Thumb-Stopping and 15 other Case Studies on HIV-related Behaviour Change Communication

Insights from testXXX campaigners to increase the uptake of HIV testing, prevention, care and support among young gay men in Bangkok, Jakarta, Manila, and Saigon
Contents

1. THE STORY OF TESTXXX SO FAR 05
   1.1 Introduction 06
   1.2 Insights Summary: Lesson Learn from testXXX Implementation in Bangkok, Jakarta, Manila and Saigon 08
   1.3 How did we Make this Report? 12
   1.4 City Snapshots 14

2. BY DISCIPLINE: LESSONS LEARNT BY TESTXXX CAMPAIGNERS 17
   2.1 Engagement (Online-to-Offline) Journey and Integration 18
   2.2 Digital and Social Media Engagement 24
   2.3 Campaign Video Production 32
   2.4 Activation Events 43
   2.5 Strategic Partnerships 49
This section provides an overview of the campaign to date, summary of the insights gained, methodology for writing this publication, and an introduction to Country Implementing Partners.
1.1 Introduction

Many Asian countries are recording alarmingly high numbers of HIV infection among its MSM population. This is particularly evident in large urban areas like Bangkok, Jakarta, Manila, and Saigon. HIV prevalence has been reported between 15-31% in these cities. Where data is available, the rate of HIV testing among young MSM aged 18 to 29 is less than 50%.

Meanwhile, the adoption of media and technology in Southeast Asia – especially in urban areas – has grown exponentially. Online sexual networking websites and mobile dating apps are used by young MSM to regularly seek out sexual partners. This gives campaigners new opportunities to reach and engage this demographic like never before.

testXXX was created by APCOM to respond to this crisis and opportunity for HIV services for young MSM in the region. testXXX empowers existing community-based clinics to reach and recruit wider young MSM audience. It does this by harnessing the power of cutting-edge communications and creativity that resonates with the knowledges, attitudes, and behaviours of young MSM.

In 2014, testBKK was created as a pilot testXXX campaign in Bangkok. In 2015, APCOM received a grant from Elton John AIDS Foundation (EJAF) to continue testBKK’s implementation and start the pilot year in Jakarta (testJKT), Manila (testMNL), and Saigon (testSGN).1

The following report showcases testXXX campaign’s use of fresh tactics to increase HIV testing across the region. These cover diverse discipline areas, from integrated engagement and online booking platforms to video content and activation events at parties. Crucially, these tactics are engaging audiences that previously had not been reached.

This publication does not attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the testXXX campaign. Rather, it aims to document key insights shared by testXXX campaigners in Bangkok, Jakarta, Manila, and Saigon, from implementing the campaign in their cities, at the testXXX Regional Dialogue in Bangkok during 23-25 May 2018.

These insights make note of which tactics are working well to reach and recruit young MSM to HIV testing, prevention, treatment and care cascade, and consider which activities could be trialled in other cities. The report is intended as a resource both for testXXX campaigners and other HIV service campaigners in the region.

1.2 Insights Summary: Lessons Learnt from testXXX Implementation in Bangkok, Jakarta, Manila and Saigon

These 18 insights draw from case studies detailed later in the report:

A. Engagement (Online-to-Offline) Journey and Integration

1. Integration: Campaigners should be aware of the technological platforms that underpin the journey a user takes from engagement to action, then integrate systems and technology to track how and when in the journey they decide to take/book the test. (see Case Study 2.1.1)

2. Engagement journey: Campaigners should understand why their target audience are not following through with the expected final action (taking HIV test), and use those insights to make a cohesive engagement journey. (see Case Study 2.1.2)

3. Buddies: Campaigners must provide a supportive companion to people who are hesitant, scared or feel intimated to get a test. (see Case Study 2.1.3)

B. Digital and Social Media Engagement

4. Lifestyle content: Statistical and straight-up health information don’t interest everyone within the target audience. Instead, the campaigners may want to consider producing gay-themed lifestyle content to reach and engage their audience as a way to drive web traffic to health resources. (see Case Study 2.2.1)

5. Targeted copywriting: Young MSM demography consists of different sub-demography that represent different traits and lifestyles. Campaigners should bring variety to its online advertising writing so that each can make connection with various characteristics of the audience. (see Case Study 2.2.2)

6. Diversification of online touchpoints: Campaigners should experiment with multiple online advertising platforms to determine which one generates the highest traffic, awareness, and bookings. (see Case Study 2.2.3)

C. Campaign Video Production

7. Community building: Campaigners should apprehend the power and popularity of each video-based project to build the size and strength of their online community for the future. (see Case Study 2.3.1)

