

Transport for London

**TfL driver tool
communications
research**

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Research conducted by 2CV

Introduction

TfL are creating web tools that allow drivers to check for disruptions on the road before they travel. To support the launch of these tools, M&C Saatchi and TfL have developed three creative communication routes.

2CV were commissioned to run some short research groups amongst London drivers to:

- *Explore response to the three creative routes to inform selection of the creative route and provide guidance for optimisation prior to launch*
- *More specifically, for each creative route, to evaluate:*
 - *Comprehension and relevance of message*
 - *Drivers' emotional response to communications*
 - *Strength of call to action (CTA)*
 - *Appeal and relevance of creative treatment*

The research approach involved six, one hour group discussions with London drivers:

Group	Main Driving Location	Driving frequency	Life stage
1	Outer London	Regular	Pre-family
2	Outer London	Occasional	Family (kids 0-16)
3	Outer London	Occasional	Older Family (kids aged 17-21) / Post Family
4	Inner London	Occasional	Pre family
5	Inner London	Regular	Family (kids 0-16)
6	Inner London	Regular	Older (kids aged 17-21) Family / Post Family

The sample also included:

- A spread of journey purposes (including commuting, utility and leisure)
- A representation of people who use travel tools (including sat nav with live updates, websites and mobile apps)
- A mix of gender, SEG and age

A range of stimulus was put into the research:

- 3 x creative routes (order rotated across the groups)
 - Cone (1 execution)
 - Steering Wheel (2 executions)
 - Know Before You Go (2 executions)
- Visual style aid for Steering Wheel and Know Before You Go routes
- Description of new driver tool website

The research was conducted on Thursday 24th and Monday 28th November 2011 by 2CV Research.

Research findings

1. Context to response

Drivers' responses to any communications from TfL are underpinned by core beliefs:

- Drivers think TfL are responsible for the public transport network and their primary objective is increasing revenue from use of public transport
- Whilst TfL are perceived to be experts on London transport, drivers do not know that TfL are responsible for any aspect of London's roads (other than congestion charge – *'the drivers tax'*)
- Drivers feel that TfL often take an anti-driver stance

➤ ***Any ambiguity in the ads message causes these beliefs to come to the fore and can trigger confusion and scepticism***

2. Response to the driver tool

Drivers respond to the tool extremely well as it offers a number of unique features and benefits:

- Information from a credible source – TfL has a good reputation for delivering reliable travel updates and travel tools for public transport
- Local travel news from a London service provider
- Keeping drivers up to date with real time information
- A more comprehensive set of information than currently on offer from other tools (not just incidents or congestion)
- Information specific to their journey via the map (vs radio updates or TV travel news)

Once drivers understand the tool it reflects very well on TfL as drivers believe TfL are trying to support them by providing a unique service.

"It's brilliant that TfL are trying to do this, I didn't think they cared about drivers, but this is really new and interesting"

"Because it's from TfL, it seems much more reliable and interesting to Londoners than something from a general news programme or something like the AA"

➤ ***Response to the TfL tool is very positive and there are many benefits of the product that can be leveraged in communications***

3. Detailed response to the three creative routes

The research explored response to three creative routes – Cone, Steering Wheel and Know Before You Go.

Initial response from drivers highlights that none of the routes communicate the tool and benefits clearly and that there is a need to be more explicit when communicating with drivers:

“Are they trying to say check before you travel on the bus?”

“It’s got to be about getting more people on public transport, that’s what they do”

“It tells you about roadworks that are planned - but I’m not sure what else it does”

“There seems to be a lot of emphasis on roadworks, I prefer it when it talks about delays and traffic news”

“I imagine this would be the first ad in a series – it’s saying something new is coming and then the next ad that comes out tells you more about it”

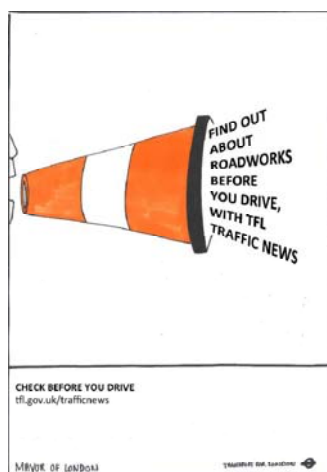
“It would work as part of a series if it went on to tell you more, but it’s not particularly clear as it stands”

Without a more concrete description of the product drivers are left guessing about the nature of the tool and TfL’s motivations for launching it.

- ***Any route that is taken forward will need to be more explicit in describing the product and benefits to drivers***

Cone

Drivers’ responses to ‘Cone’ indicate that it could form the basis of a product-led advertising route.

