



# SMOKING KID

A personal message to the smokers



**ThaiHealth**

(Thai Health Promotion Foundation)

2013 Jay Chiat Awards for Strategic Excellence

## Summary

### ***Smoking has been a public scourge for generations in Thailand.***

For the past 20 years, the Thai Health Promotion Foundation has operated and aggressively promoted free hotline, “1600 Quitline” to help smokers kick the habit. Despite the high investment, the number of calls remained considerably low. Smokers either ignored the campaigns or didn't give the key message much thought. The campaigns failed to create the attention that led to behavioral change.

### ***Instead of using scare tactics or emotional cues to convince smokers to call 1600 Quitline, the Smoking Kid campaign employed a new approach called “Inside-Out Reflection”.***

The smokers found themselves in a situation in which their own voice served as the warning message, thus creating a "self-awakening" moment. Online media was used as a direct channel to communicate with smokers on a personal level.

### ***With a budget of just \$5,000 and no media spending, Smoking Kid had an enormous impact that touched smokers and non-smokers alike.***

The campaign not only became the most effective ever for the THPF, but also sparked a global conversation and provided the inspiration to many looking to give up smoking once and for all.

## Challenges

**How do you convince someone who refuses to listen to anything you have to say in the first place?**

Since the early 1990s, the Thai government have taken tough measures and legislated against smoking by banning smoking in public areas, restricting advertising, and even to print images of the negative effects of smoking on the cigarette package. Along with strict laws and regulations, the Thai Health Promotion Foundation (THPF) invested heavily to promote 1600 Quitline to help smokers quit smoking with more than 10 anti-smoking commercials through a variety of creative executions: fear (smoking leads to illness and early death), emotions (stop smoking for the sake of your children), or creating a social trend with an anti-tobacco message. The 1600 Quitline was featured prominently in all anti-smoking advertising materials including on cigarette packaging.

***Yet, they were ineffective in getting smokers to call the Quitline.***

Smokers are immune to anti-smoking campaigns. They were already well aware of the dangers of their habit - either ignored the campaigns or found the ads a touch patronizing and didn't give the key message much thought. The 1600 Quitline, which was listed on literally every cigarette package sold in the country, had become just another meaningless warning rather than a solution. We need an entirely new approach that would grab the smokers' attention and convince them to take action in quitting smoking.

***Our goal is to increase the number of calls to the 1600 Quitline by 10% over 3 months.***

## Insight

### The most powerful speaker is “me”

After extensive analysis, we found that the main barrier preventing smokers from listening to the warnings or taking action were the smokers themselves. They were already well aware of the hazards, but they were often arrogant and considered themselves all-knowing. They believed they were in control of the situation - especially of their health.

Common refrains were:

***“I'm in control of everything now.”***

***“I know smoking is bad but I'm ok.”***

***“No one knows the condition of my health better than me.”***

***“I know myself best.”***

Therefore, warnings from friends and family or the THPF were seen as irrelevant messages from 'outsiders' who did not really understand their real situation. The previous anti-smoking campaigns were meaningless because they talked about smokers in general and not about 'them' specifically.

To create a real behavior change, we had to select the right speaker, one who smokers will trust wholeheartedly. And there is no more powerful envoy of the anti-smoking message than the smokers themselves.

***Insight: The most powerful speaker is “me” (the smoker)***

# Strategy

## Inside-Out Reflection:

### A personal message to smokers

To successfully convince smokers to call Quitline and eventually drop their bad habit, the new campaign needed to make them admit to themselves that smoking was a problem that needed to be solved and help them remember a fact they had chosen to ignore.

Instead of bombarding them with anti-smoking messages, we needed to find a new way of communication that would grab their attention, thereby forcing them to reflect on their behaviour.

***We developed a strategy called “Inside-Out Reflection”, placed smokers in a situation which their own voice would serve as the warning message.***

This impact moment would allow smokers to reflect on their behaviour and generate a call-for-action message on a personal level, with smokers themselves unknowingly acting as the messengers.

# Creative Idea

## Smoking Kid

***The creative idea was generated by combining smokers' insight with Thai cultural insight.***

Thailand is a hierarchical society in which a great deal of importance is placed on the showing of respect to elders. This also means that the older generation is expected to set a positive example for the younger generation. Adults have a duty to teach kids to behave in a proper way while kids listen and obey unconditionally.

### ***The idea "Smoking Kid"***

To have kids, who were considered innocent and less capable, trick adult smokers into admitting how awful smoking was, thereby generating a moment of inside-out reflection and making smokers act as the speakers of the anti-smoking campaign.

***We planned an implementation with three steps in launching the idea, beginning from direct experiences turning into social trend.***

# Creative Idea

## Smoking Kid

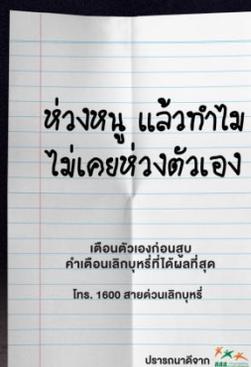
### Step 1: Moment of Truth

### A Personal Message at a Personal Moment

### Create the experiment through the activation

We designed the experiment to happen at the most critical moment - during the act of smoking - to create a 'self-awakening' moment.