8. Thumb-Stopping: Campaigners should find a way to make the first few seconds of the video attention-grabbing. Convince the audience to keep watching by making the video local, funny and, perhaps, naughty. (see Case Study 2.3.2)

9. YouTube Card and Endscreen: Campaigners can create their YouTube videos to have direct interactivity with the viewers, including executing the video’s call to action with just a click, by embedding card and endscreen features provided by YouTube. (see Case Study 2.3.3)

10. Watch time report: Campaigners who create a video series should pay attention to the data on how long viewers watch the content to get a sense of what content viewers actually watch (as opposed to videos that they click on and then abandon). (see Case Study 2.3.4)
D. Activation Event

11. **Party outreach**: Engaging young MSM to get tested at bars and gay parties is possible, but campaigners have to make the experience fun and diversify venues in order to keep reaching new audiences. *(see Case Study 2.4.1)*

12. **University outreach**: Partnering with universities is a powerful way to reach young MSM. Outreach can happen at multiple levels: through the university administration, through student clubs, or through departments focusing on health and development. *(see Case Study 2.4.2)*

13. **Media coverage**: People want to read about people. Campaigners should use human interest stories of volunteers and beneficiaries to drive media coverage of their activation events. *(see Case Study 2.4.3)*

E. Strategic Partnerships

14. **Civil society partnerships**: In cities where LGBT people experience hostility and severe social stigma, campaigners should engage with networks of human rights defenders to ensure the survival of the campaign, protect beneficiaries, and protect testXXX as a whole. *(see Case Study 2.5.1)*

15. **LGBT creatives**: Campaigners should work with skilled creative agencies who are already part of the LGBT community in their cities. They are more likely to understand the issue, the local culture, and can bring some useful contacts to help spread the campaign further. *(see Case Study 2.5.2)*

16. **Social Influencers**: Campaigners should seek out influencers with a personal connection to the issue in order to gain a real connection with your audience, then maximise their potential to drive awareness, engagement, and actions. *(see Case Study 2.5.3)*
The report is based on the lessons shared during the testXXX Regional Dialogue, which took place in Bangkok during 23-25 May 2018 and were attended by eight testXXX campaigners from Bangkok, Jakarta, Manila and Saigon.

The syllabus and agenda of the dialogue probed five key areas: engagement journey and integration; creative video content production; digital and social media engagement; activation events; and strategic partnerships. The group was consulted on the opportunities of working as a regional team by email after the dialogue.

A number of other qualitative and quantitative sources were also collected to strengthen the insights reported in publication. This includes desk reviews of quarterly progress report and impact studies on each testXXX campaign, and consultation or interviews with selected key stakeholders such as the branding agency, digital content producer and social influencers. Data was also examined from the Google Analytics and Facebook Insights of each campaign’s website and Facebook Page, respectively.
1.4 City Snapshots

testXXX operates under the EJAF grant in four capital cities of Southeast Asia: Bangkok (Thailand), Jakarta (Indonesia), Manila (the Philippines), and Saigon (Vietnam). These cities were among the focus geographical area of MSM and TG Multi-City HIV Initiative, a broad coalition of United Nations partners, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and its cooperating agencies, national AIDS programmes, city governments and MSM and transgender community-based organizations in Asia to scale up effective, comprehensive and rights-based HIV responses for MSM and transgender persons. The Asia Pacific region saw an expansion of share of new HIV infections among MSM from 7% of total cases within all key populations in 2000 to 26% in 2016.

testXXX campaign's goal is to reach and recruit young MSM to take HIV/STI tests in the partner clinics and, in case of reactive case, to ensure that the clients are enrolled in the treatment provided by the clinics. Read the city snapshots below to understand the overview of each testXXX campaign.

With the exception of testBKK, which is directly led by APCOM, APCOM has chosen to partner with established, locally-operated Country Implementing Partners in Jakarta, Manila, and Saigon for the implementation of testXXX. APCOM has found this model comes with many strengths. It enables the campaign to access partnerships that would otherwise have been more difficult to forge, and these organisations come with existing volunteer structures to strengthen the rollout of campaign activities. They also have existing partnerships with local and city-scale CBOs.

