

Advertising Campaign Proposal

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----- Target Audience

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Target Audience

The use of vapes or e-cigarettes has been an increasing issue amongst teens and young adults in today's society. The companies that produce these products are putting new generations at risk and stunting the progress in reducing youthful tobacco use. We are now faced with a nationwide crisis of youth addiction that is caused by kid-friendly flavors and large amounts of nicotine. The 2022 National Youth Tobacco Survey shows that over 2.5 million adolescents used vapes or e-cigarettes in 2022. Although the number has declined since 2019, it is still a major issue regarding public health (*M, C.*).

Our goal is to raise young people's awareness of health consequences and risks of vaping/e-cigarette use. Our target audience is made up of teens and young adults, more specifically students who attend high school and college. Our focus is to reduce the use of nicotine consumption within the local area. However, we would like to see a decrease at regional and national levels.

We hope to reach this goal through advertising via popular social media applications. Studies show that increasing knowledge about the negative effects of vaping is an important first step in reducing the levels of vaping among our youth (*Truth*). Those who had a higher awareness of the campaigns had higher odds of having negative views and attitudes towards vaping. Statistics show that these people had 1.4X higher odds of believing e-cigarettes were harmful and 1.3X higher odds that they were socially unacceptable. These people also had 1.4X higher odds in agreeing that vape companies try to get young people to start vaping.

Target Audience's Attitude Towards Vaping

It is no question that e-cigarettes have become increasingly popular over the years. Today it is very common to see young adults and adolescents using e-cigarettes. E-cigarettes were originally introduced into the market in 2006, but in recent years young adults are using them more frequently. Many of them don't care about the negative health effects it can have on them, or they started vaping before they knew the dangers.

In the e-cigarette industry today, different brands use many different marketing strategies to appeal to their audience. This can make the brand appealing to young adults and get them hooked on vapes or other types of e-cigarettes. Companies that sell e-cigarettes make them in different colors and have a variety of flavors to choose from. Many young adults have tried e-cigarettes in the past because of these marketing strategies, colors, and the many different flavors. As a result, they get hooked on nicotine without understanding the negative effects these e-cigarettes might have.

Today most young adults know the dangers of e-cigarettes but if they are already hooked on nicotine, it can be very hard for some people to stop smoking if they have been doing so for a long time. According to "A review of toxic effects of electronic cigarettes/vaping in adolescents and young adults." 40 percent of high school seniors reported using a vape in the last year. With that number being so high, it is no question that a lot of young adults use e-cigarettes.

Today many young adults are aware of the negative effects vaping has on their health, but a lot of times they simply don't care. Most of the people that do still currently vape are frequent users of e-cigarettes and don't want to stop because they are already hooked on nicotine and don't have the motivation to quit.

Awareness, Support, or Opposition

With our target audience being high school and college students, I feel as if they do support the ideas of vaping becoming regulated. Even though, throughout our research, more and more students are associating themselves with vaping. Vaping regulation in public places requires individuals to not partake in those kinds of acts, using the products when present. Our audience of high school and college students support vaping regulation.

A study was done at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, it collected the opinions of many demographics to see if they opposed the idea of having a 100% vape free campus. Almost 84% of the individuals who participated in the survey supported the idea. Within the survey, there were specific categories to divide up the demographics of the survey. For example, they used age, gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, and more. One of the questions on the survey was: “Would you support the idea of having a campus smoking policy with regular tobacco products and e-cigarettes?” Again, almost 85% of the people who took the survey said “Yes.” Another study happened around the United States. More than 50 percent of high schoolers use some type of e-cigarette (*What*). We can assume that the percentile is higher within college students with the social aspect of it all.

With the study at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee as well as the United States study, it can tell us much about student support for vaping regulations. Although the percentages are not as high as we would like to see, every year we see these statistics change positively. The students in the survey recognize that something needs to be changed, so having that awareness of vaping regulation on these campuses and in public places is a good thing. These vape-free regulations in public places and campuses can help the vaping and e-cigarette usage percentage go down, which aligns with our overall goal. Overall, it is apparent that many campuses and

- public places located around us are looking into putting these e-cigarette and vaping regulations in place.

Why Might They be in Opposition?

Teens and young people are influenced by the appearance of items. We can see that there is seemingly always a push for the newest, best thing. So, when we think of teens and vaping, they are no longer using the Juuls that once were so popular among teens. Now, we see teens with colorful, sweet, flavored e-cigarettes, just the appearance can make someone want to try it. And the more young people who are using these products causes their peers to try it out of either peer-pressure, curiosity, or both. Something containing that much nicotine easily causes addiction.

