

## “The Other Hangover”: Implementing and Evaluating an Original, Student-Designed Campaign to Curb Binge Drinking

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### Abstract

Binge drinking is a serious health and safety issue that has continued to plague college campuses, despite decades of education campaigns promoting moderation towards alcohol. As part of a student advertising competition, undergraduates were asked to develop an integrated marketing campaign focused on reducing binge drinking among college students which would successfully capture attention and resonate with their peers. The campaign the students created, called “*The Other Hangover*,” takes a unique approach to the binge-drinking issue—focusing attention on the social consequences of overconsumption, such as damage to one’s reputation and the loss of friendships. This case study examines the strategic development and implementation of the campaign, a process which was largely managed by undergraduate students connected to the project. In addition results of the evaluation effort which was conducted to measure the campaign’s success are reported, along with discussion questions designed for students and educators to further explore the relevant issues related to the project.

**Keywords:** advertising campaign; IMC campaign; health communication; nonprofit organization; strategic communication; public safety advertising; social norms; health promotions

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Binge drinking is a serious health and safety issue plaguing college campuses nationwide. According to the Harvard School of Public Health, binge drinking is defined as five or more drinks in a sitting for men, and four or more drinks for women (Wechsler & Nelson, 2001). This type of heavy drinking is associated with alcohol poisoning, suicide, unintended injuries and a host of other consequences. Examining campus binge drinking culture, researchers have sounded the alarm bells and argued that the societal costs of the problem, including hundreds of student deaths annually and an estimated financial toll in the tens of billions, are often greatly underappreciated (Wechsler & Wuethrich, 2002). Health professionals, government organizations, and collegiate institutions have focused attention on the issue of high-risk drinking for decades. Especially on college campuses, a variety of methods have been engaged in attempts to curb alcohol abuse among students, and a significant amount of funding is devoted to this issue each year (DeJong, 2002). Numerous interventions—from alcohol safety classes, counseling resources, and health campaigns—permeate the college environment. Despite significant efforts to reduce the problem, many students dismiss the threats and continue to make binge drinking a major aspect of their college experience.

In an effort to address this epidemic, the Century Council (a non-profit organization composed of a group of alcohol distillers) sponsored the National Student Advertising Competition (NSAC) during the 2008-2009 academic school year. Undergraduates were charged with developing an integrated marketing campaign focused on reducing college binge drinking. Over 150 schools participated in the competition (“The Century Council,” 2010). The University of Minnesota was among the top teams in the competition, and the group’s campaign—titled “*The Other Hangover*”—was praised for its innovative message strategy. Following the competition, the Century Council awarded a \$75,000 grant to the University of Minnesota’s School of Journalism and Mass Communication to support implementation of the campaign on campus and to administer an evaluation of the campaign’s overall effectiveness, both in resonating with the University community and in shifting students’ attitudes and behavior related to binge drinking.

*The Other Hangover* campaign appeared on the University of Minnesota campus during the fall 2010 semester. During the summer leading up to

the campaign launch of the campaign, a team of eight undergraduates led by two graduate students worked together to facilitate the campaign’s planning and implementation. This case study is intended to provide an overview of project’s development, including a summary description of the campaign’s strategy and creative messaging elements, as well as a brief overview of the campaign evaluation efforts. Along with some reflection on the project, including a discussion of the campaign’s key challenges, successes, and “lessons-learned,” this case study aims to serve as a useful tool—both for advertising educators interested in instructing students through the implementation of similar “hands-on” advertising and public relations campaigns, and for students, who can learn about the challenges involved in positively influencing the health attitudes and behavior of their peers.

### **Research Insights & Creative Messaging**

Before addressing the campaign evaluation, this case study provides a brief overview of the research, insights, and creative development of *The Other Hangover* message strategy. Undergraduate members of Minnesota’s NSAC team spent nine months formulating the positioning, strategy, and creative elements of the campaign. The team first noted that the most widely used frameworks of health persuasion (theory of reasoned action/theory of planned behavior and health belief model) all incorporate an expectancy-value mechanism whereby campaign messages influence a set of beliefs regarding the likelihood and severity of each outcome (Fishbein, Ajzen, & McArdle, 1980). Undergraduates found that in order to influence attitudes, intentions, or actual behavior, is necessary to change behavioral beliefs (beliefs about consequences of performing a behavior), normative beliefs (beliefs about the behaviors of relevant others), or both (Fishbein, Ajzen, & McArdle, 1980). Therefore, message design needed to be grounded in a solid understanding of students’ beliefs of the consequences of binge drinking. To do so required extensive pre-production research.

The team conducted interviews, focus groups, collages and photo diaries and a national online survey that reached over 90 college campuses. According to their non-scientific convenience survey of friends and peers, 81% of student respondents said they had had too much to drink during a single occasion, and 56% admittedly regretted their behavior after over-

consuming. This 56%—dubbed "At-Risk Drinkers"—was determined to be the core target audience for the campaign. Since students in this category *regretted* their behavior, it was deemed that they would be most open to campaign messages.

Next the team identified the psychographic drivers of over-consumption, looking at how college students' common attitudes and values might impact their behavior. They found that primary drinking motivations include: social acceptance, newfound independence, stress reduction, bragging rights, and what the team referred to as bargain boozing (i.e., drinking because of cheap bar specials). The student campaign team then uncovered primary beliefs underlying over-consumption. Findings suggested students expect to incur a number of negative consequences (e.g., having a hangover, missing class, spending too much money) as a result of over-consumption. For students, these consequences seemed to be both expected and accepted, offering minimal opportunity for messaging. Extreme outcomes – such as hospitalization – were discounted because students found them unrealistic.

After examining past health campaigns, the team concluded that focusing on neither extreme nor expected consequences of binge drinking has the ability to change attitudes and behavior. Instead, they determined the opportunity lies in communicating the *ignored* consequences: damage to students' reputations and image. Seventy-five percent of student respondents believe that when they over-consume, their behavior has negative social consequences, such as damaging a friendship, relationship, or self-image. These compelling results focused the team's creative strategy, and led to the following campaign positioning statement: "*Over-consumption leads to regrettable behavior that puts your reputation at risk.*"

To fully capitalize on this insight, the student campaign team branded these social consequences "*The Other Hangover.*" The students defined *The Other Hangover* as being the regrettable social consequences of overconsumption such as embarrassment, guilt, or humiliation. Campaign messages highlight the negative consequences of high-risk drinking on students' reputation, friendships, and self-image by showcasing familiar, regrettable behavior that results in *The Other Hangover*. The call to action was straightforward and realistic: don't over do it.

*The Other Hangover* campaign therefore attacked primary beliefs about over-consumption: binge-drinking does not give you social currency, but rather a social identity that you do not want to affiliate with, and social consequences you do not want to experience. The edgy and attention-grabbing advertising was designed to spark conversations, change the attitudes students have about the dangers and risks of binge-drinking behavior—and ultimately change behaviors and contribute toward a reduction in the rate of student over-consumption of alcohol.