Each testXXX campaign is mandated to create partnerships with a certain number of clinics that provide sexual health services, including HIV and STI testing and treatment, to MSM. These selected clinics should be accommodating and sensitive to the needs of MSM, including ensuring non-judgemental, anonymous and confidential service delivery. testXXX campaigners’ goal, in a nutshell, is to reach and recruit young MSM to take HIV/STI testing in the partnered clinics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country Implementing Partner</th>
<th>Implementation Period</th>
<th>Number of Clinic Partners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APCOM</td>
<td>November 2015 to present</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWL-INA</td>
<td>April 2017 to March 2018</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loveyourself</td>
<td>November 2016 to December 2017</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARMH</td>
<td>May 2016 to April 2017</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Epidemic Summary**
- **Bangkok**: 1 in 4 MSM is living with HIV
- **Jakarta**: Almost 2 in 10 MSM are living with HIV
- **Manila**: Almost 70% of people who are newly diagnosed with HIV every day are MSM
- **Saigon**: 1 in 10 MSM living in Saigon is living with HIV
This section showcases highlights from testXXX campaigners. It is separated into five sub-sections:

1. Engagement journey and integration;
2. Digital and social media engagement;
3. Video content production;
4. Activation events;
5. Strategic partnerships.
2.1 Engagement (Online-to-Offline) Journey and Integration

Beneficiaries and target audiences interact with the testXXX campaign in a variety of ways over time. Their types and levels of interactions depend on several factors, including their interest in the issue and familiarity with the campaign. Target audiences might click on a Facebook advert, visit the testXXX website, make a booking online for a HIV test, or take a test at a pop-up clinic at an activation event. Each of these observable actions represents a different (high or lower) level of engagement with the campaign that spans across multiple communication channels. The overall sum of these interactions is what is referred to here as the engagement journey. Integration between these elements of the engagement is key to ensuring a cohesive campaign that creates new relationships with target audiences and deepens relationships with existing audiences.

Case Study 2.1.1

testBKK used an integrated online booking system to measure the move from awareness to action.

Campaigners should be aware of the technological platforms that underpin the journey a user takes from engagement to action, then integrate systems and technology to track how and when in the journey they decide to take/book the test.

How many people actually take a HIV test after engaging with the testXXX campaign? This question was difficult to answer when clinics and campaigners use different technological platforms to track online and offline interactions with the target audience. Clinics are using one or more booking platforms, while testXXX was using social media, dating apps, content management systems, and a suite of analytics tools such as Google Analytics and Facebook Insights.
testMNL used follow-up communications to ensure people show up for the testing

Case Study 2.1.2

With the support from LINKAGES Thailand led by FHI 360 and supported by USAID and PEPFAR, testBKK bridged this gap by developing a customised, secure online booking platform\(^2\) through the testBKK website and other touchpoints such as Facebook page and adverts on dating app. Users can click through to an online booking page, available in two languages (Thai and English), and select testBKK’s partner clinic of their choice. After the user selects a date and time, they enter contact details (phone, Line ID, and [optional] name). They are presented with a confirmation screen, their booking then processed with their selected clinic.

This platform allows testBKK to access user data that can help hone its efforts. For example, during 1 October 2017 to 10 May 2018, the booking page was viewed a total of 46,436 times through mass advertising sources – excluding posts from online influencers. Some top traffic drivers: 35.9% via the testBKK’s website, 34.5% via Facebook ads, and 26.4% via advertising on Grindr, Hornet and Jack’d. The lowest traffic drivers were via QR codes and organic Facebook posts (0.25% combined). testBKK can use this information to more efficiently allocate resources for promoting test bookings.

Social media influencers were also used to generate bookings through this platform. Influencers who are popular among Thai gay men were recruited to create original content (posts or videos) encouraging young MSM followers to get tested and book the test via the platform.

It should be noted that some clinics still allow the clients to do walk-in, without booking in advance. That said, this platform is easily scalable. Wider adoption of this initiative would result in clinics and campaigners have a deeper understanding of the relationship between online tools and HIV test bookings.

Campaigners should understand why their target audience are not following through with the expected final action (taking HIV test), and use those insights to make a cohesive engagement journey.

Many people who book a HIV test online or directly through a clinic don’t always decide to follow through with a test. This can happen for a variety of reasons, such as forgetting to attend an appointment or people simply getting cold feet.

testMNL has been using follow-up communications with people who have booked tests to reduce the number of people who fail to show up, such as emails, SMS, and phone calls. All communications are appropriately personalised so that they feel special, and thus, it increases the likelihood of turning up to the test. While this mechanism was in place for testMNL’s partner clinics, this was not possible for government-run clinics, which use a different booking system.

---

\(^2\) testBKK’s online booking platform can be visited at http://testBKK.org/GetTested
Case Study 2.1.3

TestJKT enlisted ‘buddies’ to support people who are hesitant about taking a test.

For many young MSM, taking their first HIV test can be a daunting experience. They could be concerned about the anonymity of the services they are accessing, or worried about the prospect of a positive result. These feelings leave many people too scared to take the test, and so they put it off for a later time or simply never turn up to the appointment.

