

**INTERACTIVE DM:
CRIMESTOPPERS**



BACKGROUND

Cannabis is seen by many as the more acceptable side of recreational drugs, so asking people to report cultivation was contentious amongst the public. Evidence strongly indicated that “organised crime” was behind the majority of cannabis farms. And these gangs undoubtedly bring violence and other crime to the communities.

Crimestoppers needed to raise public awareness of the social and economic consequences of cannabis farms. The campaign needed specifically to reach residents in urban neighbourhoods with high crime rates and where the cannabis farms were likely to be. It also needed to create a national campaign to generate information about cannabis cultivation for the public.



SOLUTION

The campaign funding wouldn't accommodate a full national advertising campaign so a highly targeted campaign was required which would reach residents living on or near estates with high crime levels where cannabis farms are usually located. They decided to use highly targeted mail. It was important that recipients could read about the harm that farms could cause to their community, in the privacy of their own home. Unlike a poster or a press ad, the item could also list the tell-tale signs that a factory was operating in their neighbourhood – or even next door.

A scratch and sniff cannabis mailer was developed which used cannabis slurry to replicate the distinctive smell of cannabis plants. The overall visual concept was distinctive and could also be used on broader media such as posters, flyers and even social media where scratching and sniffing was not possible. Thirteen regional police forces across the UK had identified key urban areas to target and supplied 220,000 addresses. Core messaging emphasising the threat of violent crime by gangs connected to organised crime was the issue that carried the most weight amongst residents of all ages.

Cannabis farms grow more than just drugs.
Is there one under your nose?

Scratch and sniff to see if you recognise the smell of a cannabis farm near you

Signs to look out for:

- 1 Strong and sticky sweet smell
- 2 Cannabis growing equipment
- 3 Constantly covered or blocked off windows
- 4 Visitors at unsuitable hours
- 5 Strong and constant lighting day and night
- 6 High levels of heat and condensation
- 7 Constant buzz of ventilation
- 8 Lots of traffic

Scratch and sniff
It's completely safe, strong and it lasts for 24 hours.

Is organised crime running a cannabis farm in your neighbourhood?
Call **Crimestoppers** anonymously on **0800 555 111** or go to www.crimestoppers-uk.org

CRIMESTOPPERS
0800 555 111
The national charity for reporting crime

RESULTS

The bureau reported a 63.2% increase in legitimate “Drug manufacture and cultivation” reports during the 14 days after the launch of the campaign. Calls into the bureau increased during the launch week by 32%. And there were 1500 additional drug related reports in two months. Based on information from Crimestoppers and other intelligence, the Metropolitan Police raided and closed 34 cannabis farms, made 387 arrests, seized plants with an estimated street value of £2.1m as well as an undisclosed number of firearms. There were 7957 unique visitors to the campaign landing page during the first two months of the campaign of which 266 clicked through to the anonymous online reporting form. Overall traffic to the website increased by 24% during the launch week.

