

**MRPA • KINMAN**

**communications**

## **Awards for Excellence in Public Relations 2007**

**Client:** MEAS (Mature Enjoyment of Alcohol in Society Limited)

**Agency:** MRPA KINMAN Communications

**Entry:** The Communications Campaign to launch *drinkaware.ie*

**Category:** Integrated Campaigns

**drinkaware.ie**  
enjoy alcohol sensibly

**The Communications Campaign to launch *drinkaware.ie*  
November 2006 –Mid January 2007**

**A. The Brief**

An Integrated Communication Campaign is a single strategy that incorporates the expertise of Public Relations, Advertising and Marketing to support one common goal. In this instance the communication strategy concerns the launch of *drinkaware.ie* by MEAS (Mature Enjoyment of Alcohol in Society Limited).

MEAS is a not-for-profit organisation that was established in 2002 by the drinks industry's main companies and organisations to promote and support responsibility within the industry and to work with others to reduce alcohol related harm.

MEAS envisions an Irish society where alcohol is enjoyed in a mature, sensible and appropriate manner. To date, MEAS has focused its resources on three key areas: underage drinking; excessive drinking; and drink driving. In order to reduce alcohol abuse and related harm MEAS actively:

- Promotes social responsibility among producers, marketers, distributors and retailers of alcohol in Ireland; and
- Promotes the mature enjoyment of alcohol amongst consumers, in partnership with Government and other appropriate bodies.

In recent years, the problem of alcohol abuse has become increasingly prevalent in Irish Society. MEAS aims to promote messages of responsible drinking in the public sphere in a manner that is neither too preachy or judgemental. It also has to contend with a bias against it in some media quarters because of its connection with the drinks industry.

To address such issues, MEAS decided to refocus its resources into creating a consumer facing medium to transmit its key alcohol responsibility messaging. In an increasingly technology orientated era, websites have become a key communication tool. Drawing on experiences of UK responsible drinking organisation in particular, The Portman Group, MEAS developed *drinkaware.ie* as a suitable consumer interface for MEAS. As its names suggests, *drinkaware.ie* is also a specially designed website.

MRPA KINMAN Communications has provided PR support to MEAS on an ongoing basis since 2004. Advertising and marketing strategies were also developed to complement MEAS's PR support programme. The brief for MRPA KINMAN Communications was to develop and implement a PR plan to launch *drinkaware.ie*.

**B. Statement of Objectives**

- To establish *drinkaware.ie* as the consumer interface of MEAS
- To promote the purpose of *drinkaware.ie* – a MEAS initiative
- To promote the credibility of the *drinkaware.ie* initiative
- To promote buy-in to key functions of *drinkaware.ie*, especially greater personal awareness of one's drinking habits, and whether they conform to safe drinking standards
- To promote and drive traffic to the *drinkaware.ie* website.

**C. Programme Planning and Strategy**

It was decided at the outset that the communications strategy for the launch of *drinkaware.ie* would be an integrated one comprising PR, Advertising and Marketing Support. Advertising and Marketing support was centred on the creation and execution of outdoor, radio and TV advertising. Male and

Female radio advertisements of 30 seconds were aired on stations in Dublin, Cork, Galway, Limerick and Waterford. Male and Female TV advertisements of 30 and 10 seconds were aired on RTE, TV3, TG4, Sky, E4, C6, MTV and Paramount. Outdoor Advertising included T-Sides and Supersides in Dublin, 48 and 6 sheets nationally. Internet advertising included banners on relevant educational, student, health and discussion sites.

PR support focused on increasing the awareness of *drinkaware.ie*, and the fact that it was a MEAS initiative as well as promoting both the purpose and credibility of that initiative.

*drinkaware.ie* provided consumers with detailed and accurate information about how drink affects men, women and teenagers; how drink affects the brain, and when not to drink, among many issues. The challenge for *drinkaware.ie* was to be perceived as a credible, trustworthy, relevant and useful website as opposed to just another 'social responsibility' initiative by the drinks industry.

