

Anti-fraud Campaign Workshops

Thursday, 3 December

SESSION 1 (11:15-12:45) and SESSION 2 (14:15-15:45)

Hosts:

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The aim of the workshop was to understand how campaigns serve strategic goals, to share concrete examples and best practice and to brainstorm on how to tackle communication challenges. The morning and the afternoon workshop involved two different groups of participants.

Following an introduction on the general framework of strategic communication (presentation available on the OAFCN website), participants were invited to participate in group discussions in order to identify key elements of success of anti-fraud communication/campaigns and, then, to look at how anti-fraud communication can be improved by taking concrete practical steps.

Below is the summary of ideas that emerged in the two sessions.



Key elements of success

Many participants agreed that it is crucial to define the right target audience and to convey the right message to them (e.g. kids; young people; schools; parents etc.). It is important to know the audience and their mentalities and behaviour in order to adjust the messages according to their life experiences.

For example a successful campaign was carried out in Italy and it targeted parents and kids, as a cluster group representative for toys customers. The campaign focused on the safety of kids'

toys and took place in important toy shops around the Christmas period, but also in primary schools where seminars for parents were organized and flyers distributed.

While traditional means of communication are important, such as leaflets, presentations, etc. visual communication (TV and social media) was identified as being the most powerful tool.

The visual and emotional impacts are essential in a campaign. It is easier to reach an audience through a good visualisation about possible negative consequences of fraud or corruption. The more personal the message, the easier it is to increase civil responsibility and engagement. Examples of using TV for campaigns were discussed: an animated film with a song about the shadow economy; a TV reality show targeting pensioners; a general fraud and anti-corruption video campaign.

Several groups mentioned that successful anti-fraud communication depends on good preparation of the campaign: this involves good planning and research and identifying key stakeholders. The timing for starting a campaign is also very important (not in August for example).

Another key element that was identified by several groups was the use of adequate tools to explain why fraud is dangerous and what impact it has on citizens' lives.

In Croatia several communication campaigns were conducted and they established that being transparent and accountable is helpful. Face to face information is an important element as well as roundtable seminars with key stakeholders and media (journalists). A SWOT analysis of a previous campaign can be very useful in designing future ones.

Famous people who are often seen as role models can deliver the message very effectively. One group gave the example of using a rap singer to deliver to young people a message about tax evasion. Another example of an innovative message delivery was a video that featured a dog and explained about fraud to children at school. The involvement of famous people also triggers the use of traditional media tools, such as TV and radio (participation in programmes, interviews, spots).



Next steps to improve anti-fraud communication

It is essential to focus on the issue, to target a well-defined, specific audience and then to deliver the message by using the right tools. It can all start with a thorough stakeholder analysis. The working groups agreed that the message should be kept short, simple and strong. Technical language should be avoided. Setting up short, concentrated, direct campaigns can be more effective than prolonged ones.

Social media communication can be further explored, in particular for visual communication (Twitter, YouTube) as well as using storytelling techniques which appeals to the public emotionally. Innovation becomes ever more important due to emerging new communication platforms, formats and due to resource constraints.

Building up support of key people by lobbying them through informal meetings can improve communication efforts. Creating synergies with the right departments leads to the right results. Collaboration among key stakeholders is essential and effective working methods should be defined for this collaboration to happen.

All the working groups agreed that evaluation and follow-up of the campaign is important in designing future campaigns.

Information exchange at national and EU level can be enhanced by creating a database where existing communication material can be searched for use and reuse.

Internal communication is a key tool to inform, educate and involve colleagues across the organisation in communication efforts.

Feedback

The participants found the seminar useful, creative, thought-provoking and interactive.

Some suggestions for improving the workshop were:

- provide time for the introduction of each participant
- make the workshop longer
- have more practical examples of campaigns, also from the institutions
- present practical tools.