



GOLD

Public Service, Social Welfare & Education
Irish Blood Transfusion Service - Donor See, Donor Do
BBDO Dublin



ADFX
AWARDS
2018



Company Profile

BBDO Dublin

Originally known as Irish International the agency rebranded in 2017 to become BBDO Dublin, and has been at the forefront of advertising in Ireland for over 50 years.

With over 75 creative imaginations working across all disciplines we follow three guiding principles:

1. We ask smart questions
2. We collaborate
3. We believe that creativity and effectiveness go hand in hand.

The agency is part of the global BBDO network - currently recognised as the most effective agency network in the world. Something that BBDO Dublin is proud to play an active role in.

The logo for BBDO DUBLIN is displayed within a white rectangular box. The word "BBDO" is in a bold, red, sans-serif font, and the word "DUBLIN" is in a bold, black, sans-serif font.

Company Profile

The Irish Blood Transfusion Service

The IBTS is the statutory body with the responsibility of managing the collection, processing, testing and distribution of blood and blood products.

Operating since 1965, the organisation supplies blood and blood products to over seventy hospitals in the Republic of Ireland. The IBTS work tirelessly to process the contributions from existing donors, while actively recruiting new donors to keep up with the ever evolving needs of our hospitals.



Introduction and Background

The Irish Blood Transfusion Service is a vital life source to the day-to-day operations of our health system. This isn't new news. Everyone is aware of how important it is. But while we are all aware of the need for blood, very few of us are doing anything about it. A truth not many of us are conscious of as we step back and allow "other people" to do what needs to be done. This was something that, in 2017, BBDO Dublin sought to rectify for the Irish Blood Transfusion Service (IBTS).

A consistent flow of donations had always been something the IBTS struggled to maintain. To get to the bottom of this the IBTS commissioned research that set out to understand the state of the blood donation market. The results were stark. Between 2010 and 2015 the average age of donors increased from 38.4 to 40.8 and the rate of new donors signing up had decreased by 21%¹. In order to inject new life into the rate of donations, a fresh investment in recruitment was needed.

Before this decline could be turned around a new threat loomed. In November 2015, the Irish Blood Transfusion Service suspended taking blood donations from certain donors who had given blood in the last 18 months, due to an issue with Haemoglobin levels. With an already decreasing flow of new donors, this cut to the numbers of returning donors had disastrous effects on the circulation of blood throughout the health system.

Introduction and Background

Together these events resulted in multiple blood shortages and caused a reliance on excessive use of crisis communications in 2016. These last minute call-outs resulted in increased clinic attendances on 2015 levels. A seemingly positive result, but to the detriment of the service in the long run. The success of these emergency appeals relied on unsustainable investment and caused a rush in clinics over a short period of time. In turn it created a negative effect on donor experience and repeat donation occurrence, particularly amongst First Time Donor's (FTD), who had no previous experience to compare to.

With new and destructive pressure mounting on the IBTS, BBDO Dublin were given a challenging brief; Help the IBTS halt the negative turn in donations by developing a campaign that would move the organisation from the crisis communications of 2016 and return it to the more stable levels of 2015.

[1] <https://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/21-drop-in-blood-donors-in-ireland-in-10-years-416190.html>

Marketing Objectives

This campaign had a simple over-arching goal: minimise the damage caused by the re-introduction of haemoglobin restrictions and of destructive emergency appeals.

To do this we set ourselves clear objectives which would work together to deliver on our overall goal.

Business objective

We needed to maintain the 2015 levels of weekly donations, without relying on emergency appeals. Considering the historic reliance on this, pulling this off would be impressive but we were confident a strong campaign could do this. **Zero emergency appeals in 2017 became our first goal.**

In terms of weekly donations, a year without emergency appeals meant the IBTS were expecting a 15% decrease on clinic attendees from the 2015 results. This was caused by increased deferral rates, the percentage of visitors to the clinic are unable to proceed with a donation. Something that was beyond our control.

Nevertheless, it was vital that we maintained blood levels. We needed to get as close as we could to 2015 levels of **2751 average weekly donations** and set that as our target.