### **Campaign Execution Overview**

Following the student campaign competition, the Century Council invited the University of Minnesota to apply for grant funding to implement and evaluate the campaign. Upon notification that the funds would be awarded, a team of undergraduate students was recruited to work on the campaign. To participate, candidates were required to submit applications and resumes, and in-person interviews were held to determine which students would be invited to become part of the team. A key component of this process was compiling a group of motivated and dedicated students who also had the necessary creative, technical and project management skills to implement the campaign. Although each student received internship credit for their contribution to the project, the true value was gaining hands-on experience on a real world advertising campaign.

Individual students were assigned specific duties on the team, similar to the unique responsibilities held by employees within a small advertising agency. Wherever possible, students were given the authority to make campaign decisions and manage business relationships. The responsibilities of the students on the implementation team were extremely varied, and ranged from website development and graphic design work, to copywriting, art directing and creative efforts, to researching, establishing and managing vendor relationships. The students worked throughout the summer preceding the campaign launch to coordinate placement of the various executions, both online—via Facebook (including paid, targeted Facebook ads) and a stand-alone website—and through guerilla marketing and traditional advertising placements around campus (see Appendix A for tactical examples from the campaign).

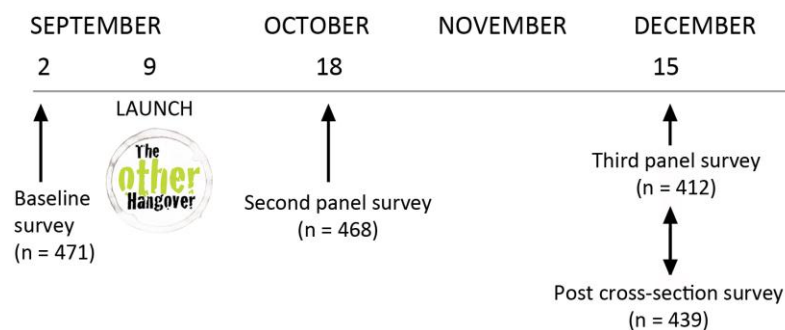
Much of the group’s time was spent coordinating with outside vendors for printing and producing various campaign materials, or negotiating and planning media contracts. Members of the team coordinated directly with the University’s student newspaper (The Minnesota Daily) to purchase advertising during the semester, and also worked with professional media companies including CBS Outdoor (for bus shelter ads) and ClearChannel (for a large billboard, above a popular student bar). In addition, the students worked to obtain permission from the University administration to install temporary “sidewalk cling” advertisements in high-traffic pedestrian areas around campus, as well as place campaign messaging within the student union and residential life buildings. Students on the team also partnered with the University’s athletics marketing department to ensure that *The Other Hangover* had a significant presence at home football games, including advertisements on the stadium’s “JumboTron” scoreboards. (While the stadium-based ads were “paid” placements, the independent sports marketing entity that contracts with the University offered the group significant discounts on the advertising due to the topic and PSA-nature of the content.) In addition, team members approached campus neighborhood bars and restaurants disseminating free campaign posters and branded cardboard coasters. Once the campaign launched, students also assisted with earned media efforts promoting the campaign and staffed a branded campaign booth at various campus events.

### **Campaign Evaluation**

A key component of the Century Council’s grant award to the University was a requirement to incorporate an evaluation of the campaign’s effectiveness. It was essential to evaluate how well the campaign was received, both among its core target audience of undergraduate students as well as within the broader University community. After significant review of past health campaign evaluation designs published within the academic literature, and discussions with University faculty regarding best-practices for health campaign evaluation techniques, a multiple-survey evaluation design was developed.

At the core of the evaluation was a panel style design using a series of three surveys, which were distributed to the same group of respondents immediately before, during, and after the official campaign period. This

design allowed for the aggregate-level tracking of changes in attitudes and reported behavior among the group of survey participants over time. With the assistance of the University's Office of Student Affairs, an official university-sponsored email was distributed to approximately 5000 undergraduate students at the beginning of the academic school year inviting them to participate in a research study. A total of 471 undergraduate students completed this initial survey. Follow-up surveys were then emailed to that same population of respondents in mid-October and again in December following the official end of the campaign. In addition to these three surveys, the design also incorporated an additional "post-only" cross-sectional survey administered simultaneously with the final-wave panel survey. This independent survey was distributed to a separate group of 439 randomly selected undergraduate students, none of whom had participated in the ongoing longitudinal surveys. The addition of this 4th survey allowed for statistical comparison between the two evaluations taken following the end of the campaign, and tested whether any sort of "Hawthorne" effects were evident among the students participating in the panel survey. Put another way, the design allowed for general statistical tests of whether students taking part in the three panel surveys were clearly self-conscious of their participation in the campaign evaluation—and thus provided results which were statistically different from the group taking part only in the single follow-up evaluation survey (see Figure 1 for survey timeline).



**Figure 1.** Timeline of survey activities.

## **Survey Implementation**

Survey implementation was coordinated through the one of the University’s information technology units, which regularly provides researchers with survey development assistance. Along with the ability to adhere to IRB data protection protocols and regulations related to the use of student email addresses, utilization of this formalized service was preferable because department staff had significant experience both in administering online surveys to the University population and in safeguarding large amounts of sensitive data. All personal information was stored in a separate database and could not be matched to participants’ survey responses. All survey respondents were compensated for participation. Students participating in the evaluation surveys were mailed \$5 Target gift cards following their completion of each of the first two surveys, as well as a larger \$10 gift card for completion of the third and final survey. This strategy served to reduce attrition and encouraged students to complete all three surveys within the design. The students recruited for the “post-only” cross-section survey, which was slightly longer than the individual panel surveys, were each mailed a \$10 gift card for completion of the evaluation survey.

## **Survey Questionnaire Development**

The questionnaires were constructed using measurements shown to be valid and reliable by past academic research. This strategy helped ensure high levels of validity and allowed for optimal data comparisons. Whenever possible, measures were adopted from well-cited surveys, including the College Alcohol Study (Wechsler, Davenport, Dowdall, Moeykens, & Castillo, 1994), the College Student Health Survey (“2009 College Student,” 2009), the Core Alcohol and Drug Survey (Presley, Meilman, & Lyerla, 1994) and the NSAC team’s own original national survey of peers.