To reduce the disparity between the number of people booking a test and actually taking the test, TestJKT set up a ‘buddy’ system. The system aims to support people who are hesitant to take a test by partnering them with a peer outreach worker who can act as a trusted companion. The buddy can provide advice to the person getting tested, accompany them to the testing appointment.

A visitor to TestJKT’s website who is trying to find out which clinic partner that is the closest to him will be given a list of “buddy” who resides within the area vicinity of the clinic. The list includes the buddy’s contact number and/or email address, in which the user can reach out to.

This initiative has successfully increased the number of people getting tested and helped break down hesitations a first-time tester might have.

Campaigners must provide a supportive companion to people who are hesitant, scared or feel intimated to get a test.
Digital and Social Media Engagement

Strong digital and social media engagement is critical to the success of the testXXX campaigns. The popularity of mobile social media tools has grown enormously in recent years, meaning that young people in urban areas are more interconnected than ever before. Social lives are planned and lived through mobile apps like Facebook and Instagram, while young MSM increasingly use dating apps like Blued, Grindr, Hornet and Jack’d to seek out sexual partners. In order for testXXX to connect with target audiences, it is essential to interact with them in online spaces like these where they are active in seeking platonic and sexual interest. Additionally, digital and social media tools help testXXX connect with audiences that are less visible in everyday life, such as MSM who don’t identify as LGBT.

Case Study 2.2.1

testBKK used ‘lifestyle content’ to drive wider engagement with health messaging

Statistical and straight-up health information don’t interest everyone within the target audience. Instead, the campaigners may want to consider producing gay-themed lifestyle content to reach and engage their audience as a way to drive web traffic to health resources.
testBKK was gaining some traction online through the creation of blog content about key HIV-related issues such as PrEP, PEP, and sexually transmitted diseases after sharing this content on its Facebook page. But campaigners felt that messages were too direct and too clinical, and as a result, not cutting through as well as they could. The campaign therefore looked to develop content geared more towards gay-oriented lifestyle as a way to attract audiences on Facebook to visit the testBKK website. Two key examples were list-articles 15 Asian Gay Movies You Should Watch and 15 Asian Gay Webseries You Should Bingewatch. The movies and web series featured in these lists included positive messages about LGBT relationships and living with HIV. Other blog posts had featured personal stories from people getting their first tests.

The results of this approach were encouraging. These two posts above gained over 2100 page views on the testBKK website within its first two weeks since they are shared on Facebook Page. An estimated 20-30% of this traffic visited then went on to visit another resource page on the testBKK website, such as “Where to Get Tested” and “How to Stay Safe” pages. This was also due in part to including a call to action, such as encouragement to book the test, within the blog posts itself.

An important lessons for campaigners here is to find out more about what interests the audience, and use these topics as a way to drive traffic to health resources.

Case Study 2.2.2

testSGN created more effective Facebook ads by customising copy for different demographics of young MSM

Young MSM demography consists of different sub-demography that represent different traits and lifestyles. Campaigners should bring variety to its online advertising’s writing so that each can make connection with various characteristics of the audience.
testSGN understands that their audience can be divided into two sub-demographies: young office workers and university/school students. These two groups have different schedule on their weekdays, with office workers being only able to visit the clinic after work hours (around 5-7pm) while the students can pay a visit in much earlier time. Seeing this dissimilarity, testSGN created two different ad sets within their Facebook ad to target two different audiences indicating their office vs. school criteria: male fans (and their male friends) above 19 years old and male fans (and their male friends) below 20 years old. Each ad set will contain ads with text that is adjusted to the lifestyle of these two groups.

For office workers, the text reads as follows:

“Our partner clinics are still open after you finish work. Don't wait. Get tested with us as soon as you can. It's free, quick, confidential and anonymous.”

The ad sets can also be further arranged, in terms of time placement of the ad, to match the two different groups. For example, the ad sets targeting office workers can be made only visible after work hours, while the one targeting students can run a whole day.

---

3 There are three levels to Facebook advertising’s campaign structure: campaign, ad set and ad. A campaign contains one or more ad sets and ads. Campaigners can choose one advertising objective for each of their campaigns. Ad sets contain one or more ads. Campaigners will define their targeting (audience), budget, schedule, bidding and placement at the ad set level. Ad is where the creative (visual/video/image/text) is used. Learn more about Facebook ad campaign structure at https://www.facebook.com/business/ad/campaign-structure

---

Case Study 2.2.3

**testBKK diversified types of online advertising to find which channel reached and recruited more young MSM**

Campaigners should experiment with multiple online advertising platforms to determine which one generates the highest traffic, awareness, and bookings.