Marketing Objectives

Marketing objective

For this to happen we needed to inspire a behavioural change in our audience, recruit new donors, and increase the repeat rate of current donors. Despite the historically low (and falling) levels of FTDs in 2015 we ambitiously set a target of increasing FTDs by 10% from 2015 numbers.

In relation to average donation levels: due to the haemoglobin restrictions and the deferral of current repeat donors, the IBTS had forecasted a decrease on the average donation in 2016. Because of this we hoped our new donors would help increase this average and in doing so maintain 2015's average donation levels of 1.66 donations per donor.

Communications objective

To achieve our targets we needed to build salience of the IBTS, the struggles it faces with donations levels and the positive effect each donation has.

To do this we had to increase the intention to donate amongst the public. The simplest and clearest way for us to record this was through clinic attendance.

Marketing Objectives

While not everyone who visits a clinic is able to donate, measuring the rate at which they are trying to donate would give us the strongest indication of their intent. Again, we aimed to match 2015's clinic attendance levels of 76,875.

We were confident that if we could reach these goals we would not only return the flow of donations to 2015 levels, but, also build a solid base for future growth for the IBTS. With robust retention strategy already in place, new donors were primed to become donors for life.

The Task

The task at hand was one that needed a smart behaviour change strategy. We were asking people to attend a clinic and give not only time but also literally give a piece of themselves. The barriers to be overcome included:

From waiting for appeal to pro-active donating

Our first challenge was to 'retrain' people to attend clinics not solely in response to emergency appeals, but as part of their routine beyond crisis periods.

Salience was low, and our audience are used to screening out messages which do not overtly apply to their day to day lives. While they understood the importance of blood donations they were not considering it something that they needed to personally get involved in.

We were dealing with a strong cognitive dissonance that was crippling the Irish Blood Transfusion Service.

Thankfully, the spike in attendance during emergency appeals showed us that there was an openness to attend out there, but they were responding solely to urgency.

We needed to build a new brand legacy that would help to encourage people to become pro-active, long term supporters of the IBTS.

The Task

Reduction in pool of potential donors

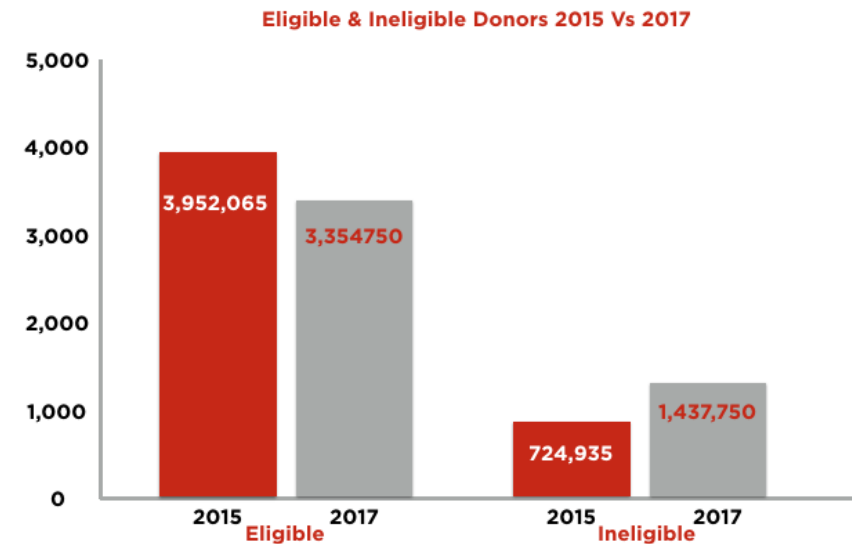
Only 3% of the eligible population in Ireland donate blood. Increasing this would be challenging given the above. A Challenge further compounded by the increase in deferral rates applied in the aftermath of the haemoglobin restrictions. Our potential donor pool had shrunk.

To increase our FTD donor rate we needed to inspire as many people from as many backgrounds as possible to act. How could we target en masse yet inspire such a personal act?

Maximum reach with minimum budget

The campaign needed to reach far and wide. Our budget really needed to stretch.

