BUZZED Evaluation

Report prepared for CAYAD Auckland

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Contents

Acknowledgements	3
Executive summary	4
1. Introduction	6
2. Method	7
Background and development of BUZZED	9
Aims and objectives Approach Drivers for the evaluation Theory of change	9 10
4. Learning from the literature on use of online media for AoD-related	
Overall effectiveness of BUZZED	
Key findings Online reach and engagement Stakeholder perceptions of engaging young people Resource for the AoD sector	14
6. Value of the BUZZED approach	
Key findings Value of the BUZZED format Story telling approach BUZZED channels	24 25
7. Participant reflections on future directions for BUZZED	29
Key findings General directions for development Specific directions from participants	29
8. Conclusions and taking BUZZED forward	34
Overall reflections	
Appendix 1: Demographics of BUZZED Storytellers	36
References	37

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Executive summary

BUZZED is an online platform that targets young people aged 14-24 years via the sharing of alcohol and other drug (AoD) related stories by influential individuals. It was designed and implemented through the leadership of CAYAD Auckland, based within the Community Empowerment Unit at Auckland Council. BUZZED aims to stimulate conversation on the impacts of AoD, and to inspire individuals and communities to share their own experiences and take action to reduce AoD-related harms.

This evaluation explores the effectiveness of the BUZZED platform in engaging young people; the extent to which it is seen as a useful resource for the AoD sector; reflections on the format, channels and storytelling approach adopted; and potential future directions for BUZZED. The evaluation was undertaken through an online survey, interviews with stakeholders, and a review of BUZZED online analytics.

BUZZED was launched in May 2016 following an intensive process of development and implementation, and there was substantial activity in its first year. There were notable levels of reach, and to some extent, engagement with the BUZZED platform over 2016/17. However, since late 2017, activity on the platform has subsided, and this has been reflected in lower levels of reach/engagement via its platforms on YouTube, website and Facebook.

While limited, there was some reported evidence of young people accessing information and support regarding their AoD use, and talking more about their substance use as a result of engaging with BUZZED. Identified strengths of BUZZED included:

- Branding: engaging and appropriate for the target audience and content
- Storytellers: high profile people sharing their stories
- Stories shared: seen to be inspiring and powerful
- Videos: professional and high quality production values.

The evaluation identified a number of challenges facing BUZZED, including: a low/limited profile; an unclear focus; and an unclear target audience. In addition, the impact of the stories was restricted due to the length of the videos, the older age of the storytellers, and the style of the videos. It was felt that the social media channels utilised were limited and that recent activity was geared towards the AoD sector rather than young people themselves.

There was support for BUZZED continuing, albeit with some changes to its current format. Suggested changes focussed on clarity of vision and objectives, a more targeted approach, increased localised content, a review of story tellers, and enhancements to social media activation.

The clear message from this evaluation is that the BUZZED initiative has the potential to engage young people via a storytelling approach, but its current execution and low profile is limiting its impact. A range of recommendations are made in section 8, which focus on the following for consideration:

- Co-design with young people and community partners on the future aims, objectives and vision of BUZZED, and its point of difference from other offerings
- Partnership and/or delivery with community-based providers
- Proactive engagement with community providers to extend BUZZED's outreach

- Development/exploration of linked resources
- Updating format and content, including shorter length, greater grassroots connection and content
- Strengthened messaging and content to support young people's decision-making on AoD
- Multiple channels of engagement, particularly social media.

1. Introduction

Community Action on Youth and Drugs (CAYAD) is a Ministry of Health initiative that seeks to reduce the harm young people experience from alcohol and other drugs (AoD). Operating in 21 locations throughout Aotearoa New Zealand, the CAYAD programme in Auckland is delivered by Auckland Council.

BUZZED, one of CAYAD Auckland's projects, is an online platform that targets young people aged 14-24 years via the sharing of AoD-related stories by influential individuals. BUZZED was launched in May 2016 following an intensive process of development and implementation. The platform aims to stimulate conversation on the impacts of AoD, and to inspire individuals and communities to share their own experiences and take action to reduce AoD-related harms. An independent evaluation of the initiative was sought to gain an understanding of BUZZED's contributions to CAYAD Auckland's aims, including how it was being used, the nature of its impact, factors that supported or hindered the achievement of intended outcomes, and learning for future development. This information will support further development of BUZZED and contribute to shared learning for other CAYAD sites.

Working with CAYAD Auckland stakeholders, four key evaluation questions were developed to guide the evaluation. The key evaluation questions are:

- 1. How effective was BUZZED in terms of:
 - a. The extent to which it engaged young people?
 - b. The extent to which it was seen as a useful resource for the AoD sector?
- 2. What were the perceived value and shortfalls of the format, channels, and storytelling approach?
- 3. What learning can be taken from the development and implementation of BUZZED?
- 4. What are the potential directions for the future development of BUZZED?

Sections 5 to 8 respond directly to each of these questions.

2. Method

To obtain a broad-based understanding of BUZZED's reach and impacts, the evaluation employed a mixed methods approach, incorporating a stakeholder workshop, stakeholder interviews, an online survey, literature scan and online data analytics. The data collection approaches are outlined below.

This evaluation was undertaken more than two years after the launch of BUZZED, and at a time when project activity had largely declined. This time lapse meant that original intentions to engage young people were not realised, and the initial evaluation approach was modified. As a result, it was primarily informed by key expert interviews and observations of the impacts on young people, rather than direct learning from the experiences of the target audience. The report should be read with these limitations in mind.

Stakeholder workshop

A workshop was conducted in Auckland with stakeholders either previously or currently involved with BUZZED. This was undertaken to gather contextual information for the evaluation team, and to explore stakeholders' views on BUZZED, including its initial aims, key challenges faced to date, and future development. Priorities for the evaluation were explored within the workshop and this, along with a review of project documentation, fed into the development of the evaluation plan.

Stakeholder interviews

Ten telephone interviews with organisational stakeholders were undertaken. These included individuals previously involved in developing or delivering BUZZED, alongside those working in the AoD sector or related youth organisations. Interviews were up to one hour in duration and explored a range of issues including:

- Perceived aims and target audience of BUZZED
- Relationship with, and use of, BUZZED
- Views of BUZZED format, storytelling approach and social media platforms
- Strengths and weaknesses of the initiative
- Suggestions for future development of BUZZED.

BUZZED online analytics

A range of available analytics for BUZZED were reviewed to provide a sense of the reach of BUZZED. Within the very wide range of analytics available, the following were chosen to give insight into the reach (i.e. attracting people to visit the platform) and engagement of BUZZED (i.e. viewing or downloading content, or accessing linked material):

- Number of BUZZED website visits
- Number of YouTube visits, and duration of content watch time
- Facebook page likes and 'engagement' (in this case, as defined by Facebook as clicking on links on the BUZZED page.

Online 'connector' survey

A brief online survey of BUZZED 'connectors' was undertaken. This involved individuals and organisations with experience of the BUZZED website and associated resources, and/or who had requested use of the videos or facilitated young people's access to these. It included staff from other

CAYAD sites, alongside representatives from the youth and AoD sectors, educational establishments, and other community groups.

