mining.

In 2016, there were 44,048 work-related road casualties, and it is estimated that crashes involving a driver with poor vision causes 2,900 casualties each year.

Driven by this, Vision Express used RSW as a platform to urge drivers to realise the risks of losing their licence and livelihood.

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

The RSW campaign was based on independent driver research commissioned by Vision Express, which found, out of those who drive for work:

- 25% are not having regular eye tests, 6% haven't had one in at least 10 years, and 2% have never had one.
- 13% would flout the requirement to voluntarily inform the DVLA if an eye test showed they were unfit to drive.
- 39% say their job would be at risk if their eyesight fell below the standard to drive.
- 27% would lose their job if they lost their licence.
- 64% of employers have never discussed the importance of meeting the minimum eyesight requirement to drive with their employees.
- 25% believe sub-standard vision is a significant road hazard. Drugs/alcohol is thought to be the biggest hazard by 82%, followed by mobile phone use (71%), tiredness (43%) and consistent speeding (26%).
- 52% believe that the current penalty of a £1,000 fine for endangering life by driving with sub-standard vision is inadequate.
- 49% agree reading a number plate as part of a driving test is an outdated/ineffective way to check sight is good enough to drive.
- 76% would support legislation for proof of a recent eye test to be mandatory when renewing a standard driving licence.

This underpinned research from other industry bodies, showing driver sight was not a road safety priority. The latest Highways England road safety report sets out a strategic plan, addressing issues which impair driving such as fatigue, distraction, alcohol/drugs - with no reference to sight impediment.

With the backing of high profile partners such as the road safety charity Brake, Vision Express lobbied government to raise awareness about the importance of regular eye tests for drivers.

Implementation of tactics:

- Vision Express undertook its own research for RSW 2017 and utilised results across all materials. The findings highlighted drivers who get behind the wheel for work were not having regular sight tests and were unfamiliar with the legal driving requirements relating to sight.
- By offering free eye tests to all via a downloadable voucher during RSW, Vision Express took affordability out of the equation.
- Compelling case studies were developed, offering real-life stories to national/regional media, including 29-year-old Paul Constable, who had to relocate his job after a brain

tumour affecting his sight led to him sacrificing his driving licence. Paul hadn't had an eye test since childhood, and attributes the test he underwent at Vision Express with saving his life. Despite losing the sight in his right eye, Paul has perfect vision in his left eye and is hopeful of regaining his licence. He regrets not making his eye health a priority by maintaining regular sight checks. Paul's story and support of the campaign was used as a strong digital media asset:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88K6qTNGtK0>

- Vision Express lobbied Government to consider vision problems as a major contributor to traffic accidents as part of the campaign, meeting with MP supporters including Barry Sheerman, Andy McDonald, Jack Dromey and Roads Minister Jesse Norman.
- Awareness-raising events at Westminster and Holyrood welcomed over 50 MPs/MSPs, including Health Minister Philip Dunne and Scottish Minister for Transport, Humza Yousaf. A driving simulator demonstrated how conditions such as glaucoma – one of the biggest causes of preventable vision loss globally – can gradually steal up to 40% of sight.

Measurement and evaluation:

- The campaign resulted in a breakthrough commitment in November 2017, with Government announcing plans to work with the DVLA to include an eye test reminder when motorists renew their photocard driving licence. The concession was made by Minister for Transport Legislation and Maritime, Mr John Hayes, following an approach by David Linden MP in support of Vision Express' initiative.
- Paul's story, other case studies and MP support secured 50+ pieces of quality media coverage, spanning key media and reaching over 7million consumers.
- 100% positive coverage including a brand mention.
- The RSW campaign and #EyeTestsSaveLives had a total reach of almost 30,000 on VE's Facebook, with over 80,000 impressions. Over 900 people engaged with the content.
- On VE's Twitter, the content had over 32,000 impressions.
- Over 17,500 Vision Express eye tests were booked during RSW –an increase of 95% when compared with 2016's RSW, and an increase of 58% when compared with the average weekly bookings for 2017.
- Throughout the whole initiative, there was an increase of 31% in bookings when compared with 2016's campaign.
- Driver eye health-related messaging was shared with almost 60 cross-party MPs, peers and MSPs, for social media, with the total number of followers of MPs who tweeted coming to over 200,000. Total retweets by those MPs' followers came to 50 and likes totalled over 100.

- The DVLA ran a 12-week awareness campaign using social media and plans to run another summer communications campaign in 2018, with Vision Express' support in delivering key road safety messages to a mass audience.
- Road Minister Jesse Norman has pledged to take eye health into consideration when the Government's 2015 Road Safety Statement is reviewed, following Vision Express' campaign.

Budget and cost effectiveness:

Video production/social media creative: £13,000. Quality videos created as a strong, easily shareable visual tool to support the campaign's significant social media focus.

PR Agency & Public Affairs Consultancy: £9,500. The Tonic Communications for campaign PR, as a cost-effective alternative to expanding the in-house team. The agency was responsible for all campaign PR/media relations before, during and after the awareness week with an agency commissioned to provide lobbying support.