On average a large national campaign such as this would budget for €250,000 on just production.



The Task

We had to create an effective campaign that relied on multiple executions, which would resonate with people across the country, on a lean campaign budget that was merely a fraction of that.

The challenges were great. How could we effectively reach out to a reduced pool of people who had proven difficult to inspire in the past, with an such a small budget? We needed a smart creative and communications strategy that would deliver a message that was personal, provocative and impactful and that would inspire change.

The Strategy

To better understand the mind-set at play in relation to this topic we carried out primary research which involved focus groups and in-depth interviews with donors, non-donors and health care professionals.

With 4 key insights gleaned from these conversations we created a structured strategy which would deliver effective communications.

1. Salience driven by visibility, recency and scale is vital

People struggled to recall any messaging from IBTS beyond emergency appeals. Our participants admitted intending to donate but consistently spoke of “just not getting around to it” or “life gets in the way” as reasons for not following through.

2. Education is needed for donors and non-donors

There was a lack of understanding across the life cycle of a blood donation. A flow chart explaining how blood gets used sparked huge interest and motivation with 60% of non- donors taking copies home to show peers and recruit.

The Strategy

3. Peer recruitment is crucial

Peers play an essential role in recruiting donors.. Whether as an explicit request or an implied pressure as part of a collective, this peer pressure was met with positive responses.

4. Not all numbers are motivating

In our secondary research we discovered two statistics which, when put side by side, showed the stark reality of the difference between supply and demand.

**In our lifetime, 1 in 4 of us will need a transfusion,
but only 3% of the eligible population is donating.**

When presented these were met with a shock that indeed made people want to take action.

How we presented the figures was key to bringing about this emotional response. 25% was said to feel smaller than 1 in 4 and 3 in 100 felt difficult to grasp, versus 3%.

Taking all of this into consideration we developed a strategy based upon four elements:

1. Create a sense of shared responsibility (donor visibility, the role of peers and social norming);

The Strategy

2. Frame the disparity in demand and supply ("one in four" and "3%" being the most powerful and relatable expressions of statistics);
3. Create a sense of personal urgency to prompt action;
4. Make it feel small and easy to do (the power of the individual to make a disproportionate impact. The power of "just one more").

The Idea

The heart of our campaign was focused on the need for blood but while the statistics highlighting the disparity were shocking, we believed making them more human would be the key to provoking action amongst non-donors.

We were also determined to create a campaign that celebrated and spearheaded action – not just awareness.

To trigger peer-to-peer recruitment, we wanted to show, not just describe the power that everyone has but perhaps cannot see, in order to resonate credibly.

Our work had to be a practical demonstration of how ordinary people around Ireland can easily fix this problem. By helping to increase donor and donation numbers one at a time.

We wanted do it with real people telling real stories in a simple yet compelling way. Instead of heart-rending drama, we wanted documentary-style storytelling.

Our idea, Every One Counts, was born. “Every one” played on a duality in that it was every donor and every donation that mattered.

The concept was strikingly simple.

The Idea


We chose a small (real) community as a microcosm of Ireland – in this case, the seaside town of Skerries, in Co. Dublin. We reached out to seven active blood donors who live in Skerries, and who between them represent an eclectic cross-section of personalities and demographics. (Again, all of these people are real donors, in Skerries, and all their stories are true.)

We shared the startling statistic with these seven donors: how 1 in 4 people will need a transfusion in their lifetime, but only 3% ever donate.

And then we asked each of them to simply do whatever they could to recruit new donors. And we followed their efforts for a week, documentary-style.

During that time, the seven existing donors managed to recruit 29 new donors.

Our campaign began with the search for the seven 'hero' donors.



SOMETHING SPECIAL IS HAPPENING FOR SKERRIES' BLOOD DONORS.

We're beginning a national campaign right here in Skerries to change the way Ireland gives blood.

This February, The Irish Blood Transfusion Service are making a series of short documentary films, that will be based on the blood donor community in Skerries. We're looking for real donors and their stories about why they give blood. If you think you'd like to be part of this project we'd love to hear from you.