MRPA KINMAN Communications provided PR support and advice to MEAS throughout the creation process of the *drinkaware.ie* campaign and website and the various advertising and marketing executions around it. The slogan for the *drinkaware.ie* campaign was identified as "*know the one that's one too many*".

### **Key Messages**

Essential to the success of any communications programme is the establishment of precise, clear key messages. The key messages for *drinkaware.ie* were:

- *drinkaware.ie* promotes responsible use of alcohol, while at the same time, challenging anti-social behaviour.
- You can have a great time while respecting alcohol and respecting yourself
- *drinkaware.ie* promotes thinking about alcohol in terms of standard drink consumption; the Department of Health & Children defines low risk alcohol consumption as 14 standard drinks per week for women and 21 for men.

### **Target audiences**

The target audiences of *drinkaware.ie* were identified as:

- Male and Females aged between 18-29 (Bullseye 22)
- Health professionals
- Government Departments
- Media
- Public
- Union of Students in Ireland
- Associated organisations

The PR element of the overall integrated campaign around the launch of *drinkaware.ie* was two-fold:

1. The launch of *drinkaware.ie* on November 6th 2006
2. Ongoing PR support of the *drinkaware.ie* campaign

#### **1. The Launch of *drinkaware.ie***

Prior to the launch of *drinkaware.ie* letters were sent from MEAS to various Government Ministers, Advisers, Party Leaders, Relevant Opposition Party Spokespeople, Healthcare Agencies, An Garda Síochána and the Union of Students Ireland informing them of the initiative. The aim of this communication was to create an undercurrent of discussion around the imminent launch of *drinkaware.ie* and to generate support for it.

To add publicity weight to the official launch of the campaign, a TV personality was sought to be the 'face of the *drinkaware.ie* campaign'. Lorraine Keane, TV3 presenter was chosen following careful consideration as to who would be suitable for association with *drinkaware.ie* and, in turn, MEAS, on the basis of age, profile, public perception, etc. Lorraine fitted the bill; she was relevant to the target market, trendy, fun and not portrayed in the media as using alcohol irresponsibly. The CEO of MEAS, Ms. Fionnuala Sheehan, was identified as the spokesperson for *drinkaware.ie*.

A photo-shoot was held in Merrion Square prior to the launch on the 6th November, featuring Lorraine Keane and Fionnuala Sheehan with a giant *drinkaware.ie* calculator (replicating a feature of the website itself). A press release and accompanying photo was distributed on Sunday 5th November to all National and Regional media in advance of the official launch on Monday 6th November, which garnered significant media coverage.

On Monday 20th November the outdoor poster campaign advertising *drinkaware.ie* was launched. The extensive spend by MEAS on advertising of €1.75 million was communicated in a further press release to the relevant media and marketing sections of the national papers. Throughout all communication executions the same key messages, in particular the *drinkaware.ie* tag line, "*know the one that's one too many*" was used and repeated.

The launch of *drinkaware.ie* received significant print and broadcast coverage both nationally and regionally.

## **2. Ongoing PR support for the *drinkaware.ie* campaign**

The launch of *drinkaware.ie* was only stage one of the overall campaign; what followed was a continued intensive integrated communications campaign. The strategy adopted at this stage was to identify and focus on the 'quirkier' information the *drinkaware.ie* website provided and key upcoming events where alcohol consumption was an issue, namely Christmas and New Year, were focused upon. With the aim of continuing to raise awareness and promote the usefulness of the website, press releases were issued on a range of topics. They included:

- i. "Why women can't drink as much as men"
- ii. "MEAS appeal for drivers to become DRINKAWARE"
- iii. "MEAS advises Christmas party revellers to '*know the one that's one too many*'"
- iv. "*Drinkaware.ie* top tips on how to survive the silly season"
- v. "How to keep your New Year's Resolution, helpful pointers towards a *drinkaware* 2007".

*drinkaware.ie* received significant national and regional print and broadcast coverage as a result of continued PR activities, namely the above press releases.

## **D. The Measurement Stage**

*drinkaware.ie* was successfully launched and promoted through national and trade media (See **Appendix 1**). It has become a well recognised resource on responsible drinking and all matters surrounding alcohol consumption.

