

Local Government NSW - RH Dougherty Award

Category: Excellence in Communication Submission
Council: Port Macquarie-Hastings Council
Entry: Meet the Hastings - Which Bin? campaign
Division: C - Population more than 70,000

1. Overall Communication Strategy

Meet the Hastings! They're our quirky family helping our community change behaviour in managing household waste... for a cleaner, more sustainable local environment.



In 2014, an inordinate amount of time, energy and money was invested in a new 3 bin residential waste system (red, yellow, green) however, two years down the track food waste and recycling was being sent to landfill when it could have been recovered in the green or yellow bins and contamination in the yellow recycling bin was high. In addition, community sentiment towards Council's waste initiatives was negative, and engagement low.

Residents needed to be encouraged to change their household waste behaviours, and take greater responsibility for effectively using their green and yellow bins. If they did this, then ultimately the community could begin to reduce how much waste they contributed to landfill.

Waste education needed more than just one-way messaging for what is considered by many a 'dry' topic. More specifically education messages about how to use the 3 bins correctly needed to be out of the box, less one dimensional and far more engaging in a cluttered communications market.

2. Strategy Development

Research into household waste management in the Port Macquarie-Hastings Local Government Area (LGA) conducted by APC Waste Consultants in 2017 identified:

- 43% of waste in the red bin is material that should be in the green bin
- 9% of waste in the red bin should be in the yellow bin
- 96% of soiled/contaminated paper, is in the red bin but should be in the green bin

Also in 2017, Port Macquarie-Hastings Council (PMHC) commissioned research to provide insight into how best to communicate with the local community, identifying that: *Unprompted awareness of Council communications campaigns was extremely low, with seven in ten respondents unable to recall any campaigns.*

It was also identified that channel diversity was key in gaining greater reach for our diverse, local audience. Current messaging was not easily adaptable and effective across a broad range of channels, content was technical and failed to meet performance targets. Waste messaging needed to encourage simple changes in behaviour that would have a large impact.

The strategy also needed to consider the somewhat conservative nature of the market whilst delivering a highly creative concept that was simple to execute and cost effective to develop and deliver. The concept needed to be relatable to our broad local demographic.... quirky but believable, credible and impactful... an animated family was the identified solution.

The overarching goal was to encourage waste avoidance, and encourage positive behaviours that result in less waste going to landfill, saving our community money and minimising the impact of waste on the local environment.

The specific objectives of the 'Which Bin?' campaign were to:

1. Develop a creative tool that really connects with the community for the 'Which Bin?' message & future waste messaging
2. Deliver practical, easy to understand waste information via the PMHC website and increase visitation (page views) to the 'pmhc.nsw.gov.au/bins' URL by 20% in 2018

3. Increase direct traffic to the PMHC website 'Bins' page by 50% in 2018, encouraging residents to visit this page as the 'single source of truth' in how to use their bins
4. Reach a total of 800 downloads of the WasteInfo App by end 2018
5. Reduce the amount of food waste found in the red bin stream by 10%

The 'Which Bin?' campaign targeted households who have a 3 bin domestic waste system (93% of all residents). While it did not specifically target aged, disabled or disadvantaged groups, a multi-channel campaign was designed to reach a broad demographic.

3. Budget

The 'Which Bin?' campaign was the first campaign to be rolled out using the Hastings Family.