Talk to Keith in Motherland Productions for more info at 01 905 6335 or email hello@motherland.ie

giveblood.ie

Irish Blood Transfusion Service
Seirbhís Fulaontrúcháin na hÉireann

The Idea



Once on board, we asked them to tell us about why donating blood is important to them.

We told them about the stark reality of the supply of blood compared to the demand and informed them of all the ways that their blood could make a difference.

Armed with this information and this new sense of urgency, we set them about the task of recruiting new donors in whatever way they felt was right.

They each took different approaches, and gave us seven very different stories. From 40 year old mother Aga, to 65 year old Conor to 23 year old Tom, each story was tailored and then deployed to make sure that we had something that would sit well with different groups in our society.

The Idea

We designed a campaign shape that differed from traditional models. We wanted to utilise social media channels to deliver required reach within budget, but also to tap into the natural peer-to-peer qualities they provided.

We wanted to mimic the network spread evident in our creative across media, creating a sense of it spreading through newsfeeds and compelling recruitment amongst a broader community.

The communications strategy that we proposed reflected our creative strategy.



With our 7 stories created, each 30" film was launched on social channels one by one. As they were launched online the audience attracted by each video was monitored closely.

The Idea

This data was used to build audiences based not on demographics but instead on viewers' shared interests and activity online. We were filling newsfeeds with content that was appropriate to the viewer allowing us to use our budget effectively and avoid wastage.

As this was a mainly digital campaign we were able to do more to bring people as close as possible to walking through the clinic door. After presenting the act of donating as something that required very little time and effort, we provided one final nudge. A click through to the website to register details and show your interest in donating.

In the end, each story brought our audience on a journey that helped them see the real need for their support. This wasn't about seeing actors sitting with nurses and donating with exaggerated smiles. This was about real people, just like them, going to a clinic and giving their blood for the good of their community.



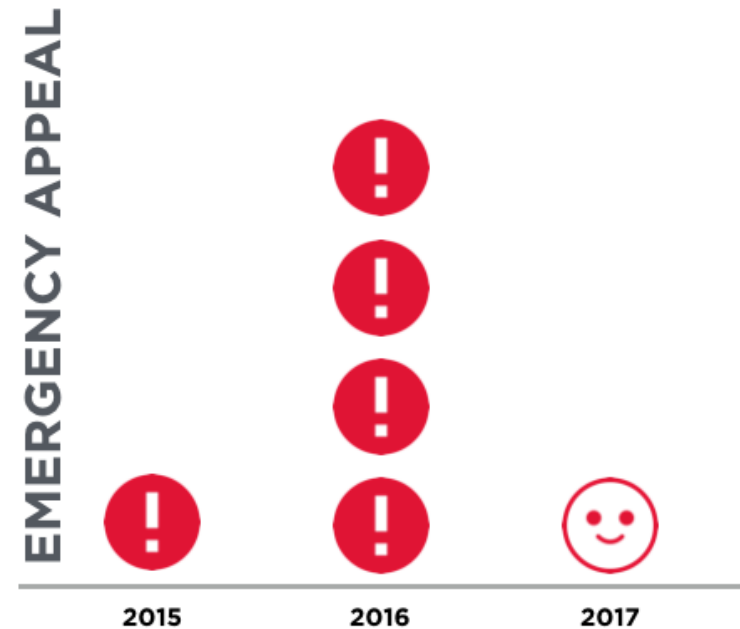
The Results

To say that the effectiveness of this campaign was essential is an understatement. We were dealing with the life source of our health industry. Our role in helping the IBTS reach targets was one that we took seriously. So it was heart-warming to see that our results at the end of the campaign were robustly positive.

As stated in the beginning, our 2017 campaign was solely about minimising the damage of the impact of the re-introduction of Haemoglobin restrictions and destructive emergency appeals. Success would be getting the Irish Blood Transfusion Service as close as possible to the sufficient supplies of 2015.

The first goal we set ourselves was quite ambitious. We wanted 2017 to be a year with 0 emergency appeals, something that had not happened in a long time.

