



AT&T with FleishmanHillard for It Can Wait No Texting While Driving 2012 Movement

FleishmanHillard and AT&T, Jan 1, 2013

Summary: 2013 Silver Anvil Award of Excellence Winner — Public Service — Business

Texting while driving is a hazard of epidemic proportions. AT&T stepped up in 2012 with a national campaign built around a simple message –It Can Wait. It's not often that a company calls on people not to use one of its services. But that's exactly what AT&T did to bring awareness to texting and driving and the consequences of the behavior.

Program elements including an online pledge, a national pledge day, simulator tours and third party and celebrity endorsements helped drive more than one million pledges to not text and drive while measuring awareness and behavior change.

Public service includes programs that advance public understanding of societal issues, problems or concerns.

Full Text: SITUATION ANALYSIS

Texting drivers are 23 times more likely to be in an accident ¹. The numbers make it clear: texting while driving is dangerous. But too many people ignore the risks. National leaders and influencers have called texting while driving an epidemic and a top telecommunications issue.

AT&T stepped up in 2012 with a national campaign built around a simple message: *It Can Wait*. No text is worth dying for.

It's not often that a company calls on people not to use one of its services. But that's exactly what was at the heart of AT&T's leadership on the texting while driving issue. Ultimately, the company's "It Can Wait" movement would urge Americans to make a personal commitment never to text and drive again. Getting there would require a bold, fundamentally different approach that would both show and tell the public about the dangers of texting while driving.

Objectives

- Save lives by raising awareness and changing texting while driving behaviors by both showing AND telling about the dangers.
- Increase consumer willingness to recommend AT&T.

Target/Audience Analysis

Texting while driving is a concern for all age groups, but teens stood out as the most important audience to reach:

- Teens send five times as many text messages as a typical adult, on average. ¹
- They're inexperienced drivers.
- They're more influenced by peer pressure.

RESEARCH / PLANNING

Extensive research – both primary and secondary – helped define the issue, identify

challenges, and suggest solutions:

- **Define the Issue:** Three of four teens reported that their friends texted while behind the wheel, and nearly 9 in 10 (89%) reported an underlying peer pressure behind it: the expectation that they'll receive a reply to a text or e-mail in five minutes or less. (May 2012 AT&T poll of 1,200 teens)² Additionally, a survey of influencers conducted for AT&T ranked texting while driving the #1 issue affecting the telecommunications industry.
- **Identify the Challenge:** Research showed a strong need to move audiences from awareness to action. While 63% of AT&T survey respondents between ages 15-54 were aware of messages regarding the dangers of texting while driving, only 29% indicated that these messages changed their habits.³
- **Suggest Possible Solutions:** Secondary research – via multiple sources – highlighted the correlation between personal commitment and behavior change, and between personal experience and behavior change. This research would prove decisive in shaping the strategy to move from awareness to action.
- **Suggest Possible Solutions:** Additional secondary research guided program timing – identifying the "100 Deadliest Days" for teen drivers (between graduation and back-to-school) in terms of heightened risk. ⁴

Strategies

Based on the situation analysis and research findings, AT&T developed a campaign strategy that would, ultimately, drive audiences to action:

- **Get Personal:** To break the "respond now" texting expectation, the campaign would have to take a more personal approach. In particular: urge drivers to make a public, personal commitment – and share that commitment with others. The result: a social movement.
- **Bring it to Life:** Given that awareness was improving but too many drivers still were texting while behind the wheel, the movement had to go beyond statistics and data to communicate the true impact of the problem. That meant use of first-person stories and technology that allowed drivers to "experience" the effects for themselves.
- **Be Everywhere:** Behavior change requires a sustained effort – with the same message delivered through multiple channels. Success would require consistent communication over all of AT&T's paid and owned channels, as well as from third parties and supported domains not connected to the AT&T brand.

EXECUTION

- **Take the Pledge:** To make it personal, AT&T launched an online no-texting-while driving pledge, including a share component encouraging drivers to tell others of their commitment.
- **Pledge Day:** AT&T declared September 19, 2012, its first ever National "No Text On Board Pledge Day," with 70+ local events and a national event with AT&T Chairman Randall Stephenson, FCC Commissioner Julius Genachowski and U.S. Sec. of Transportation Ray LaHood. 27 states ran don't-text-and-drive messages on their LED highway signs.
- **Teen-Centric Online Presence:** AT&T launched a lightly-branded, teen-friendly site – www.itcanwait.com – that was supported via social channels and a Spanish-language resource center.
- **National "See for Yourself" Tour:** To "bring it to life," AT&T commissioned texting-while-driving car and chair simulators and organized 200+ local events for drivers to experience what happens when texting and driving.
- **Field Activations:** AT&T held more than two events per day, on average, from the Aug. 15 launch through the end of the year, including simulator events, a "hackathon" event, celebrity appearances and school assemblies.
- **Online Experience:** Building on the in-person simulator, AT&T created an online

simulation at itcanwaitimulator.org.

- **Ecosystem Activation:** To "be everywhere," AT&T turned to its 240,000+ employees – including more than 50,000 employees in 5,500 retail stores – retail partners and 2,000+ suppliers to spread the message.
- **Third-Party Outreach:** AT&T engaged 165 third-party groups, along with 39,000+ high schools. More than 300 events took place at schools. 285 states and cities issued don't-text-and-drive proclamations.
- **Celebrity Engagement:** AT&T leveraged sponsorships and engaged teen stars to support the movement through PSAs and social channels.

EVALUATION OF SUCCESS / MEASUREMENT

Against the first objective to save lives by raising awareness and changing behaviors, the 2012 It Can Wait movement made a real, meaningful difference:

- Awareness of the It Can Wait message increased 26% during the key campaign period.³
- One-in-three people in that period said that texting while driving messages have an impact on their driving habits.³
- More than 1.2 million no texting and driving pledges generated through channels including ItCanWait.com, Facebook, Twitter and text-to-pledge.

Supporting results indicate just how far and wide the campaign reached:

- ItCanWait.com and Att.com/ItCanWait pageview totals approached 4 million.
 - **4,000+** media placements generating **1 billion+** impressions.
- Reach through Facebook, Twitter and YouTube was more than 250 million unique user accounts.
 - 153M+ Twitter accounts reached with #ItCanWait
 - 102M+ unique Facebook impressions
 - Nearly 7M YouTube views, including AT&T-produced videos and those created by others.

In addition, AT&T was recognized as taking a bold stand on the issue, an important second objective:

- The campaign had a significant impact on customer's willingness to recommend AT&T, as promoters (those who have a positive opinion of the brand) went up by 15% and detractors (those who have a negative opinion) decreased by 23%.³

1. [Virginia Tech Transportation Institute Research](#)
2. [Beck Research on behalf of AT&T](#)
3. AT&T TWD - ICW Perceptions Study
4. [AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#)
5. [Hart Research Associates for AT&T](#)

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