



“EX®: RE-LEARN LIFE WITHOUT CIGARETTES” CAMPAIGN

SITUATIONAL CONTEXT AND BUSINESS NEED

The American Legacy Foundation® (Legacy) is dedicated to building a world where young people reject tobacco and anyone can quit. The Foundation uses media campaigns, evidence-based programs and services, research, and grants to prevent smoking and help others stop smoking.

As part of their mission, Legacy worked with GSD&M Idea City to develop EX®, an innovative public health program designed to speak to smokers in their own language and change the way they approach quitting. The primary communications challenges facing EX® have been:

- **70% of current smokers want to quit, but are stuck between this desire and not knowing how to move forward.** Quitting is mysterious, daunting and, for many, akin to failure after multiple unsuccessful attempts. Quitting is like standing on the edge of a cliff and then jumping off into the dark void below in hopes that will get you to the other side.
- **Only 5% of smokers are successful in quitting for three or more months each year** (CDC. Cigarette Smoking Among Adults – United States. MMWR 2000; 51(29); 642-645). Extensive research GSD&M Idea City conducted in 2003 with smokers revealed a piercing insight: Smokers know they need to quit; they just lack the confidence and know-how to quit successfully. The market is bombarded with “why to quit” messaging, but no one was addressing the “how to quit” part of the process in a comprehensive way.

Legacy challenged Idea City to find a way to increase the number of successful quit attempts by taking a new approach in messaging and connections strategy.

THE RESEARCH STORY

Much of the existing smoking cessation literature and service offerings utilize the Stages of Change Model to categorize smokers by their readiness to quit and to create tailored interventions based on their categorization. The model includes five stages (Pre-contemplation, Contemplation, Preparation, Action, and Maintenance) that illustrate how an individual transitions from being a smoker with no intention to quit smoking (Pre-contemplation) to a non-smoker of at least six months (Maintenance).

The model has provided a standardized way of describing smokers. However, most cessation campaigns tend to address the early stages (Pre-Contemplation and Contemplation) with why to quit messages and the late stages (Action/Maintenance) by promoting specific products and services (like nicotine patches, gum, call centers, etc.), but haven’t focused on the idea of Preparation. As a result, smokers often do not fully prepare themselves for the rigors of quitting.

We knew something was missing—it wasn't enough to jump people from 'want to quit' directly to tools, tips, and plans. Our hypothesis was that we needed to change perceptions about what it takes to quit so more smokers will appreciate and understand the importance of preparation.

Applying the INVOLVE™ Study

Following significant studies among smokers in prior years, the Legacy team initiated additional research through GSD&M Idea City's proprietary INVOLVE™ process. This method was designed to drill into the heart of smoking behavior to understand the human—not clinical—dynamics of how smokers go about quitting, how they feel about quitting, and the reasons they don't want to quit.

INVOLVE™ is an approach to market research to understand the consumer journey, the phases of that journey, and both the rational and emotional needs at each phase.

- Through qualitative and ethnographic research methods, we are able to more clearly map the consumer experience/journey.
- Through quantitative research we are able to map this journey against communication objectives, to test message strategies, and to prioritize media channels.
- The result is a communication architecture that bridges message and media strategy to truly “involve” the consumer journey in the integrated marketing planning process.

EX@ INVOLVE™ Research Methodology

Building on past research insights obtained, the first phase of the new INVOLVE™ research included a series of one-on-one interviews with adult smokers in four cities (Indianapolis, IN; Nashville, TN; Pittsburgh, PA; Portland, OR) chosen for their geographic diversity and smoker demographics.

We interviewed four smoker segments: Contemplators, Committed Quitters, Current Quitters, and Successful Quitters to allow story-telling experiences of planned, failed, and successful quit attempts. In addition, all segments interviewed consisted of a mix of genders, household income, ages 30-54, ethnicity, and household composition with at least half of those interviewed having children.

Results from these qualitative sessions were validated via a national, online, quantitative survey of 1,022 respondents across the same target audiences specified for the qualitative phase.

The most innovative aspects of this research were those designed to uncover the stages of smoking cessation AND to map both message and media strategies to each stage and/or need identified.

Among others, the most impactful techniques in this research included:

- In-depth story-telling reviewing past and/or current quit attempts
- Touchpoint (media channels and influential people, places, and things) card sorting
- Visual / tactile experience mapping exercises
- Millward Brown's custom Demand & Activation line of questioning and analyses to arrive at media power scores to indicate impact of each media channel and/or touchpoint at a specific stage of smoking cessation attempts (quantitative survey)
- Path analysis of consumer journey and media/message influencers (quantitative survey)
- “Point in time” capture of current attitudes, behaviors, and emotions rather than projective or reflective capture of past experiences (quantitative survey)

What We Learned

The findings underscored the fluidity of the quitting process. In fact, many smokers frequently moved directly from “Contemplation” to “Action,” skipping the “Preparation” stage altogether. However,

smokers who did successfully quit reported spending time in the “Preparation” stage in order to arm themselves for the challenge ahead. We learned preparation is about a progression from desire to quit, eagerness for life without cigarettes, readiness or acceptance of the changes needed, and confidence to succeed.