The survey explored use of BUZZED; perceived value, helpfulness and impacts of BUZZED; most useful features and key limitations; and potential improvements.

A survey link was distributed by CAYAD Auckland via its networks to some 100 people, and a snowball sampling method was adopted whereby recipients were encouraged to forward on to others. The survey was distributed over June and July 2018. In total, 22 responses were received; because of the snowball sampling approach a response rate cannot be calculated, but despite two sets of reminders, this is clearly a relatively low response rate. This is likely to reflect the length of time since BUZZED was substantially active.

Although not representative of the sector, findings are reported for the additional insight it provides into the use of BUZZED and how it can be improved, which complements the interview data.

Literature scan

A brief literature scan was undertaken concurrently by CAYAD Auckland staff to provide a summary of some of the recent developments and learning in this area. This included an exploration of the impact of social media campaigns for public health, and critical success factors for social media campaigns. ¹ The literature scan is available separately and brief summary points are included in section 4 of this document.

¹ Ninnes A. 2018. Literature review for BUZZED Evaluation. CAYAD: Auckland

3. Background and development of BUZZED

Aims and objectives

BUZZED is an AoD harm reduction and social media campaign which aims to inspire change for young people through storytelling. Developed with input from young people and AoD/youth services providers, the target audience for the initiative is 14-24 year olds, whānau/adults who can influence young people, and people looking to support community action on youth and drugs.

BUZZED is primarily delivered via a website, Facebook and YouTube, which present personal stories of people, mainly from Auckland. Launched in May 2016, the BUZZED 'Sharing Stories' campaign consists of a collection of storytellers sharing their experiences of how their own (or others') AoD use affected their lives; these often include descriptions of the turning points that enabled them to stop or reduce their use.

From a review of project documents, and in discussion with stakeholders, a range of key transitions intended by BUZZED, with regard to its impact on young people and their communities, have been identified. These are presented in Figure 1 below and show the 'from' (current state) and 'to' (future state) that BUZZED is intended to support.

Figure 1: Key transitions intended by BUZZED

Silent Isolated conversations Unsure about seeking treatment Unaware of alternatives Misunderstanding Drug users as criminals Alone



Approach

Storytellers include well-known figures such as ex-comedian Mike King and musician Tiki Taane, as well as 'everyday' New Zealanders affected by AoD use. It is intended that their experiences will positively inspire young people to make changes in their own lives, or those of others. In particular, the storytelling approach involving known New Zealanders sharing their AoD experiences was adopted as a means of:

- Attracting the attention of young people and raising awareness of AoD-related issues
- Providing young people with role models that they could relate (and listen) to
- Increasing the visibility of conversations around AoD use
- Reducing the stigma around AoD use.

This campaign has been supported by the provision of AoD resources, and information on services to support problematic AoD use, on the BUZZED website. In addition, there is a BUZZED YouTube channel, and a Facebook page provides links to the stories as well as other youth-related information (e.g. news, events and training opportunities).

Drivers for the evaluation

From discussions with stakeholders in the evaluation planning phase, it was noted that a range of factors contributed to the need for an evaluation of BUZZED, including:

- Anecdotal evidence suggesting that the campaign may not be reaching some of the intended target audience
- Ensuring an appropriate selection of storytellers who are relevant and known to the target audience
- The ability of the initiative to maintain the attention of young people
- The lack of information regarding whether or not the videos are having the intended impact
- The changing landscape of social media and other online channels.

It is therefore acknowledged that important decisions were required regarding the future development of BUZZED, and this was a key driver for undertaking the evaluation. Some of the issues highlighted for consideration which were explored through the course of the evaluation included refining the target audience for the initiative, the appropriateness of the current platform, and the host organisation best placed to lead BUZZED going forward.

Theory of change

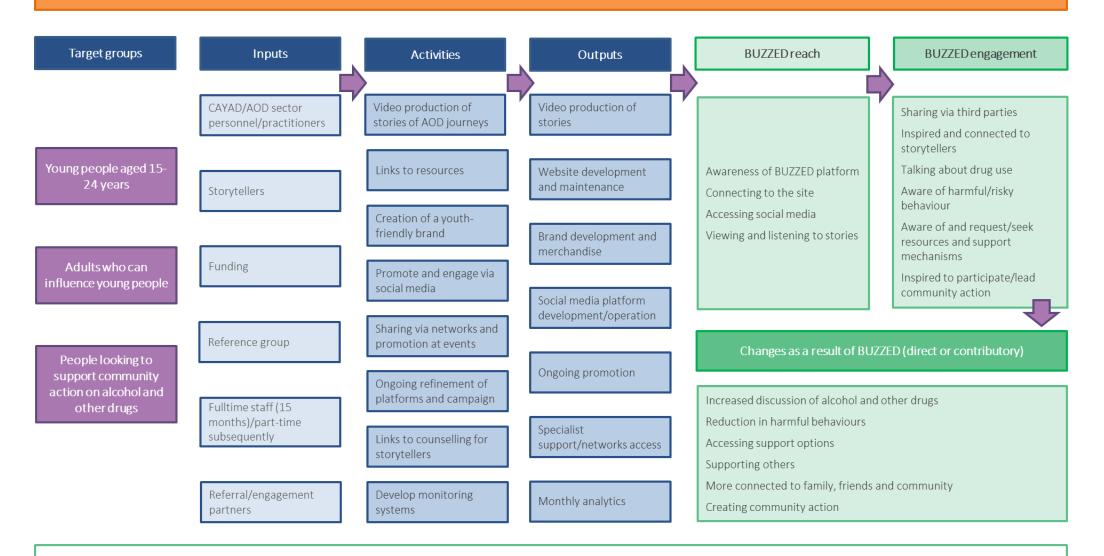
A 'theory of change' is a means of setting out the pathway through which the activities of a programme or organisation are intended to create the changes and outcomes that it is seeking. It provides a way of understanding the overall approach of a programme; and a reference point for understanding if the intended process of change and outcomes were in fact achieved, in the light of evaluative evidence.

Figure 2 on the following page sets out a Theory of Change for BUZZED, based on feedback from the BUZZED team and stakeholders in the design phase of the evaluation. The diagram sets out:

- Overarching goals of BUZZED
- The target population groups
- Inputs (in terms of staffing, funding and other resources)
- Activities (such as the video production, developing an online platform, branding and monitoring systems)
- Intended outcomes in terms of the outcomes distinguished between the *reach* of BUZZED to
 the target audiences, the quality of the *engagement* of audiences with BUZZED, and the *changes* that are expected in people's behaviours, which BUZZED is expected to contribute
 towards.

Figure 2: BUZZED Theory of Change (developed for this evaluation)

Goal: To stimulate conversation on the impacts of AOD, to inspire individuals and communities to share their own experiences, and take action against AOD-related harms



Assumptions: Telling personal stories on a web platform of resilience and recovery will support young people to reduce/minimise drug-related harm

4. Learning from the literature on use of online media for AoD-related campaigns

As a contribution to this evaluation, CAYAD Auckland staff undertook a rapid review of the literature with regard to social media, alcohol and other drugs, and young people.² This is available as a separate document and is fully referenced. To inform this evaluation, brief summary points are included in this section. We acknowledge Amy Ninnes for the substantial work undertaken for the review.

