

Q&A Report – Take Control by Brett de Hoedt. Watch the recording:  
<https://communitydirectors.com.au/training-courses/takecontrol-webinar>

1. How powerful is it to compare overseas successful campaigns to drive the message to Ausrtalian Polys? And do they listen to what is happening OS?

They listen when it suits them. Pollies take many cues from overseas and so should we as campaigners. US politics campaigning is all about fundraising and turning out the vote meaning that they have a very developed campaigning eco system. We might struggle to recruit people to hold meetings at home, hit the hustings, intern and accept the incessant phone calls that are part of US campaigning.

2. Do you think there is benefit to having a campaign that has different messages for different audiences. A/B testing as such. I work in comms with multilingual marketing and often certain campaign messages are lost in translation. Wonder if you have any experience or insight?

Absolutely. Analyse your different audiences and shape messages accordingly. Different audiences have different perspectives, motivations and priorities. I worked on a Hepatitis campaign - it's a liver disease. US research told us that some African communities (which have a higher prevalence of the disease) have little or no awareness of the disease, may not have a term for the disease, are less inclined to seek treatment for a disease without symptoms and hold stigmatising views towards those with the disease. We adjusted accordingly. CALD communities may have a different sense of humour, may be (much) more conservative than broader audiences (see Same Sex Marriage referendum results) be more religious and hold greater or less trust in institutions. You must always meet your audience where they are as opposed to where you think that they should be.

3. What support software do you recommend? I know Salesforce is good but it quickly gets expensive & its more politically focussed.

I've a little experience with NationBuilder. Gee - you'd want to have a BIG, serious campaign to justify it. Fundraising software may be good to create and divide and track audiences. MailChimp is offering more of that now too. It's a cheaper option.

4. Thoughts on alternatives in demonstration et al in a COVID-19 based environment/landscape?

Online demonstration / performance. But these are easy to conceive and take a great deal of work to carry off successfully. We're all screened out! How about creating online video interviews and promote those? Or - this is my best idea - if you want to aggressively target a corporation (Rio Tinto perhaps) why not do it by getting everyone to send Rio Tinto execs messages on LinkedIn. I dare you.

5. What are some of your fave campaigns and why?

Animals Australia are tough. They regularly make news by supplying media with behind the scenes footage to create stories that stop the nation and kill / pause / threaten billion dollar industries. Think greyhounds, horse racing and live export. The RSPCA ain't never done a campaign like that.

6. How do you know when the time is right?

You'll just know in your heart - no that's love. Sorry. Big media coverage is an opportunity. A government announcement. An anniversary. Anything that highlights your issue, angers / activates your base.

7. Should a campaign message always be as positive as possible?

Nope. Make people FEEL something. We're not playing a rational game here. Make them feel, give them an action to take, then they feel hope, then they feel righteous. Rinse and repeat. But there must be some hope / success vibes too or it gets too grim. I've felt overly burdened by some animal welfare campaigns.

8. What more powerful a sick child or sick adult?

Usually the kid. But the adult might be a Mother / Father or otherwise sympathetic.

9. Thank you that was great. What your strategy for LinkedIn?

USE IT! Hugely underutilised. It enable you to target people by occupation / employer like nothing else. It's free and you can quickly build a (loose) following.

10. what should the 3 main message points in a media release be?

[Headline, opening par, quote. Watch this: https://youtu.be/20CJouliLSY](https://youtu.be/20CJouliLSY)

11. Is there campaign overload?

Very much so. Especially "campaigns" which are really just fundraising challenges. It's hard to stand out. Be bold, persistent and unafraid of rejection. Celebs also help.

12. How do you find good graphic artists and free celebrities?

[Celebs are best approached via a personal connection. Publicists and managers are gatekeepers. I was a TV publicist and I spent my days saying "no" to people just like you. Sorry. I hire people such as designers from overseas sometimes via UpWork.com](#)

13. Great webinar.....but is it too late to take this and add it to a campaign that's already running, but has lost some steam, as the guy running it, seems to want to control it all himself?

Hmmm hard to say. Maybe start from scratch and do it better.

14. YouTube or Vimeo?

I don't have a preference.

15. What is your preferred method for supporting disability fundraising for sports participation?

Highlight the joy from the participants. Make a strong connection between donations and increased participation in the same way Fred Hollows Foundation says that \$25 buys a cataract operation. That's a hell of a good value proposition.

16. I'm interested in campaigning locally around disability access and the built environment. How would you build broader community support around disability now everyone thinks the NDIS has fixed everything?

Hit the streets and highlight specific access issues in local areas. Media will love it. Invite important people to watch and cringe. I'm serious.

