



UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY & SOCIAL MEDIA TO CREATE AN EFFECTIVE PROBLEM GAMBLING CAMPAIGN

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ohio for responsible gambling

ABSTRACT

In recent years, it was recognized that Ohio was experiencing a dramatic expansion of gambling opportunities, which was attributed to the 2009 voter-approved legislation that allowed casinos to enter the state. With these new changes came the potential for an increased level of addiction. Unfortunately, it was determined through different studies that problem gambling was not considered an issue of concern amongst citizens, and state leaders knew that they needed to take action. To address this issue, Ohio for Responsible Gambling launched a powerful multiyear campaign that places a targeted emphasis on building awareness around gambling-related issues, and drives families, professionals, and other community groups to resources available to educate and assist with problem gambling education, prevention, treatment, and recovery.



INTRODUCTION

To address this public health issue and to ensure that the state was taking strong preventative measures, Governor John R. Kasich formed Ohio for Responsible Gambling (ORG). The mission of this organization is to bring together state agencies involved in the fields of gaming, regulation, mental health, and addiction services, working together to bring quality services and messaging to Ohio communities to help reduce problem gambling and to build awareness of resources available for the prevention and treatment of gambling disorders.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

To address the issue of problem gambling in the state of Ohio, the leadership team outlined the following objectives when developing a responsible gambling awareness campaign:

- 1 Create a powerfully branded message and campaign to be implemented into an integrated marketing strategy, helping build awareness around tips for responsible gaming practices across a broad range of audiences and geographical areas.
- 2 Drive behavioral change by designing and developing a microsite that engages the community in an online assessment, gauging their risk of problem gambling, while connecting them with free resources to get help. This can be used for individuals who gamble or for influencers who may be concerned for a loved one.
- 3 Spread the message by developing motion graphics videos to be utilized in online tactics, such as social media campaigns and other ad placements, to demonstrate the dangers of problem gambling and how to prevent these risks.
- 4 Engage communities across the state by crafting and executing an approximately \$1 million annual media plan over two years, driving traffic to the microsite and online assessment through digital, environmental, event, and radio advertising (campaign began October 2015).



A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH

Ohio for Responsible Gambling set out to address the lack of awareness around the issues and consequences related to gambling by beginning the process of developing a new public health message that takes a positive approach to educating communities about responsible gambling practices. To fulfill this goal, the new campaign was created to utilize practices of social-norming approach, which aims to correct misperceptions of specific behaviors and educate the audience about the actual attitudes and behaviors of the population. In this case, the organization wanted to create a positive message that highlights the fact that the majority of the population can gamble responsibly if taking proactive and healthy approaches to gaming.

SOLUTION

When reviewing recent studies, it was shown that of Ohioans who gamble, 95 percent of that population can gamble without negative consequences, proving that gambling can be a fun and entertaining activity for the majority of the population. As a positive public health campaign, Origo Branding created a campaign brand, *Be the 95%*, which asks Ohioans who gamble to strive to be a part of the 95 percent of people who gamble responsibly. The campaign provides tools and tips for responsible gambling, in addition to information about how to determine whether a loved one might be at-risk for a gambling disorder. Statewide agency Prevention Action Alliance serves as campaign coordinator.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This campaign primarily focuses on key influencers of individuals who are at-risk of problem gambling, engaging those loved ones who can make a positive impact on the gamblers' behaviors and life choices. Target audiences include:



INFLUENCERS (families & spouses): With the main influencers (and caregivers) on the decisions and actions of those at-risk of problem gambling, the goal is to build awareness and engagement about simple ways the influencer can address the prevention/treatment of those closest to them. With such a wide range of demographic and socioeconomic factors in communities across the state, it was critical to create imagery, design, and messaging that spanned populations, allowing the creative strategy to modify when speaking to different audiences and geographical areas.



AT-RISK INDIVIDUALS (specifically males, age 18-25): While the campaign focuses on key influencers, this campaign also directly targets males and females who are at-risk of problem gambling, driving the end goal of preventing/treating gambling addictions within the state of Ohio.



STAKEHOLDER ORGANIZATIONS: While the initiative has a partnership of three strong groups, more awareness can be garnered by engaging other organizations and healthcare/treatment facilities that have access to the community and other networks of families, employers, and at-risk individuals.