Social media is seen to play a crucial role in young adults' drinking cultures and processes of identity construction (Lyons et al 2014). The health sector has a responsibility to combat the spread of misinformation on social media, and to help facilitate two-way conversations online, as these conversations will happen with or without them (Dosemagen & Aase 2016). For example, alcohol marketing through social media has become very sophisticated, to the point where it is no longer seen as 'marketing' and helps inform identity construction (Lyons et al 2017). There is seen to be inadequate online regulation of alcohol related content, so marketing is reaching high proportions of under-age users, is normalising excessive drinking, and leading to co-created content (Lyons et al 2017).

Available research indicates that public health social media interventions have statistically significant positive effects on knowledge, intention and behaviour change for young people (Laranjo et al 2015). Potential benefits of social media activity by the health sector includes disseminating public health research, combatting misinformation and influencing policy (Breland et al 2017).

Peer to peer influence is powerful, therefore having key youth influencers promoting healthy behaviour and information can likewise be a powerful tool for change (Moran et al 2017). Storytelling can be an effective technique for connecting with audiences and broader movements; however, they are only one part of a movement to create change and need to sit along other action (Vromen & Coleman 2013).

Social media is seen as an effective means of reaching teenagers, and a useful platform to encourage interpersonal interaction and providing information. However, it is unclear whether it helps build community partnerships or helps to change the environment, which are factors necessary for behaviour change (Taufa et al 2018).

There is value in grassroots community stories; for example research among Pacific peoples in Aotearoa New Zealand argues that the collective nature of Pacific cultures should be leveraged and testimonies from community members who have used drugs and alcohol should be used to strengthen motivation (Taufa et al 2018).

Social media use is constantly evolving. Facebook is still a popular social media site for people aged under 25 (MOSH 2017). However, audiences under 25 are now less active and spend less time on Facebook than previously (MOSH 2017), and Instagram and Snapchat are emerging as popular platforms for audiences aged under 35 (Netmarketing Courses 2018). It has become more apparent that what is shared or posted on Facebook is more permanent and public than many originally

 $^{^2}$ See Ninnes A. 2018. Literature review for BUZZED Evaluation. CAYAD: Auckland for the full Literature Review and for supporting references.

realised, creating risks for reputation and career long-term; it is believed that this has led younger audiences towards more apps that are less traceable and less permanent (Carney 2016).

The way in which social media operates is also constantly changing. For example, changes to Facebook algorithms and page settings has now significantly decreased the likelihood that posts will be seen or receive interactions of any kind without monetary investment (MOSH 2017).

Critical success factors for social media campaigns have been identified as the following (Thornley & Marsh 2010):

- A youth-centred approach to social marketing
- 'By youth for youth' where young people were included in all aspects of the campaign and their guidance was taken on board and used to shape and refine the campaign
- Use of methods and channels that are accessible and appealing to youth
- Social marketing informed by theory and formative research to inform the campaign and comprehension evaluation from the beginning
- A comprehensive and multi-faceted approach, including long-term campaigns of at least 1-2 years that are well resourced/funded; multi-faceted campaigns that included policy changes and focus on 'upstream' factors; and which complement other initiatives such as school-based programmes, advocacy or policy changes
- Ethnic and age-specific approaches in social marketing
- Application of commercial marketing success factors to social marketing, including use of branding and counter-marketing, and following industry guidelines for reach, frequency and duration of advertisements
- Use of appropriate messages that empower youth and appeal to their need for independence and rebellion; and strong and intense emotional messages (both positive and negative), and personal testimony
- Work across sectors and organisations.

In terms of their style and delivery, developers of social media campaigns need to be cognisant that their posts and material will likely be viewed via smartphone and in a range of social contexts (Taufa et al 2018). Videos appear to be effective in engaging people, and positive emotional messages or videos providing factual information are popular (Kite et al 2016). However it is difficult to assess meaningful engagement and responses to key messages through functional measures that capture views, likes, and shares (Parackal et al 2017).

5. Overall effectiveness of BUZZED

This section explores the following questions:

How effective was BUZZED in terms of:

- The extent to which it engaged young people?
- The extent to which it was seen as a useful resource for the AoD sector?

The section draws principally on key expert interviews, supported by the online survey and a review of BUZZED analytics.

Key findings

- BUZZED achieved some substantial reach, particularly via YouTube and Facebook, through to late 2017. These channels reached a broad cross-section of viewers, including but not limited to young people.
- Reflecting the reduction in activity via BUZZED since late 2017, reach and engagement has declined since late 2017.
- Stakeholders interviewed had differing views of which audiences the platform is targeted towards.
- There was a general sense that BUZZED was effective in engaging young people in a general sense, and specifically through seeking information and talking more about their AoD use.
- The BUZZED branding was seen by some as appealing and appropriate to the target audience.
- Some concerns were raised with regard to the perceived lack of resources to support young people³.
- BUZZED was used as a resource for the AoD sector in a variety of ways, including for provider-led discussions with young people, streaming videos and events and venues, and distribution to networks. These were however hampered by a perceived low profile in the sector, unclear focus and target audience, and lack of recent activity.

Online reach and engagement

Through a range of online sources, we were able to explore the extent to which people were accessing BUZZED, and to a limited degree, some markers of the effectiveness of engagement. A selection of online data analytics is discussed for illustrative purposes.

Through the three platforms of website, YouTube channel and Facebook page, we can see that BUZZED has achieved some substantial reach, particularly via YouTube and Facebook, through to late 2017. These channels have reached a broad cross-section of viewers, including but not limited to young people. Reflecting the reduction in activity via BUZZED since late 2017, reach and engagement

³ A resources page was included on the website. In addition, links to support services were provided at the end of each video. However, these may have been overlooked if the entire clip was not viewed.

has declined since late 2017. However, as evidenced by the continuing levels of Facebook page likes, there may be a latent level of interest that could be rekindled.

Website reach

Over the two years from BUZZED's launch in May 2016 to May 2018, there were almost 4000 interactions with the BUZZED website (simply defined as 'users' who accessed the website in some way). As shown in Figure 3 below, access to the site rapidly grew from July 2016 and peaking in November that year, with some notable reach also occurring in mid-2017. Level of reach subsequently declined from September 2017 onwards.

Figure 3: Total BUZZED website visits 2016-2018

Source: CAYAD Auckland/Google analytics

Among website users, some age breakdowns were possible from identifiable users. These are detailed in Figure 4 below, and indicate that those aged 18-24 years comprised only 15% of users. Please note however that as detailed in the theory of change, young people are only one target group; others were adults who can influence young people and people looking to support community action on alcohol and other drugs.

