
 **PREUSSER
RESEARCH
GROUP, INC.**

Increasing Seat Belt Use in NYC:
Evaluation of a Demonstration Project
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Background

- ▲ Seat belt use reduces the severity of injuries to vehicle occupants involved in a traffic crash.
- ▲ Of the 30,521 occupants killed in traffic crashes in 2006, 55% were not wearing seat belts.


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Selective Traffic Enforcement Programs

- ▲ Selective Traffic Enforcement Programs (sTEPs) are a proven method to change motorists' behavior and do it quickly.
- ▲ Occupant protection sTEPs raise seat belt use rates.


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Study Objective




The objective of this study was to evaluate the effects of a seat belt media and enforcement demonstration program in an ethnically and socially diverse neighborhood in New York City.

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Methods: Site Selection-Queens

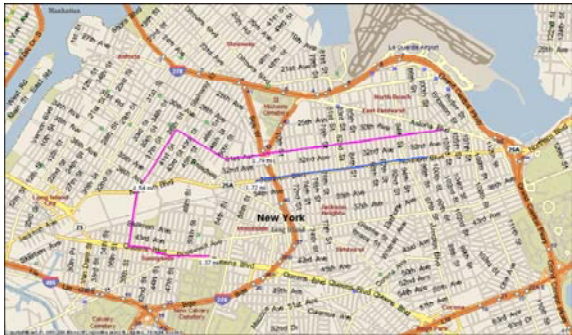
- ▲ Northern Boulevard
- ▲ The Northern Boulevard had previously been identified to have many vehicle crashes.



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Queens Belt Observations - Program Area and Surrounding Precinct Communities



— Northern Boulevard Observations
— Community Observations

Methods: Site Selection-Bronx

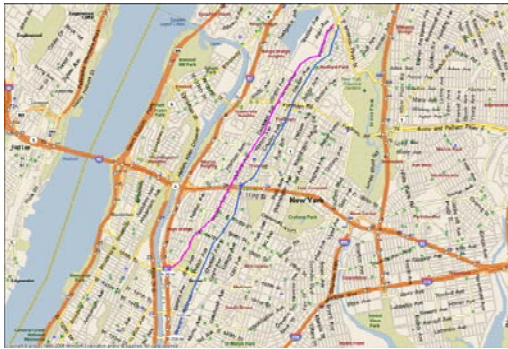
- ▲ Grand Concourse.
- ▲ Major urban arterial with similar traffic volume and mixed socio-demographics.
- ▲ Community observations were taken along Jerome Avenue.



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Bronx Belt Observations - Control Area



— Grand Concourse
— Jerome Ave

Methods: Media

- ▲ Media was entirely localized consisting of billboards, posters and police belt use checkpoints and roving patrols.
- ▲ Citywide print, radio and television outlets were not used due to cost.


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Media Flight Dates


- ▲ Wave 1: July 9th – July 22nd, 2007
- ▲ Wave 2: Oct 8th – Oct 21st, 2007
- ▲ Wave 3: Jan 7th, 2008 – Jan 20th, 2008
- ▲ Wave 4: March 24th – April 6th, 2008

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Media Messages-Posters

- ▲ **DON'T GO BELTLESS.**
 - ▶ Cops are cracking down on unbuckled drivers and passengers




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Media Messages-Posters

- ▲ **SAVE YOUR EXCUSES.**
 - ▶ Cops are cracking down on unbuckled drivers and passengers




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Media Messages-Posters

▲ **PSSST . . .**

- ▶ Cops are cracking down on unbuckled drivers and passengers

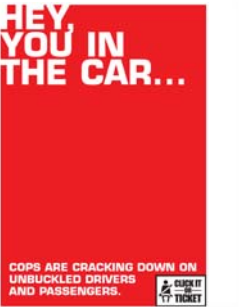


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Media Messages-Posters

HEY, YOU IN THE CAR . . .

- ▶ Cops are cracking down on unbuckled drivers and passengers



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Enforcement Dates

- ▲ Wave 1: July 20th – July 24th, 2007
- ▲ Wave 2: Oct 19th – Oct 23rd, 2007
- ▲ Wave 3: Jan 18th – Jan 22nd, 2008
- ▲ Wave 4: April 4th – April 8th, 2008


▲ The enforcement ran Friday to Tuesday.

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Enforcement Activity




- ▲ Activity was conducted during each of the four waves.
- ▲ Northern Boulevard (checkpoints-60)
- ▲ Within surrounding precinct communities (roving patrols).

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Enforcement Activity

- ▲ TCD issued **6,784** summonses.
- ▲ During Waves 1 through 4, total summonses (respectively): 1,665; 2,190; 1,283; and 1,646.
- ▲ The three precincts surrounding Northern Boulevard: **1,611** total summonses to the effort.

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Evaluation

- ▲ Public awareness surveys at select DMV offices.
- ▲ Roadside seat belt observations.

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Evaluation: DMV Surveys

- ▲ Wave 1 and Wave 4 both College Point (Queens) and Bronx DMV registries pre/post the media/enforcement period.
- ▲ 2nd and 3rd Waves, only distributed in the College Point office during the Post periods.

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Evaluation: Belt Observations

- ▲ Pre- and Post-media/enforcement roadside seatbelt observations on Northern Blvd.
- ▲ Community observations were conducted along parallel roadways to Northern Boulevard.

