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Health Canada - Health Accord Ads
Focus Group Testing
Final Report

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Ipsos

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STUDY OBJECTIVES

The research focussed on testing two potential Health Canada ads focussing on the recent Federal-Provincial Health Accord. The purpose of the research was to gauge participants reaction to the various visual elements, language used and overall tone for each of the mock-ups.

METHODOLOGY

A total of 2 one-hour focus groups were conducted in Montreal with members of the Canadian general public. In addition research findings presented herein reflect feedback collected via similar consultations conducted in Ottawa and Vancouver. Both Montreal groups were conducted in French all other consultations were conducted in English. As is usual practice, 12 participants were recruited for each group, allowing for two no shows. Groups were conducted February 6, 2003

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>
Vancouver	February 6th, 2003
Ottawa	February 6th, 2003
Montreal	February 6th, 2003

Note: In both Ottawa and Vancouver approximately 30 minutes of focus group time was dedicated to this subject matter.

Reminder to Readers

Readers are reminded that the results from qualitative research are not statistically valid. The results reported here cannot be generalized to the target population in general. They can however, suggest the range of perceptions that exist among participants as they relate to topics discussed.

DETAILED FINDINGS

Mock-up #1: "Accord Ad"

Initial reactions to the "Accord Ad" were mixed, with a lean to the negative. Although participants generally recognised the importance of communicating recent developments to the general public, there was a sense among most that the "Accord Ad" lacked in information and detail. This perceived lack of information tended to contribute to a general cynicism as to the motivation for running such advertisement. Some commented that the tone was somewhat boastful and opportunistic while lacking in particulars. Visually speaking, although most felt it was important for the Government of Canada to clearly indicate that it had authored this ad, most felt that the use of the Canadian flag in three separate locations was unnecessary. In addition, although the actual pictures used (faces depicting various individuals of various ages and ethnicity) were deemed inclusive by both Ottawa and Montreal participants, those in Vancouver were less likely to be of this opinion, in fact some felt these pictures discredited the ad by trying too hard to be representative of the Canadian population.

Wording considerations

As far as actual wording goes, participants in Ottawa and Montreal appreciated the reference to "Quality Health Care for all Canadians" which for most should be the ultimate objective for governments in general. Furthermore, most expressed positive reactions to the reference to accountability. This was seen by some as rather revolutionary, considering the source. Ottawa and Montreal participants were less favourable to the use of the word "Accord". Those in Montreal explained that this choice of words was less than accurate, one participant saying that this was not in fact an "Accord" but rather a compromise. This perception was largely fuelled by media reports relating to the inability of both the provincial and federal governments to see eye to eye on the issue. For others, the word "Accord" evoked images of "Meech Lake". Ottawa participants on the other hand simply felt that this choice of wording would not be understood by most. In Vancouver, "Accord" suggested that there would be a definitive outcome resulting from this understanding, i.e. - legislation. Vancouver participants also expressed some resistance to the use of the phrase "all Canadians" as it was seen as less than inclusive of those who were not Canadian citizens.

Mock-up #2: "Action Plan"

Overall, this ad received a more favourable response from most participants. Favourable comments tended to focus on the fact that this option appeared to provide more information "up front" and as such was deemed more credible. In short, it was seen as less ambiguous and generally came across as information sharing rather than a self-congratulatory ad from the Government of Canada. This impression was largely driven by the bulleted enumeration of expected outcomes, which appears at the bottom of the ad. For many, this advertisement was more effective in answering core questions about what this deal means for ordinary Canadians. Others commented that this was a statement of intent, which implies that some work has already been done to identify problem areas and come up with solutions. As such the choice of the words "Action Plan" was deemed appropriate by most with the exception of some participants in Vancouver who felt it was "too vague".

When questioned as to possible improvements, many felt that serious consideration should be given to increasing the font size for bulleted information at the bottom of the page in order to emphasize the intended outcomes of this deal. As was the case with the " Accord ad" some feel that the use of three flags was repetitious and unnecessary. Furthermore Vancouver respondents once again expressed reservation with the use of the actual pictures used for the reasons noted previously.

Wording Considerations

In French text, references to "Des **rapports** sur les investissement en santé." Is seen as too vague a statement, many commenting that it provides too much "wiggle room". Rather, participants felt that some kind of clear indication as to the timeliness of these "reports" would go a long way to reassuring readers that this would not be a long drawn out process. Some Vancouver participants felt that "Action Plan" was too vague and left some doubt as to what the eventual outcome might be.

CONCLUSIONS

- Based on participants' reactions, Health Canada should move ahead with the "Action Plan" option. It tended to garner more positive reactions from most participants in both English and French groups. It is deemed more informative and less self-congratulatory. It focuses on specific improvements to the Health Care system.

Possible improvements might include:

- Increasing the font size for the bulleted text which appears towards the bottom of the page,
- Including some reference to "Quality Health Care" in the text as this wording resonates well with both English and French participants,
- Avoid using "All Canadians" as this implies that some (those who have yet to obtain citizenship) will be left out,
- Provide specifics as to reporting dates, thus avoiding the impression that this will be a long drawn out process with no end in sight,
- Consider using alternate wording for "Rapport" in French text, possibly "compte-rendu annuel" which seemed to be considered a good compromise,
- Limit the use of Wordmark, FIP and flag, which for some is seen as somewhat repetitious.