18-24 years 15%

25-34 26%

35-44 19%

55-64 7%

N=1487 users

Figure 4: Age breakdown among identifiable website users

Source: CAYAD Auckland/Google analytics

YouTube reach

YouTube data for BUZZED shows some notable levels of engagement, with some videos particularly standing out. The length of engagement with some videos suggests that some videos were very successful in engaging viewers with the content. Overall data analytics from May 2016 to May 2018 show that:

- In total, 326,000 minutes of watch time occurred, with 71,000 views; this meant an average watch time of 4.6 minutes (i.e. 4 minutes 34 seconds).
- Videos involving Tiki Taane and Mike King had the highest level of reach, with 29,200 and 17,700 views respectively; the Tiki Taane video had on average 6.7 minutes watch time (total length 11 minutes), and 4 minutes' average watch time for Mike King (total length 7.5 minutes).
- A compilation video of different speakers received 10,000 views with an average 1.4 minutes watch time (3.3 minutes length)
- The remaining 7 'top ten' videos received between 680 and 2300 views each (ranging in length from 4 minutes to 9 minutes).

YouTube data also indicates that 80% of views were from within Aotearoa New Zealand, and 62% of viewers were male. This is consistent with the demographics of storytellers (detailed in Appendix 1).

Facebook reach

Data on engagement with the BUZZED Facebook is available from October 2016. As with website and YouTube data, we were able to explore trend data for 2 years. We have chosen two markers of reach: firstly, the total number of page 'likes'; and secondly, average 'engaged users'.

Figure 5 below details the average monthly BUZZED Facebook page likes from the launch of the page in October 2016. It shows a rapid growth in the first six months, reaching 3000 by March 2017. Growth slowed and from November 2017, began to slowly decline. The slow decline would reflect that page likes remain, even without viewing the page, as users need to consciously 'unlike' a page.

However, this is likely to provide a latent level of interest which could be rekindled should new content be posted in the future.

Figure 5: Average monthly total BUZZED Facebook page likes October 2016 to 2018

Source: Facebook analytics

As at October 2018, of the 3323 people who 'liked' the BUZZED page, 69% identified as female and 30% identified as male. Their age profiles are detailed in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Age profile of BUZZED Facebook page 'likes'

Age	Males (% of total)	Females (% of total)	Total
13-17 years	1%	1%	2%
18-24	7%	19%	26%
25-34	12%	28%	40%
35-44	6%	11%	17%
45-54	3%	6%	9%
55-64	1%	2%	3%
65 years and over	1%	1%	2%
Total	30%	69%	

Figure 6 below shows the average monthly engaged users for the BUZZED page, which is the number of people who 'engaged' with a page (i.e. any click on items in a page). There were clearly some months of highly active engagement with the site as new content was posted, particularly in May, September and October 2017. This did however tail off from November 2017 onwards, as fewer items were posted.

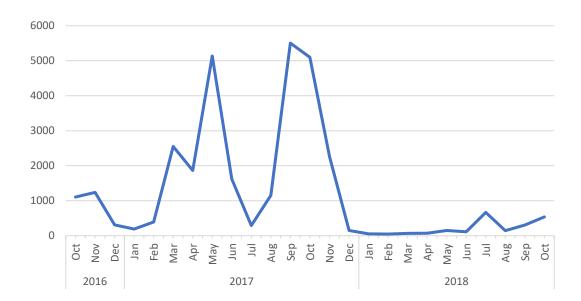


Figure 6: Average monthly BUZZED Facebook page engaged users October 2016 to 2018

Source: Facebook analytics

Stakeholder perceptions of engaging young people

Target age groups

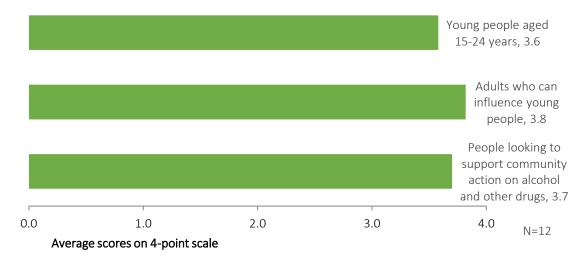
In considering BUZZED's impact with regard to engaging young people, it is worth firstly highlighting how interviewees perceived the initiative's **target audience**. While this was broadly viewed as 'young people', stakeholders tended to define it in different ways, ranging from pre-teens up to those in their mid-twenties. Some interviewees felt that the BUZZED campaign was directed at young people already engaged in substance use, and possibly in a problematic way. Together, these signal a lack of clarity with regards to who BUZZED is directed towards.

For some, the broad scope of the intended audience was seen to present challenges with regard to tailoring or directing messages such as reaching people with different needs and motivations; others felt it was targeted at an older demographic.

Online survey respondents thought that BUZZED was relevant to each of its target groups, with most seeing it as 'generally relevant' or 'very relevant' (on a 4-point scale from 'not relevant at all' to 'very relevant').

Figure 7: Perceived relevance of BUZZED to target audiences

Please rate how relevant you think BUZZED is to each group, where 1 means not relevant at all and 4 means very relevant



Perceived objectives

In terms of what it set out to do, stakeholders perceived a number of **facets to BUZZED's role**, as follows, which generally align with the theory of change:

- Creating conversations around AoD use
- Increasing awareness around AoD use
- Letting young people know that there is help available
- Inspiring young people to make changes
- Encouraging young people to reflect on their own behaviour
- A harm reduction resource.

Perceived effectiveness in engaging young people

Some stakeholders were unable to comment on the impacts of the BUZZED campaign in relation to engaging young people, either due to their lack of exposure in this area (i.e. they had not used it in their work) or the length of time that had passed since they had previously been involved.

Those who did, however, reported evidence of young people accessing information and support about their own or someone else's drug use, and youth talking more about their AoD use. Some indicated, more broadly, that it had been effective at engaging young people but did not specify how. Comments included:

These resources, when we've used them, have always opened up those discussions beyond the discussion. With young people coming and then talking to a youth worker, and saying 'hey my mum really drinks a lot, and she lets me drink as well, and often I go home and mum's drunk, and I don't want to drink but it's just been something that's normal in my life, and it wasn't until I watched that video that I realised that something's wrong'.

[The videos] got really good people talking about their journey and stuff like that and it brought about really good discussion. So the conversations that young people were having- the young people talking about it — I'm not sure if they knew that it was the BUZZED campaign as such, but it brought really good awareness and good conversation to the topic.

One stakeholder felt that the resource was particularly effective when managed or facilitated by appropriate stakeholders, such as the CAYAD Auckland team (i.e. in a sense, acting as connectors between BUZZED content and young people through their work).

Interviewees highlighted that success in engaging young people could also be gauged via the **number of views** of some of the videos – this was particularly evident in relation to the stories of some of the high profile individuals such as Mike King and Tiki Taane. In addition, it was reported that storytellers had been contacted directly by young people seeking support or further information after watching some videos.

Other issues raised in relation to BUZZED's effectiveness in engaging young people included the strength of the **BUZZED branding,** which was viewed as appealing and appropriate for the youth target audience and content:

I think the branding associated with BUZZED is visually quite engaging... I think the way that it looks appeals to... a group of people that like to go clubbing ... and the colours of that match quite a lot with other styles of advertising for that particular grouping.

