




**Case Study in Academic and Industry Collaboration:
The development of an adolescent targeted sun
protection intervention in NSW**

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Outline of presentation

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Background



- **Centre for Health Initiatives**
 - Research strength, University of Wollongong
 - Established 2004
 - Focus on health, social marketing & behaviour change
- **Cancer Council NSW**
 - Leading cancer charity in NSW
 - Established in 1953

The collaboration



- Collaborations between academia and industry encouraged.
- Schemes have a moderate effect on academics' propensity to work with industry (Bozeman and Gaughan, 2007), and industry groups recognising the value of engaging in partnerships in joint knowledge production (Lam, 2007).
- Collaborations are also potentially problematic:
 - diverging agendas (Mitev and Venters, 2009);
 - differing priorities regarding the dissemination of findings (Welsh et al., 2007).

The collaboration



- In 2005, the partnership was established to explore the use of social marketing theory and practice in campaigns to improve sun protection.
- In 2008 the partners jointly submitted and were awarded a Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Grant to develop a program to improve the sun protection behaviours of NSW adolescents.
- The partnership is now in the second year of a three-year commitment.

The vision



Implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive sun protection program for adolescents

The overall aim of this project is to increase the scope and frequency of sun protective behaviours by adolescents such that their overall risk of developing sun-related cancers is significantly reduced.

Factors



- Organisational
- Operational
- Environmental

Organisational Factors



- Evidence driven practice has been a clear and consistent commitment by both organisations.
- The significance of social marketing as a specific strategic priority and approach however has been a key point of negotiation.
 - Use of terminology
 - Strategic direction

Operational Factors



- The most critical operational element for success in this project has been the people;
 - Skill, time and commitment of the people working on this project.
- Numerous staff changes have occurred in both organisations since the commencement of this project, requiring flexibility by both organisations;
 - Timing of deliverables
 - Changes to the allocation of tasks
 - The overall commitment to the project.

Environmental Factors



- Increased uncertainty and changing resources within both organisations as a result of the global financial crisis has been a factor in future planning.
- While the impact on operational factors on a day-to-day basis is minimal, it is an important contextual challenge for the partnership.

The results



- During the summer of 2009-2010:
 - In two communities of NSW, an environmental intervention with local government was implemented, including trial of a newly developed ‘Sun Sound’ played at regular intervals on beaches and pools. This activity was led by the Cancer Council NSW.
 - In two other communities of NSW the social marketing program ‘Don’t let the sun get under your skin message’ was rolled out. Including posters, sun-teams on beaches & in schools taking UV photos and promoting sun protection with teenagers. This activity was led by the Centre for Health Initiatives.

The poster features a split-face image of a young man. The left side of his face is clear and healthy, while the right side is dark and shadowed, representing UV damage. Below the image are two labels: 'WHAT YOU SEE' under the clear side and 'WHAT YOU CAN'T SEE' under the shadowed side. To the right of the image is the 'BE SUN SOUND' logo, which consists of a stylized sun with concentric circles inside, and below it, four icons representing a beach, a pool, a sun hat, and a beach ball. At the bottom of the poster, the text reads: 'UV light shows sun damage that you can't see... yet. The better you look after your skin now, the better you look for life. DON'T LET THE SUN GET UNDER YOUR SKIN'. Below this text are four small circular icons.

www.sunsound.com.au

Conclusion and Implications



- There is a substantial difference between the nature of the partnership as it was initially conceptualised and as it is today.
- So far, the success of the project is about a clear commitment to the project and to problem solving as the project unfolds.
- Future collaborations between industry and academia should acknowledge the complexity of partnerships and establish appropriate procedures that ensure the changing nature of the partnership is captured.

References



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