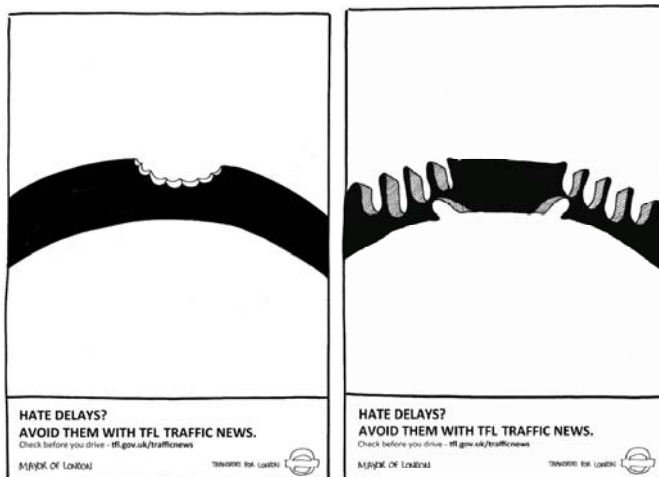


The ‘Cone’ visual works on several levels:

- It catches people’s attention and announces new news
- It indicates the advertising/product relates to driving and road events
- It emphasises the ‘announcement/news’ element of the product

This route also contains the most ‘literal’ description of the product which is less ambiguous, and helps minimise confusion and scepticism.

Steering Wheel



This route resonates with the frustration experienced driving in London. By illustrating this emotion, some drivers feel TfL is being empathetic to drivers and warm to TfL. However, some drivers feel that this emotion is overly negative and could evoke feelings of frustration experienced when driving in London.

"I love it – that's me, I really grip the wheel and shout!"

"I don't like it to be honest, it makes me feel uncomfortable, we all get frustrated, but I don't think it's appropriate for an advert"

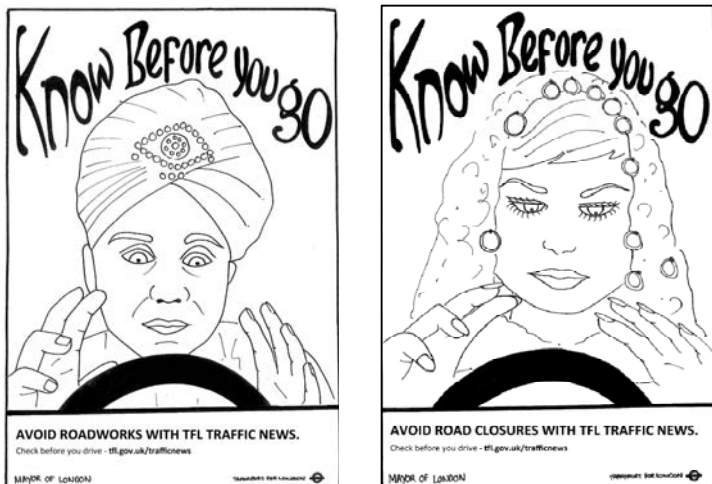
The problem-solution approach (Hate delays? Avoid them...) taken by this route makes drivers think that the tool would meet their needs and help them avoid delays (even though it is not clear what the product is).

The focus on 'delays' was welcomed by all – it seems more all-encompassing than roadworks/road closures.

However, there was still a lot of ambiguity in the route:

- The feeling of frustration was clearly communicated by the photo of a driver (visual reference stimulus), but not by the abstract image of fist indents or bites out of the steering wheel (scamps).
- The product is not clearly explained/described – 'Traffic News' indicates updates, but the route does not include a product description or unique benefits.

Know Before You Go



The headline 'Know Before You Go' was well received by drivers and gives the call to action of checking before driving to be aware of issues on the road. It highlights how empowering this knowledge could be for drivers.

However, many felt that the imagery undermined the strong headline:

- Images of psychics are not always immediately decoded by drivers (even from visual stimulus)
- Connection to driving is not immediately clear (steering wheel/crystal ball connection also hard for drivers to decode)
- Soft creative style is not felt to be suitable for talking to drivers – want a more direct style of communication from TfL
- Psychic connotations could undermine credibility – not a reliable source of knowledge and has charlatan connotations

4. Development and next steps

Of the three routes, whilst there is no clear winner, Cone would seem to fit best with a product-led strategy for communication and have the least potential for evoking negative emotions or confusion from drivers.

Other factors that the research identified to be further developed before launch included:

- Product description
- Language
- Call to action

Product description

There is an opportunity for the advertising to communicate the features and benefits of the travel tool more clearly, to motivate customers to go online and use it.

The breadth of features the tool offers is received well. The provision of real time information and the ability to get personalised information via the map are also seen to be particularly appealing and unique features. The advertising could communicate these aspects of the tool more clearly to drive people to the website.

People welcome the fact twitter is included in the call to action. Whether people use it or not, they expect it to be included.

Language

The language used in the adverts can lead people to misinterpret the product and should be considered in development.

- Referring to roadworks and road closures can limit drivers' understanding of the scope of the tool
- Referring to avoiding delays, disruptions and checking is clearer
- Repetition of the word drive also helps to emphasise that this ad is aimed at drivers

Call to action

Drivers currently use travel tools to suit different occasions:

- Every day, local journeys – more *passive* use of travel tools eg listening to radio updates during the journey
- Longer, more occasional journeys – more *active* use of travel tools eg checking online before travelling

Habits around checking travel news are quite engrained and despite its appeal most drivers feel that they would be unlikely to use the tool on a daily basis.

There may be an opportunity to refine the call to action in order to drive more regular use, or a need to reconsider the KPIs.