**testXXX is one of the first campaigns to strategically use dating apps to drive awareness and bookings for HIV tests. Dating apps used for paid advertising so far in Bangkok, Jakarta and Manila include Grindr, Hornet, and Jack’d. As key online spaces where young people seek casual sex - especially in environments where people can’t easily be ‘out’ - these platforms became an important place for testBKK, which already installed online booking platforms, to recruit new bookings and also identify reactive cases for enrolment in treatment programmes.**

After analysing the performance of its digital marketing channels, testBKK found advertising on Facebook and Hornet generated the highest volume of traffic to the online booking platform. Facebook Advertising was more cost effective at driving traffic to the booking platforms, due in part to Facebook’s flexibility for the advertiser to set the budget. Meanwhile, the advertising package of Hornet, and of many other dating apps, comes with fixed-price structure. Hornet, however, yielded the highest number of young MSM making a booking and taking the test.

This case study highlights the value of an integrated online booking system (see Case Study 2.1.1) to determine which sources are generating most test bookings. It also highlights the need to diversify channels used to determine the highest return on advertising investment.
Traffic Sources of Online Booking Platform’s Visitors in March 2018

- Jack’d: 2%
- Grindr: 18%
- Platform: 33%
- Facebook: 47%

Traffic Sources of Visitors who complete their booking on the Platform in March 2018

- Jack’d: 3%
- Grindr: 9%
- Platform: 48%
- Facebook: 40%
2.3 Campaign Video Production

Strong campaign video production and distribution has the power to change knowledge, attitudes and behaviours surrounding HIV-related knowledge. This content can come in a variety of formats and genres. Drama can help viewers develop a deeper understanding of an issue and how they should relate to it in everyday lives, such as how to date someone who is HIV positive and deal with other issues facing LGBT people. On the other hand, catchy videos that use local humour can ensure otherwise dull health messages are watched and shared widely online. Developing high quality video content, whether it’s a short public service announcement (PSA) video or a webseries, is a key way to drive online engagement with text.

Case Study 2.3.1

testBKK used a webseries to build online community and affecting positive behaviour change in Bangkok

Campaigners should apprehend the power and popularity of each video-based project to build the size and strength of their online community for the future.
In partnership with a creative community that is famously known to produce viral YouTube videos and dance parties catering to LGBT communities in Bangkok, testBKK produced a scripted web series called GAYOK Bangkok. The series follows fictional gay characters that represent different ages, body types, gender expression, and HIV status, and it provides a realistic and diverse portrayal of gay individuals of Bangkok. The sexual health messages, including PrEP, are threaded subtly into the storyline, which paints a picture of life drama among the characters.

Between the launch of the trailer video and a week after the last episode aired, testBKK’s Facebook Page fanbase increased by over eight times. The website’s users increased over 20 times and the website’s pageviews increased by 18 times.

The series attracted young MSM and their allies to the testBKK Facebook Page, positioning testBKK as a trusted channel of information and quality content. The bigger fanbase is now an effective tool for testBKK to reach more MSM in Bangkok through continuing to disseminate content. This in turn can drive more traffic and drive deeper engagement in future initiatives run by testBKK.

But it’s not all about Facebook likes – the series was shown to have a positive effect on brand recognition and knowledge/attitudes too. According to the impact studies conducted to the same cohort of young MSM conducted by Mahidol University, the research partner of testBKK, awareness of testBKK had growth 23.7%, while awareness of PrEP had grown by 22.6%.

While this was indeed a success for testBKK, other testXXX campaigners have not been enjoying the same success with producing web series. When testJKT created the series Buddies, it did not help build power for the campaign online. Campaigners concluded that a successful web series requires some key ingredients to be a success including: clever scriptwriting, clean cinematography, experienced and/or well-known actors, a solid budget to promote the series, and strong overall technical production skills. These factors all play a key role in attracting and engaging key audiences in the campaign.

Case Study 2.3.2

TestMNL made its campaign videos local and relatable, and used thumb-stopping to engage viewers

In partnership with a creative community that is famously known to produce viral YouTube videos and dance parties catering to LGBT communities in Bangkok, testBKK produced a scripted web series called GAYOK Bangkok. The series follows fictional gay characters that represent different ages, body types, gender expression, and HIV status, and it provides a realistic and diverse portrayal of gay individuals of Bangkok. The sexual health messages, including PrEP, are threaded subtly into the storyline, which paints a picture of life drama among the characters.

Between the launch of the trailer video and a week after the last episode aired, testBKK’s Facebook Page fanbase increased by over eight times. The website’s users increased over 20 times and the website’s pageviews increased by 18 times.