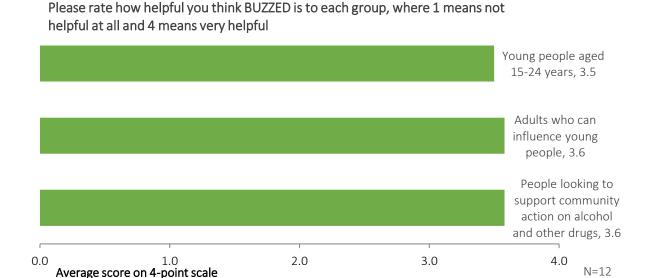
Concerns were expressed, however, about the perceived **lack of resources** to support the videos. This was considered important, given that viewing these may prompt young people to seek out information and support; one stakeholder, for example, reported that they were contacted directly by young people after viewing a clip they featured in. While it was recognised by some that there were links provided on the website to a range of agencies, one interviewee suggested that resources should also cater for other young people who were not requiring support at this level:

When I click that 'Get Help' button all those telephone help lines appear and we are not quite sure whether BUZZED could write more positive and strength-based help... Maybe we could consider if the audience for BUZZED is also for other young people. For example, if they are not involved in drinking or they just want to know how they could cut back or to reduce their drinking or to avoid drinking at all.

Key areas of impact

Indicatively and at a general level, BUZZED was seen by online survey respondents who had accessed BUZZED as helpful to each of its target audiences (please note however the small sample size) (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Perceived helpfulness of BUZZED to target audiences

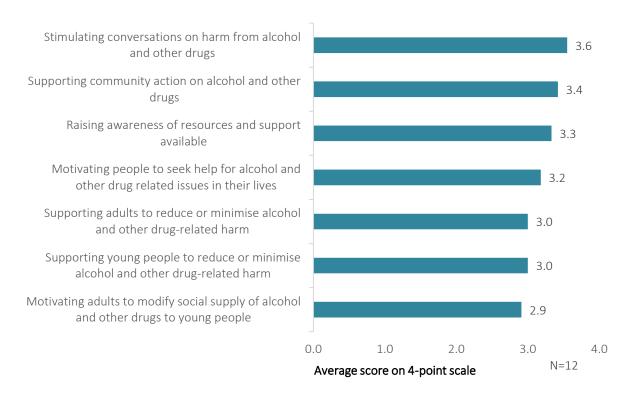


There was particular value seen by the online survey from BUZZED in:

- Stimulating conversations on alcohol and drug use
- Raising awareness of alcohol and drug use
- Contributing to community action approaches in these areas

There was also benefit seen in motivating and supporting people to reduce or minimise alcohol and drug-related use/harm, but this was more equivocal (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Perceived level of positive impact of BUZZED



Resource for the AoD sector

The stakeholder interviews and survey explored the different ways that BUZZED had been utilised. Those who had engaged with BUZZED through their work reported that this had been both as a standalone resource, and in a facilitated environment:

- Provider-led discussions with young people/whānau attending AoD treatment or youth services
- Streaming videos at events and on-site at service provider venues
- Training events
- Included in training and publications as a possible future resource
- Sharing with other staff, organisations and agencies
- Sharing on social media.

Comments included:

At the Community Centre that we operate from, the videos stream all the time... I guess the videos are a stopping point. People tend to just stop and watch – it's a moving thing, so people get engaged when they see it.

In the context of our programmes with young people... we made the resource available. And the guys when they came and did their group time together, they would show a video and talk about... It was always used with discussion around it, so it wasn't just like 'show the video'... just a resources to facilitate a discussion on the subject matter was the main thing.

For some stakeholders, much of their engagement with the initiative had been undertaken some time previously, and was not a recent occurrence. One interviewee indicated that practitioners in their organisation were no longer utilising BUZZED, in part because it was not always relevant within the community group context:

For the smaller groups that they run in the community it's quite a big thing to be able to pull out a laptop and watch a video and then facilitate a discussion around it... They've done that sometimes, but it's mostly been where there's a clear purpose for the video – like playing animated videos that have the key facts around alcohol or cannabis. Something like that is easier to use in that kind of context.

While it was considered useful in other settings, findings from the stakeholder interviews indicate that the extent to which BUZZED was seen as a useful resource for the AoD sector was limited by the following:

- Its **low profile in the sector**: When I see what they're doing it's really great, but I guess the only thing I would say would probably be a criticism would be that it's not out enough it can be forgotten about.
- An unclear focus/theory of change: It kind of felt like it was trying to do a few too many things, for a few too many people, and therefore probably wasn't going to do any of, of them well enough.

- Its perceived broad target audience: The problem that was encountered that stopped the content from being successful is the age range wasn't niche enough, it wasn't targeted enough.
- The lack of recent activity: I quite often jump on the website just to have a look... I just don't think it's working to its full potential. I think it just needs to be out there more and in your face.

Other challenges that limited its effectiveness as a resource for the AoD sector are linked to the format and storytelling approach; these issues are discussed in further detail in the following sections.

6. Value of the BUZZED approach

This section explores the following question:

What were the perceived value and shortfalls of the format, channels, and storytelling approach?

Findings discussed draw on interviews with stakeholders and the online survey.

Key findings

- The BUZZED format was seen by many to have high production values and an engaging story telling format
- The range of BUZZED storytellers were viewed positively
- The format however is already considered dated, particularly the length of the videos and the dark background
- Some thought clearer takeout messages were needed, and some also queried if messages could be misinterpreted
- YouTube and Facebook channels were generally supported, but a wider variety of youth-relevant channels, such as Snapchat and Instagram, were suggested.

Value of the BUZZED format

BUZZED is primarily delivered via a website, Facebook and YouTube, with videos of individuals sharing their personal stories of alcohol and other drug use. All were filmed in a similar format, with the storyteller sitting and speaking directly to camera. The clips vary in length; most are four to five minutes, with some around seven minutes or longer in duration.

Some interviewees felt that the videos **had high production values** and a story format that engaged the audience. This was viewed as a positive aspect that contributed to its appeal to the target audience:

I think it's well produced, it is done in story form, it does bring in people that young people want to listen to, and it doesn't feel like a social services resource.

The videos themselves and the way that they were put together and how they looked, it was all really great. It was all done well and produced well in my opinion. It was interesting to watch.

For some, however, the overall look and feel of the videos was considered somewhat "dark". These stakeholders felt that this positioned the messages as being directed at individuals further along their AOD 'journey' (i.e. people already engaged in problematic AoD use) than BUZZED's intended audience, and less suited to young people who either are not at that stage or not ready to address their substance use behaviour:

The videos are still kind of that older style of how we talk about drugs and alcohol with people sitting on a dark background with heavy lighting... that fits a particular audience who are already experiencing some harms... But my understanding is that, it wasn't targeting that particular audience, it was supposed to be targeting earlier for a community.

