

Can marketing change behaviour

[Business](#), [Marketing](#)



Social marketing is more often used by governments to solve, for instance, health and environmental problems. However, changing people's behavior can be very difficult to do. In this paper we will see that there are different ways for marketing to succeed a behavioral change, not always on his own. Also, there are other alternatives needed to achieve this change. How marketing can change behavior? Social marketing has an important place in the behavioral change. To reach this change, companies, governments or policy makers have, at first, to understand consumers' needs and why people behave the way they do.

An effective social marketing campaign is built on an important research and on group consultation to understand their needs and motivations. Thus, they have to think about a message that can reflect the different target groups in order to be able to influence them. For instance, to reduce binge drinking among teenagers, the first thing to do would be to talk to local young people to understand why they are drinking alcohol and how we can persuade them to stop (Perspectives in Public Health, 2009, up). A social marketing campaign can succeed if it is well-targeted.

Segmentation can sometimes be a problem because everyone does not react in the same way. We cannot promote a social campaign to all, it does not answer to everyone's needs. Some people will not be as easily influenced than others. Segmentation accentuates individual differences. One of social marketing principles is that the audience has to be understood. Because even if the point of the campaign will remain the same, the reason why people want to change their behavior is different from a person to another. We are not going to use the same ideas and arguments to convince them.

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The campaign will be different. For example, people vary in their levels of concern about pro-environmental behavior (Corner and Randall, 2011, page 1009). Some are engaged in environmental behavior because they are really concerned about the Earth's future whereas other people are only engaged because they want to save money. Data" (Perspectives in Public Health, 2009) to know what messages would incite them to change behavior. The best way to know the answer will be to ask a few people, who are part of the target, to respond.

For instance, in the United Kingdom, Transport for London did a social marketing campaign " Stop. Think. Live. " about road safety targeting teenagers. There is a message (e. G. " My friend saw the text. He didn't see the truck. ") and a photo of a dead teenager lying on the ground. Teenagers can reflect to this person on the photo, or it can make them think about one of their friends. Transport for London did this campaign to tell teenagers to pay attention and live. The message is clear and the picture can shock people. Then, we can think that this does not just happen to other people.

Transport for Loon's previous safety campaigns had an impact, " with the number of teenage deaths or serious injuries in dad incidents falling by 14 per cent between 2009 and 2010" (S. Bull, 2012). Most of the time, to impact the youngest people, policy makers are using shocking images to make them react. They are the most easily influenced. The success of a social marketing initiative depends on the context. Indeed, people are sometimes acting in an irrational and inconsistent way in their choices, often because they are influenced by surrounding factors. Also, it depends on choices given.

From the consumer perspective, there must be a wish to change so he asks himself: " is it worth for me? " If policy makers want to change people's behavior, they have to show them the right behavior to adopt with good arguments and measures. If government makes an initiative to encourage its audience to use a bike instead of their car, policy makers have to make sure that people can find a bike and won't have difficulties to travel with it. This is why, for instance, in few French big cities, mayors decide to propose an inexpensive and easy to use bikes' system around the town with roads available only for bikes.

They motivate people by giving them choices. It is more difficult for those people to refuse to make a try and let their car for a while. Therefore, we realize that social marketing cannot work on his own. It means that policy makers have to make things before and after the campaign to make it work. Before doing the social marketing campaign, policy makers collect data to know what people want. This is a challenge because often, what people say and what people do may be different. Thus, what they know may not really affect people's behavior. In general, people are naturally resistant to being told what to do.

This is the reason why perception is the key driver of change. Policy makers need to make people perceive that the right behavior is the one that they propose. They have to " take the message into the heart of communities: geographically, emotionally and physically. " (Perspectives of Public Health, 2009) After the social marketing campaign, policy makers have different ways to influence behavior. Government can compel people to act in certain

ways with legislation and regulation. They can also act in a less coercive way, which can still be very effective, for instance with incentives (e. G. Excise duty) and information provision (e. . Public health guidance) (MINDSET report, page 7). Created " Traversals". The aim of this initiative was to reduce car use by at least 10% n suburban areas containing 100 000 households (Australian Department for Transport, Energy and Infrastructure, 2009). It is a difficult objective so government offered incentives, as free maps, and developed a 'personalized-travel-plan' with person-specific information about public transports included, for all the participants. This initiative was set up with social marketing techniques and it was a success: " 14% reduction in car use was achieved and maintained over 18 month period. (Corner and Randall, 2011) According to D. McKenzie-Mohr (2002), " Behavior is strongly influenced by economic motives". Policy makers know that people will, most of the time, act in their economic self-interest. This is why it exists some programs that highlight the economic advantages of being engaged in a specific activity. When governments want to reach a big part of the population, they will use economic incentives because they know that it is one of the only ways to make themselves heard from a lot of people.

For instance, in France, the charity EUNICE encourages people to make a donation with an important tax deduction in exchange. However, companies also want to change their consumers' behavior when they innovate. They are using advertisements to show new way to use a product. In Smash Mash Potatoes ad from sass's, there are Martians laughing at earthlings for peeling potatoes to make mashed potato while they are already using an easiest

way to make it. Companies' aim is to simplify their consumers' life. Most of public policies aim to change behavior.

MINDSET is a " checklist of influences on our behavior for use when making policy' (MINDSET report, page 8) to complement and improve policy tools. This paper was written to make sure that policy makers consider the " most robust effects on our behavior" (MINDSET port, page 7). That is what MINDSET is: Messenger, Incentives, Norms, Defaults, Salience, Priming, Affect, Commitments and Ego. These are the nine elements which can help policy makers to change behavior. There are limitations to behavioral change through social marketing. Some circumstances when tailoring a message to an audience existing values, beliefs and preferences might not be a sensible strategy' (Corner and Randall, 2011) if these existing values, beliefs and preferences are opposed to the campaign's goal. Indeed, for contraceptives, we can't tailor the message to include the belief that using interception is unacceptable. At one point, marketers would need to confront the conflict between the existing beliefs of the audience and the campaign's goal. A social marketing campaign cannot please to everyone.

In society, each individual is different from another. This is why policy makers have to choose their target. In addition, we can change behavior through education. It plays an important role in survey by the Development Education Association found that learning about global issues such as poverty, sustainability and trade create agency around climate change in adulthood" (Corner and Randall, 2011). Education makes us being responsible and concerned about social issues in life. School is one of the

first places where we can create our own opinions and learn how to behave in society.

Thus, instead of using marketing to change behavior, we can start from the beginning by going in schools and educate children on the different social issues they will have to deal with in later life. Marketing has a much smaller impact on behavior than other elements. In fact, there are two key factors to change behavior: motivation and ease. Change is, first of all, a personal choice. People's individual thoughts and feelings as well as their inventions and beliefs can change their behavior. Depending on what you think or where you come from, it is different.

The person must be ready to change and has to feel that it is a good thing for him to do it. Also, physical environment and social interaction with others (Numbered, 2010-12) have their part of responsibility. Family and friends are the most important people in someone's life. If we are in trouble or if we need advice, we always seek help from our family and friends. They are the people who know us the best and they can find a way to help us through this change. Finally, macro-social environment is likely able to change behavior.

Often, depending on what people who surround us in society do or think, the audience is going to think the same just to fit in with the crowd. In

conclusion, we have seen that marketing can be a good way to change behavior if marketers understand people's needs, target the right audience and deliver the good message. A social marketing campaign is a long term process which can succeed if it gets along with different kind of measures (e. G. Incentives) to prove its efficiency. On the other hand, education, peers

and macro-social environment keep playing an important role and can replace social marketing to change behavior.