

remerinc

KING COUNTY OEM



OVERALL IMPRESSIONS

Overall Impressions:

The message that people need to be prepared for emergencies is an important one that has received heightened exposure as a result of natural disasters such as the Asian Tsunami of 2004 and Hurricane Katrina in 2005. It has become the job of local government entities to leverage that exposure into action.

However, the resulting multiple message platforms have made it somewhat confusing for consumers and have potentially limited the ultimate impact of the efforts. By working to focus on the “3 Days, 3 Ways” platform, the communications seem to be moving in the right direction. Simplifying messages in today's crowded communications environment is a good thing and, in fact, we often advise our clients to pick the one thing they wish to communicate as well as the one thing they want their audience to do. While we certainly understand that working with various partners is inherently difficult and that being a public entity carries with it a mandate to distribute information, we recommend that – as much as possible – messages continue to be simplified and focused to ensure that people take the necessary steps to move from being aware that they need to do something to actually doing it.

One of the marketing precepts that we recommend to all clients is that audience behavior is fairly predictable, and that changing it requires addressing the reasons for it in a relatively simple and concrete fashion. In the case of emergency preparedness, those steps would be:

- Increase awareness of how to prepare for a large scale emergency.
- Build a tool kit that enables individuals to take action.
- Partner with local retailers to sell and promote availability of ready-made kits.
- Provide opportunity for evangelists to share the message with friends and family.

We reviewed the materials you provided with these steps in mind, and from the perspective that, while these are clearly not consumer/retail executions, they live in that world by virtue of the media in which they appear and therefore need to be effective in that environment. As in all marketing materials, messages need to be clearly communicated and desired action-steps effectively defined.

AUDIT

CURRENT COMMUNICATIONS

Clearly, reducing the number of messages distributed by the Office is a move in the right direction. “3 Days, 3 Ways” is a relatively memorable themeline, and helps to give a more concrete message than some of the earlier efforts. In addition, by extending the message to multiple contact points and running it more consistently, the campaign is likely to begin breaking through the clutter and resonating with people. While the current research draft states that only 5% of the audience recalls that message, our experience is that with continued media support, recall will continue to rise.

We believe that, for many people, the concept of being self sufficient for three entire days is overwhelming and the campaign should therefore impart easier initial steps and methods for beginning the preparation process. As noted in the conclusions of Herbert Research’s August 2005 report, the themeline is somewhat difficult to understand. It requires the reader to understand the emergency preparedness context and then to recall what each phrase requires. It is our belief that additional messaging should be added to the campaign to more quickly reinforce what actions constitute “3-Ways.”

Television Advertising

The TV spot featuring several children is a good example of this. While the spot is very well produced and the children repeat “3 Days, 3 Ways” multiple times, only once do they inform the viewer that this means to have enough food and supplies for three days following an incident and what those three ways should prepare them for. The use of multiple children is effective in getting the attention of parents, and viewers are likely to be left realizing they are not ready and not prepared. However, there is not enough in the spot to really motivate viewers to change their behavior – even incrementally – towards getting ready.

Radio Advertising

The current radio spot more clearly states the things listeners should do to get prepared, but it is difficult to match up the recommendations with the themeline. Listeners are told to get prepared: “establish a family plan, establish a meeting place and an out-of-town contact.” Then they are told to have supplies, which are listed: food, water, clothing, shelter and a radio. Finally, they are told to get CPR and first aid training. For one :60 radio spot, that’s quite a lot of information to absorb. There is little repetition to help listeners, and little messaging to reinforce the importance of getting prepared. Compared to typical radio advertisements, which usually have one or two items for listeners to remember, this spot is likely overwhelming and potentially has the effect of only reminding listeners that getting prepared can be a lot of work.

Transit Advertising

The bus wraps are a strong media because of their repetitive, county-wide presence as well as the long-term nature of the agreement. The themeline is well-suited for the billboard style communications transit media provides and the bright colors are effective at drawing attention to the boards. Yet, the fairly common colors do little to distinguish the message from less important consumer-focused advertisements and the call-to-action of the boards is difficult to understand quickly in the timeframe required by transit advertising.

Web Site

As one would expect, these traditional advertising executions point audiences to the URL 3days3ways.org. One would expect to find a good deal of messaging reinforcing the marketing materials, including in-depth reasons why to prepare, various methods for getting ready, checklists of items that should be on hand, and background information about government agencies and how they plan to respond. While all of this information is available from the site, the multi-levels of navigation make finding the information more difficult than it should be. It is not immediately clear whether the site is a portal for the government agencies on the left, whether the partners at the bottom are the source of the information, or whether the “3 Ways” listed at the top are links or simply reinforce the header. In addition, the design could help visitors by more clearly defining the priority of the various sections of the home page and clearly giving them actionable next steps.

