



MDOT's Public Safety Crisis

Challenge

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) faced a public safety and public relations crisis when concrete began falling from Detroit area freeway bridges. Additionally, many MDOT roads and highways required major repairs or reconstruction. MDOT needed to inform the community of the rebuilding of the bridges, and the slated reconstruction and repairs of its roads and highways.

Solution

Avance created an aggressive, marketing communications campaign for MDOT. The objective of the campaign was to communicate MDOT's goals to make Michigan's bridges and roadways safe. Motorists also needed information about detours and the inconveniences associated with repairs. The campaign needed crisis communications about the falling concrete and to allay the public's concern about their safety. Avance developed and implemented a marketing communications campaign that included a strategic plan, branding activities, public and media relations, organized advisory committees and town hall meetings, and developed a hotline, collateral materials, advertising, crisis management, consultation/meetings, a web site and an evaluation process. The agency was also a part of the project management team and assisted with internal communications – translated engineering information for the general public, created charts and presentations for external audiences; and identified key influencers such as business leaders and government entities, and established relationships with these publics for MDOT's staff. For three years, the campaign succeeded in both informing the public of the work being done and in reassuring them that the bridges and roads would soon be among the safest in Michigan. As a result of the campaign's success, Avance received an award from the Traffic Safety Association of Michigan.

**A Report to
The Community:
The Michigan Department of Transportation
Bridge Rehabilitation Programs**

MDOT's BridgeFix and Bridge Corridor Programs