Smokers report rational aspects of preparing to quit: gathering facts and information about how to quit, determining what tools and resources are available to use, etc. But, in deeper probing, smokers reveal critical emotional aspects that build the mental preparedness to quit, beginning to believe that quitting was feasible and they could do it. We describe this emotional and mental transformation as building the resolve to quit – the confidence needed to succeed that comes from knowing what changes smokers need to make in order to be successful (self-efficacy).

Smokers who had built resolve reported using two methods: 1) self-reflection and 2) self-empowerment. By self-reflecting on their behavior, smokers learned why and when they smoke. The self-reflection process helped them see smoking as a series of cigarettes to attack on an individual basis. From this, they were able to develop a framework for action and, eventually, feel a sense of self-empowerment.

For an example, by self-reflecting on his behavior, a smoker can identify the actions in his life that trigger the need for a cigarette, such as having a cup of coffee. By determining ways to address this trigger without a cigarette and practicing doing so before actually quitting smoking – for instance, by waiting until after he finishes the cup of coffee to light up – the smoker can gain a sense of mastery over the trigger. This can lead to a positive mindset for actually beginning a quit attempt—developing the self-confidence needed to be successful.

Immediately, we saw an opportunity in the cessation advertising marketplace to provide consumers with “Preparation” messaging that is complementary to existing advertising on why to quit and what products or resources to use. And through our research we had identified the smoking triggers as well as the emotional context around each.

By building resolve, smokers can gain a clearer picture of what quitting entails and of the changes they will have to make in their lives in order to succeed. Services and resources (like telephone counseling services, web-based quit plans, NRT products, etc.) can then be offered to channel this new-found understanding and confidence into a quit plan. Resolve may be the difference between a smoker who states they *want* to quit in the next 30 days and a smoker who is actually *ready* to quit in the next 30 days.

The Idea

Don't quit... RE-LEARN.

The EX® Innovative Solution

Understanding in great detail this journey toward cessation, we see our solution as helping smokers build their resolve for a successful quit attempt. Our focus is not on the tools for quitting, but the emotional and mental preparation needed to fill the emotional and mental gap between wanting to quit and the tools and services that are already out there. By creating resolved quitters, we will increase the number of successful quit attempts.

1. **Messaging:** Because quitting is so personal, we need the audience to experience and build their own 'resolve.' The work drives traffic online, where people can interact with the EX® brand and learn from others as they prepare for a successful quit (BecomeAnEX.org) and build a sense of self-empowerment. The message is not only a unique voice in the market, but fulfills a previous void and layers in synergistically to existing cessation efforts. We tell them not to quit, at least not yet. Instead, "re-learn your life without cigarettes" first. Being fully prepared is the key to a successful quit.
2. **Media:** Balance the plan against the objectives of getting out the overarching message and the need to spend time with more self-reflective messages/interactions. All work drives to a robust campaign website for extensive custom interaction.

Follow-up ad testing with consumers yielded helpful messaging elements moving forward:

- "Learn how to make changes to quit...it gives me hope."
- "This is like a building block. If you can figure this out, you can figure other things out and learn how to quit."
- "You need to re-learn the things you do with smoking. It will be hard, but it can be done."
- "You can learn how to control what makes you smoke."

CAMPAIGN DESCRIPTION

First and foremost, the communication strategy needs to showcase in an engaging and, more important, convincing manner that you can re-learn your life without cigarettes. Most smokers have triggers – the things, activities, moods and feelings that make them want to smoke (all identified in our research). The campaign demonstrates that success in overcoming one smoking trigger can be a building block for success in overcoming another trigger. To do this, each creative execution focuses on individual triggers and evoking a sense of confidence that they can be overcome – this helped the target audience to emotionally prepare for quitting.

The call to action drives people to **BecomeAnEX.org**, which brings the "re-learn" idea to life and helps smokers create their own personalized plan to re-learn their lives without cigarettes and offers a robust online community of smokers and ex-smokers. The plan includes facts and information along with exercises to put this knowledge into practice.

The Creative

Idea City created a comprehensive advertising awareness campaign that surrounded smokers with EX® messaging as they experienced common smoking triggers throughout their days – stress, boredom, socializing, relaxing, eating, drinking coffee, driving – and demonstrated that re-learning these individual things without a cigarette can eventually lead to a life without cigarettes. This notion is captured in the copy, "If you can re-learn [insert trigger] without cigarettes, you can re-learn anything without cigarettes" and the overall campaign tag line of "re-learn life without cigarettes."

