



Ipsos Reid

Canada

Pre-testing of Creative Elements of the Winter 2013 Skills Initiative advertising campaign—EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



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1.0 Background and Objectives

For the past three years, the Government of Canada has aired the successful Better Jobs ad campaign with the objective of raising awareness among Canadian youth of key government programs and services that could help them obtain the education and skills they need to get better jobs. Budget 2013 includes new measures related to skills and training. Building off the success of the Better Jobs campaign, ESDC's new Skills Initiative campaign will:

- raise Canadians' awareness of Government of Canada programs and services designed to connect Canadians with available jobs; and
- drive target audiences to ActionPlan.gc.ca/Jobs or to 1 800 O-Canada to get more information from the Government of Canada on programs and services that can help them make informed education and career choices

ESDC identified a need to conduct qualitative research in order to pre-test creative materials flowing from the new ESDC Skills Initiative campaign.

The goal of the creative testing was to determine whether the creative treatment resonates with the target audience and meets the advertising campaign's objectives (specific objectives will be included in a project briefing with the selected supplier) and to determine what changes, if any, are needed in the creative. Pre-testing the creative elements of the advertising campaign will be critical to the success of the overall campaign.

More specifically qualitative research focused on the following elements:

- Main message
- Clarity of the message
- Success in getting the message across
- Purpose of the advertisement
- Intended audience
- Emotional reaction
- Stand out elements

2.0 Methodology

Ipsos-Reid conducted a series of 8 focus groups in Halifax, Quebec City, Brampton¹ and Red Deer with members of the general public. Two groups conducted in each location. Focus groups in Halifax, Brampton and Red Deer were conducted in English; Quebec City focus groups were in French. All focus group attendees were between 18 and 54 years of age. In addition, screening questions were used to ensure a good mix of gender, academic attainment among participants in all sessions. Furthermore, the recruitment screener included questions designed to ensure that all those recruited were fully capable of participating in focus group discussions.

Prior to commencement of focus groups, participants were required to produce a piece of government issued photo ID in order to verify their identity and eligibility to participate in focus group sessions. In

¹ Groups with Brampton residents were conducted at a facility in Mississauga.
[ESDC]—Creative Concept Focus Groups—Summary of Findings



In addition, all participants were informed of Ipsos Reid’s intent to videotape and audiotape sessions and asked to sign a written consent form authorizing the use of video and audio taping. Focus group participants were reminded of the purpose of the research, the study sponsor and Ipsos Reid’s mandate to carry out the research. All participants were reminded that their participation in this study was voluntary and that any and all input collected during the course of the focus groups would remain confidential.

All those having participated in the sessions received a 75\$ honorarium as a token of appreciation for their participation.

Of note: Ipsos Reid rotated order of presentation of creative concepts tested from one location to the other in order to control for any response bias.

Total expenditures (invoiced by supplier): \$45,032.79

All focus group sessions were conducted between November 14th and November 20th, 2013.

The table below provides a quick overview of focus group location, composition and dates.

Location	Audience	Date
Halifax	General Public 18-54 years of age	November 14 th
Quebec City (French)	General Public 18-54 years of age	November 18 th
Brampton	General Public 18-54 years of age	November 19 th
Red Deer	General Public 18-54 years of age	November 20 th

Note to Reader

Qualitative data from focus group discussions are reviewed by the researchers, who draw out continuities and synthesize the main themes, critical "hot buttons", "typical" responses and general levels of agreement/disagreement voiced during the sessions. The analysis of qualitative findings yields tendencies and indications of how the target audience perceives the study issues. However, results are not representative of the general population. Qualitative research involves a limited number of people who are specially selected according to pre-determined attributes. Only quantitative surveys that have a robust number of respondents who have been selected randomly from the target population can be generalized as to represent the broader population.



Political Neutrality Statement

I hereby certify as Senior Officer of Ipsos Reid that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Communications Policy of the Government of Canada and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not include information on electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, and standings with the electorate or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leaders.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marc Beaudoin".

Marc Beaudoin
Vice President
Ipsos Reid Public Affairs

3.0 Executive Summary

Most Important Issues

- Feedback collected during the most important issue discussion underscored levels of concern related to employment more generally speaking, and the desire for increased efforts to address what some see as a need for more ‘good paying’ or ‘skilled job’ opportunities, with a number of participants in all groups mentioning this.

Reaction to Concepts Tested

- Concepts #1 and #2 were most effective in communicating that the Government of Canada can provide information and resources on skills development, retraining assistance and overall job search resources. Concept #3 (Aboriginal Training Program) was less effective in this regard due to its perceived appeal to a more specific targeted audience (Aboriginals). As such this concept was less effective in retaining viewers’ attention from beginning to end which in turn led to confusion about the message communicated in this instance.
- In relative terms, the third concept (“Skills”) was fairly quickly dismissed in all groups as irrelevant, not compelling, and not informative.
- Words most often used to describe concept#1 (“Testimonial”) were: realistic, relatable and illustrative of what kind of assistance is available.
- Concept #2 (“Facts and Figures”) appeal tended to be based on its presentation of what some saw as more factual information which could appeal to a broader audience. The inclusion of detailed facts and figures did not go unnoticed and was generally well received. Many also said this concept was more in line with what they have come to expect from Government ads (to the point, information based).
- Sponsorship was clear for all three concepts tested – these are Government of Canada ads.

4.0 Issues Facing the Country for Government Focus

Initially participants were asked what they felt was the single most important issue currently facing the country today and deserving of the federal government's attention. Participant feedback can be grouped into three broad themes:

1. Issues related to the economy including the need for more jobs, job creation and a particular focus on skilled job opportunities as well as references to cost of living.
2. Issues related to the environment with a particular focus on natural resource extraction and potential environmental impacts for future generations.
3. Various social policy issues including healthcare, seniors, immigration, housing and poverty.

In terms of the economy, concern focussed on personal and public debt levels. Comments tended to focus on jobs and unemployment, affordability of housing, and interest rates. A few noted an apparent disconnect between recently reported number of jobs created and what they have witnessed in their day to day lives. The consensus among group participants was that increased efforts needed to be put into creating 'good jobs' or 'skilled jobs' rather than low paying and part time jobs.

A number of participants were of the view that more 'good job' options were needed for those entering the workforce, as well as in particular regions (notably the Atlantic provinces). There were also references to employment insurance, and how the recent rule changes have led to added strains on certain families.

References to the environment were generally framed in the context of the importance of balancing our economic and environmental interests; specifically the importance of ensuring resource extraction was done in an environmentally responsible way. Other major areas of concern included health care, the social and economic impacts of an aging population and sustainability of the current housing market to name a few.

When asked what was heard about job creation or skills development, a few made references to the Economic Action Plan and seemingly the 'Better Jobs' ads – but few mentioned anything beyond that.