We hired child actors, cigarette in hand, to approach designated public smoking areas outside office buildings and ask smokers if they could use their lighter. As was expected, all adult smokers refused the request and instead lectured the kids on the dangers of smoking. The children would then ask why they were still smoking, before handing them a brochure with the message:



*You worry about me, but why not about yourself?  
Reminding yourself is the most effective warning to help you quit.  
Call the 1600 hotline to quit smoking.*

# Creative Idea

## Smoking Kid

### Step 2: Mirror Effect on Other Smokers Spread out through online media

We wanted to recreate the same intimate feelings of surprise and personal reflection experienced by the original participants for a wide audience of smokers.

Therefore, instead of mass media, in which audiences are forced to view and receive information in a passive way, we used online media. This was a natural choice because it is more personal and highly engaging, and thus would work best with the ad's message. By actively watching the entire scene caught on hidden cameras, the smokers would experience the same feeling and would have time to reflect on their behaviour as well.



# Creative Idea

## Smoking Kid

### Step 3: Mass Awareness from contagious content Generate social trend from public with massive earned media

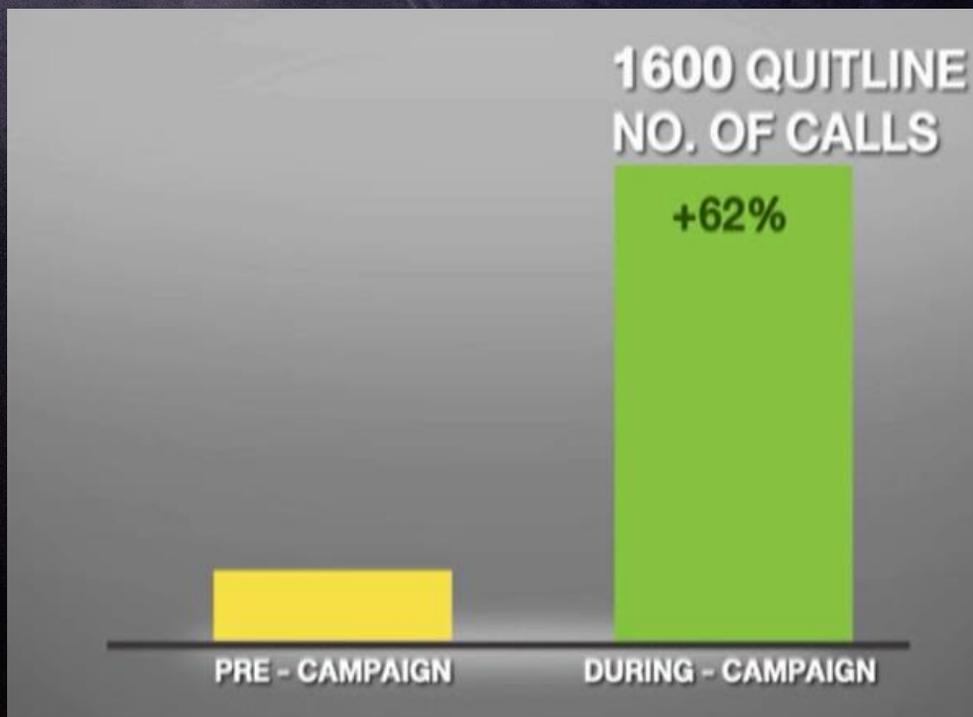
With strong content and an impactful message that resonated with a global audience, plus the social nature of the internet that encouraged the sharing of the video, we could spark important conversations among both smokers and non-smokers alike. This would bring the topic of smoking back into the offline world and as a result, the 1600 Quitline would once again be visible to smokers.