The series attracted young MSM and their allies to the testBKK Facebook Page, positioning testBKK as a trusted channel of information and quality content. The bigger fanbase is now an effective tool for testBKK to reach more MSM in Bangkok through continuing to disseminate content. This in turn can drive more traffic and drive deeper engagement in future initiatives run by testBKK.

But it’s not all about Facebook likes – the series was shown to have a positive effect on brand recognition and knowledge/attitudes too. According to the impact studies conducted to the same cohort of young MSM conducted by Mahidol University, the research partner of testBKK, awareness of testBKK had growth 23.7%, while awareness of PrEP had grown by 22.6%.

While this was indeed a success for testBKK, other testXXX campaigners have not been enjoying the same success with producing web series. When testJKT created the series Buddies, it did not help build power for the campaign online. Campaigners concluded that a successful web series requires some key ingredients to be a success including: clever scriptwriting, clean cinematography, experienced and/or well-known actors, a solid budget to promote the series, and strong overall technical production skills. These factors all play a key role in attracting and engaging key audiences in the campaign.

---

34

4 GAYOK Bangkok can be watched at testBKK.org/GayOkBangkok
testMNL wanted to build on a key lesson from testBKK’s focus group discussions: that their target audiences found the idea of getting a HIV test awkward and uncomfortable. But rather than simply reproducing the same idea that testBKK had executed, testMNL embarked from a theme that resonated more deeply with Filipino audiences.

The resulting video, Red Room⁵, featured two men kissing on a bed. One man is wrapped in black leather and rope by the other. Camera angles capture the sensuality of this experience, almost a soft-porn scene. This is all captured with the very first seconds of the video, triggering the users who sees the video while scrolling their screen to stop scrolling and, instead, continue watching the rest of the video. This technique is known as ‘thumb stopping.’

At the end of the video, the tied-up man is bombarded by the other guy with a multilevel marketing scam – something that often comes at unexpected moment in the Philippines. Within the first quarter, the video achieved positive feedback in 103 Facebook comments, and 43,000 views (organic) on the testMNL Facebook page.

testMNL’s campaigners learnt from this that video content work well if it is: 1) local and in-touch with current trends; 2) funny; and 3) naughty, by including messages on sex positivity. The video campaign proved that a common issue can be tackled across borders, but the key to successful implementation is through adapting content and ideas for the local culture and context. testMNL always embedded a call-to-action in these posts, so views also helped to drive traffic too.

---

**Case Study 2.3.3**

testBKK and testMNL used YouTube card and endscreen feature to translate video view into call-to-action

---

⁵ Watch “Red Room” at testMNL’s YouTube Channel at http://YouTube.com/testMNL

---

Campaigners can create their YouTube videos to have direct interactivity with the viewers, including executing the video’s call to action with just a click/tap on the video, by embedding “card” and “endscreen” features provided by YouTube.
Among many examples, TestBKK uses a YouTube card to point viewers to the PrEP webpage during a GAYOK Bangkok webseries’ scene where the characters of a serodiscordant couple talked about the prophylaxis medicine. TestMNL uses an end screen to point viewers to their “where to get tested” page at the end of their PSA video campaigns.

TestBKK and TestJKT studied the watch-time drop of their video series to avoid the same mistake in the future video production.

Card in the middle of testBKK’s PSA video

Campaigners who create a video series should pay attention to the data on how long viewers watch the content to get a sense of what content viewers actually watch (as opposed to videos that they click on and then abandon).

6 To learn more about YouTube card and endscreen, go to https://creatoracademy.youtube.com/page/lesson/cards
When testBKK and testJKT have seen a drop in watch time and views of their series, they ask themselves the following questions to try to diagnose the issue:

(a) Have I changed my upload schedule?
(b) Is a single video responsible for the drop?
(c) Was the content that was responsible for the drop seasonal or topical to what was happening in the world?
(d) Was there a specific word/visual shown in a scene that triggers the drop (such as a cursing word, or videographical error/glitch)

After the release of all episodes of the Baitbus webseries on its YouTube channel, testBKK reviewed the average watch time drop of each episode through the analytics provided by YouTube. The review concluded that most of the viewers left the episode before the key promoted message (i.e., the announcement by the host and the social influencer guest star on testBKK’s online booking platform), which was placed in the last one third segment of the episode. This suggested that, for the upcoming webseries production, when the audience retention can’t be guaranteed, a plugin of the key message should be introduced in the episode as early as possible, either through a snippet scene or text layover.
2.4 Activation Events

Activation events are an important way to reach young MSM in offline places where they socialise. These events are time intensive – from the setting up logistics to designing materials and ensuring adequate promotion – though it can be an effective way to reach high-risk young MSM if the venue and creative are well targeted to the audience. These events have so far taken place in diverse venues and settings, including pop-up clinics at popular circuit parties in Bangkok and entertainment events at LGBT venues in Jakarta.

