

CAANZ Beacon Awards 2015

Case Study

Agency Name:	FCB Media NZ
Advertiser Name:	Inland Revenue
Gold Beacon Award Categories:	Social marketing Best use of Digital Landscape Best Communications Strategy Most effective Best use of insight

Finding The “Unfindable”

With default loans totalling more than half a billion dollars, Inland Revenue needed to remind overseas based borrowers of their student loan commitments. FCB Media’s mission to track down these “unfindables” and persuade them to make contact netted payback for Inland Revenue as well as Gold Beacon Awards in the Social marketing, Best use of Digital Landscape, Best Communications Strategy, Most effective, and Best use of insight categories.

Background

When graduates leave New Zealand, paying off a student loan is often the last thing on their minds. Little wonder that the Inland Revenue Department was running total default loans of more than half a billion dollars.

Inland Revenue’s briefing to FCB Media was simple. Track down the borrowers and ensure that their student loan commitments are top of mind.

Campaign Objectives

While the great majority of student loan borrowers meet their commitments, those who go overseas often get themselves in trouble by forgetting or ignoring their student loan. Overseas based borrowers represent 15% of borrowers yet 87% of the total amount in default – equivalent to \$542M. Inland Revenue needed help reducing this number.

FCB Media was given a simple mission: Track down the borrowers and bring their commitments back to the front of their minds. Specifically, increase loan repayments from overseas based borrowers and as a means of achieving this, increase the percentage of overseas based borrowers for whom Inland Revenue has contact details.

While the mission was seemingly simple, the execution was anything but.

Campaign Overview

Seventy percent of overseas based borrowers start addressing their loans once they're in contact with Inland Revenue. So if FCB Media was to succeed in its mission, getting borrowers in contact with Inland Revenue would be critical.

However Inland Revenue has very little data on who or where these borrowers are – they are essentially unfindable. Furthermore, many overseas based borrowers have left New Zealand to enjoy care-free, life-changing “OE” experiences and commitments like student loans can wait.

In short, for many overseas based borrowers a student loan is physically and emotionally “out of sight, out of mind”.

Media Strategy

To meet objectives, FCB Media needed to address both physical and emotional aspects of “out of sight, out of mind”. This meant being physically “in sight” to as many overseas based borrowers as possible – finding the “unfindable”. FCB Media then needed to persuade these borrowers to make contact despite being in “OE mode”.

The secret to success was some new media smarts combined with high influence, high frequency, emotionally compelling communication.

To find the “unfindable” borrowers, FCB Media used Facebook and LinkedIn datasets to create a “highly likely” overseas based borrowers match audience. It then ran custom campaigns targeting these individuals. Respondents were captured in a consolidated data set.

FCB Media also turned to programmatic (automated) buying of online ads and published them against lookalike profiles of initial responders across a far wider global audience pool. New data sources and response tactics including new-to-market targeting were continuously tested and global mobile click-to-call units made contact as easy as possible.

As FCB Media found new borrowers, insights were captured in the consolidated data set and used to informed execution of the other layer of the campaign: Influence and persuading the borrowers to make contact.

Locally based parents of borrowers and expat outreach organisations were armed with information to prompt conversations, targeted Skype advertising in-calls were used and a native content partnership and PR programme delivered media articles in countries that had the highest concentrations of borrowers or parents of borrowers.

Results

FCB Media innovative new media approach that leveraged 3rd party media datasets to enrich Inland Revenue's understanding of overseas based borrowers, succeeded in finding more "unfindable" borrowers and motivating them to make contact.

As a result the proportion of overseas based borrowers contacting Inland Revenue increased significantly, as did those making repayments. Response rates increased over 60% across campaign period – proof that FCB Media's approach got better and better at finding "unfindables" over time.

Data from more than four hundred thousand records in FCB Media consolidated data set delivered new, valuable insights that were actioned. In a double win, these insights will also provide pay-back for future campaigns.