Our first and proudest achievement was reaching that goal. Due to the response to our campaign, 2017 finished without having to run a single emergency appeal.



The Results

Something that had not been possible in recent years.

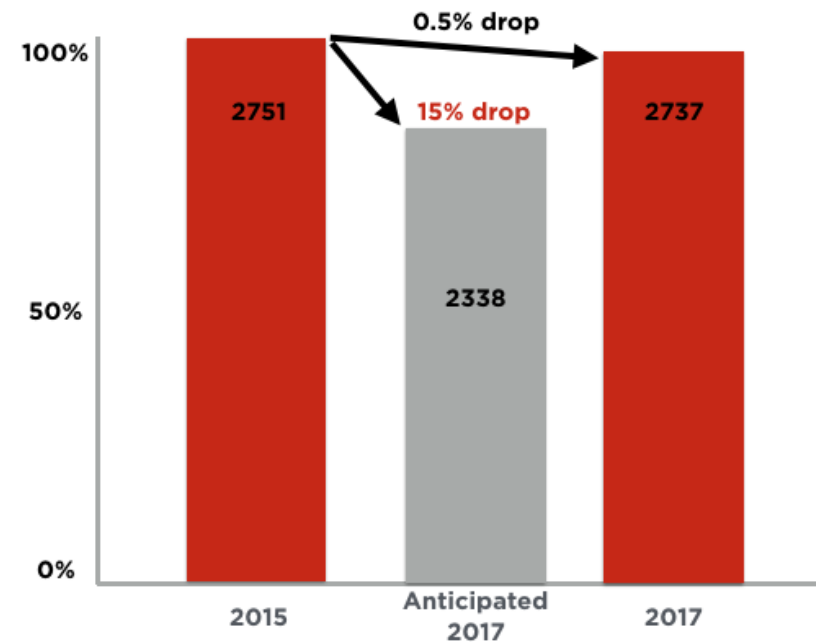
Average Weekly donations

Due to the increased deferral rate from the Haemoglobin Restrictions the IBTS were forecasting a 15% decrease on the weekly average donations of 2015, expecting a fall from 2751 of that year to 2338 in 2017.

But, we couldn't let this happen, it was vital that we maintained blood levels, so we needed to get as close as we could to 2015 levels.

We managed to negate the drop in average weekly donations by achieving weekly average donations of 2737, just 0.5% below the target.

What is important to note is that the average weekly attendances in 2015 were increased by an emergency appeal, which would have caused a burst of 8.7%.



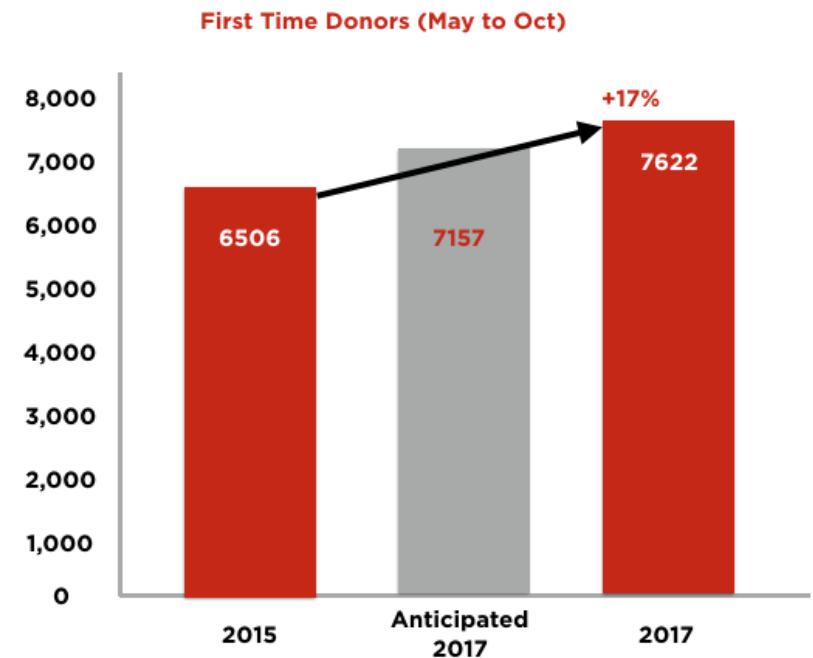
The Results

Our average weekly attendances in 2017 were so steady that there was never a need to do a call out and so emergency appeals were avoided.