The launch campaign of *drinkaware.ie* ran from November 2006 until mid January 2007. On Sunday 5th November, Fionnuala Sheehan, CEO of MEAS and spokesperson of *drinkaware.ie*, was interviewed on TV3 News at 5.30pm and by INN. On Monday 6th November, the launch day of the website, *drinkaware.ie* received a significant amount of national print coverage and national and regional broadcast coverage as a direct result of press release activity. Fionnuala Sheehan was interviewed on the majority of national and regional radio stations and articles appeared in the Irish

Times, Irish Independent, Irish Examiner, Irish Daily Mail, The Irish Sun, The Irish Daily Mirror, Evening Herald, Herald AM and Metro (See Appendix 2).

In the following days, the key messages surrounding *drinkaware.ie* were continuously communicated to the media. This resulted in a continued wave of national and regional print and broadcast coverage throughout November.

The outdoor advertising campaign began on Monday 20th November, and communication with the media around this again promoted the commitment of MEAS to tackling alcohol abuse in Ireland. Press releases activity resulted in coverage of the *drinkaware.ie* advertising campaign in the media and marketing sections of the Sunday Business Post, the business section of the Irish Examiner and trade magazines. Marketing Magazine named the *drinkaware.ie* outdoor poster of the month. (See appendix 3)

Web statistics surrounding *drinkaware.ie* website were very high with a total of 27, 826 visits over the period of November 2006 to January 2007. The number of visits peaked in December in line with the press release activity and declined in January as this initial launch campaign came to a close. (See appendix 4)

To ensure continuing increased awareness and promotion of understanding of what *drinkaware.ie* was about, a series of press releases were issued around key themes such as drink driving, and responsibly celebrating Christmas and the New Year. Each of these themed press releases achieved excellent national and regional print and broadcast coverage, in addition to trade coverage. Examples of media coverage received included The Irish Sun feature on 'Think and Drink Call, XMAS party safety plea'; Galway City Tribune feature on 'Tips on Sensible Drinking, New Years Resolutions', a TV3 News feature on drinkaware tips for Christmas; a Clare FM interview with Fionnuala Sheehan about the countdown to Christmas. (See appendix 5)

Promoting the credibility of MEAS and the usefulness of *drinkaware.ie* to all stakeholders has been a key goal behind all communications. The credibility and high standing achieved by *drinkaware.ie* was evidenced by the unsolicited endorsements that followed from a range of influential bodies including the Irish Sports Council, Failte Ireland, Union Students of Ireland, National University of Ireland Maynooth, Dundalk Institute of Technology, University of Dublin Trinity College, Institute of Art Design and Technology, The Mater Hospital, The Automobile Association, Road Safety Authority, Coca-Cola Bottlers Ireland, The Community Relations Department in An Garda Síochána, Parentline, GAA (Alcohol Substance and Abuse Prevention Programme) and The Digital Hub (See appendix 6).

On completion of the launch campaign of *drinkaware.ie*, Lansdowne Market Research was commissioned by MEAS in January 2007 to conduct fully representative, nationwide research into the awareness and perceptions of the campaign, in addition to tracking the understanding of its key messages by the public. After a two and half month campaign, 53% of those interviewed were aware of *drinkaware.ie* and 73% were familiar with the campaign slogan 'know the one...'. 26% of the target market was aware of *drinkaware.ie* as a direct result of newspaper and magazine coverage. Furthermore, the research found that 76% of those interviewed knew that MEAS and *drinkaware.ie* promotes responsible drinking (See Appendix 7).

## **E. Budget**

MEAS has a retainer agreement with MRPA KINMAN Communications which covers all PR activities. The annual retainer is not disclosed here, however, the time outlay by MRPA KINMAN Communications for the launch of *drinkaware.ie* amounts to approximately €9,000 in monetary value. The value of the advertising and marketing spend by MEAS was €1.75 million. Overall photography expenditure was € 2,934 for the launch of *drinkaware.ie*.