AirSmart: A pilot Australian air quality public education campaign

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Introduction

The 2019-20 bushfires in eastern Australia highlighted the lack of an Australian-wide media campaign about the health impacts of air pollution and protective actions to take. In response, Asthma Australia set out to develop the 'AirSmart' campaign to improve environmental health literacy focused on air pollution.

Pilot Campaign Development, Implementation and Evaluation

The AirSmart pilot, based on the Hierarchy of Effects Model, aimed to (1) raise community awareness about air quality, and (2) promote a phone app for local air quality information and related health advice. The process included:

1. Pilot campaign developed, guided by a committee of experts in air quality and public health.
2. Two phases of consumer focus groups undertaken to inform the campaign development.
3. Final concept selected and developed with the tag line – "Make the invisible, visible."
4. Pilot campaign launched in July 2022 for six-weeks in regional Victoria and southern NSW using TV and digital ads.
5. Campaign evaluation using a pre/post community survey, media and app metrics.

Scan to watch an advertisement

Findings

There were more than 16,000 app downloads and 22,000 sessions on the AirSmart website during the pilot.

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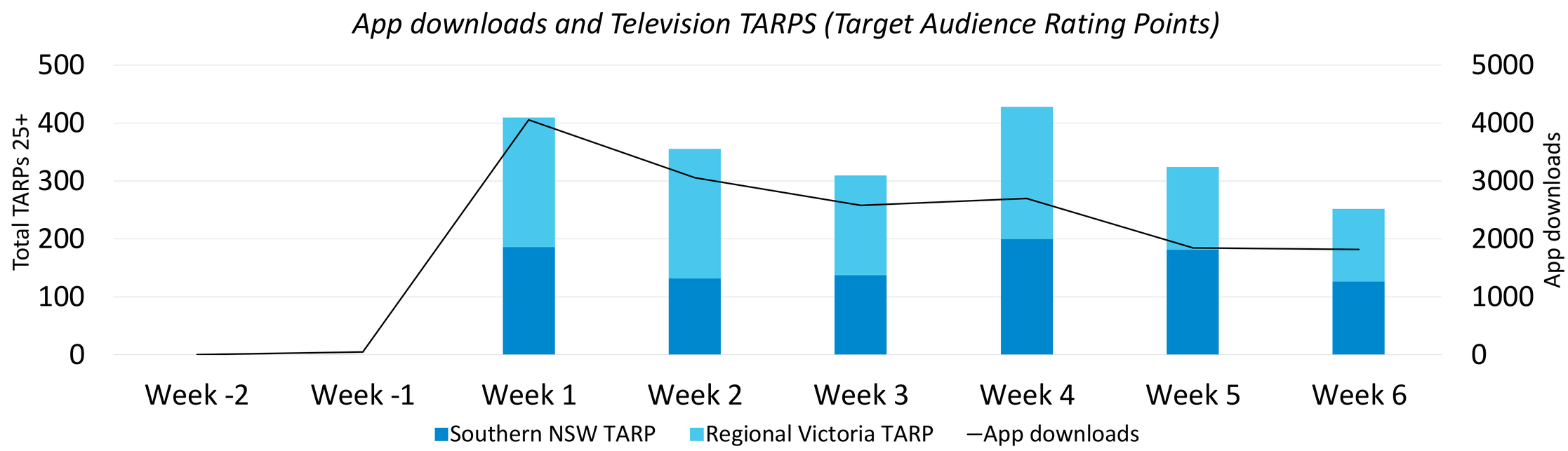

2 Unprompted population recall of the campaign was 3% and prompted recognition was 12%.

3 There were no significant differences for any knowledge, attitude, intention, or behaviour statements pre- to post-campaign. As this was a pilot campaign, significant changes in these outcomes were not expected.

Conclusion

The pilot campaign reinforced community interest for local air quality information and related health protection information.

The continued testing of, and investment into, wide-reaching education campaigns like AirSmart is particularly important as climate change continues to alter the frequency and severity of poor air quality events.

AirSmart

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