First Time Donors

We also wanted to recruit more FTDs while increasing the repeat rate of existing donors. We set ourselves an ambitious target of not just turning this historic downfall around – but increasing it from 2015 figures of 6506 FTDs by 10% bringing it to 7157 FTDs.

The campaign delivered remarkable results amongst FTDs. In total, we recruited 7622 FTDs, which is 17.2% more FTDs in 2017 compared to 2015, almost doubling our target. We also did it without a single emergency appeal, which generally sees high levels of FTDs.



The Results

Average Donation

In relation to the average donation: due to the Haemoglobin restrictions, the IBTS had forecast a decrease on the average donation in 2016 by 5% with an anticipated fall from 1.66 donations per donor to 1.57. Because of this we set out to restore to 2015's average donation levels of 1.66 donations per donor.

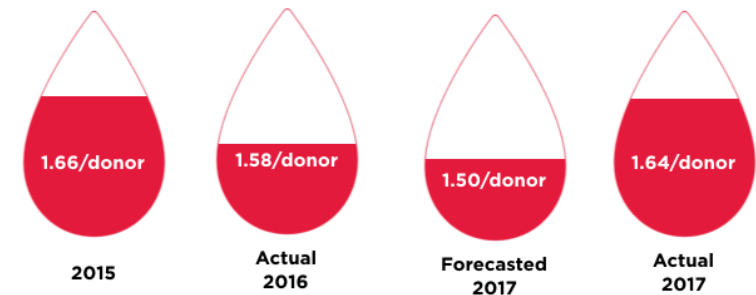
While we fell just short of this goal we are happy to say that we made a strong start in bringing the average donation per donor close to the 2015 figure, and arrested the disastrous decline of 2016 with a reduced pool of potential donors.

Measuring intent

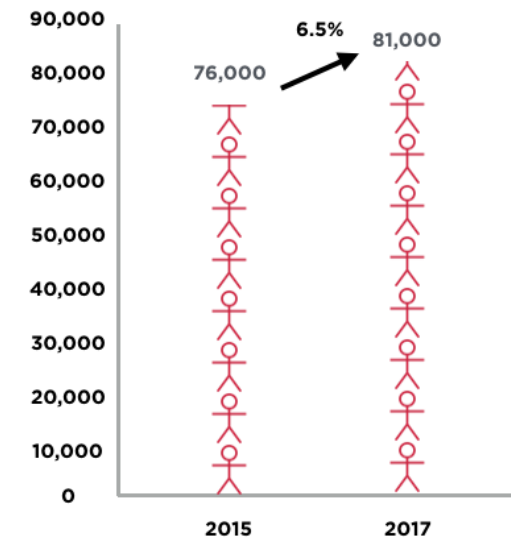
Our communications objectives were anchored in salience. To measure this we focused on intent to donate.

To measure intent, we focused on the most tangible indicator available clinic visits.

Average Donation Per Donor



Clinic Attendees (May-Oct)