Summary

The question repeatedly posed by all these media executions - “Are You Ready?” - could do more towards giving audiences a next step. Though it is clearly wise to tie into the federal program, this question does little to reinforce that most government agencies are NOT ready and do not do as much work as they could to shift people towards taking a first step toward actually getting ready. Since the communications are seemingly all based on creating awareness and changing perceptions, the spots could seemingly work harder if they contained a stronger call-to-action rather than posing this somewhat rhetorical question. As outlined in the research, the way people answer this question has little to do with their actual preparedness and more to do with their perception. Very few people meet the “3 Days, 3 Ways” mantra. Yet the communications materials leave the audience to determine whether they are ready rather than demanding that they actually get ready to reach the levels that you – the experts – have determined they need to reach.

Safe At Home

This partnership with Philips, the American Red Cross and the Seattle Mariners creates a solid community outreach program. The brochure layout is simple and contains well-organized, helpful information that can be readily understood. In addition, the Emergency Preparedness Kits are a concrete example of a relatively easy first step towards becoming more prepared for disasters. This piece begins to tie-in the larger “3 Ways” campaign.

However, the campaign is difficult to find, even at Safeco Field during a Mariners game. There is little, if any, promotion of the campaign on the media partners or on the OEM site. While a very powerful tactic, without stronger and more visible promotion, this campaign feels disconnected from the rest of the communication efforts.

Home Team Ready

This TV campaign is a fairly standard joint PSA effort. The use of King-5 personalities makes good use of their stature to relay the communication messages. And the campaign provides detailed instructions on how to get more prepared while the simple visuals do a nice job of reinforcing the voice-over instructions. By using the well-known reflective triangle, the graphic identity is also an easily understood visual for getting ready. In addition, by focusing on a single type of incident, whether winter weather or a chemical spill, the spots give the viewer the right kind of context and framework to understand the communication messages.

However, because they lack any direct tie-in to the OEM or the “3 Ways” campaign, the spots feel like a sole King-5 effort, which likely reduces their overall impact. TV viewers are increasingly cynical and, without the tie-in to the official government agencies, it is easier to tune them out. While clearly driven by King-5, even a small mention or reference to the OEM and the “3 Ways” campaign would help give viewers the additional context needed to help drive their response. Reinforcing the larger campaign would reduce the confusion about appropriate next steps and help to drive awareness of the OEM and its authority as a source for emergency preparedness information.

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS:

Overall, our number one recommendation is that the campaign become more action-oriented and less focused on creating awareness of the need to be prepared. People know that they should be prepared, but need to be jolted into taking action. It is our belief that scare tactics could lead to avoidance, but that outlining concrete actions would give people a step they could take to get prepared. Direct statements like, “Get Ready,” “Stop Planning,” and “Get Prepared” could cause a real effect in generating action, especially when coupled with clearly communicated, simple next steps.

As Homeland Security funding decreases, the challenges facing OEM’s communication efforts will only get harder. Undoubtedly, local media partnerships will become even more important. And while they are necessary to help disseminate your messages, they are also part of the confusion, since it is even harder to consolidate messages when each partner adds their own slant on them. In addition, it is also clear that combining efforts with other governmental agencies – from the federal government to the tri-county level – will continue to be a necessary strategy when developing communication efforts. While these combined efforts also help to increase the ability of the public to disseminate these important messages, they also keep audiences from being able to turn to one source to get all the information they need.

However, with the “3 Days, 3 Ways” campaign, there appears to be a platform on which you can build. We would recommend continuing to focus efforts on consolidating promotions and messages under this umbrella campaign whenever possible. Using common phrases and consistent calls-to-action will help tie the myriad efforts together. We would recommend a stronger list of mandates when dealing with partners – including OEM mentions, logos when appropriate, and use of the “3 Ways” moniker. While partners usually start with their own list of demands, we would recommend finding other elements to sacrifice instead of your “brand.”

Another concrete action we would strongly recommend is the development of a stronger and more complete brand identity for the campaign. This brand identity should appear in all communications carrying the “3 Days, 3 Ways” message, regardless of the sponsoring media partner. The brand identity would also include a strong color palette, a consistent tone and manner in terms of phrasing, vocabulary, and intonation, and a template for incorporating partners, even if the OEM logo was not the dominant logo in the placement. Developing and consistently using these elements will help increase audience recognition that communications are officially sanctioned, and carry with them the expertise possessed by your office.

We would also recommend that the brand identity trend more towards the official, organized, expertise side of the spectrum instead of the current tone, which seems to be more consumer and retail oriented. The bright yellows and reds are attention getting, but they are not the tone of a serious communication. We would recommend that the tone come more from your state-of-the-art facility.

