



**SUPER
AWESOME**



 Location: UK

 Audience:
Teen Boys 13-17

COUNTER TERRORISM POLICING: Engaging Teen Boys with Modern Media Techniques

How Counter Terrorism Policing partnered with SuperAwesome to engage teen boys using audience intelligence, contextual media, and dedicated teen guardrails - delivering a 66% View Rate that left industry benchmarks behind.

Engaging a youth audience with important public safety messaging requires more than just showing up; it requires a deep understanding of where they spend their time and how to speak to them appropriately. Counter Terrorism Policing needed to reach teen boys aged 13-17 effectively, ensuring their 'What You Share Leaves a Trace' youth safeguarding campaign achieved the greatest chance of cut-through.

By leveraging SuperAwesome's Awesome Intelligence platform, the campaign moved beyond generic demographic targeting to reach specific youth segments using privacy-safe, non-personal data. SuperAwesome also ensured this campaign exclusively reached age-appropriate teen audiences, avoiding younger users for whom this messaging would be inappropriate.



+26pts

66% YouTube View Rate
(40% benchmark)

The communications strategy was informed by qualitative audience research commissioned by Counter Terrorism Policing, which found that young people were most motivated by the real-world consequences of their online behaviour, including the impact on their future opportunities, family relationships, and digital devices. These insights shaped both the creative approach and media strategy.

Combined with a creative strategy specifically built for teens and guided by robust safety guidelines, the targeted YouTube campaign successfully captured audience attention, delivering a massive 66.17% View Rate that significantly outperformed industry benchmarks (+22pts).





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The Challenge

Counter Terrorism Policing doesn't operate in a vacuum. Behind the 'What You Share Leaves a Trace' campaign is a genuine public safety imperative - helping prevent young people from sharing terrorist or extremist content online by increasing awareness of the real-world consequences of their online actions.

The campaign was developed in response to a rise in under-18s being arrested for terrorism offences and referred to Prevent following the sharing or consumption of terrorist content online.

Teen boys were identified as a priority audience within the wider youth audience. They're digitally native, socially influential, and at an age where awareness of the world around them is sharpening. But reaching them has always been the hard part. Not because they're disengaged - quite the opposite. They're deeply engaged, just across dozens of platforms, formats, and communities simultaneously, on their own terms.

Standard media planning with broad, generalised buckets (e.g., "Boys, 13-17") wasn't going to cut it.



The Solution

Counter Terrorism Policing developed the campaign strategy using audience insight, behavioural research, and qualitative testing with young people, powered by SuperAwesome's Awesome Intelligence platform to deliver a data-driven, privacy-safe media plan.



WHAT YOU SHARE LEAVES A TRACE

CLICK TO FIND OUT MORE

This allowed the campaign to evolve from basic demographics to deep insights about the audience's motivations, values, and media consumption habits (e.g., identifying that the target audience prioritises friendships and teams, loves YouTube and CTV, and are influenced the most by their peers and social media).

The research also identified that messages centred on future opportunities, family approval, and the consequences of sharing harmful content were more compelling than traditional enforcement-led messaging.

Audience-Based Approach



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Using privacy-safe, non-personal data approaches, the campaign modelled two specific 13-17 audience segments to effectively reach them. The following characteristics represent the exact criteria used for this campaign's audience classification:



ADVANCED GAMERS

For this group, digital is a massive part of their identity. Their discovery happens through family, friends, and social media, and their fandoms revolve heavily around gaming platforms, Twitch, and YouTube.



PRO-PLAYERS

These sporty teens value social connections and digital identity, expressing competitiveness through gaming. Their fandoms revolve around sports, and they use digital platforms to connect with their favourite teams and athletes through short-form and TV content.

Creative execution was also informed by research recognising differences between younger (13-15) and older (16-17) audiences, with tailored creative developed to ensure messaging resonated across both age groups.

Media Strategy:

The audiences are mapped across the fragmented media landscape, using SuperAwesome's classification, curation, and moderation of content trending among Gen Alpha/Z:

PREMIUM YOUTUBE CONTENT:

SuperAwesome used a combination of proprietary research, historical campaign data, and trends to discover the latest youth-friendly content on YouTube Main

FORMAT OPTIMISATION:

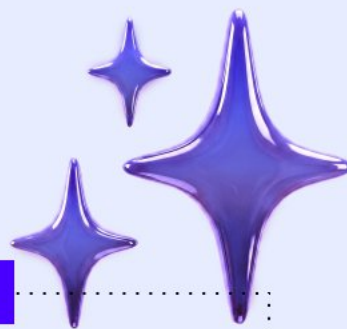
The campaign used optimised video formats across YouTube to ensure maximum completed views for the critical message

CONTEXTUAL RELEVANCE:

Ads were run only across the most relevant content for teen boys, with key passions - such as gaming and sports - as an additional layer of targeting

OTHER CHANNELS:

YouTube advertising was complemented by TikTok advertising and Counter Terrorism Policing's owned social media channels, helping reinforce campaign messaging and maximise reach amongst the target audience.