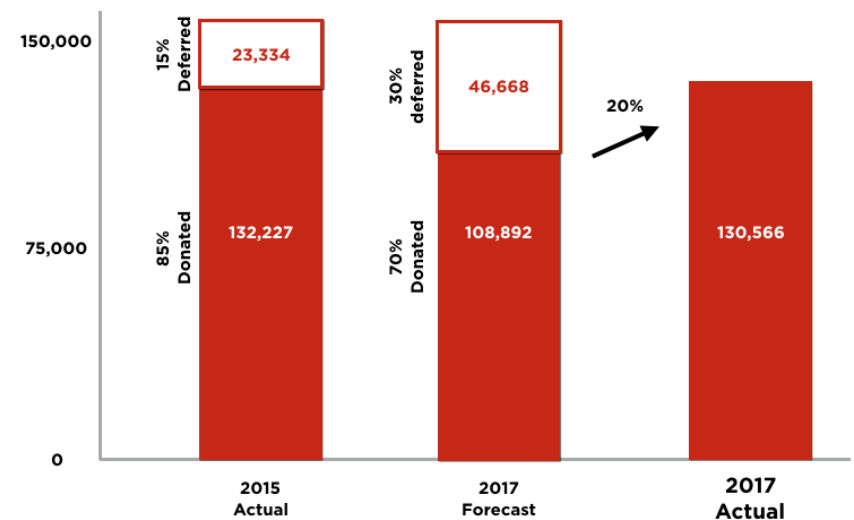
The Results

While not everyone who visits a clinic is able to donate, measuring the rate at which they are trying to donate gives a bulletproof indication of their intent. Again, we aimed to match 2015's clinic attendance levels of 76,875.

Here, as with our FTD results, we significantly outperformed our targets. Without an emergency appeals we managed to meet our target and surpass it by a further 6.5%, totaling 81,880.

When we set out with our campaign the outlook was bleak. Had the IBTS stayed on the same track and 2017 been left to the increased deferral rates of 30% the donations were expected to remain low at 108,892 for the year.

Instead, we were able to restore donation numbers close to, 2015 levels, surpassing the expected turnout of 108,892 by 20%. At the same time we allowed the IBTS to communicate with current and potential donors without having to go into emergency mode. And most importantly, we recruited new, regular donors.



The Results

Blood Money

Measuring the ROMI for an account that receives blood in return for its marketing investment can prove tricky.

As they aren't a commercial organisation we needed to understand the value of their donation in a way that would show us just how much we helped them spend their money efficiently.

To do this we measured the investment they made versus the donations received in that year.

We couldn't account for all donations from the campaign as there would always be external factors such as local clinic activity, retention programs and even peer recruitment which would happen year on year regardless.

To account for this we removed a baseline of an average of 2000 donations per week, working out at 104,000 donations per year.

	2015	2016	2017
Marketing spend			
Creative	75,000	45000	70000
Media	225,000	350000	187746
TOTAL	300,000	395,000	257,746
Total donors in the year	79885	81439	79613
Total donations in the year	132609	128695	130565
Average donation per donor	1.66	1.58	1.64
Baseline average donations per week	2000	2000	2000
Baseline donations per yer (weekly x 52)	104000	104000	104000
Incremental donations for the year	28609	24695	26565
Marketing spend per incremental donation	€10.49	€16.00	€9.70
Gross savings on marketing spend per donor versus 2015			€0.78
Gross savings on marketing spend per donor versus 2016			€6.29

The Results

Based on the incremental donations of 28,609 in 2015, 24,695 in 2016 and 26,565 in 2017 we were able to accord marketing spend against each donation in each year.

Our 2017 campaign brought marketing spend down by €0.79 per donation, versus 2015.

Although we haven't focused on 2016 the results also show how valuable our behaviour change campaign was versus emergency appeals, which had dominated that year.

There were no extraordinary external factors such as national medical emergencies. In fact the nature of the IBTS business means that they have an effective monopoly on the market – so any affect on their donation levels is attributable to their activity alone.

Overall we were proud to be part of a campaign that created such positive change in a market that keeps our communities alive. The success of this campaign has given the IBTS a chance to stabilise donations so that they can go back to focusing on growth for the future.