A bit dark, quite sparse and raw... I think for some it could be exactly what they are needing. But I wonder at what point in their journey this is what they need to hear?... And maybe it's not something that, if you haven't come to that realisation yet, maybe this is a bit soon.

The videos were widely viewed as too long (running in length from 4 minutes to 11 minutes or more), which reflected the period in which they were produced. Some interviewees suggested that today's online environment tends to present briefer videos, and that this reflects the shorter concentration spans of audiences; viewers of these types of videos (particularly young people) were used to 'bite-sized' clips. Longer videos risked being either completely overlooked, or viewed in part only:

I think that probably at the time [that BUZZED was developed] generating content was really huge and there was a real appetite for a lot of content, but I think we've become more and more accustomed to seeing really, really short form content in our social media feeds.

Some stakeholders felt that the length of the videos, alongside the limited editing and long narratives presented, meant that they **lacked a clear takeout message**. This was seen to dilute the potential for information to be taken on board and actioned by the target audience, and resulted in a less impactful communication overall:

The messages and the editing, like they tell a good story, but it isn't a 'make changes by doing these five steps' kind of thing.

Linked to this, one stakeholder compared the BUZZED approach with similar work they had previously been involved with, whereby they utilised scripts for their storytellers to ensure that succinct messages incorporating "best practice" information were clearly communicated. As evident in the following extract, this required a balancing act, in terms of maintaining a story that appeared authentic and natural:

It's a very difficult thing with video advocacy, it has to appear natural, it has to come across as spontaneous and fun and honest...But at the same time you want it to be best practice and you want it to be driving home the main point that, from theory, actually work to bring transformation around the issue.

It was suggested by a range of stakeholders, therefore, that the videos could be shortened and edited to provide more targeted messages (this is discussed further in Section 7 and featured in considerations for further development of BUZZED).

Story telling approach

The BUZZED videos utilise a storytelling approach whereby individuals share their experiences of how alcohol and other drug use has affected their lives, and the key turning points that helped them to stop or reduce their use.

This format was familiar to interviewees and generally viewed as **an appropriate and effective approach**. The stories shared – particularly those communicating a narrative where substance-related challenges had been overcome – were seen to be very powerful, engaging, and relatable for the intended audience. Some believed that the current stories on the BUZZED website had the ability to inspire others to make a change. Comments included:

When you get role models speaking about issues that young people struggle with, and talking about their mastery of crisis, and talking about how they overcame that, and how those things aren't prevalent or controlling for them anymore, we think that has real power.

It goes directly to people's heart space – story telling is probably one of the most driving things for any organisation in terms of getting the message out. They achieve that.

It was acknowledged that this approach had been widely adopted by various online personalities (e.g. YouTube bloggers) and become commonplace across a range of contexts. One stakeholder therefore questioned whether its power or effectiveness had diminished:

Where somebody tells a story, we've got so much of that, that I wonder if we've almost saturated the market with people trying to be inspirational for others.

The range of BUZZED storytellers was mostly viewed positively, and seen to provide a good mix of 'celebrity' versus 'everyday' people. In particular, the high-profile story tellers were perceived as having the ability to generate interest in, and discussion around, AOD-related topics. It was felt by some, however, that the current individuals featured may be more impactful on a slightly older audience, and less relevant to BUZZED's youth target (please see Appendix 1 for demographics, where available, of BUZZED storytellers).

It was acknowledged that a story telling format can introduce a small number of challenges. Given that it required people to share very personal stories about their experiences of substance use and addiction, it was believed that this **restricted the pool of potential storytellers** as not everyone who had been through this kind of experience would be willing to talk about it in a public forum. In addition, some stakeholders spoke about the **potential risk to storytellers**, in terms of possible relapse and increased vulnerability as a result their involvement in BUZZED (although most expected or knew that those involved to date had been well supported through this process):

I think there's risks for the person who's telling the story. It's an incredibly vulnerable position to put yourself in. I think probably people's lived experience with drugs and alcohol is not necessarily fixed so it doesn't mean that they might not slip back into bad behaviours... I think there's a real vulnerability for the individual who is sharing their story.

The potential for **unanticipated negative impacts**, particularly young people interpreting substance use as being safe for people of their age was highlighted by some:

The risk is that, especially if you're watching a story of someone that's older than you, 'well I'll just keep doing it until I get to about their age and then I'll stop and I'll be fine'.

I see someone who's a role model who I look up to and I hear what they're saying and what a great story they told. But I'm only 15 and I can party for more before I sort of come right... I've always questioned if there a counter narrative that comes out of these resources.

One interviewee was concerned that if young people did not watch the entire clip, they would receive part of the message only, and left with a "glorified" image of drug use. Another believed that viewing need to be facilitated by someone with experience to ensure that an appropriate takeout message was received:

If we watch some of the YouTube videos ... we are aware that they [have] positive messages in the end of the interview that we have watched. But I think that in the beginning, the role models ... we would feel that they are sort of glorifying some of the extreme activities, which we are a little bit concerned about.

For a group of young people with a teacher who might not be trained in that, so that the young people don't see 'well it's okay to do it for a while as long as I make changes later, because they were successful'.

BUZZED channels

Interviews with stakeholders explored views of the social media channels utilised by BUZZED, including the way that these were employed by the initiative. At the time of the evaluation, these covered a BUZZED Facebook page, YouTube channel and website.

Interviewees recognised that Facebook and YouTube attract large audiences and it was expected that BUZZED would be utilising these platforms. However, there was a general view that Facebook is less relevant to a younger audience, given that it was now widely used by an older demographic; one stakeholder also felt that the type of content shared by BUZZED was not suited to Facebook:

From what we know, from working with young people, Facebook has become a bit of a family zone, so a place where they know their grandma is likely to be, their mum, their aunts and uncles. And so they don't share their full selves, via that channel.

Other platforms such as Snapchat and Instagram were generally seen to be more appropriate for a youth audience; additional suggestions included Reddit and Tumblr:⁴

Instagram Stories definitely, I know people that would get like 90 likes on a photo but maybe get like 800 views on a story.

It's the Instagrams and YouTube and Snapchat that are the easy or the most effective direct routes for teenagers because that's where they are currently engaging.

At the time of the evaluation, most interviewees had not had recent exposure to BUZZED communications via these channels, and were therefore unable to comment on the level or nature of social media activity undertaken by the initiative. However, a small number of participants who were familiar with this content felt that it appeared to be targeting stakeholder organisations and individuals working in the AoD sector, rather than young people themselves:

So Facebook requires people to be in the circles that that page is, so I think BUZZED appeals to professionals that are interested in it, and that's probably the network of people that are looking at BUZZED at the moment, and who could share it... but I don't think it's direct young people who are engaging with the campaign itself.

Some stakeholders felt that BUZZED had engaged with social media in a fairly simplistic fashion, and questioned whether the initiative had maximised the potential of these platforms in targeting young people. Particularly amongst stakeholder interviewees who were either in a younger demographic

⁴ This is supported by the literature review. We note that since the evaluation was initiated, CAYAD Auckland have launched an Instagram account.

themselves or who worked directly with young people, it was felt that BUZZED would benefit from a more strategic approach to its social media presence. Suggestions included targeted advertisements, clickbait or teasers; engaging a social media strategist; and placing shorter video clips on Instagram (this is discussed further in the following section):

I don't know how they use click bait. Did they do teasers? Did they do sponsored posts? Did they create an Instagram community where it's sort of a BUZZED community?