Case Study 2.4.1

testJKT and testBKK run creative events to attract party-goers to get tested

Engaging young MSM to get tested at bars and gay parties is possible, but campaigners have to make the experience fun and diversify venues in order to keep reaching new audiences.
Would you take a HIV test if you see a pop-up testing clinic in the party you’re going to? Campaigners at testBKK and testJKT invested significant resources into encouraging patrons at venues catering to young MSM to find out the answer and achieved some promising results.

In 2017, testBKK partnered with gCircuit, Asia’s biggest gay circuit that took place in Bangkok over Songkran (Thai New Year) holiday. testBKK designed and set up a specially-made booth and testing facilities at a location just outside the main party area. Models handed out condoms to party-goers. The most eye-catching element was a photo booth, changed each day in line with the theme of the party that night. Participants can step into the booth with friends, take a photo, and post it on their social media channels.

The result? While over a hundred men were tested, the number of reactive cases identified was low. The booth was good for building awareness and positioning testBKK as part of the wider LGBT community, but it was not an effective mechanism for identifying reactive cases.

testJKT ran a different kind of activation event geared more towards entertainment in a popular LGBT venue, Apollo Club. The Fantasy World open-mic night, where LGBT individuals can show off their talent on stage, was regularly attended by up to 500 people, and entrance was free for people who took the HIV test at the pop-up clinic made ready by testJKT and its community-based organisation (CBO) and clinic partners. Getting the timing right was key to engage the key audience at these events. Thus, testJKT usually targeted the night before public holidays – where number of patrons was higher than usual, and Wednesdays – when drinks sold by the club were cheaper than any other days.

Over time, these events would become less effective because the event would attract a similar audience each time. As such, the same people would be encouraged by testJKT to take tests. It was therefore essential to keep diversifying the venues where these events are held in order to keep reach a new audience.

Case Study 2.4.2

testMNL mobilised students during university campus outreach to reach young MSM in a younger age bracket

Partnering with universities is a powerful way to reach young MSM. Outreach can happen at multiple levels: through the university administration, through student clubs, or through departments focusing on health and development.

A key strength of the testMNL campaign is its ability to reach young people at universities. Campaigners found this to be an important place to reach and engage young MSM below 18 years old, which is, oftentimes, the minimum age for someone to legally use dating apps or to be presented with mature content of Facebook advertising and Google AdWords.

When selecting a university to engage, testMNL campaigners recommended looking out for universities with existing gender and development projects. Some could even invite NGOs to conduct lectures on HIV prevalence in your country. This is an important and captive audience to meet.
testMNL promoted its activation events by providing journalists with human interest stories

Media coverage can be an effective way to maximise participation in activation events. But gaining the attention of writers and journalists for HIV-related events in conservative contexts can be challenging for a variety of reasons. These reasons include working in repressive contexts or a lack of willingness to openly discuss issues facing gay men.

testMNL found a way to gain positive media coverage for its Let’s testMNL, the campaign’s biggest activation event. They developed and pitched human interest stories to drive positive media coverage to provide a hook to their activation events. These stories could be of volunteers, activists or campaign beneficiaries. testMNL found that media were more likely to cover the event through this technique, and therefore drive greater participation. Additionally, Love Yourself communication staff also reached out to young people in the LGBT community and encouraged them to volunteer as models for the events, which also helped generate more coverage.

Learn more about Let’s testMNL at http://www.loveyourself.ph/2017/05/lets-testmnl-fast-easy-and-anonymous.html
2.5 Strategic Partnerships

TestXXX campaigners use partnerships in different ways to support and reach campaign goals. Some TestXXX campaigns used partnerships to maximise visibility and gain access to audiences that would otherwise be harder to reach, or bring a specific skill or perspective to strengthen digital and video content. Other partnerships were forged to give TestXXX resilience in the face of hateful political and media discourse, and for financial stability.

Case Study 2.5.1

TestJKT and TestMNL worked with human rights defenders to strengthen organisational resilience in hostile environments.

