

Engaging Men's Health in South Africa

December 2022



CAMPAIGN GOAL: Focus on Hard-to-Reach Populations

In **South Africa**, our campaign sought to increase awareness and use of HIV services provided by our campaign partner, **Engage Men's Health (EMH)**, part of the **OUT-LGBT** organization, for men who have sex with men. These services include safe and discreet HIV testing, treatment, and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) — which is the use of medicine (taken daily or around high-risk events) to prevent HIV. Through FHI 360's [EpiC project](#), our goal was to increase use of such services among men who have sex with men in the Johannesburg area.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- **Goal:** To increase awareness and uptake of HIV prevention, testing and treatment services among men.
- **Results:** We reached more than 3 million users, may have increased knowledge of HIV among those we reached and saw an increase in WhatsApp queries about services.
- **Top Lesson:** Be thoughtful about what type of campaign best serves audience needs.

Project Background

FHI 360 and Meta entered a collaboration to support selected FHI 360 projects working toward social and behavior change objectives; this case study showcases one of five such projects. Information about the other four projects can be found at www.fhi360.org/projects/meta-program-scaled-support. In addition to providing other metrics, this case study presents findings from Meta's Brand Lift Study (BLS) tool, which analyzes campaigns based on users' ad recall and responses to questions relevant to behavior change goals. BLS determines if there was a significant "lift" for users who saw ads compared with those who did not in *recall* of ads, as well as in *knowledge*, *attitudes* or *agency* around a behavior.



RESULTS: Translating Ad Recall to Care-Seeking Action

Our two-phase campaign on Facebook and Instagram reached more than 3 million people; on average, users saw our ads seven times over two months in phase one and ten times over two and half months in phase two. For both phases, we saw a significant lift in recall; 72,000 more users in phase one and 236,000 in phase two who saw our ads remembered them compared with those who did not see our ads. In phase one, knowledge of how to make an appointment for HIV services did not see a significant lift. In phase two, we saw a positive but not significant lift trend — with our results suggesting that an additional 36,000 users who saw our ads were able to demonstrate knowledge of how frequently people should test for HIV, compared with those who did not see our ads. A key campaign call to action — to start a conversation with the EMH on WhatsApp — also saw a boost. Before the campaign, the line had received about 800 messages; this jumped to 10,000 during the campaign. There is a caveat, though: To reach enough users for the BLS to generate significant results, we had to broaden our geographic parameters. Most of the users reached, and queries received, were not in or from our target audience of men who have sex with men in the Johannesburg area and could not access the services provided by EMH.



SUCCESS SPOTLIGHT: Understand Your Audience; Trust Past Experience

Understand your audience. Our campaign artwork and messaging were based on a persona study to better appeal to our sometimes hard-to-reach audience of men who have sex with men. This includes a significant portion who are private about their sexuality and might use the appearance of masculinities more in line with prevailing norms as part of this privacy. We echoed this preference for a more culturally conventional presentation of masculinity in the images we used.

Use flex targeting. With an understanding of how to reflect our audience in our ads, our team learned to use flex targeting to show these ads to an audience that can be hard to reach. We did this by showing ads to users who had clusters of interests that could place them in our target audience – determining these intersecting interests from our persona study.



LESSONS LEARNED: Tailor Your Campaign; Prepare for Pushback



Figure 1: Two ads from our EMH campaign in South Africa

We learned a great deal and reached many users by undertaking a BLS as part of our campaign. However, to meet the parameters of this study, we reached beyond our target group of men who have sex with men and outside our geographic scope to provide services. Reaching this broader user base saw some homophobic pushback on our ads. For certain audiences and goals, we recommend carefully

considering how to structure campaigns: a smaller, nimbler, more targeted campaign may have identified and reached our audience more effectively. For a broader campaign that may reach beyond target audiences, we recommend having a plan in place from the outset to address pushback.

What's Next for Us?

We are planning to build on increased visibility of and engagement with EMH — including improved ranking of EMH's Facebook and Instagram pages — to continue promoting EMH's services. As we do, we will draw on the skills our team has built using Meta tools.