Campaign evaluators adopted many survey items from the College Student Health Survey, a survey that has been administered by Boynton Health Service to students at the University of Minnesota and other Minnesota colleges since 1995. Using measures from a survey that has been regularly administered to the campaign’s target population over the past 15 years

provided an opportunity to eventually compare evaluation results against retrospective data and to track subtle changes over time. Questionnaire items asked students about seven general areas: Alcohol Usage/Frequency, Drinking Effects/Outcomes/Behaviors, Attitudes and Beliefs, Drinking Motives, Campus Environment, Media Habits, and Demographic Information. In addition to fixed-response survey items, the evaluation also included a number of "open-ended" questions, asking students to write about whether they were aware of, and liked or disliked, *The Other Hangover* campaign—if they talked about the campaign with their peers, and whether they felt that the campaign's messaging was effective. Evaluative results provided in this paper primarily focus on campaign awareness, and message acceptance – both necessary steps leading to attitude and behavior change. Following provides a brief overview of evaluative findings.

### **Survey Results**

A total representative sample of 910 undergraduates participated in the campaign evaluation. The panel group was initially surveyed prior to the official campaign launch in September (n = 471), again in October during the peak of campaign activities (n = 468), and finally again in mid-December following the end of official campaign promotion (n = 412). As discussed earlier, a separate cross-section of undergraduates was also sampled at the end of the campaign (n = 439). The "third wave" panel and cross-section groups were compared on key alcohol and campaign-related indicators to determine if differences existed in responses. Differences between groups might indicate that a "Hawthorn effect" had occurred, in which participation in the evaluation might have caused panel participants to become "primed" and thus respond in a biased manner. A series of t-tests indicated campaign recognition and free recall, as well as alcohol consumption patterns, did not differ between the two groups. Data from the "third wave" panel and cross-section were then combined (n = 851) to form the final survey group evaluation. This group of respondents was used for all statistical analyses related to campaign awareness and message assessment. Analyses regarding measured changes in attitudes and behaviors over time compared data from the baseline, mid-, and post-campaign panel surveys.

Tables 1 and 2 provide a general overview of survey respondents. More than 90% of survey respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25, and

**Table 1.** Demographic profile of respondents.

<b>Average Age (years)</b>	21
Under 18	2.4%
18-20	55.8%
20-25	35.9%
26 or over	5.8%
<b>Average GPA</b>	3.43
<b>Collegiate Status</b>	
Freshman	22.1%
Sophomore	18.6%
Junior	24.2%
Senior	28.7%
Other	6.4%
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	65.7%
Male	34.1%
Transgender	0.2%
<b>Ethnic Origin</b>	
White-Not Hispanic	77.7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	12.2%
Black-Not Hispanic	2.8%
Latino/Hispanic	2.7%
Mixed Heritage	2.8%
Other	1.8%
<b>Enrollment</b>	
Full-time (12+ credits)	92.1%
Part-time (1-11 credits)	7.9%
<b>Residence Location</b>	
On-campus	53.5%
Off-campus	46.5%

**Table 2.** Alcohol use among respondents.

<b>Consumed any alcoholic drinks in the past 12 months</b>	
Freshman	65.4%
Sophomore	72.8%
Junior	83.5%
Senior	86.1%
Other	76.4%
<b>Consumed 5 or more drinks in sitting in past 2 weeks</b>	
None	41.8%
Once	16.6%
Twice	7.5%
3-5 times	16.3%
6-9 times	0.8%
<b>Consumed 5 or more drinks at least once in past 2 weeks, by sex</b>	
Female	37.8%
Male	52.9%

a majority of survey respondents were female (65.7%), Caucasian (77.7%), and full-time students. A strong majority in each of these groups reported alcohol use in the past 12 months.

### **Measuring Campaign Recall, Recognition, and Exposure**

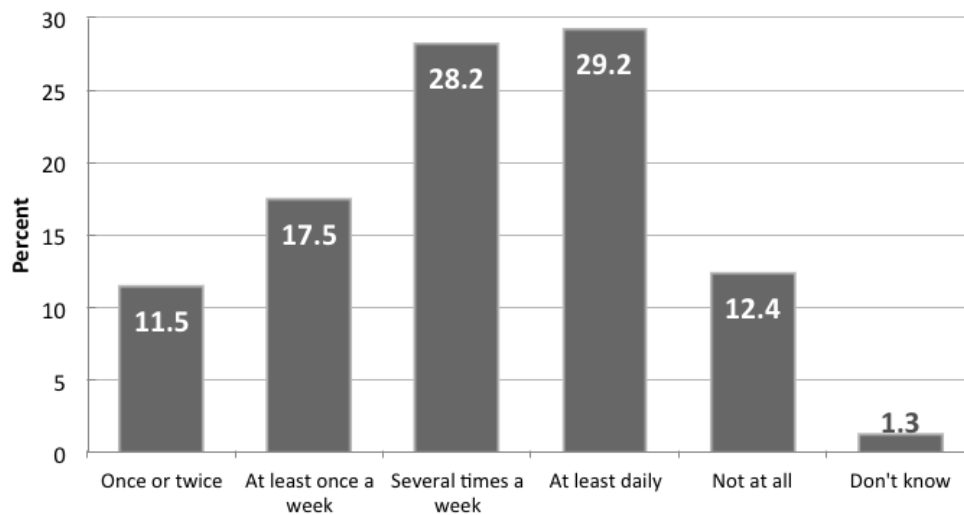
Among the most basic evaluative goals was to measure students' recall, and recognition of the campaign. Encoded exposure was measured by a series of recognition and recall-based survey questions. Results illustrated how placement, frequency and relevancy of campaign materials converged to create high levels of campaign awareness and memory for specific executions. To assess free recall, respondents were asked to name any anti-binge drinking ads they had recently seen. In total (n = 603) 47.1% specifically indicated "The Other Hangover," and an additional 11.1% described *The Other Hangover* materials, but did not reference the campaign by name. Combined, *The Other Hangover* achieved 58.2%

unprompted recall. A strong majority of respondents (86%) recognized the campaign logo, and reported seeing it around campus.

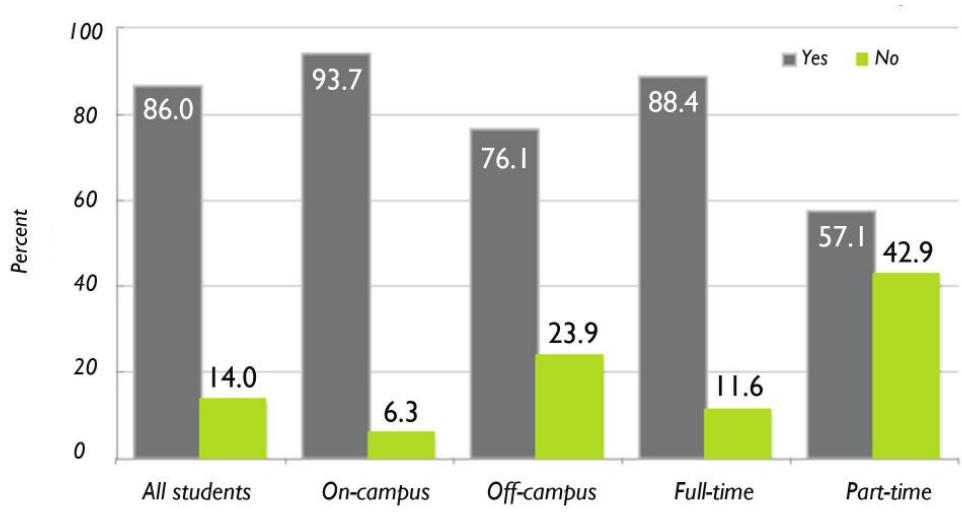
A majority (74.9%) of survey respondents reported seeing the campaign several times a week or more (see Figure 2). Such basic analyses helped determine that campaign materials effectively saturated the campus environment.