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Observation Procedures

- ▲ Two trained research assistants.
- ▲ Both directions of traffic during day and evening hours.
- ▲ Vehicle type, race, sex and belt use for the driver only for each vehicle.

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Observation Schedule

- ▶ Pre-Post in Queens took place during Wave 1 and Wave 4.
- ▶ Post only seat belt observations in Queens for Wave 2 and Wave 3.
- ▶ Bronx was observed during both the Pre and Post dates for Wave 1 and Wave 4.

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DMV Survey Respondent Totals

Total of **8,185** DMV surveys were collected

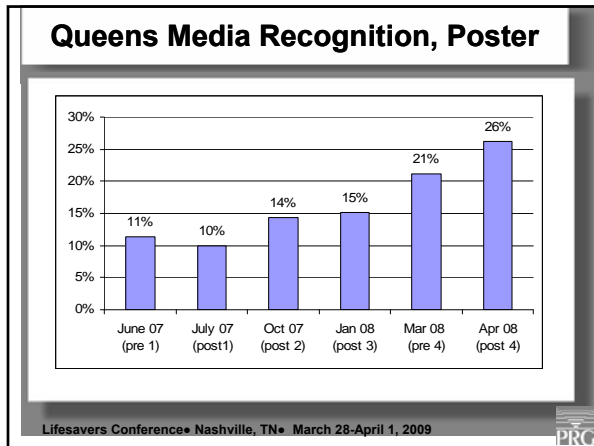
- ▶ 3,347 Pre-Wave periods.
- ▶ 4,838 all four Post-Wave periods.

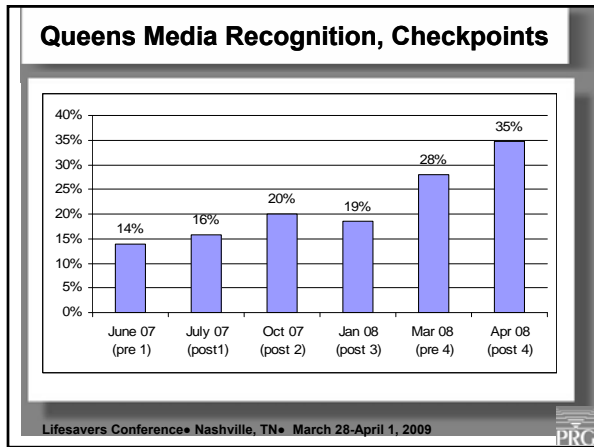
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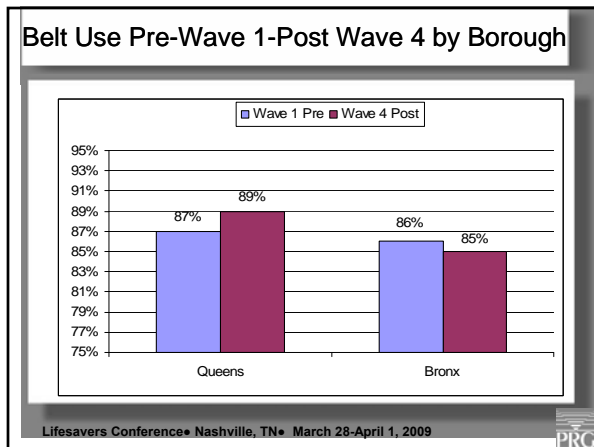
Queens Media Recognition, Billboard

Date	Recognition (%)
June 07 (pre 1)	16%
July 07 (post1)	18%
Oct 07 (post 2)	20%
Jan 08 (post 3)	22%
Mar 08 (pre 4)	33%
Apr 08 (post 4)	35%


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Queens Belt Observations-Wave 4		
Queens Overall:	PRE 85.1%	Post 88.7%*
Race: White	85.0%	88.1%*
Black	81.5%	88.3%*
Asian	88.3%	91.7%
Gender: Male	84.3%	87.8%*
Female	87.9%	92.0%*
Main Corridor (N. Blvd):	85.8%	89.0%*
Side/Local Road:	84.1%	88.4%*
Daytime (8am to 1pm):	85.7%	88.9%
Evening (4pm to 9pm):	84.5%	88.5%

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Conclusion

- ▲ The NYPD program was unique in that it accomplished high visibility enforcement in an urban area without using costly broadcast media.
- ▲ Residents recalled the billboards and roadside posters, recalled the police presence, and, subsequently, increased their belt use.
- ▲ A large number of tickets were written.

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Conclusion

- ▲ Belt use was generally high (well above the national average) prior to the program and then increased significantly beyond these levels.
- ▲ The program clearly demonstrates that an urban police agency, with strong leadership and available police resources, can increase belt use along a known high-risk corridor without the need to purchase prohibitively expensive citywide media.

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Conclusion

- ▲ The NYPD program showed how law enforcement can successfully address belt use in one neighborhood.
- ▲ We would consider the NYPD program to be very useful as a guide or strategy for future small scale enforcement programs in similarly diversified city locales.
- ▲ This program serves to be somewhat of a modification to the larger, proven-effective CIOT model.
- ▲ It seems to be successful when used in the right location under the right circumstances, but should not be considered as a broad "how to" template for any State or Region-wide program for which the full use of broadcast media is appropriate.

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