

PROMOTION/ **AWARENESS RAISING**

BROAD PROMOTIONAL CAMPAIGNS

Overview

In the same way that car manufacturers use emotion-based marketing to sell the idea of a lifestyle connected with buying a given car, the idea of cycling can be “sold” to the general public. A broadly-focused promotional campaign for cycling puts – or keeps – cycling in the public eye in a positive way. A campaign is usually associated with a particular slogan or image (or both), although the specific messages conveyed by your campaign depend on your target audience.

Background and Objectives

Definition

A broad promotional campaign is a campaign intended to “sell” the idea of bicycling to those who currently don’t cycle, and to create a positive image for cycling among the public in general. Similar to the way that automobile advertising promotes a certain lifestyle, a successful cycling campaign appeals to the emotions of its audience to sell the idea of cycling.

Function/Objective

In champion cities, broad promotional campaigns serve to reinforce the existing culture, to reward the choice of those who already cycle, and to encourage non-cyclists to “join the crowd.”

In starter cities, promotional campaigns help to give the general population cause to rethink their current attitude toward cycling (or perhaps to even start to think about cycling at all).

Climber cities may have some combination of these two.

Scope/Field of application

Broad cycling promotion campaigns are appropriate in climber cities and champion cities. In starter cities, if you are in the very early stages of development as a cycling city or town, your first investments should be in infrastructure and education rather than promotion so that you have something new and positive to promote to potential cyclists. It isn’t appropriate to invest in a promotional campaign unless your cycling infrastructure and conditions are already at a reasonable level or measures are being taken at the same time to improve those conditions.

Target audience

- Potential and recreational cyclists
- The general public
- Possibly tourists

Implementation

A broad cycling campaign should be carried out within the framework of other cycling-related measures (improvement of cycling infrastructure, production of a new local cycling map, incorporation of cycling with public transport, new bike racks, etc.) It is not appropriate to invest in a broad promotional campaign unless cycling infrastructure and conditions are already at a reasonable level or measures are being taken to improve those conditions.

Potential partnerships

- Local municipality
- Tourism office



- Local cycling organisations
- Health organisations
- Public transport operator
- Bike manufacturers or retailers
- The media

Planning your campaign

In most starter cities, 75% of cyclists are men, whereas in champion cities, the ratio is much closer to 50-50. A professional marketing agency can carry out market research to help you determine what messages and images would appeal to your target audience(s) and how best to convey those messages for an effective promotional campaign. Variations include:

- Clothing (sporty or “normal”)
- Age (old, young, or in between)
- Gender
- Perceived level of danger (with or without helmet or reflective vest, riding with car traffic or on a car-free bike path)
- Type of bike
- Fitness level (thin, heavy, muscular)
- Weather conditions and terrain

You should always pilot your ideas on the kind of people you’d like to reach with your message and images (not on people who already cycle).

Considerations

Strengths

- Emotion-based sales pitches have generally proven more successful than logic-based ones.

Weaknesses

- A promotional campaign that’s broad enough to be effective is generally also quite expensive.

Success factors and barriers

- A broad promotional campaign must be done in support of other programmes and activities to increase cycling in your city. Simply encouraging people to cycle more without making it easy and attractive for them to do so will not be successful.

Evaluation of impact

A representative survey of citizens of your city will tell you about their awareness of cycling, how they perceive it, and if, or how much, they cycle themselves.

Good Practice Cases

Case 1

Bici Bolzano/Fahrrad Bozen – Bolzano (IT)

The bilingual (Italian/German) city of Bolzano developed a strategic and professional marketing campaign to sell the idea of cycling to its citizens and thus to achieve its cycling goals. To do this, Bolzano developed an “identity” to represent bike mobility in the city, and their promotional campaign serves to ensure that the identity is seen widely and perceived positively. The Bici Bolzano/Fahrrad Bozen logo is used on all bike-related marketing elements in the city, including on posters, information signs, sign posts, the Internet, cinema spots, and postcards. The logo is easily



recognised and is intended to communicate “bike mobility” and the idea of velocity and to invoke positive feelings in those who see it.

Bolzano’s bike barometer (see fact sheet: Bike Barometers) is also a part of this broad marketing campaign for cycling.



Bici Bolzano **Fahrrad Bozen**

Bolzano is a champion city with a cycling modal split of 25% (in 2005), up from 20% in 2002.

Case 2

“I bike CPH” – Copenhagen (DK)

With its I bike CPH campaign, the city of Copenhagen sells itself, both to its own citizens, as well as to the rest of the world, as the best place in the world to cycle. The awareness among Copenhageners that outsiders find their cycling culture special improves their own attitude toward cycling, creating a circle of positive reinforcement.

Copenhagen has been so successful in promoting itself as a cycling city that the term “to Copenhagenize” has become synonymous among city planners around the world with urban planning and design that focuses city transport on pedestrians and cycling rather than the car, and the benefits for citizens, the environment, and the vitality of cities.

This promotional campaign is, however, only one part of a much larger master plan to increase cycling levels in Copenhagen and to improve the quality of the cycling experience in the city.

Copenhagen is a champion city with a cycling modal split of 36% and a concrete goal of 50% of all commuter trips by bike in 2015.

