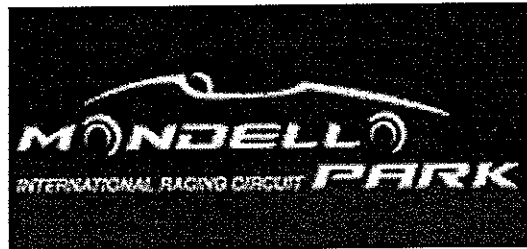


ISM

**IRISH SCHOOL
OF MOTORING**



The Client:	ISM/Mondello Park
The Agency:	Fleishman-Hillard
The Entry:	ISM/Mondello Park <i>Early Drive</i> programme for Transition Year Students
The Category:	Best Consumer PR campaign less than €20,000

Background

The Irish School of Motoring is Ireland's leading school of motoring. It is long established and innovative in meeting the needs of today's competitive marketplace.

Mondello Park in Co. Kildare is Ireland's only International car and motor bike racing circuit which also hosts a racing school for those with ambitions of racing at a different level to the average person.

One of the greatest problems in Irish society today is that of young drivers being killed and injured in motor accidents due to inexperience, speed, consumption of alcohol and all the personality and behavioural traits exhibited by people of their age.

In most European Countries there is compulsory driving tuition at school but not in Ireland. Young people can obtain a provisional licence, pass a simple theory test and then begin driving.

ISM and Mondello Park have come together to target Transition Year teachers and their students with a unique "Early Drive" programme which is designed to educate students of 16 years on the responsibilities attached to driving, to enable them to learn to drive BEFORE they reach the regulatory 17 years of age, to experience some of the hazards to driving and to enjoy a good day out.

Brief

The Early Drive programme is centred on Mondello Park and offers a multitude of features which the students will enjoy. Apart from being hugely beneficial and reasonably priced at €55, it is designed to be an enjoyable experience. It involves a Safety First programme in the classroom, a demonstration of what happens when a car has to stop suddenly, a simulation of the impact of a car crash, a 40-minute drive with an instructor on the Mondello Park track, and a visit to the Mondello Park motor racing museum.

ISM/Mondello Park asked F-H to submit a proposal for a public relations programme which would launch and quickly establish the Early Drive programme as a "must" for 16-year-old transition year students throughout the country.

Statement of Objectives:

Following months of research and testing of the programme, ISM/Mondello Park had a number of objectives when hiring F-H.

- There should be a high profile media and KIP launch for the Early Drive programme
- There should be a focused targeting of key stakeholders such as the Ministers for Transport, Education and Environment and their Departments
- To obtain Government endorsement of the Early Drive Programme
- To obtain approval for Early Drive from such important bodies as the National Safety Council
- To obtain the support of Local Authority Road Safety Officers
- To obtain the support of the Garda Siochana
- There should be a focused targeting of Transition Year teachers
- To encourage TY teachers to include Early Drive as an attractive and very beneficial component of transition year
- There should be a campaign focused on Transition Year students, especially those of 16 who would soon obtain their first driving licence
- The campaign should drive bookings from school groups but also individuals who were anxious to experience Early Drive
- To encourage parents to subscribe to the courses as an essential part of their child's preparation for future life
- To re-enforce in the public mind that ISM is the pre-eminent school of motoring in Ireland, offering innovative and extremely useful products aimed at all markets
- To communicate to target audiences the benefits of doing business with ISM
- To re-enforce Mondello Park as a superb venue not just for motor sports but for its motor racing school and corporate entertainment

Target Audiences:

- School principals and TY teachers throughout Ireland but particularly in the Dublin and Greater Leinster areas.
- Transition year students aged 16 years
- TY student's parents and families
- Government Ministers with responsibility for road safety, environment and education
- Political parties in the Oireachtas
- Garda Siochana
- National Safety Council
- Local Authorities
- National and Greater Leinster area media

Programme Planning and Strategy:

F-H devised a strategic communications plan which was specifically geared to meeting the objectives of the client. A spectacular launch was planned which would garner tremendous media coverage. Prior to that, however, it was necessary to engage in detailed planning and preparation. This was designed to ensure that key stakeholders were not only briefed in advance about Early Drive but were fully supportive of its objectives.

F-H and the client engaged in a campaign of awareness-raising which involved the delivery of colourful brochures about Early Drive to 3,000 Transition Year teachers throughout the country. We also briefed the Garda Síochána, and the National Safety Council.