17. If you could provide a critique on climate change campaigns to date in Australia and the non-action by governments, what would be the top issues you would address? What would be an absolute game changer in your mind?

We're losing and it kills me. As I said - if we can't win this debate with things the way they are now, we never will. There are lots of smart people in the environment sector (smartest sector I've worked with) but they are very big picture - often talking about global accords and far off places even within Australia. They are very outback / bush / rural orientated when Australians are in truth very metropolitan. Fewer and fewer Australians relate to non-metro Australia for anything but holidays. The movement is very white, young, hip and university educated. Nothing wrong with that but they must reach out to the massive number of recent arrivals from China, India and other places who don't have the connection to country. I'd like them to relate better to the suburbs and Mums and Dads. And here's my BIG idea. It's far too politically incorrect to even mention - population growth. It's the single biggest contributing factor to the rapid destruction of the planet, a vote winner but they'll never mention it. Likewise air pollution. Also we need MASS mobilisation offering 250,000 or so people a year access to a superb, cunningly crafted, nature experience. People don't care about what they've never experienced. Surprise surprise not everyone spends their uni years down at the Prom.

18. Can you ask people to do too many things in a campaign? We have staff pushing for simple and doing one or two things we want people to do. Then we have other staff who are pushing for multiple things for our network to do during campaign. How do you strike a balance between having clear actions for people to take and overwhelming them?

Keep it simple. One step at a time. List the steps somewhere online so people can get an overview of what they have and have not done. You should be able to track what people have and haven't done and send the request to do more accordingly.

19. If using radio for launching a campaign is FM or AM preferred?

Anywhere that gives you coverage is fine with me. Stop being so picky! If you are buying advertising A) reconsider and B) pick the station your key audience might tune in to.

20. What techniques work better with the different age demographics (boomers, Gen X, Gen Y or milleniels)?

The older the audience the more emaily / websitely they are. The older are more likely to consume mainstream news media and also be exposed to advertising. The more likely they are to donate. (Remember - according to the Progressive Twitter all Boomers are rich. Progressive Twitter also believes them to be white and racist but I digress.) I suspect that younger people are more open to being approached by campaigners on the street. (Face-to-face fundraisers know this.) Gen X-ers may be laden with child rearing and parent-caring. Every generation (except Gen-X) feels different, hard-done-by and underserved. (Very) generally speaking older audiences are better able to enjoy some self-deprecating humour. Younger audiences may be more likely to participate in some form of challenge (headshaving, trail walking etc) and may be more drawn to the activity than the cause.

21. How do you campaign effectively when government denies an issue e.g. climate change, and you wish to promote the need to be aware for example of the upcoming bushfire season and the local council is not sustainability focussed?

Run for local office on just that issue.

22. How can a campaign talk to people who are not well educated and get them away from crackpot theories?

That's a growing problem. We have an epidemic of dumbness which is holding us back as a species. Is it really worth trying? Crackpots are not ones to change their minds. If pushed, I'd use humour, online video and try to debunk them. But don't get trolled to death.

23. Brett have you reviewed the messages of the NZ COVID-19 campaign compared to the OZ one ? do you have any comments on the messages of both sides ?

Didn't see the Kiwi effort. Ours was abysmal and the people behind it (pollies and agency) have blood on their hands. My blog: <http://www.hootville.com/damage-control-crisis-management-advice>

24. During the current COVID climate, how do you suggest people deal with being unable to go out and campaign locally in the community?

Wait. Don't put all your faith in social media - it will likely underwhelm. How about seeking media coverage?

25. I have 100 (exaggeration) emails a day because I am passionate and sign petitions etc. But I can't do more with them all. How do we target people better so that emails don't get lost??? So actions get followed up?

Email ain't what it used to be. It's hard to avoid the Promotions folder and the reader's sense of overwhelm. When in charge of a petition move people quickly to your own email database (not just emailing them via the petition). Text messages are effective (though intrusive and more costly.) Be VERY interesting in your emails. Be regular and always risk over-sending as absence will not make the heart grow fonder.

26. How do you refocus a campaign that has stalled or gone off track?

Wait and start again? Focus on one particular issue or action at a time. Hit the phones to reconnect with supporters.

27. Anything you would do different if it is a membership campaign you are working on for a NFP org?

Not necessarily. Always be interesting, challenging, smart and results -orientated.

28. How do you close a campaign?

Declaring victory onboard an aircraft carrier with a Mission Accomplished banner is an elegant option. Or saying a big thanks to supporters and summarising the achievements. And then tease the next campaign like they do at the end of blockbuster movie franchises.