

Motivation and Climate Change – New Reports

This month there's a new 34 page report at www.campaignstrategy.org - *Research Into Motivating Prospectors, Settlers and Pioneers To Change Behaviours That Affect Climate Emissions* (www.campaignstrategy.org/articles/behaviourchange_climate.pdf).

There's also a paper *Using Values Modes* (<http://www.campaignstrategy.org/articles/usingvaluemodes.pdf>) which explains the psychographic mapping system that divides the population into 12 'Value Modes' distributed among the three main Maslowian motivational segments of Pioneers, Prospectors and Settlers. The latter also gives seven basic 'Value Modes Strategies', the latest UK 'values map' and the proportions in each segment and group.

Because they are politically, commercially and socially important, and because they are rarely engaged by either public sector communications efforts or NGO campaigns, there is wide interest in communicating with 'Prospectors', the esteem-driven slice of the population (40% in the UK, more in the USA). The piece of research reported at www.campaignstrategy.org was conducted for a consortium of Local Authorities and the Centre for Sustainable Energy in Bristol, England, and drew on the Value Modes model run by CDSM (Cultural Dynamics www.cultdyn.co.uk). It is qualitative research, focused on two Prospector Value Modes, involving ten eight person groups moderated and interpreted by KSBR (www.ksbr.co.uk): six Prospector, one Pioneer and one Settler.

The project which the research was designed to inform, targets people visiting shopping malls and is not yet completed [1] but we're sharing some of the research results now, because the findings may be helpful with many other communications efforts. While it uses small groups, this approach is much more penetrating than polling (asking direct questions), or even lifestyle-based segmentation (eg ACORN or MOSAIC).

These findings are especially significant to anyone seeking to achieve "behaviour change". Whereas classic campaigns can be conducted by engaging a small sliver of society which then causes strategic changes to take place, once any group embarks on population-wide 'behaviour change', you need a population-wide model to work with. It is popularly assumed that no such model exists at the level of values or motivations and these are generally guessed-at by looking at opinions, attitudes, lifestyles or behaviours. As is argued in the report, this is simply naive and even obtuse because it ignores well-established findings, especially from the commercial world, that it is psychological values which drive behaviour, and stated beliefs and opinions tend to fit behaviour, not the other way around. By using Value Modes we can start with people, and their motivations, rather than starting with the problem (in this case climate change).

The study revealed some striking differences between the groups, and between the type of 'offers' that might 'work' for Prospectors, and the normal approach taken in most public sector or NGO campaigns. For example: for the flagship Prospector group of 'Now People' here are some do's and don'ts around talking about climate change:

Don't:

- Talk about the implications of climate change: too remote; they are not very bothered
- Use messengers (voices) which lack authority or could be challenged
- Criticise behaviours (eg wrong type of car, 'wasting' energy in your home)
- Ask them to give things up
- Ask them to be the first to change (amongst their peers)

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- Invoke critical judgement by others

Do:

- Refer to local, visible, negative changes involving loss or damage
- Show the significance of UK emissions and those of normal people (ie like them)
- Use interest in homes and gardens
- Deploy the nag factor of their children
- Create offers which are above all easy, cost-effective, instant and painless

Think for a moment about the common use of 'pledges', mostly to give things up, in climate campaigns, and the drivers which are deployed - often evidence of implications - and it is clear how different the offer needs to be for these people from the 'normal' climate campaign.

The report details how to talk to Prospectors as a whole, and to Settlers and Pioneers. The latter for example, do like 'implications' and are very ready to accept that they are personally part of the problem but perhaps too ready - the researchers characterised their stance as 'accepting responsibility in principle': Pioneers have a tendency to acknowledge the issue intellectually and not necessarily act on it. They are also quite likely to have already considered something like your proposed action and taken whatever action on it that they will, unless it looks very new. Unlike Prospectors, the Settlers we spoke to were ready to embrace the idea of austerity in the name of climate, although mainly for others !

While the general picture is most useful, the research also threw up some interesting anecdotal insights.

For example there was the Settler lady who had undertaken the typically Pioneer behaviour of fitting her home out with solar power - much to the interest of her Settler peers. But her motivation was straight from the handbook - she wanted energy independence, safety, security, very local security. It had little or nothing to do with climate as a globally conceived 'issue'.