Further analyses indicated that *The Other Hangover* was remembered best by students most likely to be exposed to its advertising messages, full-time students living on or near campus. In fact, we achieved nearly 94% logo recognition among students living on campus (see Figure 3).

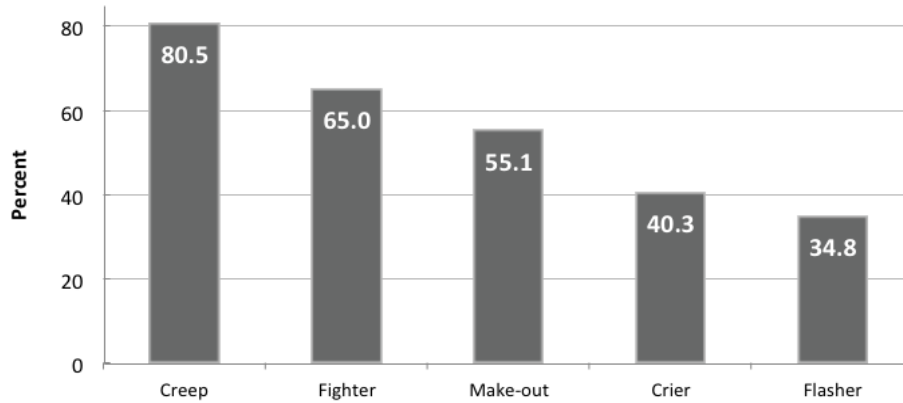
The evaluation also assessed recognition for specific campaign advertisements. The "Creep" poster generated the highest recognition among respondents, followed by the "Fighter," "Make-out," "Crier," and "Flasher" (see Figure 4).



**Figure 2.** Frequency with which respondents remembered seeing the campaign.



**Figure 3.** Percent recognition of *The Other Hangover* logo by respondents.



**Figure 4.** Percent recognition of specific campaign ads by respondents.

Reported recognition of specific advertisements directly mirrored the potential for exposure to each ad execution, based on the number of ads present in the campus environment. For example, the Creep ad was the only ad prominently featured on a billboard; it also ran as a full-page ad in *The Minnesota Daily*, and was posted on 4 campus area bus shelters. The Fighter was also featured as a full-page ad in *The Minnesota Daily* and

located on 3 bus shelters. The Make-out, Crier, and Flasher ads all did not run in *The Minnesota Daily*, but each had the same number of bus shelter ads. The Flasher ad likely had the lowest rate of recognition because it was not distributed in the residence halls along with the other campaign posters. These types of assessments helped determine the relative value of various media channels in promoting campaign awareness within the University environment. While a main objective was to promote messaging using engaging online and guerilla-style media placements, it was the traditional media placements such as billboards, bus shelters, and newspaper ads that provided the most valuable reach to a large University audience.

### **Overall Message Acceptance**

A series of questions asked students about their perception of *The Other Hangover* campaign messages. Participants were asked to compare the ads in relation to other anti-binge drinking campaigns they remember seeing. Survey results showed that *The Other Hangover* resonated very well:

- 81.1% agreed *The Other Hangover* messages are more relevant to them;
- 82.3% agreed the situations portrayed in the ads are more believable; and
- 78% said they like *The Other Hangover* campaign.

Students both related to and held positive attitudes toward *The Other Hangover* messages. The campaign's messaging was accepted in an environment typically hostile toward any anti-binge drinking messages. High acceptance of *The Other Hangover* messages shows potential for future attitude and behavior change.

Several statistical analyses were completed to determine if there were differences in evaluative ratings between demographic segments. Lifestyle variables were also analyzed to examine if affiliations with certain communities affected message acceptance. The three items above (relevant, believable, liking) were combined to form an overall scale of attitude towards the message (Chronbach = .905).

- Binge drinkers versus non-binge drinkers had similar ratings of the ads ( $M = 16.5$  vs.  $M = 16.2$ ).
- Students under 21 had slightly higher ratings of the ads than students over the legal drinking age ( $M = 16.6$  vs.  $M = 16.0$ ) though differences were not significant.
- Males and females did differ in overall ratings of the message strategy; female students rated the ads slightly higher than males ( $M = 16.8$  vs.  $M = 15.6$ ) ( $t(540) = 3.742, p < .001$ ).
- Fraternity and sorority members had similar ratings as non-Greek students ( $M = 16.7$  vs.  $M = 16.4$ ).
- Athletes and sports fans had the same ratings as those not affiliated with the sports community ( $M = 16.6$  vs.  $M = 16.4$ ).

A lack of evaluative differences between the various population segments suggests the message strategy of *The Other Hangover* was generally well accepted across a broad campus community.

### **Student Ratings of Individual Ads**

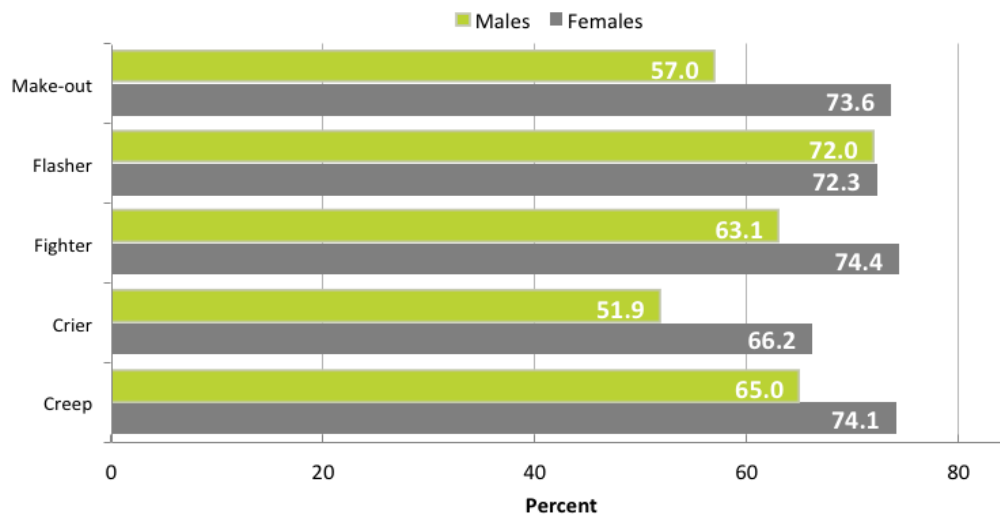
Students completing the final-wave survey were also asked to rate each of the five print ads on a 4-point scale from "excellent" to "poor." The ranking list below shows students' aggregate-level attitudinal ratings toward the ads, listed from the most-liked to least-liked:

1. Flasher
2. Creep
3. Fighter
4. Make-out
5. Crier

Demographic and lifestyle variables did interact to predict students' ratings of the ads. Females rated nearly every ad slightly higher than males. Moreover, high-risk drinkers tended to have slightly higher evaluations than non-high-risk drinkers, though the differences are not statistically significant across all ads (see Figure 5).