On YouTube you can pay for short ads and target them to particular videos or locations, so it could be targeting people within this age demographic in this region.

Given the fact that the page did grow to such a height quite fast, if there was someone doing strategy, I've got no doubt that it could have gone bigger.

7. Participant reflections on future directions for BUZZED

This section explores the following question:

What learning can be taken from the development and implementation of BUZZED?

The section draws on key expert interviews and the online survey.

Key findings

- Stakeholders generally supported BUZZED's continuation, and offered a range of suggestions for improving its reach and engagement.
- There was a strong call for greater clarity of BUZZED's vision, aims and objectives, which should be developed with young people, together with a clearly understood point of difference from other current offerings
- Some sought greater community outreach and ownership of BUZZED, with accompanying resources to complement online activity
- Suggestions were made to update and tighten the storytelling format, including briefer segments, wider range of stories and community-based presenters, captions, and clearer behaviour change messaging woven into content
- A common theme was expansion to a broader range of social media channels.

General directions for development

Interviews with stakeholders explored their views regarding the future development of BUZZED, including whether or not there remained a need for the platform or something similar; and suggested improvements to its current format.

Overall, interviewees backed the continuation of an initiative like BUZZED, albeit with some modifications. At a broad level, it was acknowledged that young people remained a focus for support within the AoD field, particularly given the lack of options available in some areas. One individual felt that BUZZED's non-judgemental approach was particularly important – and needed – in this context. Comments included:

Because I work with young people I get to speak with these young people on a regular basis and a lack of pathways or interventions is pretty evident. BUZZED has presented us with ways that we can direct young people so that I find is necessary.

I think there is a definite need to be able to have resources that promote conversation and are based on facts not on morals.

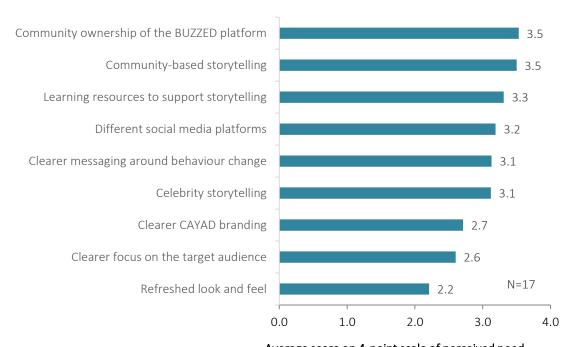
At a more detailed level, respondents to the online survey also proposed a range of changes to improve BUZZED's reach and engagement in the future (Figure 10). Key directions from the survey are listed below:

• Community-based storytelling and ownership

- Clearer behaviour change messaging
- Accompanying resources to support story-telling
- Expanding to other social media channels.

These are discussed within overarching themes emerging from interview feedback in the sections that follow.

Figure 10: Potential directions for BUZZED development



Average score on 4-point scale of perceived need

Specific directions from participants

Interviewees put forward a number of suggestions when considering how the initiative could be improved and its potential direction going forward. These can be categorised under five key areas:

- Clarify and co-design of aims and strategy
- Community outreach and resources
- Updating BUZZED's format
- Expanding social media engagement
- Strengthened behaviour change messaging

A discussion of each is provided in the sections that follow.

Clarify and co-design BUZZED aims, role and strategy

An updated vision and purpose for BUZZED was seen as important. A strong message from stakeholders was the need to work with young people to co-design a new vision for BUZZED, with a clear understanding of the audience and how its aims will be reached. Emerging from this would be a refined theory of change that charts its future direction.

I think it would be good to have a youth panel so if you're hoping to affect a particular audience then get that audience in and create think pieces — have them have a say in co-design — maybe have those young people do the social media themselves.

A theme from some responses was identifying a clear sense of the role or point of difference that BUZZED offers, compared to other available platforms.

I would start by doing a bit of map of what else is out there and figuring out what I thought BUZZED's place might be within that. And I would probably list my hypotheses, or my assumptions about the role that BUZZED could play. And therefore, what its next iteration might be. And then I would work with young people, through a co-design process, to test that.

One interviewee pointed to the Lowdown⁵ as a site that includes stories of alcohol and drug use and resilience; this pointed to both collaborative opportunities and a more fundamental question of if BUZZED has a clear point of difference from other offerings available. It is worth noting that there are currently a range of platforms offering stories of overcoming drug and alcohol harm, including The Lowdown, Drughelp⁶ and Matua Raki.⁷

What else is out there that's similar? I think there's one called The Lowdown is probably the one I'm thinking of... and how do they link to each other, what's the point of difference, could it be embedded in The Lowdown? Is it more widely known?

BUZZED community outreach and resources

Some participants suggested that BUZZED could broaden its reach and overall offering. This included having a stronger community presence and working with schools and youth organisations where young people congregate.

Some felt that BUZZED should ensure a strong local or "grassroots" component. Introducing this was seen to increase the relevance of the initiative amongst its youth target audience and providing a way for young people to engage; one stakeholder also commented that this aligned well with CAYAD's community action mandate.

I would suggest to involve, to partner with a wide ranging of community groups... they could easily pick them up and localise the information. Perhaps they could think about their local champions ... or when they are sharing that digital story or video, they could simply write something about their own local community when sharing that video.

Related to this was a suggestion that BUZZED link more strongly with influential networks in Māori communities:

⁵ The Lowdown is a website to help young New Zealanders recognise and understand depression or anxiety, and other mental health issues, including alcohol and other drugs. It includes a storytelling component. See: https://thelowdown.co.nz/about-us

⁶ https://drughelp.org.nz/, providing New Zealand-based stories of drug use, and why and how they decided to change

⁷ 'We are family' stories of family and whānau affected by AoD use; accessed from https://www.matuaraki.org.nz/resources/we-are-family-stories-of-family-and-whnau-affected-by-someone-elses-use-of-alcohol-or-other-drugs/727

Advertisement and reach into Māori communities, BUZZED ... could use people from the Kapa Haka world [and] rangatahi who are Māori famous who have their own YouTube [following]

Some suggested developing or linking to a range of printed or other resources that could complement BUZZED's online presence, and improve its uptake in schools and other settings. This would require a more comprehensive scale of outreach than online platforms alone.

[We found that] local activation, local engagement at a community level or in places where young people go with those same messages was more effective than online media for engaging them. Even though having it backed up on online media, the same things they saw in the community we found was important.

If they're going through their school they could see posters, or if it's a health expo there's a stand there that says the same messages, or walking through the mall. There's something that gives them an experiential or an experience of engaging with a particular message.