Then there was the reaction to the notion of 'carbon footprints', much beloved of many UK NGOs and some in the current government sector. A group of Prospectors reacted first with some puzzlement and then shied away from the idea - a footprint, especially a sooty carbon one, was not something you wanted on your carpet, it had no place in their home. So while our clients were spot-on in choosing to meet up with Prospectors on their home turf of a shopping mall, any approach that centred on a policy idea of 'carbon footprints' would most likely be vigorously avoided.

Have a look at the report and the guide if you're planning any climate communications, and see if there's anything in it which helps. One final thought which it prompted in me was that because of the way most businesses operate (market-led), once products and services are available that 'work' for Prospectors (the Prius and the Wattson are perhaps examples), it's commerce which is most likely to get it right for them. That much may be rather obvious but it also implies that unless NGOs and public sector communicators break away from their Pioneer assumptions, and even worse their Concerned Ethical thinking, they are likely to be more and more marginalised as the social bandwagon for climate action rolls on.

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Such research also shows why the 'social marketing' approach, much in vogue for the UK government, is ultimately limited. It will help with identifying audiences, channels and contexts but it provides little or no useful insight into motivation. Nor is it strategic, analysing power and changing the context, actors, allies or obstacles in the way that good campaigns do.

In the next edition of this newsletter I aim to have more about social marketing and climate change efforts. I'll also ask whether commercial companies are anyway overwhelming government 'public service' communications (not only on climate) with advertising and PR which simply has the opposite effect, and if so, why government doesn't do something about it?

Dell Goes Green ?

Anyone interested in following up the Greenpeace Apple campaign reported in the last edition, should have a look at Dell's greening initiative, detailed at http://home.businesswire.com/portal/site/google/index.jsp?ndmViewId=news_view&newsId=20070605005323&newsLang=en

Dell claims it's launched a "global effort to partner with its customers to become the greenest technology company on Earth for the long-term. The new Zero Carbon Initiative will continue to maximize the energy efficiency of Dell products and over time offset their carbon impact".

It is "committed to reduce the carbon intensity of its global operations by 15 percent by 2012" and "is asking customers for their ideas in building the "greenest PC on the planet." Dell's call for ideas and more information is on its IdeaStorm site (www.ideastorm.com)"

A smart move which places Dell well ahead of Apple for any aspirant green computer designer, and will cause a good deal of clucking in the hen coops of its primary suppliers from whom it is demanding reports on their greenhouse gas emissions data. It says "Suppliers risk having their overall scores reduced during Dell quarterly business reviews for not identifying and publicly reporting GHG emissions. A supplier's volume of Dell business can be affected by the scores earned on reviews. Dell will work with suppliers on emissions reduction strategies once data is collected".

Innovators

If you're looking for interesting new campaign ideas try the mainly student activists inventing their campaigns at Ben and Jerry" 'Climate College', an online climate friendly initiative which has already spawned projects such as unpluggit, the campaign to curb phone-charger standby.

Described as 'A 6 month programme that offers the chance for 18-30 year olds to educate themselves about the causes, politics and potential solutions of climate change', it's at www.climatechangecollege.org

Interesting Consultants

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Have a look at www.provokateur.com (London) and www.spitfirestrategies.com (Washington) and in case, says Jon Cracknell, "you're ever feeling complacent", try www.worldometers.info

Still Flying ?

A survey by AA Personal Loans found that a fifth of holidaymakers are planning to take holidays in Britain to reduce their carbon footprint. 11% said they wanted a driving holiday in Europe because of the environmental impact of flying. 3% of people have cancelled their holidays altogether because of climate change concerns. Fewer than half of the respondents said they were sticking to plans to take short-haul flights to Europe. www.mailonsunday.co.uk/pages/live/articles/news/news.html?in_article_id=455481&in_page_id=1770

[1] for follow up on the project contact Ian Preston – ian.preston@cse.org.uk. To contact the researchers – Value Modes – Pat Dade: pat.date@cultdyn.co.uk and qualitative: John.Scott@ksbr.co.uk

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