### Campaign Conversations

Past research has noted that often campaign evaluations can fail to detect success if the full range of paths through which a campaign might exert its influence is incomplete (Hornik & Yanovitzky, 2003). *The Other Hangover* campaign was embedded within a complex social environment, meaning it was important to consider possible indirect effects of the campaign. Interpersonal influence can play a major role in student acceptance of the campaign. Conversations with peers help shape a student's perception of the advertisement, making it more or less likely they accept the promoted behavior. The evaluation surveys also gauged the prevalence and valence of conversations students had about *The Other Hangover*, as conversations



**Figure 5.** Percent by gender who rated individual ads as "good" or "excellent."

can have an indirect influence on campaign success. Survey results show that *The Other Hangover* sparked conversation among students. A majority (54.8%) of students reported having talked about the campaign with their friends.

Table 3 illustrates how various demographic and psychographic groups exhibited higher prevalence of campaign-related discussion. Most notably, high-risk drinkers showed increased discussion tendencies compared to non-high-risk drinkers. These initial analyses indicate the target audience is actively discussing campaign materials, as desired.

**Table 3.** Percent who talked about *The Other Hangover* at least once.

All Students	54.8%
High-Risk Drinkers	61.8% <sup>a</sup>
Non-High-Risk	54.9%
Male	49.5%
Female	57.9% <sup>b</sup>
Under 21	58.8% <sup>c</sup>
Over 21	48.5%
Sports Fan	63.6% <sup>d</sup>
Non-Sports Fan	48.9%
Live in Dorm	69.8% <sup>e</sup>
Other	49.5%
High Sensation Seekers	60.8% <sup>f</sup>
Low Sensation Seekers	50.3%

<sup>a</sup> Difference in proportions is significant (95% CI; Z = 1.359)

<sup>b</sup> Difference in proportions is significant (95% CI; Z = 1.904)

<sup>c</sup> Difference in proportions is significant (95% CI; Z = 2.394)

<sup>d</sup> Difference in proportions is significant (95% CI; Z = 3.394)

<sup>e</sup> Difference in proportions is significant (95% CI; Z = 4.286)

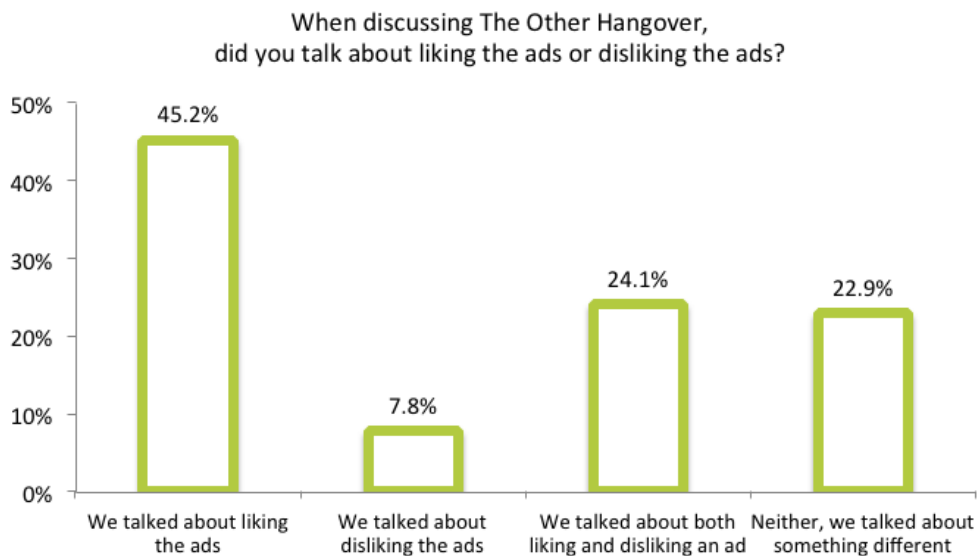
<sup>f</sup> Difference in proportions is significant (95% CI; Z = 2.420)

Importantly, students were significantly more likely to discuss liking the campaign than disliking it (45.2% vs. 7.8%; see Figure 6).

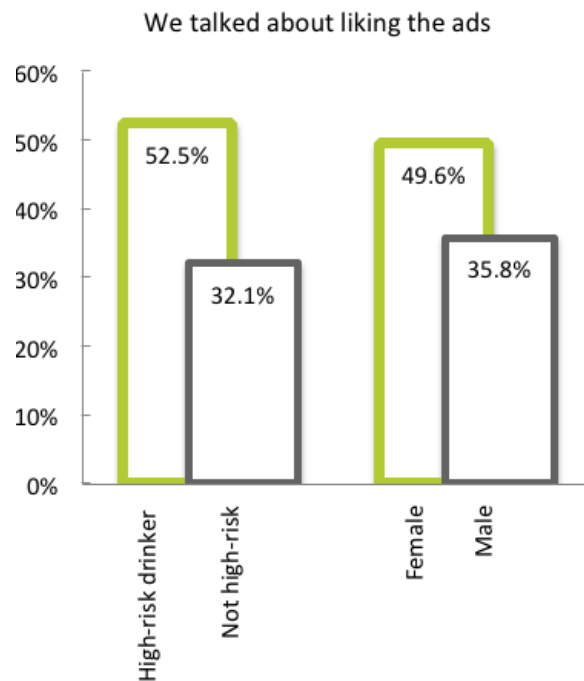
Another key question addressed by the evaluation was whether conversations about the campaign may have differed by population group. A variety of variables were analyzed to determine if certain population segments tended to discuss either positive, or negative feelings about the campaign. Interestingly, *high-risk drinkers* compared to non-high-risk (CI 95%;  $Z = 2.356$ ) and *females* compared to males (CI 95%;  $Z = 2.222$ ) were more likely to talk with peers about liking the campaign. No statistical differences were found across groups in prevalence of conversations about disliking the campaign (see Figure 7).

### Open-Ended Survey Responses

The questionnaires also included a number of open-ended survey questions to allow for a more detailed understanding of message evaluation. For example, students were asked what they thought *The*



**Figure 6.** Percent of all respondents who reported talking about liking or disliking the ads.



**Figure 7.** Percent of respondents who reported talking about liking or disliking the ads, comparing high-risk to non-high-risk drinkers and men to women.