# The Result

## Spurring action for Thai smokers

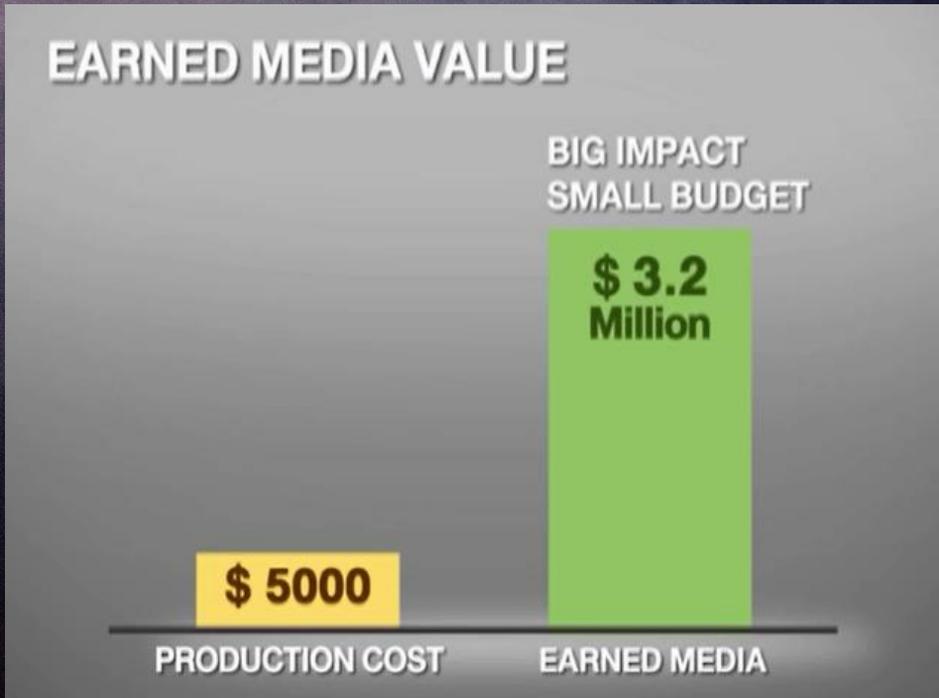
The campaign was able to create a measurable behaviour change. The number of completed calls went from an average of 7,057 per month from January to May, to 11461 in June, an increase of 62%. This marked a new high and outperformed all of THPF's previous anti-smoking campaigns over the past 20 years.



Moreover, after the launching period on July, the average number of monthly calls through November was 9321, up 32% from pre-launching levels. This sustained higher number of calls meant that other media advertising the 1600 Quitline was no longer invisible to smokers.

# The Result

Far outperforming previous campaigns



Cost of investment per campaign was substantially reduced from an average of \$1.5 million to \$5,000 (with no media spending), the campaign eventually generated incredibly high earned media valued at \$USD 3.2 million within one month.

# The Result

Influencing smokers both locally and globally with a universal message

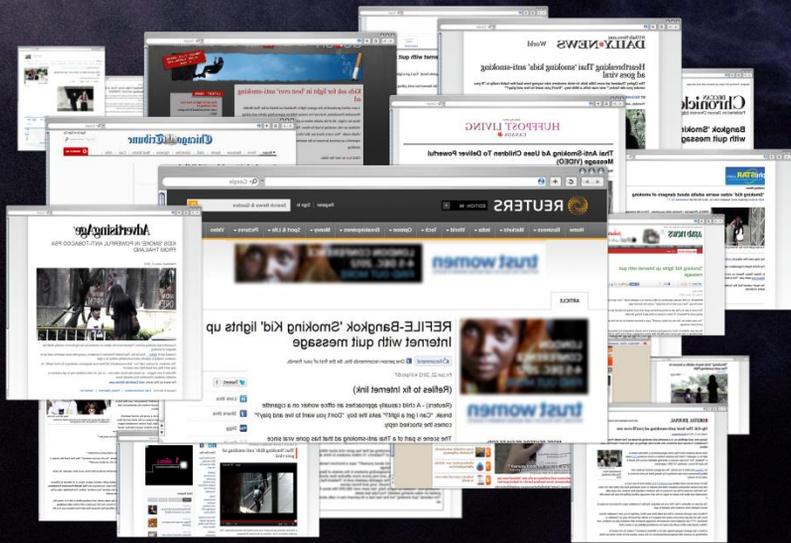


The video became a viral sensation and helped to spark a worldwide conversation. Some journalists, industry analysts and netizens were calling it the "most effective anti-smoking ad ever." The video was viewed more than a million times within the first three days and more than 5 million times within 10 days.

# The Result

## Influencing smokers both locally and globally with a universal message

Scores of local and international media outlets reported on the video. This included Al Jazeera, Reuters, Financial Times, New York Daily News, Adweek, Arab News, Chicago Tribune, Deccan Chronicle from India, and Philstar from the Philippines. The clip was shared in 30 countries, and was mentioned in more than 20,000 posts on social media and blogs.



# The Result

## The Netizens Have Spoken

Tens of thousands of comments from viewers all over the world were logged on social media outlets, news sites and video sharing portals. The reaction was overwhelmingly positive. People were inspired and felt a call to action - smokers for quitting and non-smokers for sharing the video.

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**SS**

*wow. I'm a smoker and I completely ignore those pictures on the package, I'm immune to them. I know it's wrong, it's bad, it's killing me and yet...after watching this video, it's the first time that I can honestly say that an anti-smoking ad has ever affected me....well done. That was brilliant.*

**Crowtherobot**

*Good ad. It doesn't just try to SCARE people into stopping smoking, it actually makes the people THINK.*

**Dan**

*Pretty hard to sit here with a smoke in my hand and watch that ad. Powerful stuff. If I attempt to quit (again) I will watch that ad whenever I get that craving. Couldn't hurt.*

**jettabear1**

*Excellent ad! This has given me the incentive to toss my smokes in the trash*

**Nadine**

*WOW !!!! I have watched this 4 times  
Very powerful  
I passed it on to all my smoker friends  
Best anti smoking add ever.... It hit home*

”

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