In cities where LGBT people experience hostility and severe social stigma, campaigners should engage with networks of human rights defenders to ensure the survival of the campaign, protect beneficiaries, and protect TestXXX as a whole.

testJKT operates in a hostile political and social environment. As of the time of writing, all but one LGBT bar and club have been closed down by authorities in the city. All MSM sex venues have also closed, following the high-profile raid of a well-known gay sauna. These instances have put individuals and pro-LGBT organisations at risk of physical danger, as well as legal consequences.
To counter this, testJKT has been building partnerships with Indonesia’s national-scale human rights defenders, Arus Pelangi. The collective specialises in advocacy and laws on LGBT issues and represent LGBT people in court. They also help organise workshops and educate media on SOGIESC. This network could be called upon to help people requiring urgent legal assistance, as well as assist testJKT campaigners that would need assistance.

testMNL campaigners also reported using similar networks, which also helped lead to wider social acceptance of testXXX’s sex-positive messaging.

These types of partnerships are essential to the very survival of testXXX. In some contexts they are used to ensure events would not be shut down/raided by police and to ensure the safety of the people who participate.

**Case Study 2.5.2**

testBKK collaborated with industry experts who were already proficient in influencing gay demography to produce impactful campaign resources efficiently.

Campaigners should work with skilled creative agencies who are already part of the LGBT community in their cities. They are more likely to understand the issue, the local culture, and can bring some useful contacts to help spread the campaign further.

TestBKK wanted to produce compelling campaign video to reach and recruit young MSM, while also communicating a sex-positive message. While Bangkok is often lauded as the most progressive city in the region, talking about sex and pleasure for MSM still remained taboo even among the MSM itself. testBKK therefore identified a need to work with production partners that understood both the issue and the context in which they were working.
testBKK worked with two creative agencies in Bangkok to produce its video content. They employed Trasher Bangkok, a party organiser and production house with a strong LGBT following, and Blued, a dating app with a growing local presence in Thailand and connections to online influencers.

Trasher Bangkok created the GAYOK Bangkok web series. The agency brought new creativity in how to talk about issues facing gay men in Bangkok. The agency’s ability to use realistic storylines and embed HIV testing messaging into these stories helped ensure a balance between the needs of testXXX and what audiences wanted to watch. testBKK campaigners noted that they understand the target community, appreciate emotional value, and understand trends. The first series resulted in positive changes in attitudes towards gay person living with HIV and PrEP. It also helped build the size and strength of testBKK’s online community (see 2.3.4).

Blued created a variety web series, Baitbus. The storyline was a mash-up of a popular genre of gay porn and a ‘cash cab’ game show. The variety show quizzed participants about attitudes towards sex, pleasure, and HIV knowledge. On each episode, a young gay man participant got scouted from a public place through Blued dating app by the show’s host and got invited to go inside a “bus” in which the game show would begin. The participant would be accompanied by a gay social influencer guest star who’s already waiting inside the “bus”. Cash rewards were offered to the participant for every right answer. Cash rewards were offered to the participant for every right answer. Blued used well-known social media personalities to host the show. The association of the testBKK and Blued brands also helped position testXXX as a sex-positive campaign.

testSGN, on the other hand, used production agencies that did not have as much experience working with the LGBT community. As such it was more time consuming to sensitise the agency with the issue.

---

9 Learn more about Trasher Bangkok at https://www.facebook.com/trasherbangkok
10 Learn more about Blued Thailand at https://www.facebook.com/bluedthailand/
Engaging with ‘online influencers’ – people with large social media followings and connections to your target audience – is becoming an increasingly important way to drive awareness and traffic for testXXX in Bangkok, Jakarta, and Manila. For each city, these individuals have offered greater awareness for testXXX, and also drive direct HIV test bookings too.

To obtain the influencers’ perspectives, testXXX campaigners spoke with six online influencers to determine what encouraged them to participate in the campaign.

The influencers believed their top contribution to testXXX were: raising awareness; reducing stigma; fixing misconceptions; helping people find reliable information; setting a positive; making people less hesitant to take the test; helping people understand why it’s important and it is okay to talk about HIV.

The influencers decided to get involved to help young MSM friends access reliable services; to help people become aware of their status, to spread a ‘friendly warning’, and to normalise testing by instilling sex positivity. One also knew about a friend who had died.

They recommended campaigners diversify the types of social media influencers they use. Instead of working with one celebrity with hundreds of thousands of followers, it can be more cost-effective to work with a number of hyper-targeted influencers with thousands or tens of thousands of followers.

The audiences of micro-influencers can be more focused on niche interests, meaning that the ratio and interaction can actually be greater and more effective, offering a scalable way to combine influence and authenticity. For example, a self-identified gay gamer on YouTube or a beauty vlogger may each have a smaller following than a well-known gay movie actor. Yet they can provide access to an untapped group of young MSM demography that others can’t.
We are united in advocating for issues around HIV and those that advance the rights, health and well being of people of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and sex characteristics.