*Other Hangover* represented, and what specifically they discussed with their friends about the campaign. Similar to the quantitative findings, a strong majority of open-ended responses indicated positive attitudes toward the campaign. Comments often described the campaign as “funny” and “clever,” but also as “realistic” and “relatable.” A qualitative analysis of the responses showed the messaging and tone of the campaign really seemed to resonate with its target audience, with a significant number of students commenting that the advertisements depict common undesirable drinking situations. Students also felt as though the campaign was not patronizing or “talking down” to them like previous anti binge drinking messages (see Appendix B for sample positive open-ended survey response comments).

### **Mixed Community Feedback**

While the vast majority of feedback regarding *The Other Hangover* campaign was positive, it should also be noted that some community members questioned the strategy of the campaign—and a small number of individuals expressed strong criticism regarding some of the images and messages within the advertising. Informal conversations held with various members of the University community revealed that some community members were critical of the campaign’s core strategy focusing on reputations, and questioned why the campaign had not addressed important factors such as health, safety or legal issues frequently associated with overconsumption. In addition, a few community members sent emails to the campaign team expressing concern that themes and images within the campaign could be interpreted as sexist, or inadvertently conveyed notions of “victim blaming,” especially related to women.

These concerns primarily focused on two of the print ads—one dubbed “The Flasher” (with the headline “Reputations Aren’t Drunk-Proof”) and the other dubbed “Make-Out” (with the headline “Even though you were drunk, this still happened.”) In particular, a couple community members expressed frustration that the ads could serve to objectify the female body, or otherwise reinforce negative stereotypes. The students on the campaign team took these concerns very seriously—and even participated in a meeting to listen to the specific concerns of these community members. The meeting was productive and helped the team to better understand these perspectives.

While a small minority of community members held these negative opinions toward the campaign, it is important to acknowledge these concerns—especially for any institutions that may be considering the use of *The Other Hangover*, or similar campaigns, on their own campus in the future. Arguably almost no anti-binge drinking advertising campaign could be implemented without at least some criticism from the community regarding the particular creative approach or message strategy used. A diverse community is likely to have a broad range of opinions and reactions to any campaign, especially one intended to be edgy and attention-grabbing. While the community concerns and criticisms outlined above should not in any way be ignored, it should be

emphasized that the strategy and creative messaging of *The Other Hangover* were generally very well-received by the broader community, especially with the target audience of At-Risk Drinkers (see Appendix C for sample critical and mixed open-ended survey response comments).

### General Conclusions

As was evident both through the reported quantitative data and within the open-ended survey responses, if nothing else, it can be concluded that *The Other Hangover* campaign was highly successful in breaking through the cluttered media environment and gaining the attention of students. The evaluation clearly indicates that the campaign's messages were not only noticed, but also triggered students to discuss the ads and binge drinking among peers. While the majority of those conversations were positive toward the campaign, for many students, discussion was more complex than simple liking or disliking of the ads. Students actively discussed their own drinking behaviors with friends, and seemed to integrate the campaign's messaging into their daily lives. Some students even used the *The Other Hangover* as a catchphrase to remind their friends not to over-consume.

Binge drinking is, without question, a problem that impacts the wider university community. Support from University administration proved to be one of the most essential elements in successfully implementing *The Other Hangover* campaign. The team's ability to work closely in collaborating planning efforts with University administrators and community members was invaluable. Students working on the campaign spent a significant amount of time and effort in coordinating meetings with key representatives from the University's Offices of Student Affairs, University Relations, Residence Life, Facilities Management and the Boynton Health Service, informing various staff and administrators of the planned campaign and seeking feedback for its implementation. Support from the University administration both helped spread *The Other Hangover* message and contributed to the overall success of the campaign.

While the ultimate goal of any campaign such as *The Other Hangover* is to change behavior and reduce the overall prevalence of binge drinking, short-term objectives should focus on assessing awareness and message acceptance. Although the evaluation surveys did measure student

attitudes related to binge-drinking during the course of the campaign, the data did not show any statistically significant population level shifts in student attitudes toward binge drinking throughout the semester. Attitudes are generally stable and often highly resistant to change, and it could be argued that achieving measurable attitude change within such a relatively short amount of time is an unrealistic goal. Alternatively, it may be possible that the campaign was successful in positively altering some student attitudes, while having little to no influence on other individuals—thus making the particular impact of the campaign’s messaging difficult to detect using aggregate level survey data.

What is more certain is that the process of successfully altering student attitudes toward binge drinking is likely to take place slowly, over time—and is only likely to emerge over the course of a number of years. Advertising campaigns such as *The Other Hangover* are likely to play an important but still only partial role in reducing binge drinking on university campuses. Communication efforts must be implemented in partnership with other essential alcohol education and environmental-based alcohol policies. This case study and assessment of the project shows that *The Other Hangover* was accepted by and resonated with a college student audience, and that a student-designed and student-driven campaign effort can be successful in having a positive impact on the community.

## Discussion Questions

### Examining Campaign Strategy

As you read in the case study, it is important to recognize that the messaging strategy used by *The Other Hangover* campaign was intentionally designed to be provocative in an effort to stand out and grab college students’ attention.

1. What are some of the potential criticisms that members of the community might have regarding the approach of the campaign and its focus on reputations and the social consequences of binge drinking?

2. What “public relations” issues should the sponsors of the campaign be prepared to address, and what key messages should they emphasize when responding to these criticisms? Are some of the potential criticisms of the campaign fair?
3. While obviously everyone will not always agree with the messaging used by a public health campaign, does this particular campaign cross a line and go too far in attempting to be edgy?

### **Campaign Sponsorship and Strategy Implications**

*The Other Hangover* was developed independently by group of undergraduate advertising students participating in a competition—and the money used to implement the campaign they created was provided by an outside group which is funded by the distilling industry.

4. If you were a key administration official at the University where this campaign was developed, what concerns would you have about allowing the campaign to be implemented on campus?
5. Is the source of the campaign funding, corporations within the alcohol industry itself, a potential ethical issue?
6. What might be some of the unintended messages that community members might take away from this campaign?
7. What other members of the community, such as health and public safety officials, might consider themselves to be stakeholders in a campaign like *The Other Hangover*—and what sorts of concerns might those individuals have about the campaign?

### **Campaign Messaging and Advertising Executions**

Look back at the various advertising executions used by *The Other Hangover* campaign, including the print ads (used for posters and bus shelter ads) and sidewalk-cling messages.

8. Considering the messaging strategy and advertising images that were chosen, who specifically do you think the "target audience" was intended to be? Are there certain audiences that are ignored by the campaign?
9. Do you think the messages and images in the campaign could be misinterpreted (or considered offensive) by some audiences?
10. Are there ways in which the campaign could be adapted to better communicate to some groups, or would this serve to dilute or otherwise weaken the message?