After speaking to two Northwest Missouri State University peers who are under the age of 21 and vape, we can learn that their interest in the products peaked while in high school and has led to years of e-cigarette and vape use. One stated that she is aware of the risks and doesn't really care because of the "it hasn't harmed me yet" mentality. And the other said "I can stop whenever I want to, I just don't want to yet." That causes one to ask the question, "what is enough to make someone stop vaping?" To these two students, whose answers were almost identical, saying they both were seriously considering the benefits of quitting but are not ready to and don't want to. One said that if she is accepted into some academy that she would have to stop vaping, but would most likely start again afterwards. After asking why they wouldn't want to support a vape-free campus, one stated "it isn't fair to take away the ability to vape on campus because it would affect people in between classes and when they wanted to vape." The other simply stated that it isn't necessary because it wouldn't work 100%.

Teens and young adults seem to be aware of the risks, but they still are choosing to take them because they are in a mindset stated by Louis Schreiber of “if it hasn’t happened to me, it’s not going to happen to me, or until then, I’m fine” (Yu, 2019). From looking at the sources, it is easy to see that this is the mentality that many young people have taken up. The addiction that comes with the use of nicotine and tobacco products makes them not want a smoke or vape free campus because they don’t want to be told that they can’t feed their addictions.

Media Use Patterns

Traditional Mass Media Use Patterns

The teenage demographic is largely involved and immersed in the digital world as a whole. While the digital world can be split into a variety of different platforms and channels, research indicates that the most popular medium that our target audience is involved in is social media.

The ease of access to the digital world has never been higher. According to *Pew Research Center*, 95% of teens have access to a smartphone, and half of that sample is “almost always” using the device. Of the many social media platforms that teenagers have dived into, the three that reign supreme are YouTube, Instagram, and Snapchat. While Facebook used to dominate the realm of social media platforms, it has slowly faded out as the new generations sweeps in. In turn, newer apps like TikTok, Twitter, and others have been emerging into the social media landscape, and winning over the younger generations. Additionally, these platforms are thriving within the realm of AI and the power of algorithms, which has divided the teenage population into niche groups that are tailored to their own wants and needs.

While our target demographic is extremely dependent on social media as a resource for instant gratification and dopamine, a naturally occurring hormone in humans that is stimulated when we are feeling content and/or satisfied; They are also very vulnerable and exposed when scrolling through their feeds, digesting the content that is delivered to them. Therefore, in order to get our message across, we must be sensitive and cautious of our delivery in order to not scare away the audience. We can't preach our message in a bad light, rather, we need to shed light on the good that comes from living a life free of vaping, versus showing what a life with vaping neglects and entails.

Teens are idolizers – they like seeing others live a healthy lifestyle, in hopes of putting together a similar life. A good way of delivering our message would be to promote their peers or people like them living a life free of vaping, based around a good diet, exercise routine, and self-confidence. To take that idea a step further, we could partner with influencers among the different platforms to promote a healthy lifestyle free from vaping. The influencers play a vital role in our audience's life, especially in terms of decision making.

While teenagers turn to social media platforms as a resource for instant gratification, as previously mentioned, we can also use social media as a resource for them to get the help they need. They should be able to reach out with questions, concerns, or even help if they've made vaping a part of their daily lives. While it may not serve much of a purpose to provide resources to those who don't partake in vaping, delivering an ad that can be a hand reaching out to help those who are struggling would almost certainly be enough to get our target audience engaged in our campaign.

The teenage demographic is a vast, undefined, and dynamic group for many reasons. However, they ultimately fall all within the same realm of patterned behaviors and tendencies,

which lies within their social media habits. Our campaign can serve to shed light on the benefits of living vape-free, while also serving as an extension of a resource to get the assistance needed to eliminate vaping from their lives.

New Mass Media Use Patterns

As previously stated, teens are highly dependent on social media. The hours of media consumed by young adults is staggering. There are already 4.7 billion people using a form of social media in one way or another (Chaffey). It's very easy to see just how addicted younger generations are to social media. The world practically runs through social media even more so than it did through television in the fifties. Social media is easier to access, is more widespread, and easier to profit from. If our advertisement wants to achieve the most efficient way of getting to as many people as part of our younger target audience as fast as possible, using the most popular app they use would be a great way to approach this.

So many different types of social media platforms are used by young adults. From mainstream apps such as Twitter, Twitch, Tik Tok, Snapchat, etc. Finding one that isn't used is nearly impossible. As for the most popular platform, Pew Research Center conducted a survey to see which of ten apps was the most commonly used by teens, the most used was YouTube.

