

APPENDIX 2: DESCRIPTION OF FOCUS GROUPS

1. FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

Nine focus groups were conducted with young people in both rural and metropolitan areas to ensure a mix of participants with varied driver experiences. These areas were: Western Sydney (Fairfield, Bankstown and the University of Western Sydney), Inner City Sydney (Redfern 1 and 2), and central western New South Wales (Blue Mountains, Mudgee, and Bathurst 1 and 2 groups). Each focus group contained six to eight young people, making a total of 60 participants. Of the total, 30 were male and 30 were female. Ages ranged from 16 to 25 with the average age being 19.75 years. Eight participants were in the 16-17 year age range; 30 were 18-19 years and 22 were in the 20-25 year age range.

Focus group participants were from a range of backgrounds- nine had completed tertiary qualifications and 19 were currently engaged in study, while 31 were currently employed (four were both working and studying). Three participants stated that they were unemployed and three gave no response.

Twelve participants had a learner driving licence, 25 had provisional licences and 16 had full licences. One participant had been disqualified from driving and one had an HR licence. Six participants' licence status was not stated.

Thirty six participants gave their ethnicity as Australian and the remaining 15 gave a different ethnicity. Ethnicities reported included Chinese, Croatian, Iraqi, Italian, Jewish, Greek, Latin American, Maltese, Maori, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Turkish and Vietnamese. Nine participants did not comment on their ethnicity.

2. ADVERTISEMENTS

A total of 28 advertisements, including a mix of car and road safety advertisements were discussed in the focus groups. A core list of 12 advertisements was regularly used to elicit discussion related to the meanings of the advertisements for the participants and their responses to them.

The advertisements shown are described in section 6 and table 1 lists the advertisements shown in each focus group. The number and type of ads shown in each group depended on the level of discussion, the rest in particular ads and the location (country or city). The first Redfern group, for example, spent a great deal of time discussing various themes in advertising and only viewed five advertisements. The comments in the Bankstown group tended to be brief and so 14 advertisements were viewed in that group.

3. FORMAT

Focus groups were based on a discussion format in which participants were shown an advertisement and then invited to comment on the content and meanings of the advertisements, their appeal and various aspects of the ads, such as the styles of driving suggested and the people involved. The complete list of questions is given in section 4.

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An important factor to note is that the focus group format provided an opportunity for thoughtful consideration of the advertisements shown. This may not be a normal feature of everyday conversation although the ideas expressed are generally part of everyday conversation relating to cars and driving. As was noted by participants:

Male: ... the amount we're thinking about it now doesn't go through your head when you watch the ad. It just doesn't click. You just don't think. You don't care.

Female: We're on to the next ad in two seconds, anyway!

Male: I'm off making a feed or something. I'm not looking at the TV.

The focus group method was adopted in order to encourage thoughtful discussion amongst participants. Madriz (2000) emphasises the collectivistic as opposed to individualistic method of focus groups as able to encapsulate the 'multivocality' of participant's attitudes, experiences and beliefs. Focus groups are able to draw on the social contexts within which decisions are made and ideas formed (Kitzinger 1994) in encouraging interaction between participants where agreement, disagreement and elaboration of ideas and beliefs are fostered. As well as expressing collective views, focus groups facilitate the expression of individual differences (Wellings, Branigan and Mitchell 2000).

4. FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following questions were posed to focus group participants:

1. What does this ad say about the car it advertises?
2. What ways of driving does this ad promote?
3. What meanings does it have for you?
4. Do you identify with particular people, things or styles of driving in the ad? Which ones? In what ways? If not, why not?
5. Does this ad appeal to you? In what ways?
6. Do you like this ad? What is it about it that you like?
7. What do you think the intended meaning of the ad is supposed to be?

5. ANALYSIS

A first-level analysis of focus group transcripts was undertaken using the software NVIVO, looking for recurring themes. This formed the basis for the extended analysis of significant issues, meanings and contradictions in the comments of the participants.

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Using NVIVO, coding was made using the following categories:

General Characteristics

- 1) Gender 2) Country/City 3) Age 4) Value

Attitude

- 1) Annoyed 2) Caution 3) Fun 4) Safety 5) Boring 6) Reckless 7) Aggression/Thrill

Driving

- 1) Control 2) Burnouts 3) Driving 4) Racing 5) Risk 6) Speed 7) Performance

Advertising

- 1) Game 2) Real 3) Social issues

6. ADS SHOWN TO FOCUS GROUPS

Descriptions of the 12 main advertisements shown in the focus groups are as follows:

1. Mitsubishi

Opens with shot of finger tapping to beat of the song 'Dreamer's Disease' which continues playing while inter-cut shots various cars shown, with different groups of passengers. A group of three young women and a man are in Magna, Pajeros are shown with a young black and white man, a family, a father and young adult and a male and female couple are in the Lancer. Everyone is shown singing or tapping along to the music. Scenes include city, country, freeway tunnel, and a mix of foreign and local cars. Slogan: 'Driving your world.'

2. Police Reverse

Opens with long shot of car upside down on country road, then cut to close up of a male driver hanging upside down in the cabin, crying in horror on realising his woman passenger is dead. The crash scene is then played in reverse, shot from both inside and outside the vehicle, and an alternate ending presented of the car pulled over and a policeman issuing a speeding ticket, while the driver apologises to the woman and blames his car for wanting to go "whoosh [gesture]". Voice over explains more speed cameras and radars are around and ends with 'Speed and you'll probably be stopped, not dead.'

3. Honda CRV Louts

Woman driving along. Car next to hers shown as older model full of young long haired males listening to heavy metal music and bashing their heads in time with music. She puts up her electronic window to shut them out. "Insulated from road noise." All new CRV Smarter 4WD.