### **Campaign Evaluation Effort**

Evaluating the success or failure of an advertising campaign is often a difficult and messy endeavor, especially because a real world campaign doesn't operate within a vacuum (or in a controlled laboratory!), but instead is only one part of a noisy and complex media environment.

11. Considering the results outlined in the case study, did the evaluators of *The Other Hangover* campaign create useful measures for the success of the project?
12. Was their evaluation design, which utilized a series of longitudinal online surveys of University undergraduates who were exposed to the campaign, a fair approach in gauging student reactions and attitudes toward the campaign? What other types of evaluation efforts could have been conducted?
13. Considering the results of the evaluation, should the campaign organizers declare that the project was indeed a success?
14. Realizing binge-drinking isn't likely to be eliminated through a single campaign, how should "success" be defined when thinking about a campaign like *The Other Hangover*?

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#### Editorial history

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**Appendix A.** Campaign materials and media schedule.

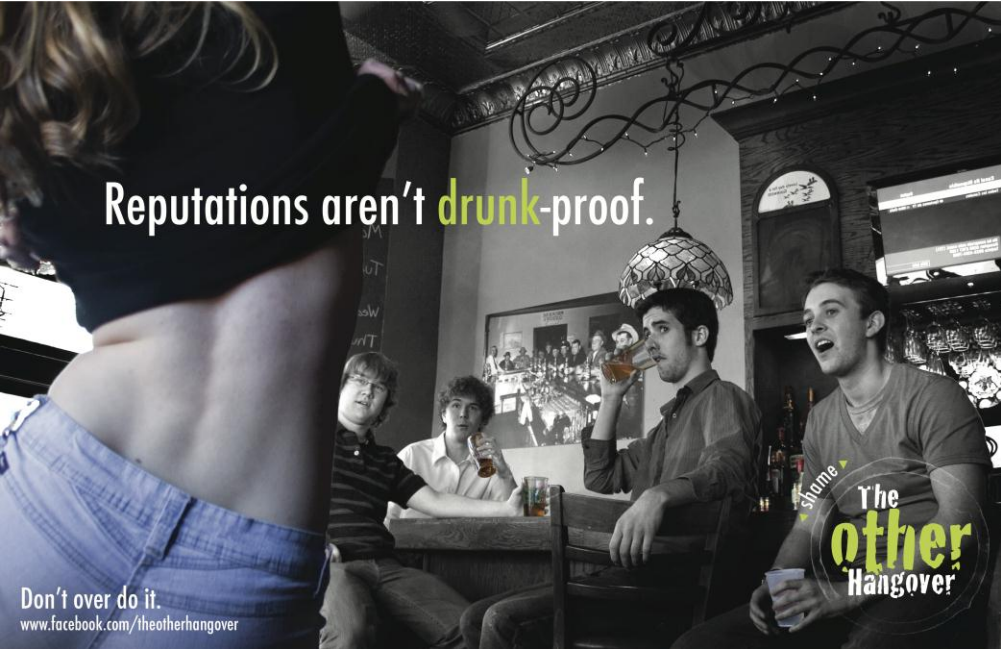
Along with attention grabbing headlines and imagery, all campaign materials included the campaign logo, Facebook URL, and the tagline "Don't over do it"—emphasizing the campaign's message of moderation. The images and notes below provide a small sampling of *The Other Hangover* campaign's advertising materials:

*Campaign Posters*

Posters were placed in campus residence halls, apartment buildings, bars, restaurants, and handed out during events throughout the semester.



Appendix A. (continued)



**Appendix A. (continued)**



*Outdoor Advertising*

Bus shelter ads, a billboard, and sidewalk clings were installed in high-traffic pedestrian areas around campus. The bus shelter placements arguably provided the best and most cost-effective campaign visibility; large format ads appeared near almost every major University intersection.

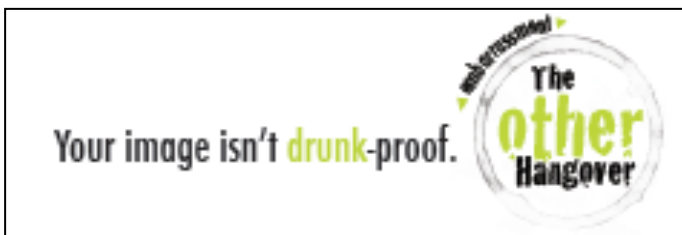


**Appendix A. (continued)**



*Branded Items*

Campaign “mirror clings,” door-hangers (appearing in University-owned underclassmen residence hall bathrooms and hallways), and cardboard coasters were provided free to several popular campus area bars and restaurants. Magnetic football schedule and picture-frame were distributed to student season-ticket holders.



Appendix A. (continued)



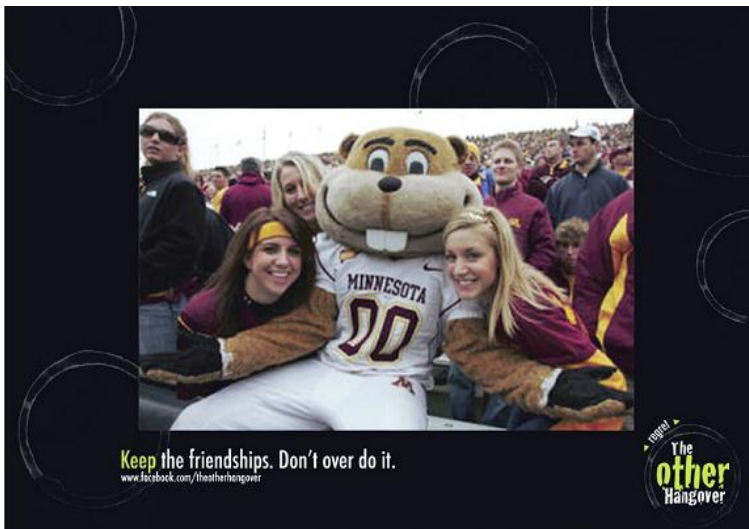
**2010 GOPHER FOOTBALL**

Date	Opponent	Location	Time (CST)
Thu, Sep 02	Middle Tennessee	Murfreesboro, Tenn.	6:30 p.m.
Sat, Sep 11	SOUTH DAKOTA	TDF Bank Stadium	11:00 a.m.
Sat, Sep 18	USC	TDF Bank Stadium	2:30 p.m.
Sat, Sep 25	NORTHERN ILLINOIS	TDF Bank Stadium	7:30 p.m.
Sat, Oct 02	NORTHWESTERN	TDF Bank Stadium	11:00 a.m.
Sat, Oct 09	Wisconsin	Madison, Wis.	11:00 a.m.
Sat, Oct 16	Purdue	West Lafayette, Ind.	11:00 a.m.
Sat, Oct 23	PENN STATE	TDF Bank Stadium	TBA
Sat, Oct 30	OHIO STATE	TDF Bank Stadium	7:00 p.m.
Sat, Nov 06	Michigan State	East Lansing, Mich.	TBA
Sat, Nov 13	Illinois	Champaign, Ill.	TBA
Sat, Nov 27	IOWA	TDF Bank Stadium	TBA

www.facebook.com/theotherhangover GOPHERSPORTS.com

**Keep the friendships. Don't over do it.**

**The other Hangover**  
www.facebook.com/theotherhangover



**Appendix A. (continued)***Online Marketing*

A complete campaign website ([www.TheOtherHangover.com](http://www.TheOtherHangover.com)) and Facebook page served as key connection points with students. Online quizzes, bumper stickers and Facebook ads helped increase student's engagement with the message.