The Media

To complement the creative message and strengthen overall campaign relevance, the media strategy concentrated on finding moments when smokers are (1) contemplating having a cigarette, (2) at places or events that may trigger the urge to smoke or (3) actually having a cigarette.

The media mix had to be efficient since our annual budget was approximately \$21 million, less than is spent by the tobacco industry in one day (CDC. Cigarette Smoking Among Adults – United States.

MMWR 2006; 56(44): 1157-1161). Therefore, the media plan implemented a broad yet highly strategic media mix to ensure messaging reached the target during the most relevant dayparts and situations, based largely on triggers:

- **Network and cable TV** on channels like ABC and ESPN provided mass reach and the opportunity for promotions in which celebrities (Cameron Mathison and Nancy Lee Grahn from ABC Daytime) discussed how EX® could help people re-learn their lives without cigarettes.
- **Online media** consisted of search and display banners. Banners that messaged specific triggers appeared on sites where people are contemplating life changes, like Monster.com and Match.com, since studies show that people typically consider quitting smoking when they are considering other life changes. All banners linked directly to the BecomeAnEX.org site.
- **Network and unwired radio** ran during morning and evening drive time to address a common smoking trigger – driving. Radio also helped reach priority populations, specifically African Americans and Hispanics, through targeted programming.
- **Ambient/out-of-home media**, including lunch trucks, coffee trucks and coffee sleeves distributed at airports and local cafés, supported two of the most common smoking triggers – drinking coffee and eating.
- **Captivate elevator screens** with the message, “Re-learn stressful places without cigarettes. Re-learn anything without cigarettes.” were used to engage smokers (who’ve been relegated to smoking outside of their office building) as they were either coming back up from having a cigarette or going down to have one.
- **Cinema** advertising was utilized as movie theaters are an environment where smokers may be contemplating their next cigarette.

SUMMARY AND RESULTS

The INVOLVE™ research took us to a place previous clinical research—and even brand positioning research—had not reached. Because we explored the consumer journey through the quit attempt, we identified the rational and emotional dynamics of the critical Preparation phase in the Stages of Change cessation model. This provided us with a framework for an ongoing dialogue with those trying to quit smoking rather than a brand or messaging strategy only.

The insights allowed us to maximize campaign efficiency (right message, right time, right place with limited resources). We understand how important this is to Legacy, to whom, as a non-profit, every dollar spent is precious. Optimizing isn’t just business – it means improved public health, a chance to save a life.

Evaluation

Legacy conducts extensive and ongoing evaluation of the campaigns they execute. A full report of publicly disseminated evaluation reports can be found at www.TheNATC.org. In this submission we highlight results from an initial pilot test in 2007 as well as traffic and survey results among BecomeAnEX.org after the national launch. Additional results from independent, longitudinal tracking research are currently being analyzed by Legacy.

Pilot Test Highlights

Legacy conducted pilot tests in Buffalo, San Antonio, Grand Rapids, and Baltimore. Key results were:

- There was a positive response to EX® ads and brand across all sites and race/ethnicity.

- Unaided (confirmed) awareness for the campaign was 40% (high bar since awareness required respondents to describe a scene from the creative without any prompts). Aided awareness was 60%.
- The campaign demonstrated the ability to increase consumer demand for both quit lines and the cessation website (BecomeAnEX.org).
- EX® increased quit line call volume five- to 11-fold.
- There were statistically significant changes in key cessation attitudes among those aware of the EX® campaign.

BecomeAnEX.org Highlights

After the national launch, BecomeAnEX.org site visits outpaced benchmark sites 32 to one. The campaign drove over 700,000 visits to BecomeAnEX.org in the first five months, 32 times more than the average visits to benchmark sites (similar size within the health category) over that same time frame. [UPDATED NOTE: January 2009 statistics show over a million visits to date.]

Idea City conducted an online survey among smokers who had signed up on the site showed directional evidence that the interactive community may be leading to higher quit rate success. While too early and insufficient data to declare definitive results, we did see the EX® quit rate on BecomeAnEX.org surpassed the national quit rate by 56% in just the first six months after launch. Twenty-six percent (26%) of committed quitters who joined BecomeAnEX.org have quit. Nearly a third of those have stayed smoke-free for at least three months (Idea City Site Survey, October 2008). This means, based on initial results, roughly 7.8% of people who came to BecomeAnEX.org for help quitting smoking actually quit for three months—a 56% increase from the national quit rate, which is 5% over a three-month period. Furthermore, we see a high correlation between engagement with the site (participation in activities and the community) and successful quits.

Ongoing Evaluation

Later this spring, the American Legacy Foundation will publish results of independent research with longitudinal data tracking the impact of the EX® campaign on quit rates. While the data have not been fully analyzed, early indications show promising results. The data will be released early in 2009.