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4. RTA Slomo Speed

Shows two cars speeding towards a truck. Both hit, one with more damage than the other. Special effects (used in The Matrix films) allow a person to be shown in real time while the cars are in slow motion as he explains technical details. The difference between doing 60kph versus 65 kph shows up at the point of impact because 'In the last 5 metres of braking you wipe off half your speed. So this car is still doing 32ks when it hits. This one also hits but only at 5ks. So no matter how good a driver you are, 5ks difference up there makes 27ks difference down here.'

5. Holden Monaro Game

This begins like a videogame, with players selecting from various colour, interior, and engine options, then it becomes a car racing game which includes real footage of city streets and surrounds overlain with visual effects to make it more game-like. The Monaro starts last but passes other more prestigious luxury sports cars in the race. Audio includes mechanical noises, video game sounds, roar of engines. The final voiceover and captions say 'The Monaro is back. Game Over.'

6. Toyota Hilux Bugger

A young man is asked to take his boss's ute to get hardware materials. He forgets the handbrake and the ute runs off. He and the dog cling to the back while it smashes through a brick fence, a garden, a bus stop, through the building site and knocks over the portable toilet where the boss has just finished. In this way it gathers the needed materials. The dog lands in the toilet and, says 'Bugger!'

7. Ford V6 Escape Soccer

Cars racing around beach hitting large soccer ball. Last scene shows ball hit out to sea, cuts to male driver peering out through windscreen astounded as if ball went out into space.

8. Nissan Xtrail Xtreme

While slow, loose brass band music plays, a daggy man in a bowling hat hits a croquet ball; a glasses-wearing older man fumbles with a shuttlecock inside a community hall; a pale younger man slowly hits a ball on a piece of elastic outside a Recreation Centre. "There are sports... and there are extreme sports." Music changes to fast rock beat, and images of extreme skiing/ski jumping, ayaking down a waterfall, a boy twirling upside down on a skateboard, someone stacking it on a mountain bike. Cut to two young men in vehicle, driving over hills, off-road, throwing bikes into the back of car, driving across a muddy creek, red dusty desert, then through water and clear white spray. End shot: black screen with Nissan logo.

9. Speed Cameras - Road Safety Council, WA Police

Cars on various streets with speed camera taking photos. If you thought you were safe in the back streets, if you thought you were safe speeding on the highway, if you thought you were safe speeding on the open road, if you thought you were safe speeding anywhere think again. Because there's no such thing as safe speeding and now, there's nowhere you won't get caught.

10. NRMA Rev

A young male driver with wrap-around mirrored sunglasses and gelled hair, pulls up at traffic lights. With loud music playing, he lowers the window, looking through at the car and driver next to him, challenging them. Taking off without looking ahead, he hits a pedestrian.

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11. RTA Seat belt

Shows licence being chewed up in seat belt holder as stern, deep male voice announces double demerits for seat belts this Easter. Slogan: No belt, no brains.

12. RTA - country roads

Two guys in a ute are talking about some deal they'd made, with shots of driver and passenger looking at each other, inter-cut with images of speedo needle at 110, then 115kph. They see a school bus around a bend and panic. The passenger covers his head, the driver swerves and hits a tree. Inside the bus, the driver stops and tells students to 'stay there', but they all go to look out the back window anyway. We see the bus driver run over to the ute/tree and stand back, shoulders slumped, after seeing the damage. Cut to black screen and sound of idling bus and country sounds, with tag line in white: "8 out of 10 speeding deaths on country roads occur on bends".

Other ads screened

Alfa Jet Thrust, Barina Circles, Integra Type R, Falcon Ute being Followed, Myhome UK, Camry Engine, Falcon Enough, Julie and Son UK, Laser SR2, Seat Belt, Fatigue, Country Road Toll Northern NSW, Brothers in Laser, Holden Ute Crop Circles, Current Affair Thunderstruck, Car Ad Impact, ASB Ford Ute, Peugeot 206.

Table 1: Car and road safety advertisements shown to focus groups

Bankstown	Bathurst 1	Bathurst 2	Fairfield	Mudgee
Alfa Jet Thrust	RTA Speed Country	RTA Speed Country	Alfa Jet Thrust	RTA Speed Country
Alfa Quads	Police Reverse	RTA Slomo	Camry Engine	Police Reverse
Barina	Hilux Bugger	Integra Type R	Julie and Son	CRV Louts
Falcon Enough	Escape Soccer	Monaro Game	Laser SR2 Hot	Speed Cameras
RTA Speed Country	ABS Ford Ute	Hilux Bugger	RTA Slomo	Monaro Game
Police Reverse	BMW Woman	Falcon Ute being followed	Seat Belts	Hilux Bugger
RTA Slomo	Mitsubishi	Holden Ute Crop Circles	CRV Louts	Escape Soccer
CRV Louts		Current Affairs Thunderstruck	Monaro Game	NRMA Rev
Speed Cameras		Car Ad Impact	Mitsubishi	Mitsubishi
Monaro Game		Mitsubishi		

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Blue Mountains	Redfern 1	Redfern 2	University
RTA Speed Country	RTA Speed Country	RTA Speed Country	RTA Speed Country
Police Reverse	Police Reverse	Police Reverse	CRV Louts
CRV Louts	Speed Cameras	Seat Belts	Speed Cameras
Speed Cameras	Escape Soccer	CRV Louts	Monaro Game
Monaro Game	BMW Woman	Speed Cameras	Hilux Buzzer
Hilux Buzzer		Country Road Toll	Escape Soccer
Escape Soccer		Brothers in Laser	BMW Woman
Current Affairs Thunderstruck		Monaro Game	NRMA Rev
NRMA Rev		Hilux Buzzer	
Xtrail Xtreme		BMW Woman	
		NRMA Rev	
		Xtrail Xtreme	