APPENDIX



ri

3 DAYS 3-WAYS :30
KIRO TV



Strengths:

- Youth actors are engaging
- Good explanation of "3-Days" campaign
- Multiple participants engage viewers
- Consistent presence of URL

Suggestions:

- Avoid fear and focus on actionable items
- Detail the "more information" that is available
- Establish a stronger brand identity

ARE YOU READY? :30

KIRO TV



Strengths:

- Disaster context reminds viewers of what could happen
- Good use of TV personality
- Bullets helpful

Suggestions:

- Include appropriate KC-OEM logos
- Use campaign brand identity
- Identify as event publicity earlier in spot

HOME TEAM READY

KING 5 TV



Strengths:

- Strong specifics
- Strong use of personality
- Simple and straightforward

Suggestions:

- Include appropriate mention of KC-OEM
- Include standardized brand elements, to lend credibility

HOME TEAM READY SHELTER

NWCN TV



Strengths:

- Good visual depiction of appropriate actions
- Easily understandable

Suggestions:

- Include appropriate mention of KC-OEM, including standardized brand elements
- Establish a positive rather than fearful tone
- Create a more common/realistic context to engage viewers

3-DAYS 3-WAYS (RADIO :30)



Strengths:

- Multiple repetitions of 3 Days soundtrack will break through clutter

Suggestions:

- Simplify/reduce messages
- Increase positive tone to encourage people to listen
- Tie more closely to Puget Sound region with explicit mentions of the region



IT'S WHAT WE DO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Strengths:

- Multiple participants engage viewers
- Strong tie to Government agencies
- Acknowledgement of “avoidance” factor

Suggestions:

- More sophisticated title cards
- Stronger brand identity

VIGILANCE

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Strengths:

- Strong tie to Government agency
- Strong clarification of term “vigilance”
- Good visual examples

Suggestions:

- More engaging title cards
- Better organized/hierarchy in agency logo slates

WE'RE PARENTS TOO EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



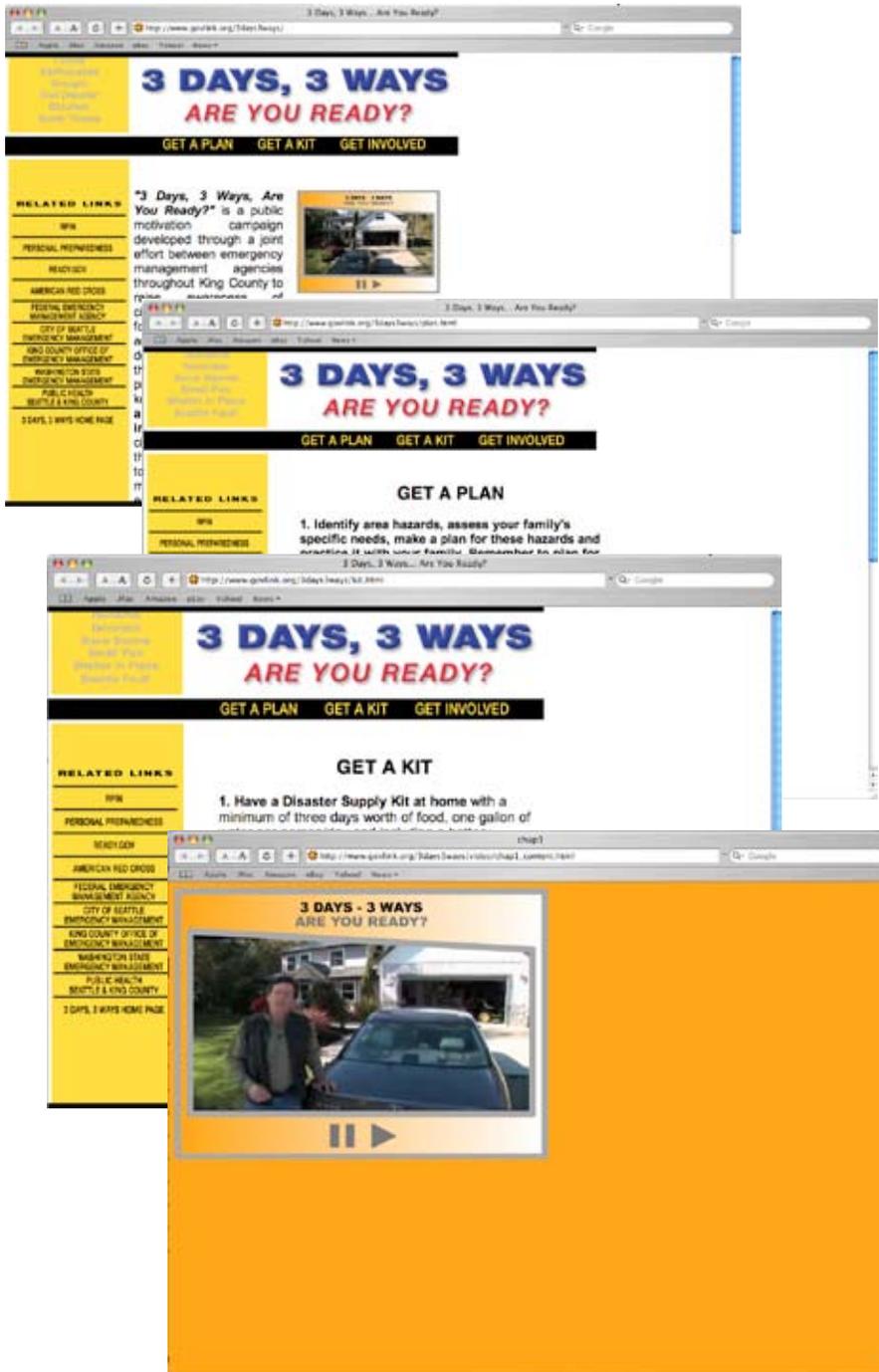
Strengths:

- Tie to Government agencies
- Multiple participants engage viewers
- Message reinforced multiple times

Suggestions:

- Stronger brand identity
- Stronger tie to "3 Days" campaign ("3 days" mention buried)
- More upbeat readings

3DAYS3WAYS.ORG



Strengths:

- Good list of links
- Inclusion of multi-media files
- Simple explanations of the "3-Ways"

Suggestions:

- More sophisticated color scheme
- More organized hierarchy of information
- More actionable information upfront

METROK.COV/PREPARE

The screenshot shows the website for the Office of Emergency Management in King County. The browser address bar displays 'http://www.metrokc.gov/prepare/'. The page features a blue header with navigation links: 'KING COUNTY HOME | NEWS | SERVICES | DIRECTORY | CONTACT'. Below the header, the main content area includes a search bar, a 'You're in: Emergency Services' breadcrumb, and a banner with the text 'Promoting disaster resistant communities through excellence in service and partnerships'. A 'Featured' section highlights 'What's new in Eric's Corner?' with a sub-header 'Check Jobs Eric has heard about... with recent job openings in the region and country.' Below this, it lists categories for new items updated on May 31st: 'Pandemic flu (1 new)', 'Disaster and hazards', 'Disaster preparedness (2 new)', 'Homeland security (1 new)', 'In the news (4 new)', 'Professional development', and 'General emergency management'. A 'Podcasting - Disasters: Are you ready?' link is also present. On the right, a 'Links for...' section promotes 'RPIN.org' for breaking news and lists categories: 'News', 'Eric's Corner', 'Related Links & Alerts', and 'Emergency Management Agencies'. Below this is a 'Preparedness Information & Resources' section with links to 'Personal Preparedness', 'Basic-Better-Best!', 'Hazards and Disasters', 'Home Team Ready', and 'Citizen Corps/CERT'. A left-hand navigation menu lists: 'Emergency Services', 'Preparedness Info & Resources', 'Homeland Security', 'Plans & Programs', 'About Us', 'Enhanced 911 Program', 'Related Links & Alerts', and 'Site map'.

Strengths:

- “Eric’s Corner” add human element
- More sophisticated look
- Easily accessible overview of resources
- Well organized

Suggestions:

- Better delineate target – other responders vs. public
- Decrease repetition
- Decrease the number of options for visitors by creating broader categories



“3 DAYS, 3 WAYS” BOOKMARKS

Strengths:

- Strong tactic for building awareness
- URL highlighted
- Simple, straightforward hints and suggestions

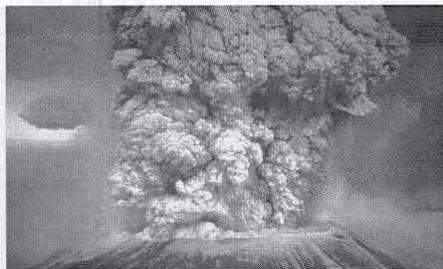
Suggestions:

- More sophisticated color scheme
- More action-oriented tagline



**If an earthquake, terrorist
attack or volcanic eruption
were to strike today...**

ARE YOU READY?



SAFE-ATHOME BROCHURE (DRAFT)

Strengths:

- Strong tie to baseball distribution
- Good overview of information

Suggestions:

- Tie to "3 Ways" campaign
- More actionable tagline
- Motivate action instead of "scare" readers