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Creative Strategy

To ensure the campaign message resonated without feeling out of place or violating platform safety, Counter Terrorism Policing developed creative informed by youth audience research, while SuperAwesome applied its expertise in youth-safe media environments and platform guardrails.



Creatives Built for Teens:

A heightened focus on teen wellbeing and safety requires a highly responsible approach. The campaign was designed to respect their maturity while ensuring all messaging remained legally compliant and platform-appropriate, and to help ensure it reached only age-appropriate teen audiences, avoiding younger users.

Realistic, Impactful Storytelling:

Creative focused on realistic scenarios and the real-life consequences of sharing terrorist content online, reflecting the motivations and concerns identified through qualitative audience research.

Backed by 13+ Years of Expertise:

SuperAwesome knows teens best. This creative execution was informed by over 13 years of expertise in youth digital engagement, thought leadership, and proven campaign performance, ensuring the tone struck the right chord with a sceptical Gen Alpha/Z audience.

Dedicated Teen Guardrails:

Applied to the campaign by SuperAwesome - grounded in regulatory and platform expectations. These guidelines supported a broader, more mature creative approach, helping Counter Terrorism Policing meet their strict compliance obligations with absolute clarity and confidence.



Results

By applying an actionable media plan rooted in audience intelligence and teen-focused creative guardrails, the campaign successfully reached teen boys in the digital spaces where they are already highly engaged.

The campaign generated nearly **18 million impressions**, drove approximately **100,000 new users** to the Action Counters Terrorism (ACT Early) website, received around **70,000 TikTok likes** and increased Counter Terrorism Policing's TikTok audience by approximately **4,000 followers**, providing valuable insight to inform future youth safeguarding campaigns.

The data-driven YouTube strategy delivered exceptional attention metrics:

66.17% YouTube View Rate (VR)

+26.17 points over the standard 40% benchmark

Audience Highlights:



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Both audiences performed at a consistently high VCR level, with Advanced Gamers delivering 66.53% and Pro-players finishing at 64.86%. While advanced gamers showed a slight edge, the results highlighted how effectively the campaign connected and resonated with both audiences.

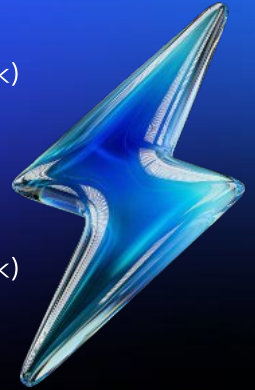
This strong performance indicates that the campaign's messaging and creative resonated with diverse audiences and behaviours, engaging both digitally native and more sport-driven, socially connected audiences. Overall, the high VCR across both audiences demonstrates wide appeal and confirms that the campaign successfully resonated with its target audience.

66.53%

Advanced Gamers
(+26.5pts vs benchmark)

64.86%

Pro-Players
(+24.9pts vs benchmark)



The consistently strong performance across both audience cohorts demonstrated that combining behavioural insight with contextual media planning can successfully engage young audiences with complex public safety messaging

Rochelle D'Cruz, Counter Terrorism Policing HQ

Why it Worked

The lesson from this campaign isn't specific to counter-terrorism. It applies to any serious message aimed at a youth audience: broad demographic targeting leaves too much to chance. The brands and organisations that will win teen attention are those willing to invest in understanding who those teens actually are - their values, their platforms, their content habits, and building media and creative strategies around that reality.

SuperAwesome exists precisely for this, with thirteen years of youth digital expertise and proprietary audience intelligence. The campaign succeeded because it paired granular audience intelligence with Counter Terrorism Policing's behavioural insight and youth audience research, using privacy-safe, non-personal data approaches.

By abandoning broad age- and gender-based assumptions in favour of identifying that its audience prioritises gaming and sports, Counter Terrorism Policing were able to deliver their message in highly relevant, premium YouTube environments.

Furthermore, by applying SuperAwesome's dedicated teen guidelines, the campaign struck the perfect balance: it enabled contemporary storytelling that appealed to teen boys while ensuring the serious safeguarding message reached age-appropriate teen audiences only, strictly avoiding younger users.



 **Want to
dig deeper?**

Get in touch with the team



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