APPENDIX I – SCREENER

Good morning/afternoon/evening, my name is _____ and I am calling from Ipsos-Reid, a national marketing research organization. We are a professional public opinion research firm that gathers opinions from people. From time to time, we solicit opinions by sitting down and talking with a group of people. We are having one of these discussion sessions and are calling to see if you would be willing to participate. This discussion session will take about two hours and those who qualify and attend will receive \$75 as a token of our appreciation. Would you be interested in participating in one of these groups which would be held at a location in _____ on _____?

Yes CONTINUE

No THANK AND TERMINATE

Location	Date/Timing	Composition
Montreal	Feb. 6 - 7:00 PM	French
Montreal	Feb. 6 - 8:00 PM	French

Now, I would like to ask you a few questions to see if you qualify to attend.

"Are you 18 years of age or older?"

Yes CONTINUE

No THANK AND TERMINATE

(INTERVIEWER RECORD GENDER, DO NOT ASK)

Male/Female (50/50 Soft Quota)

2. "Do you or does anyone in your household work in any of the following areas?"

(READ LIST) IF "YES" TO ANY - THANK AND TERMINATE

An advertising agency

A market research company

The media, that is for TV, Radio or a newspaper

The Federal or Provincial Government

The Health Sector (Nurse, Doctor, Physiotherapist, etc..)

Thank you - as part of the discussion you may need to read some printed materials if you wear glasses for reading can you please remember to bring them to the group so that you can read the materials.

At the facility, you may be asked to produce photo identification, so please remember to bring something with you. (INTERVIEWER NOTE: If respondent says they do not have photo ID, then any other form of ID will do).

We are reserving a special place for you at this session. There will only be 8 or 9 people attending, so if for any reason you cannot attend, please call (READ FIELD SUPERVISOR NUMBER, XXXPHONENUMBER) as soon as possible so that we can select someone else to take your place.

Also, someone from our office will be calling you back to confirm these arrangements. Could I please have your name and phone number where we can reach you during the evening and during the day?

NAME: _____

DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER: _____

EVENING PHONE NUMBER: _____

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

RECRUITED BY: _____

CONFIRMED BY: _____

APPENDIX II – MODERATOR’S GUIDE

INTRODUCTION (5 MINUTES)

Explain to participants:

- Ipsos-Reid
- the length of session (1 hours)
- taping of the discussion
- one-way mirror and colleagues viewing in back room
- results are confidential and reported in aggregate/individuals are not identified/participation is voluntary/
- sponsored by the Government of Canada
- the role of moderator is to ask questions, timekeeper, objective/no vested interest
- role of participants: not expected to be experts, no need to reach consensus, speak openly and frankly about opinions, no right/wrong answers
- Get participants to introduce themselves and their occupation/hobbies etc...

Instructions

WARM UP (5 MINUTES)

1a → c Have you heard/seen anything in the news/advertisements lately about a Federal/Provincial agreement on healthcare? If yes, what have you heard? Do you think the agreement is generally positive or negative? *1b* *1c*

POST-QUESTIONS (5 MINUTES)

Instructions Show the proposed print advertisement. Allow participants an opportunity to read the ad. Before discussing the advertisement have participants answer the post-viewing questionnaire.

See attached questionnaire.

INITIAL REACTIONS (15 Minutes)

General Probes:

- 2a-7c What are your ^{2a} views overall? ^{2b} Likes? ^{2c} Dislikes?
- 3 What is the main message?
- 4 Is the message easy to understand?
- 5 Who is the ad aimed at?
- 6 Why is the Government proposing to run this advertisement?
- 7a-7f How did you answer the questionnaire? (Believable? ^{7a} Appropriate? ^{7b} Relevant? ^{7c} Informative? ^{7d} Interesting?) ^{7e} ^{7f}
- 8 Do you have any suggestions for improving the ad?

BROCHURE TESTING (15 MINUTES)

Show the proposed brochure outline/format.

General Probes:

- 9a-9d What are your views overall? Likes? Dislikes? Re: the format? ^{9a} ^{9b} ^{9c} ^{9d}
- 10 What do think the 4 main headings/titles should be for each section?
- 11 What information do you want included in the brochure?
- 12 If the brochure contains the information you've mentioned tonight do you think it would be useful for other people?

CONCLUSION (5 MINUTES)

Finally, what is the one thing from everything we discussed tonight that could happen to make you feel that the Healthcare system is getting better, moving forward, etc.?

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POST – AD QUESTIONNAIRE (Please circle the appropriate number from 0 to 10)

1. Would you say that you are very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident or not at all confident in the Government of Canada’s ability to improve the healthcare system across Canada?

Not very confident					Very					
Confident										
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

2. Would you say that you are very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident or not at all confident in your provincial Government’s ability to improve the healthcare system in your province?

Not very confident					Very					
Confident										
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

3. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement. “I am confident that the federal and provincial governments are taking the steps necessary to improve the health care system in Canada.”

Strongly Disagree					Strongly					
Agree										
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

4. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement “The federal/provincial healthcare agreement will lead to a stronger healthcare system in the future.”

Strongly Disagree					Strongly					
Agree										
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

5. Please indicate whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement "Now that the Government of Canada has put more money into the healthcare system the provinces will be able to make noticeable improvements within the next year"

Strongly Disagree										Strongly
Agree										
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

6. Please tell me whether you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with the following statement "The Government of Canada has simply put back the money it took out of the healthcare system over the last couple of years."

Strongly Disagree										Strongly
Agree										
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10