

Social Marketing as a Tool to Prevent Vandalism

***World Social Marketing
Conference***

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Presentation agenda:

- Purpose of the project
- Geographic Scope
- Vandalism and its costs
- The generally accepted profile of a vandal
- Motivations
- Approaches to vandalism prevention
- Police reporting and intelligence based policing
- Project outcomes



Vandalism is Costly

- Incidents of criminal damage cost the Australian economy in excess of \$1.34 billion a year
- 60% of the costs are tangible (\$400.00 average per incident)
- Remaining 40% (\$300.00) are intangible costs



Vandalism

- Graffiti and vandalism attacks one of the core aspects of our culture being the value we place on ownership of property
- Vandalism can lead to a greater fear of crime in our neighbourhood
- It may (arguably) encourage offenders to commit further crime in our neighbourhood



Purpose of the Project

- Fill in some gaps in the existing knowledge about vandalism
- Establish whether social marketing has the potential to reduce vandalism (and perhaps other forms of crime).



Geographic Scope of Project

- Wollondilly LGA
 - Outer metropolitan area South West of Sydney
- Wingecarribee LGA
 - Rural area South West of Sydney
- Wollongong LGA
 - Urban area South West of Sydney



Definition

- Vandalism is a very emotive term attached to certain forms of behaviour but only under certain conditions.
- Generally accepted definitions
 - Wanton or malicious damage to property
 - Wilful or ignorant destruction of artistic, literary or religious treasures



Vandalism Typologies

- Acquisitive (predatory)
- Vindictive
- Malicious (wanton)
- Tactical
- Ideological
- Play
- Institutional



Trying to Understand Vandalism

- Judicial perspective
- Social and behavioural perspectives
- Environmental perspective



Perpetrator Profile

- Male
- 12-14 years of age
- Have learning difficulties or having problems at school
- Acting spontaneously in a group, (Clarke, 1978)



Motivations

- Popular misperception that vandalism has no purpose but motivation is integral to all human activity (Canter, 1984)
 - Revenge (Thaw, 1976;Canter, 1984)
 - Boredom
 - Acquisition (Cohen, 1968; Canter, 1984; Coffield, 1991)
 - Exploration (Canter, 1984);
 - Excitement (Allen & Greenberger 1978; Canter, 1984; Coffield, 1991)
 - Ideological (Cohen, 1968)
 - Limited access to manufactured entertainment (Martin, 1961)



Issues with the Motivational Typologies

- Some evidence that these motivational typologies have been derived by informal and unsystematic means, (Goldstein 1997)
- The potential for these typologies to generate action for reduction is unknown (e.g. for S.M. a possible basis for market segmentation)
- May not be inclusive enough, (Goldstein, 1996)
- Reliability with which we can rate a pool of vandalistic acts is unknown (Goldstein, 1996)



Vandalism Prevention

- Primary prevention
- Defeatism
- Deflection
- Protect and Detect
- Deterrence and Retribution
- Education and Publicity



Vandalism: Police Reporting

- Most incidents of crime are not reported to the police.
- A number of disincentives to reporting:
 - Fear of retribution
 - Increased insurance premiums
 - Reduced property values
 - Low expectation that offenders will be caught
 - The attitude that most vandalism is not a serious offence



Intelligence Based Policing

- The police are dependent on intelligence gathered from the public to prevent crime and/or to catch offenders
- So-called intelligence based policing determines the allocation and distribution of human and other resources to prevent crime or to detect and detain offenders
- It is one of the foundations of community based policing which is the most effective form of crime prevention (Rosenbaum, 1988)



Research Question and a Hypothesis

- Research question: Does social marketing have the potential to reduce vandalism?
- Intelligence based policing influences decisions regarding resource availability and distribution by the police.
- Hypothesis: Increasing the rate of incident reporting by victims and the general public will support efforts to reduce the rate of vandalism



Outcomes

- Develop a Social Marketing intervention planning process for property crime prevention.
- Establish if Social Marketing has potential to militate against property crime.
- Identify social marketing planning processes and strategies to prevent crime by supporting community based policing efforts



Anticipated Contribution

- A theoretical framework that will be of benefit to academics and practitioners.
- The project will not involve upstream or downstream social marketing but indirect stakeholders
- The findings are likely to improve the extent of knowledge about vandals
- Establish whether social marketing can assist in reduction of current levels of vandalism