The immediate reaction from these key stakeholders was very positive with promises of support. The National Safety Council was most encouraging and undertook to work with ISM/Mondello in encouraging the Government to foster this or similar schemes to help reduce road deaths. Both undertook to attend the official launch.

It was vital to obtain Government support for the scheme. F-H briefed the special adviser to the Minister for Transport, Martin Cullen, who was very receptive to the idea of Early Drive.

F-H also briefed the Minister for the Environment and Local Government, Dick Roche and his special adviser Sean Fitzpatrick who were also very enthusiastic. Minister Roche agreed to launch the Early Drive programme, immediately ensuring that it had Government endorsement, something of particular importance to the schools.

Groups of students were also brought to Mondello Park to experience the Early Drive programme prior to the official launch to ensure that last minute refinements could be made. These were very successful and only very minor adjustments had to be made.

F-H devised the official launch programme which would be newsworthy, photogenic, entertaining and impactful.

All the stakeholders mentioned above were invited to the launch at Mondello Park. This included Road Safety officers from the 27 local authorities around the country, local politicians, transition year teachers and, of course, a group of students from various schools in Dublin and Kildare.

Because it was a 20 mile journey from Dublin, an intensive media information campaign was undertaken to ensure a good turnout.

The launch was a major success, with RTE TV, TV3 and Sky News sending news teams and the attendance of the Irish Times, the Irish Independent, The Irish Examiner, Today FM and Independent Network News. Many other radio stations carried reports and interviews done over the phone.

Government endorsement of Early Drive was fulsomely provided by the Minister for the Environment, Dick Roche who highly recommended the programme. This endorsement was enhanced by the attendance and support from the Minister of State at the Department of Health and Children, Sean Power T.D.

The launch event included a short video in which the mother of two young men who had died in car crashes was shown, the launch speeches and then practical demonstrations.

Minister Roche and students were asked to place cones on the track at spots where they thought a car, braking at 30 miles an hour, would be expected to stop. The car was then driven down the track, braked at the designated spot but ploughed through all the cones, thus demonstrating how difficult it is to gauge braking distances.

The Minister and students also tested simulators on braking and the impact of accidents while a melon was dropped from a 30-ft high tower, demonstrating in a dramatic fashion what would happen to a person's unprotected head on impact in a car crash. The TV cameras also went with the students as they had their first experiences of driving the test cars in a safe environment.

The Measurement Stage

- Not only did Early Drive receive Government approval from a Cabinet Minister and a Minister of State, Minister Roche undertook to brief the Minister for Education and Science with a view to including such programmes in the Transition Year syllabus
- Minister Roche's support was enhanced by the attendance and endorsement by the Minister of State, Sean Power
- The media coverage was outstanding from RTE TV, Sky News Ireland, TV3, Today FM, INN, KFM, FM104, 98FM, East Coast Radio, LMFm from Louth Meath, Irish Times, Irish Independent, Irish Examiner, Leinster Leader, and the Kildare Nationalist. The Irish Times responded to an invitation to feature Early Drive, with a journalist, a non-driver, taking part in the programme and describing his experiences.
- The National Safety Council has joined with ISM/Mondello Park in a research programme which will monitor the progress of those students who have and those who have not experienced Early Drive before taking to the road
- NSC will support efforts of ISM/Mondello Park to have a safe driving programme formally adopted by the Transition Year syllabus
- The Garda Síochána endorsed the Early Drive programme in TV and other media interviews
- Road Safety Officers from as far away as Donegal attended the launch
- Early Drive courses are to be established in Cork and Galway because of the demand
- 1,322 pupils have participated in Early Drive in the first three months
- The ISM/Mondello Park projections were for 20 schools in the first six months
- In fact 34 schools have booked in the first three months and bookings are being taken on a daily basis
- A full time co-ordinator has been appointed to handle the Early Drive business-this was unanticipated
- Extra cars for driving instruction have been acquired
- Several new casual staff have been brought in to accommodate the numbers
- Children with disabilities have been accommodated
- More than 80% of participants have come from outside Dublin
- The number of students applying for the course independent of their school is remarkably high-three open days have been held to accommodate them
- There have been 80 inquiries from Transition Year teachers
- Many have undertaken to schedule Early Drive for the next school year as it came on stream during the current one.

Budget

The public relations budget for the Early Drive programme was €5,000.