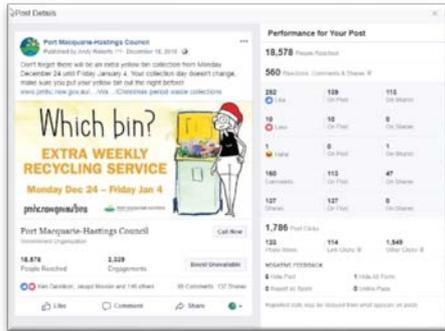
Budget January - December 2018

Cost	Channel/Activity	Outcome
\$960.00	Concept development	2D animated family of 5
\$12520.00	Education videos - Green bin video and Yellow bin video	+ 2min in duration each showcasing what happens to waste in the green and yellow bins
\$3960.00	Production of TVCs	30 and 15 secs Which Bin? TVCs
\$240.00	Production of Radio advertisement	30 secs Which Bin? spot
\$288.00	CAD delivery fees	various
\$600.00	Additional character illustrations	Hi-res illustrations for print channels
\$8995.00	Local commercial television advertising (Prime 7, 7 Mate, 7 Two)	Sport sponsorship in local News Placement across 3 channels x 6 weeks 159 spots Prime 7/ 79 spots Prime Mate 71 spots 7Two
\$3625.00	Local cinema advertising	Every session, each week x 12 weeks
\$4995.00	Local commercial radio advertising (MMM & HIT FM)	111 spots from Feb - April
\$8733.63	Bus back advertising	2 bus backs x 24 weeks
\$1570.00	Fridge Magnets	3,500 fridge magnets
\$3787.07	Press Advertising in local newspapers Port News, Wauchope Gazette and Camden Haven Courier	Half page ads
\$6500.00	Local commercial television advertising (WIN 10 - MasterChef sponsorship).	30 secs x 169 for 13 weeks
\$563.00	Pull up banners	2 x double sided banners
\$145.00	Shopping Centre Displays	National Recycling Week 4 x shopping centre displays - Port Macquarie, Wauchope, Lake Cathie, Lake Innes
\$279.82	Facebook Advertising	Feb x 2 weeks
\$57761.52	Total	

4. Distribution Methods

A broad range of communication channels, both paid and non-paid, were used to distribute the 'Which Bin?' message to our audience including:

Paid Channels	Non-Paid channels
Television - Prime 7 and WIN TV	Council Community Update e-newsletter
Radio - MMM and HIT FM	Digital Billboard - in CBD
Print - Port News, Camden Haven Courier, Wauchope Gazette	Facebook Page - PMHC
Bus Backs - Busways	Staff Connect (Internal communications)
Cinema - Majestic Port Macquarie	Media Releases
Shopping Centres- Port Central, Settlement City Port Macquarie, Wauchope IGA, Lake Innes & Lake Cathie	PMHC Website - www.pmhc.nsw.gov.au/bins update of bins pages/slider/spotlight section
Collateral - fridge magnets distributed via Customer Service & at shopping centre displays	Council Community Now Newsletter (in rates notices)
Facebook Advertising	Bus stop signage (Council owned)
	YouTube - PMHC
	Mayor's Message radio cross
	Market Day stalls
	Factsheets - website downloads



Facebook Post



Green bin education video



Bus Back



Print Advertising

5. Communication of Message

Meet the Hastings Family... Harry, Lucy, Hannah, Joey and Timmy, your regular family trying to do their best to manage their household waste. Harry (Dad) is your average knock about bloke, Lucy is a yoga loving mum, and their kids Hannah, the teenage daughter who is just a little too cool for school but perfect for relating to digital savvy teenagers; Joey the not so engaged teenage son and Timmy the younger sibling who is our (slightly annoying) waste warrior is using pester power to teach the rest of us.

The message is, 'Which Bin? Choose green and yellow first so your red bin won't burst!'

While the 'Which Bin?' message is serious, the Hastings family delivers it with a large dose of humour and a sprinkling of light heartedness. The message addresses the issues identified in the research where more than 50% of items found in the red bin don't actually belong there. From this point the green and yellow bins became the focus.

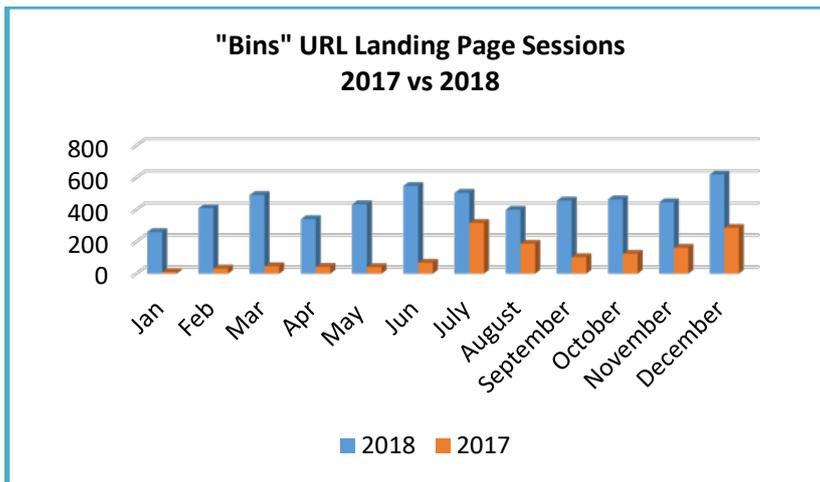
The short 30 second scripts for television and radio creatively addressed the problem items e.g. food scraps including meat and bones, dirty serviettes and recycling incorrectly placed in the red bin. Cleaning up after dinner, Harry isn't sure what goes in which bin? He yells out from the kitchen - which bin for meat bones, which bin for a serviette with some kind of food in it and he cheekily asks which bin for mum's cooking (yes a few sneaky sniggers ensue)? The family, doing their own thing in the living room sing out in unison which bin each item should go in.

