ATTITUDES AND AWARENESS SURROUNDING DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF IMPAIRING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS
WHAT WE KNOW

Prescription drug use has dramatically increased
Prescription drugs are an extremely broad category with various effects on the user’s mental functions.
WHAT WE KNOW

Research has proven CNS (central nervous system) depressants and narcotic analgesics are impairing and increase crash risk if used while driving.
Anti-anxiety drugs like Xanax®, sedative hypnotic medicines such as Ambien®, and narcotic pain killers are amongst the most commonly prescribed drugs.
Identify what percentage of the population uses one of these three commonly prescribed impairing prescription drugs (IPDs)
STUDY OBJECTIVES

Identify what percentage of the population admits to driving on these IPDs compared to driving on other impairing substances
STUDY OBJECTIVES

Identify people most likely to drive on these particular IPDs
STUDY OBJECTIVES

Measure public attitudes and awareness regarding the risks and consequences of driving on these particular IPDs.
Identify a messaging strategy to inform the public about the risks and consequences of driving on these particular IPDs and ultimately reduce the incidences of driving under their influence.
STUDY METHODOLOGY

QUANTITATIVE

FIELDED
January 10-18
2017

SAMPLE SIZE
601 Adult Respondents
Representative sample of state of Texas (weighted to account for geographic location, race, age, etc.)
Message testing included multiple regression analyses to measure effectiveness and not just popularity of messages.
STUDY METHODOLOGY

QUALITATIVE

CONDUCTED
April 17-19
2017

FOCUS GROUP SIZE
8-10 Participants
STUDY METHODOLOGY

QUALITATIVE

3 FOCUS GROUPS
Austin, Dallas & El Paso

WOMEN
28-48 Years Old

2 FOCUS GROUPS
Austin & Dallas

Users of Narcotic Painkillers, Benzodiazepine Class and/or ANTI-ANXIETY DRUGS
Focus groups included an exploration of mindset surrounding prescription drug use, driving risks, and legal consequences.
The groups also tested the top performing messages from the quantitative study to analyze how motivational they were with respondents and if they contained any noise.
KEY FINDING ONE

Texans self-report driving on impairing RX Drugs

- More than 3 drinks a day: 18%
- Driving hours after IPD: 10%
- Under influence of illegal drug: 3%
- Narcotic pain killers: 7%
- Benzodiazepine class: 4%
- Prescription sleep aids: 1%
DRIVER DEMOGRAPHICS

7% Male
12% Female

18-34 (10%)  35-54 (11%)  55+ (7%)
KEY FINDING TWO

Public ranks danger of driving under prescription drugs lower than other driving behaviors

- Driving While Texting: 91%
- Driving Under the Influence of an Illegal Drug: 90%
- Driving Within a Few Hours of Taking a Prescription Sleep Aid, Such as Ambien: 90%
- Driving After Consuming More Than 3 Alcoholic Drinks in a Day: 83%
- Driving Within a Few Hours of Taking a Prescription Painkiller: 66%
- Driving Within a Few Hours of Taking a Prescription Anti-Anxiety Aid: 77%
- Very Serious: 54%
- Serious: 23%
KEY FINDING THREE

While the penalty is the same as driving under the influence of alcohol, Texans believe otherwise.

- 21% No penalty
- 34% Less than DWI
- 42% Same as DWI
- 2% More than DWI
KEY FINDING FOUR

Texans do not understand the seriousness of impaired prescription driving

They believe that because the drugs are prescribed by a doctor, different rules must apply
KEY FINDING FOUR

Texans do not understand the seriousness of impaired prescription driving

They are not seeing public campaigns about the issue
KEY FINDING FOUR

Texans do not understand the seriousness of impaired prescription driving

They do not see organizations taking on or forming around the issue
KEY FINDING FOUR

Texans do not understand the seriousness of impaired prescription driving

Not all doctors and pharmacists are warning them
KEY FINDING FOUR

Texans do not understand the seriousness of impaired prescription driving

Pill bottles do not offer warnings that are clear enough
There's a difference between an illicit street drug and a prescribed drug. One is legal, and the other isn't, and if you were in an accident because you were prescribed medication and you took it anyway, although it says on the bottle that it may make you drowsy, you're not going to be charged.

— Dallas, General Population
“Penalties for operating a vehicle under the influence of an impairing prescription drug are the same as being intoxicated on alcohol.”
“Driving a vehicle while under the influence of an impairing prescription drug, like Xanax®, Ambien®, or an opioid painkiller like OxyContin®, is as dangerous as driving while intoxicated on alcohol, since these drugs act in a manner similar to alcohol.”
“It costs a person up to $17,000 in fines, court costs, and legal fees if convicted of operating a motor vehicle while under the influence of an impairing prescription drug.”
That's pretty motivational because you know how serious driving with alcohol is, because there's signs for it everywhere, and all the fines and everything, all the commercials.

— Dallas, Prescription User
They are not seeing public campaigns about the issue
They do not see organizations taking on or forming around the issue
OPPORTUNITY
ADDRESS MISPERCEPTIONS

Not all doctors and pharmacists are warning them
Pill bottles do not offer warnings that are clear enough
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