



Only You Can Prevent Wildfires

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Situation Analysis

In 1944, the USDA Forest Service, National Association of State Foresters (NASF) and Ad Council collaborated to create the longest running advertising campaign: Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires. The campaign's spokesperson and iconic image is Smokey Bear. Smokey aims to provoke a sense of accountability among Americans by informing about habits that could cause a forest fire.

The campaign utilized outdated tactics such as radio and television public service announcements that reached its past audience. The organizations are now tasked with modernizing the longtime PSA campaign through modern tactics and media channels.

Program Overview

The Only You Can Prevent Wildfires campaign, formerly the Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires campaign, is a modern approach to wildfire prevention education. This campaign will provide wildfire prevention education while spreading awareness of the current wildfire problem facing the United States.

As the longest running advertising campaign in history, the Ad Council, USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters have provided generations of Americans with forest and wildfire prevention education. From the campaign's inception, the organizations have developed credibility by acting ethically in response to audience feedback.

With the use of the iconic Smokey Bear, this new programming will implement educational tactics through modern media that provokes a sense of urgency and responsibility onto Americans.

Goal

The Only You Can Prevent Wildfires campaign will implement wildfire prevention education and generate wildfire awareness among U.S. citizens, specifically students, the West Coast population, educators and national media outlets.

Objectives

- Informational- To inform 85% of the U.S. population of fire prevention measures by March 1, 2022.
- Attitudinal- Provoke a sense of urgency and caution among 55% of the U.S. population by May 15, 2022.
- Behavioral- Engage 45% of the U.S. population in the campaign by July 31, 2022.

Strategy

The Only You Can Prevent Wildfires Campaign will raise awareness and urgency of the wildfires occurring in the United States through modern educational programs, national media outlets, print and digital advertisements, social media and student scholarship incentives.

Publics

- Students: schools, colleges and universities
- Educators
- National media outlets
- Citizens living on the West Coast in the U.S.
- Citizens of the U.S.

Key Messages

- **Only you can prevent wildfires-** A twist on the campaign's most famous key message, this evokes accountability for the wildfires happening today.
- **Care before you share-** This encourages caution and care for a fire before sharing on social media.
- **Never flee a fire!-** This message highlights the danger of leaving a fire unattended.
- **It's looking Smokey-** Emphasizing the amount of wildfires that are spreading throughout the U.S.
- **Students for Smokey-** Students have the chance to win scholarships through a written wildfire prevention essay chosen by the organization.

Spokesperson

Smokey Bear will continue to be the campaign's spokesperson.

Tactics

- **Informational- To inform 85% of the U.S. population of fire prevention measures by March 1, 2022.**
 - Create and distribute press releases to national news outlets such as National Geographic, PBS and CNN
 - Launch modern wildfire advertisements through Hulu and YouTube to target a younger audience
 - Push the use of educational resources from the Smokey Bear website onto educators
 - Issue fact sheets about wildfires
 - Interact with social media users through Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and TikTok
 - Produce stickers and bumper stickers with Smokey's logo and key messages
 - Issue maps of where wildfires are surging in the U.S.
 - Create a Smokey Bear filter on Snapchat
- **Attitudinal- Provoke a sense of urgency and caution among 55% of the U.S. population by May 15, 2022.**
 - Create and launch an advertisement interviewing people that have lost homes due to wildfires
 - Distribute flyers at school assemblies with the statistic "nine out of ten wildfires are caused by humans" to cultivate responsibility
 - Create emotional advertisements using animals in the fires to provoke a sense of urgency
- **Behavioral- Engage 45% of the U.S. population in wildfire prevention by July 31, 2022.**
 - Create a TikTok trend for users to duet with Smokey giving fire prevention tips
 - Conduct a weekly Instagram live series featuring Smokey answering user generated questions via Smokey's email
 - Create Twitter and Instagram polls containing trivia pertaining to today's wildfires
 - Issue a national scholarship incentive to upcoming college students through a fire prevention essay

Evaluation

Analytics including Instagram live views, TikTok views and shares, Twitter poll data and impressions will measure the impact of social media tactics.

The data reflecting student participation or interest in the scholarship incentive will measure the campaign's impact on student's attitudes toward wildfire prevention..

The analytics of advertisements presented through the Internet, Hulu and YouTube will measure awareness.

Proven Maxims

Maxim 5: A suggested action or appeal, as part of a message coupled with it, is more likely to be accepted than a message by itself.

Smokey Bear's slogan acts as a call to action to the audience by stating "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires". The key messages within the campaign focus on getting the audience to complete an action. Instead of telling the audience to prevent wildfires, the campaign shares steps to take to prevent wildfires.

Maxim 8: Degree of clarity, simplicity and symbolism has a direct and measurable effect on message acceptance.

For a public service announcement to reach and resonate with the public it is crucial that the messages are simple and easy to understand. How to prevent wildfires is not common knowledge and can be complex to an everyday audience. The campaign simplifies these messages on how to prevent wildfires to maximize audience reception.