When considering 'who' is best placed to lead BUZZED, a number of stakeholders felt that partnering with an existing organisation or campaign that was more widely known would help raise its profile and broaden its reach. Suggestions for potential partners generally included AoD organisations (e.g. Alcohol Drug Helpline, Drug Foundation) and youth organisations (e.g. Youthline, ZEAL). Other strategies for increasing BUZZED's profile included increased networking both within the AoD sector and across relevant youth-related settings:

Updating BUZZED's format

While generally viewed as an appropriate approach for BUZZED, stakeholders believed that the storytelling format required updating to increase its impact with its youth target audience. Suggested changes included:

- Shorter/targeted, videos (e.g. linked to specific behaviour change)
- Wider range of storytellers (including younger people, more community voices, and those with a range of substance use experiences)
- Revised style of presentation for videos (e.g. less "dark")
- Videos with more than one storyteller
- Introduction of captions for video clips⁸.

One interviewee believed that BUZZED's application and utility could be widened if clearer messaging was woven into its content:

They could be useful in health classes for where students are critiquing protective factors, risk factors and community response to them, but they would need to be re-edited to fit with that format... they need to have it very clear what the messages are... what is the evidence behind it rather than having a more abstract resource.

⁸ All the BUZZED videos contained captions at the time of the research. However, as these are only displayed when the required settings are activated, some stakeholders may have been unaware that they were available.

Expanding BUZZED's social media engagement

Stakeholder suggestions for BUZZED's social media strategy were centred on increasing the initiative's reach with its target audience in a more strategic fashion. Some suggested engaging a social media strategist or expert to provide an approach that is consistent, targeted and responsive to audience insights:

Being really cognisant that their needs change all the time. And their consumption changes all the time. And the way that their conversations change all of the time. And so therefore the product itself might need to change too.

Other suggestions included utilising a wider range of social media platforms (e.g. Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat), targeted advertising, and employing skilled individuals to share and promote content:

I would probably focus quite significantly on how I was going to get more eyeballs on what I was creating. And there's a whole number of ways to do that. Whether that's paid placement, whether that's working with some key influencers who might do some sharing of content. Whether that's looking at alternate places that you could screen the stories.

Strengthened behaviour change messaging

There was a strong focus from some quarters on ensuring that the initiative contained more clearly defined behaviour change messages, and that these were linked to appropriate stories.

It could be improved by having as somebody talks: 'did you know that less than a quarter of secondary school students binge drink on a monthly basis', or whatever the statistics are that put the additional social norm and critical thinking context, over the top of what somebody is saying...The things that create opportunities for young people to make change is very much the development of critical thinking over the messages that they're receiving, and what they want for themselves.

Some stakeholders also felt that the current content could be expanded to ensure that there was a mix of experiences presented (e.g. role models who were alcohol-free), and that young people were provided with sufficient information to inform their AoD-related decision making.

Starting very focussed conversations with a clear message and purpose for each of the videos that are created.

I'm not sure if it was all abstinence-focussed but I'm presuming some of the young people still might use, but just not in a problematic way. So a variety of recovery journeys is good.

8. Conclusions and taking BUZZED forward

This final section explores the following question:

What are the potential directions for the future development of BUZZED?

The section synthesises findings from across the evaluation to consider the overall value of BUZZED and propose directions for BUZZED's future development.

Overall reflections

This evaluation has shown that BUZZED has established a platform which, especially in its early stages following launch, attracted high volumes of traffic and interest across its channels, and there is substantial data to show people were accessing the stories that were produced. It is likely that there is a latent level of interest that could be rekindled if BUZZED were to be re-initiated.

There is general agreement that the site has made connection with its target audiences of 14-24 year olds, whānau/adults who can influence young people, and people looking to support community action on youth and drugs. In doing so, BUZZED has stimulated conversations about drug use, and assisted people to access information and support. These point to an alignment with the early stage impacts discussed in the theory of change.

The difficulties in engaging directly with young people (in part due to the lower level of activity occurring on the platform at the time of writing) limited our ability to assess the extent to which, at this point, BUZZED has extended further towards its goals set out in the theory of change. This is particularly with regard to seeking resources and support, and inspiring community action; as well as such long-term goals as reducing harmful behaviours and accessing support.

The evaluation has shown that there is widespread value seen in BUZZED's approach, particularly in terms of the branding, production values, storytellers and range of stories developed, and initial momentum across multiple channels. BUZZED has also supported the work of some in the AoD sector, who have referred the content to clients, colleagues, networks, and incorporated into activities.

Although BUZZED was launched as recently as 2016, the feedback from stakeholders highlights how quickly such offerings can date and require refreshing. Even in the two years since BUZZED was launched, young people have engaged with a wide range of social media platforms beyond the three that BUZZED has used, and video production has shifted to shorter items that are more heavily curated in their approach.

BUZZED's approach of storytelling to inspire change on alcohol and drug use is clearly engaging, but not completely unique. There are a range of platforms that also make use of storytelling approaches, including The Lowdown, Drughelp, and Matua Raki. Whilst there is support for the intent and focus of BUZZED, we believe there is also a need for BUZZED to clearly articulate the point of difference that it offers, within the aims and objectives that are developed in the future.

Suggested future directions

The clear message from this evaluation is that the BUZZED initiative has the potential to engage young people via a storytelling approach, but its current execution and low profile is limiting its impact.

This evaluation is able to provide reflections from the experience of BUZZED and the input of people from across the sector to inform its further development. There are however detailed decisions required about the future delivery of BUZZED that require a concerted process of engagement and codesign which CAYAD Auckland and its partners are best positioned to lead. Based on the feedback received, we propose the following directions for BUZZED's future development:

- 1. CAYAD work with a group of interested young people and community partners to co-design and update BUZZED's vision, aims, objectives and intended audiences, and clarify its point of difference from other platforms
- 2. Once agreed on the above, CAYAD Auckland provide a supported process for delivery of BUZZED through or in partnership with interested community-based providers
- 3. Review the existing theory of change from this evaluation to set out the strategy going forward
- 4. Proactive engagement with potential community partners to promote BUZZED more widely, and link directly with young people via youth support and other services
- 5. Review, explore and/or develop appropriate resources that are needed (or are available and can be linked) to complement BUZZED's online activities
- 6. Working with experienced professionals, updating format and content, including with the following:
 - a. shorter/targeted videos
 - b. a wider range of storytellers, particularly local/grassroots content, and young people's voices
 - c. revised style of presentation for videos
 - d. use of captions for video clips.
- 7. Commit resources to work across multiple web and social media channels with a strategic approach to social media promotion and engagement
- 8. Strengthened messaging to support decision-making and behaviour change through carefully structured and edited content.

Appendix 1: Demographics of BUZZED Storytellers

Gender			
Male	13 (76%)		
Female	4 (24%)		
Age			
18-24 years	2 (12%)		
25-34 years	4 (24%)		
35-44 years	4 (24%)		
45-54 years	2 (12%)		
Not specified	5 (21%)		
Ethnicity			
New Zealand European	6 (35%)		
Māori	4 (24%)		
Pacific	3 (18%)		
Asian	1 (6%)		
Other	3 (18%)		
Not specified	6 (35%)		
(Note: Some indicated more than one ethnicity)			

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