6. Results

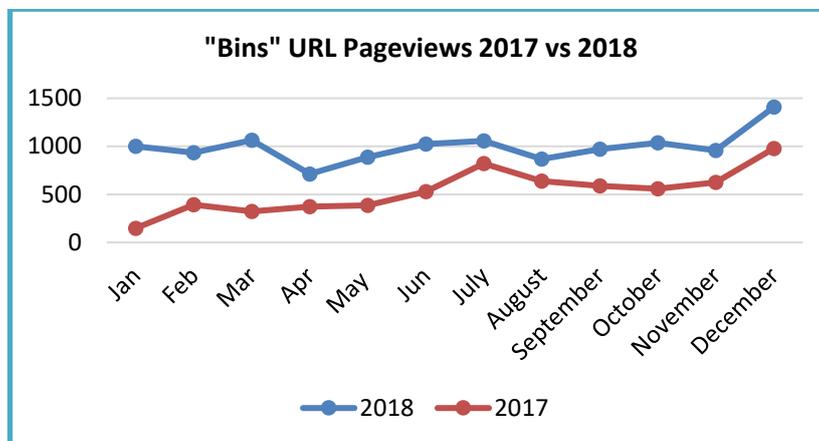
The call to action for most channels was to the 'bins' landing page on Council's website, "Not sure which bin? Visit Council's website pmhc.nsw.gov.au/bins for more". On radio, listeners are asked to visit Council's website and search for 'bins'. This web page and subsequent pages have been revamped to include the Hastings family and copy rewritten to be more customer friendly.

281% increase in direct visits to www.pmhc.nsw.gov.au/bins (Target 50% increase)

281% increase in direct visitation to the 'bins' URL compared to the 2017 (5,379 in 2018 vs 1,411 in 2017).



87.5% increase in page views to 'bins' page on PMHC website (Target 20% increase). Page views increased by 87.5% (11,969 in 2018 vs 6383 in 2017).



927 downloads of the WastelInfo App during 2018 - (844 downloads in 2017)

Based on early waste data and our surveys there is evidence of greater recovery of organic waste and a reduction in domestic waste going to landfill. An audit of waste to landfill will be completed in 2020.

300 surveys completed. Survey results highlighted:

- 84% of respondents put food scraps in the green bin or composted at home.
- 73% always flattened their recycled cartons/boxes
- 68% always rinsed containers and jars
- 75% always used reusable shopping bags to reduce single use plastics
- 46% used Council's website for waste information

7. Evaluation

Originally, the concept was considered by many in the organisation as high risk. It was a significant departure from traditional Council communications programs. Gaining executive approval to implement an animated family concept was a pivotal moment. The community acceptance and connection with the Hastings family is strong. They are the face of waste in the Port Macquarie-Hastings. At community events and shopping centre displays, residents come up and talk to us about the Hastings family and how much they love what we're doing. Keeping the website current, the waste messages relevant and momentum going is important.

8. Unique Features

Overwhelmingly, attitudes towards the Hastings family and using the green and yellow bins was extremely positive. The Hastings family has also been the topic of conversation in a number of the Mayor's messages and reportedly the topic of conversations at dinner parties too! A suite of collateral and videos, with linked messages around waste avoidance, recycling right and litter have also been developed throughout 2018 using the Hastings family. In December, the family recorded their first Christmas message asking the community to avoid extra packaging, buy gifts that will last and reduce, reuse and recycle. The out of the box messaging is ongoing and will continue to support avoiding waste to save money and our local environment.