**Appendix A. (continued)**



*Events and Promotions*

Campaign banner and booth were used for major campus events such as Homecoming and Gopherfest.



**Appendix A. (continued)**

*Football Stadium*

Advertising appeared on the “JumboTron” scoreboard, student section stairways, and bathroom stalls in the University football stadium.



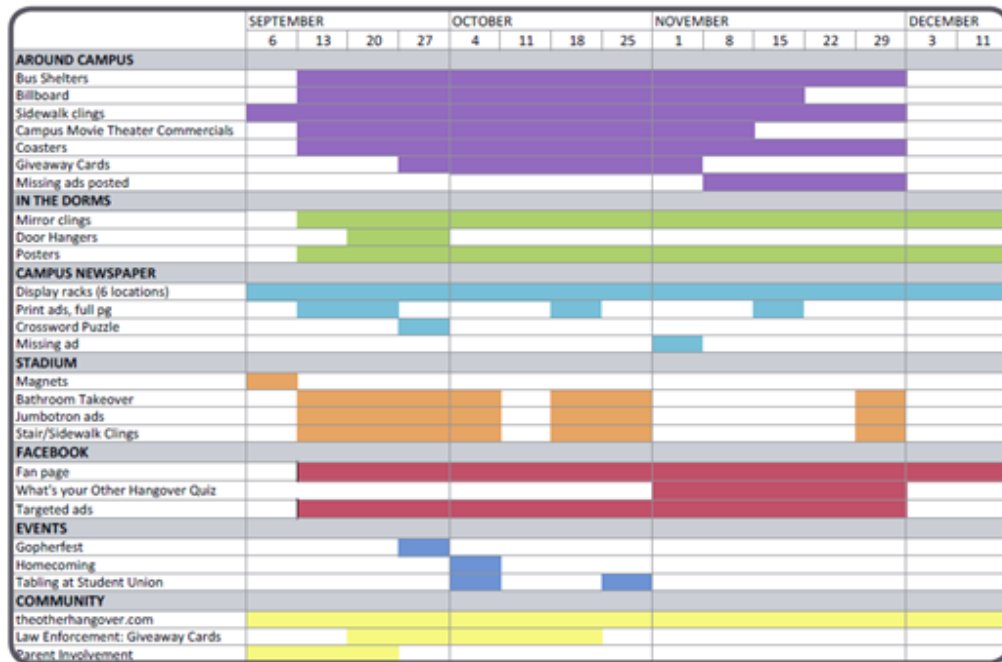
**Appendix A.** *(continued)*



**Appendix A. (continued)**

*Media Schedule*

This media flowchart shows the timing and duration (during the Fall 2010 semester) of the campaign’s various elements, including paid advertising executions, Facebook promotions, and on-campus events.



**Appendix B.** A sampling of positive open-ended survey response comments.

"Someone is making an effort to actually relate to college students. We want to have fun, but there are limits. Someone is actually being real with us. They were clever and actually related to us. They were scenes we had seen all too often."

"It's not about scaring people away from drinking by saying they might die or something super serious; it's giving situations that people, especially college students, might likely find themselves in, and saying that the smaller results of drinking are harmful, too. Being drunk isn't an excuse for bad behavior, and things you've done don't just go away after you sober up."

"This campaign depicts events I know and have seen happen as a result of binge drinking. The campaign is a friendly reminder of the repercussions of drinking too much - I don't feel judged by it or annoyed, rather I appreciate the reminder."

"We discussed how the ads were actually very real life. Many times you see an ad and it reminds you of something that happened to you, or another friend, and it reminds you of how you felt during that time, the next day, etc. and reminds you of the embarrassment, guilt, etc that you felt, and that you don't want to experience that feeling again."

"[We talked about...] How effective the campaign was and how a friend was going as "the other hangover" for Halloween."

"[We talked about...] How they make a lot of sense. How countless people ruin their reputations. We especially liked the "creep" ad because it is sad how some men turn into "creeps" after drinking."

"We kind of joked about them but at the same time we really realized that we didn't want any of those things to happen to us."

"The slogans stick in your head. I was talking about how it was relevant and convincing and I really thought it was very likely to reach college students deep inside."

**Appendix B.** *(continued)*

"We talked about how people could actually relate to them. We also discussed how we have known people that behave like the people in the ads when they're drunk."

"We talked about how the situations portrayed actually happen in real life. We agreed that the ads were more relevant than other ads are to college life. We discuss the sayings in the ads (which are quite catchy) and sometimes use them as jokes to remind people to control how much they drink. They are actually quite effective!"

"We talked about how the ads were funny and relatable. We drove past the billboard and we talked about how we like the ad. We thought it was relevant."

"[We talked about...] How the situations were very believable and we had seen similar things happen in real life in drinking situations. And how they probably won't actually stop people from drinking, but they are very noticeable and make people at least think about the issue and about how they might come off to others when drinking."

**Appendix C.** A sampling of critical and mixed open-ended survey response comments.

"There are a lot worse things related to binge-drinking than hurting your reputation, such as dying from alcohol poisoning or getting a DWI...I think the campaign's focus on friendships and reputation doesn't convey the seriousness of the issue."

"[We talked about...] How awful the ads were. Shaming folks is never productive. Making it seem like men make sexual advances only because they're drunk is a horrific thing to say on a campus where so many sexual assaults happened. Also, the slut shaming is absurd. Whoever designed this should be ashamed. Seriously."

"Some of the messages were really good and important for the University community. However, "shame" or fear of regret is not the first thing that students think of. Talks about the "crazy party" usually don't involve talking about how embarrassing it was. More importance could be placed on health effects."

"One of my friend's Facebook statuses was "could have been an ad for the other hangover last night..." this just goes to show that, while people paid attention to it and thought it was funny, they still drank. Another friend showed me the ad of the girl and the guy over the pool table and said, "this WAS US when we were freshmen." but again, it wasn't in a serious tone, it was just uncanny how relatable the situations were. Overall, I think that the situations were highly relatable, which is a great start, but ultimately that's not enough to deter binge drinking."

"We were indifferent towards the ads, but we didn't really think it would change much. College kids are college kids and they are going to drink alcohol no matter what. Maybe it caused some kids to think a bit more about their choices which is good, but we didn't think it would have that much effect."