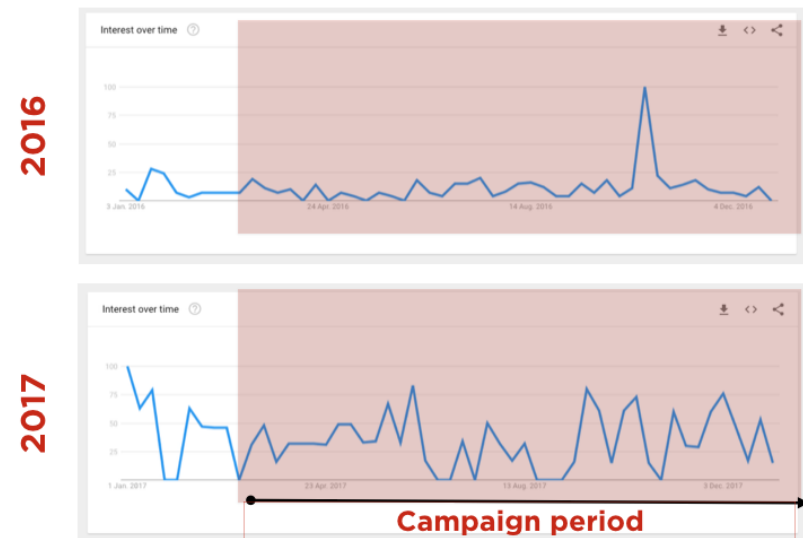
The Impact

The purpose of our campaign was to influence behaviour. Early on we identified a strong sense of cognitive dissonance amongst the public. This was causing dramatic deficits in donation rates and would take a strong behaviour change campaign to have a positive impact.

The overall goal was to create a strong foundation of donors for the IBTS, benchmarked against 2015. We needed to do this without relying on emergency campaigns and so building brand salience was key to our success.

Unfortunately, they do not have yearly results of this to benchmark. What we did have though was a year of no emergency appeals. There is no bigger indication of a shift on behaviour than moving our donors from a state of reactive donations in response to emergency appeals towards consistent pro-active donations.

Search results were also able to show us in increased interest in becoming a donor.



The Impact

The Google trends analysis of 2017 compared with 2016 shows that there activity online of conscious searching in relation to this topic increased greatly when our campaign was live.

These numbers are indicative of increased salience. The search results also show that the click through rates for the terms searched sat at 25% for specific terms.

This was a strong indication that they were prompted to go online to find out more from communications they came across elsewhere. *"This is activity that can be attributed to the lower funnel of the donors journey. They show intent for action, for this to happen the heavy lifting was done in the upper funnel to get people to search in the first place."*

- Robert Keegan, Strategist, Google

Campaign	Impressions	Clicks	CTR	Avg. CPC	Avg. position
IBTS Brand	120,260	31,157	25.91%	€0.25	1.01
Where to Give Blood	102,924	28,727	27.91%	€0.15	1.03
Be a Donor	85,545	16,576	19.38%	€0.24	1.06
Generic Terms	183,155	9,542	5.21%	€0.78	1.18

New Learnings

With a successful campaign to be proud of we had three key learnings, which we will take forward into our future work.

You don't need broadcast to get reach

By tapping into smart media channels, we were able to sidestep traditional channels that would have been a default choice for IBTS in the past. In this instance we needed to create a herd effect to cause growth amongst the masses, and the best channel for us was social.

Reflect beliefs, not demographics

When we set out with this campaign we were sure that we needed to approach the audience from a behavioural point of view. We had to be cunning with our targeting and felt that showing our audience stories featuring people who merely resembled them in age and sex would be lazy and ineffective. By reflecting the viewers' beliefs and motivations through the stories they were served, we were able to talk to them beyond what they were but instead who they were. This was an effective strategy and something that we are sure will help us create smarter targeting strategies going forward.

New Learnings

Some people stayed out of reach

There was one group of donors that proved elusive – younger men. This was a surprise to us but looking at it further we have homed in a number of reasons: not least that the rate of drug use amongst young men is twice that of young women², causing them to avoid clinics. We are in the midst of understanding more about this and hope to have a solution to help us talk to this group more effectively in the future.

² <http://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Bulletin-1.pdf>

Summary

The Irish Blood Transfusion Service is essential in the daily operations of our health system. However, maintaining a consistent flow of donations has always been challenging. In 2015, donor sign-ups were decreasing and protective regulation measures implemented restricted the available donor pool further. Together, these events resulted in multiple blood shortages and caused a reliance on damaging crisis communications.

Tasked with halting the decline, BBDO Dublin identified a statistic that pushed our audience into action. Grounding this in the power of the individual to make a disproportionate impact, we crafted a campaign that returned the IBTS to consistent supply.