CAMPAIGN MICROSITE & ONLINE QUIZ

(<http://www.the95percent.org>)

As the main call-to-action for the campaign and an online hub for information on responsible gambling, Origo Branding designed and developed a campaign microsite with the goal to drive behavioral change within the community. On this microsite, a user can:

- Engage in an assessment that gauges the risk of problem gambling, producing data and metrics around state demographics and behavioral change
- Connect to free resources and education, including warning signs of a problem gambler, tips on how to be a responsible gambler, and animated videos
- Access Problem Gambling Helpline information and other resources to prevent/treat problem gambling



MEDIA BUYING & DIGITAL STRATEGIES

Helping to engage communities across Ohio, Origo launched the campaign with a major press conference in August 2015, as well as executing an approximately \$1 million media plan with a diverse set of media outlets in October 2015, driving traffic to the microsite and online assessment as the main call-to-action, specifically leveraging digital tactics to target adults in Ohio, ages 25-54, with a special focus on men 18-25, who are at-risk for gambling behaviors.



Google AdWords Pay-per-Click (PPC) Campaign: In this PPC campaign, users who are actively pursuing gambling activities or having gaming as top-of-mind are targeted, as the campaign link to the microsite is placed at the top of their search list when searching gambling related topics. Keywords could include “fantasy football,” “poker tips,” “trips to Las Vegas,” etc.



Targeted Display Ads: In this tactic, digital banner ads can be seen on thousands of websites throughout a display network, seen by those seeking information about gambling. As this campaign gained momentum (and the website retargeting pool grows), we retargeted users by distributing behaviorally targeted impressions.



Mobile Geofencing: Geofencing is a feature in a software program that uses the GPS or radio frequency identification (RFID) to define geographical boundaries. A geofence is a virtual barrier. With this portion of the campaign, mobile devices that fall within a 1-3 mile radius of casinos, stadiums, and racinos around Ohio are targeted and ads are placed on them. This allows us to capture demographics of individuals who are in the vicinity of gambling and may be traveling to/from a gaming location.

ONLINE TOOLKIT & LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

To create strong partners and champions for our campaign, an online toolkit was developed, providing template advertisements for statewide partners to use in their local markets, helping to promote our message throughout their communities utilizing their own problem gambling prevention dollars. Tools include social media graphics, digital ads, brochures, print ads, billboards, videos, and radio ads, all of which, Origo helped co-brand for the various organizations to help them promote their mission.

- Through this tactic, partners were able to save on creative fees and utilize their budget on media, helping the campaign to better reach rural markets around Ohio through different tactics of environmental advertising, radio spots, and pre-roll ads in movie theaters.



FACEBOOK & OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA

A Facebook page was created for *Be the 95%* and sidebar ads and boosted posts were launched to help drive traffic to the Facebook page and microsite.

- Targeting specific groups, the campaign engaged users on both desktop and mobile devices, providing responsible gambling tips, in addition to inspirational messaging that aligns with the brand philosophy of living a healthy and positive lifestyle.
- Facebook ads were highly effective and allowed for choice of location, gender, age, and interests of the target audience, ensuring delivery of the message to the ideal demographic.

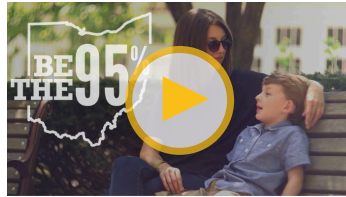


BRAND VIDEOS

To help support the brand story, Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and videos were created to build awareness around the issue of responsible gambling, creating tools that could be shared online. These were featured on the microsite, as well as through different digital and social media strategies.



:30 Second TV Spot
<https://vimeo.com/189976490>



Main Campaign Video
<https://vimeo.com/136544386>



Be The 95% March Basketball Video
<https://vimeo.com/155406647>



INTERACTIVE MODULE

To create a fresh approach to the campaign messaging, as well as find an engaging way to deliver the story to younger audiences, an online module (or simulation) was created to give users a peek into “The Life of a Responsible Gambler.” In this module, a user is able to pick a character that enjoys a specific type of gambling:

- The user can navigate through different questions and life scenarios, making responsible choices before being able to gamble, ensuring that they are in the 95 percent of individuals who can gamble responsibly.
- Throughout the module, tips on responsible gambling are presented to the user, in addition to warning signs of an individual who is at-risk of problem gambling.
- At the conclusion of the module, the user is directed to the online quiz to see if he/she is in the 95 percent of individuals who can gamble responsibly. Other educational resources and helpline information are also offered.

RESULTS

Through our research-driven tactics, this campaign reached groundbreaking results, creating the following metrics from October of 2015 through June of 2017 (21 months):



- 140+ million estimated campaign impressions
- 122,036 site visits
- 324,161 page views
- 21,992 sessions for the online gambling quiz
- 3,634 toolkit visits (leading to \$320K+ in local media buys from other state partners around Ohio in 2016)
- Digital display ads performed 4x the national average

Furthermore, this has been an award-winning campaign, winning best Public Awareness Campaign and best Website for two years in a row at the 2016 and 2017 National Council on Problem Gambling Conferences, gaining national recognition for the State of Ohio.