Almost 95% of the teens surveyed had used YouTube before (Vogel, Watnick, Massart). YouTube, while not being mainly focused on communication as most apps are, focuses more on entertainment and information. But, it is still effective for companies to use due to how much time young adults spend on it, and because of how much it is used by our target audience.

Another app to consider would be Tik Tok. While YouTube is considered the most popular by statistics, many would argue that it is not the case. Tik Tok, as of 2021, has an average user time in minutes of 95 minutes per day, passing YouTube's 56 minutes per day

(Perez). Similarly to YouTube, Tik Tok is very accessible to anyone; young or old. It is very easy to use, and very easy for someone to lose track of time while using. To some, Tik Tok is considered to be almost too addicting. So much time is consumed by people on the platform. In an article posted by Jared Evitts of BBC, teens had turned to completely deleting the app off of their devices during exam periods due to being worried it would affect their studies if they got on the app (Evitts). Just like YouTube, Tik Tok's purpose is to entertain users. And arguably, Tik Tok has more communication and connection with the consumer than YouTube. Thus, this makes it yet another effective candidate for our campaign.

For a final good choice for a platform for this campaign, another popular app would be Twitter. Twitter may not have as much of a target audience as the others discussed but, Twitter has one advantage over the others - a larger time window. Lindsay Cox of Hubspot conducted a list of what each mainstream social media platform's time windows of posting were. Of the apps, Twitter has the largest timeframe of effective posting times with 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Cox). This puts Twitter with 9 total hours of time where spreading a message to users will be seen, shared, and viewed by users. The more a post is seen by people, the higher the chance it has to be shared. The more shared it becomes, the higher the chance the post is seen by someone who happens to be a part of our target audience.

In today's world of social media, any choice of a platform is an effective choice to present an idea on. It is such a massive part of our current society that the message will be seen by someone no matter where it is posted. But, what should be taken into account is how we wish for this campaign to expose itself, and how efficiently it is exposed. We do this by choosing one app that has a strong quality that is paramount to our campaign's success; that is how many people of our target audience our campaign is exposed to through YouTube, how quickly it is

- spread to others via Tik Tok, and the window of how long it is most efficiently shared through Twitter.

Prevalent Topics on Media Platforms

Out of the three main platforms we analyzed as the best fits for the proposed campaign, two have a designated ranking system –these being YouTube and Twitter– while the last one has no clear numbered ranking built into the platform that delineates what is trending – that being Tik Tok. As such, it is much easier to see what items and content are trending on YouTube and Twitter in comparison to what is trending on Tik Tok. By evaluating these platforms’ own list of top trending content, we can see the type of content that is most popular, and therefore most seen, on this platform. We can then use that information and apply it to our own campaign. We will begin by evaluating the trending items on YouTube.

First, we will evaluate YouTube. As seen on YouTube’s own page, there are four separate trending sections. The first is “now” which is a combination of all subsequent trending lists. The second is “music,” followed by “gaming” and “movies” (Trending). The three later tabs explain themselves, but searching through the “now” trending section can give us an idea of what is most popular on the site, as it is the culmination of all three other tabs. With analysis, we can gather that videos that have been created to entertain do best on the YouTube platform. For example, out of the top ten videos listed on the trending page as of February 26, 2023, seven of these videos chiefly serve an entertainment purpose (Trending). For this reason, any advertising placed on this platform should entertain and engage our consumers, as well as informing them about the risks of vaping in order to best capture their attention, and therefore create change.

Second, we will evaluate Twitter. As seen on Twitter’s own trending page, there are five separate trending sections. These sections include “for you,” an algorithm based trending

suggestion tab, “trending,” the overall summary of all subsequent trending sections, “news,” “sports,” and “entertainment” (United States Trends). While all three of these later sections have some presence in the top ten trending twitter topics at any given time, sports topics dominate the top trending spots, for instance, on February 26, 2023, eight of the ten top trending topics related to sports (United States Trends). From this analysis, we can conclude that a sport tie in to our campaign would do especially well on Twitter.

Finally, we will attempt to evaluate Tik Tok. Tik Tok is a more difficult platform to analyze in the same way we have the previous two platforms, as it does not have a designated trending page, and rather relies fully on algorithms and hashtags to grab the consumer’s attention (Top Trending). For this reason, trending items on Tik Tok are much harder to partake in without due diligent monitoring of the platform and the changes in various content’s popularity. One overall trend on the platform is the popularization of brief sound bites from various audio sources (Top Trending). For this reason, the best course of action to monitor trending topics on the platform is to monitor what sounds are most popular on the platform. “Sounds” encompasses both songs, and user created sound bites that others use to create their own content. With the use of these popular sounds in content we push, we can partake in the trending conversations on this platform and add our voice and message to them.

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