

COI 

# Issues for dissemination of research across Government

SRA Conference, 4 December 2007

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COI

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The Central Office of Information (COI) is a Department reporting to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. It was also established as an Executive Agency in 1990 and then as a Trading Fund in 1991



## The Research Unit in COI

- Around 30 staff
- Client base of 60 government departments and agencies
- 6 specialist teams focusing on areas of client / sector expertise
- Roster of 79 market research agencies
- £17.7 million turnover in 2005-6
- Around 500 research projects a year

# What we do



Comms Tracking

Strategic Comms Research

Creative Development

Deliberative Consultation

Ethnography

Research Consultancy

Policy Development

Stakeholder Research

Mystery Shopping

Customer satisfaction

Evaluation Workshops

# Who we talk to



**General Public**      **Students**      **Opinion Leaders**

**Employers**      **Young People**      **SMEs**

**Tax Evaders**      **Sex Workers**

**Disabled**      **Teachers**

**Healthcare Professionals**      **Homeless**

**Young Offenders**      **Ethnic Minorities**      **Staff**

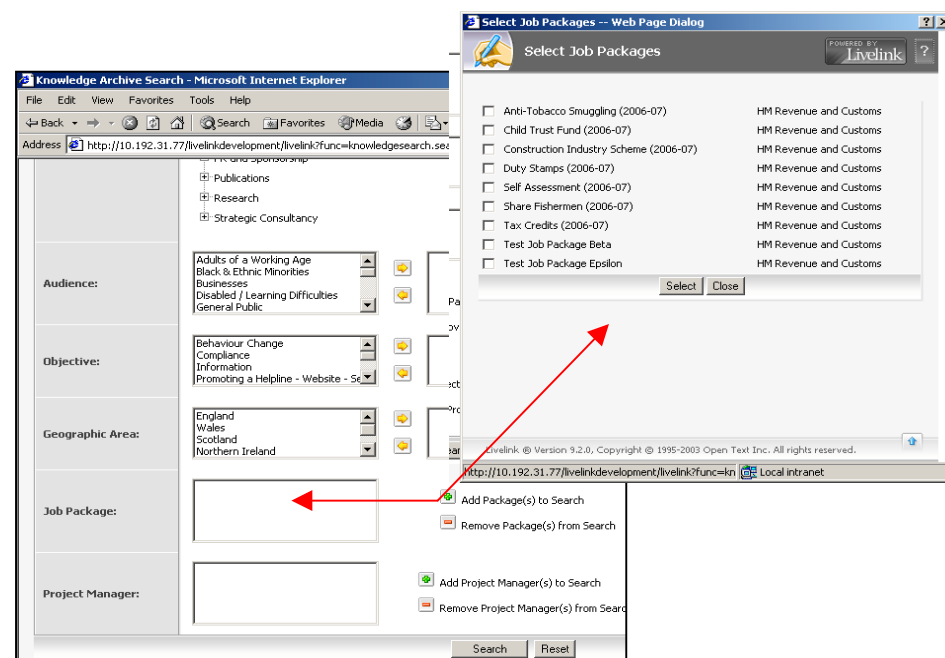
**Benefit Fraudsters**      **Asylum Seekers**      **Muslim Youth**

# Research Tools: Library and Archive

## Research Library

- Over 4,000 research reports held by COI
- Knowledge Archive allows searching by variables such as

- Campaign
- Project theme
- Target audience
- Specialist activity

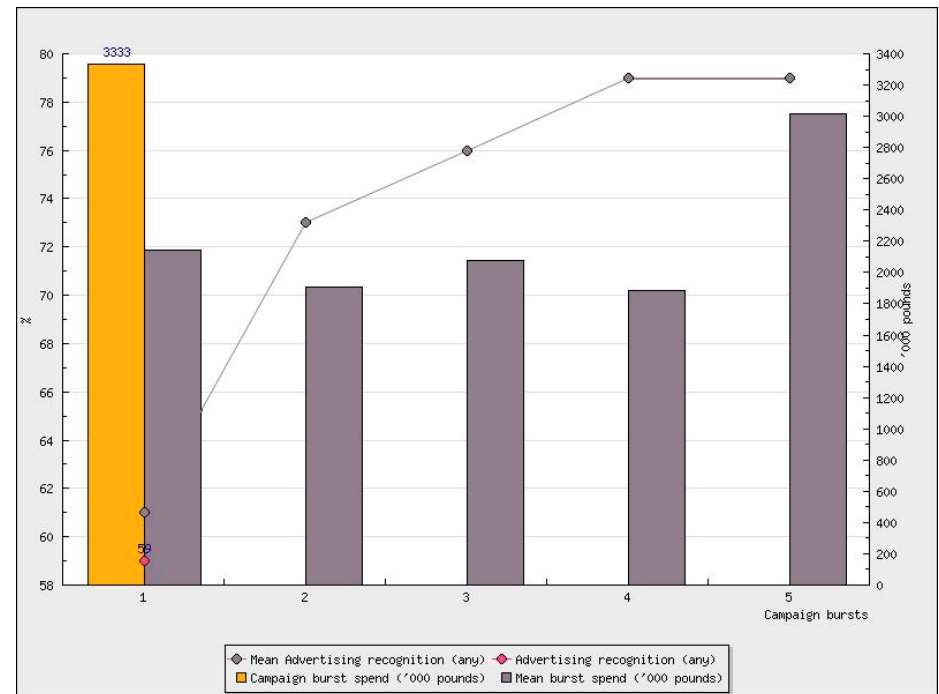


# Dissemination Tools: Campaign Tracking Database



## Campaign Tracking Database

- Developed to aid campaign evaluation through comparative data
- Enables realistic target setting through access to similar campaigns
- Helps to answer client questions more effectively



# Common Good Research



- For cross-government benefit
- To increase communication effectiveness
- Topics:
  - Communicating with Older People (2005-06)
  - Black/Minority Ethnic Communities (2003)
  - Small and Medium Enterprises (2003)

The screenshot shows the homepage of the COI Common Good Research website. The header features the COI logo and the text 'common good research fresh insight into hard to reach audiences'. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'About this site' and 'Contact'. The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column contains a 'Research Topics' menu with links for 'Older People', 'Black/Minority Ethnic Communities', and 'Small/Medium Enterprises', along with a 'Register' button and a login form. The middle column contains a welcome message and a registration prompt. The right column contains three featured articles with images and titles: 'Communicating with Older People', 'Black / Minority Ethnic Communities (BMEs)', and 'Small / Medium Enterprises (SMEs)'.

**Research Topics:**

- Older People
- Black/Minority Ethnic Communities
- Small/Medium Enterprises

Register

Please register to access the main contents of this site

Register

Login for registered users

Your Email

Password

Login

Forgotten your password?

Welcome to COI Common Good Research - a programme focusing on key target audiences for government communications campaigns.

Please register to access the main contents of this site or see more details about the Common Good Research programme.

This site is a resource for all Government departments and their Executive Agencies. Other public sector, voluntary or private sector organisations may be eligible to register on request.

**Communicating with Older People**

The latest Common Good project focuses on Older People and how to target them more effectively. The study has generated a number of reports, the latest of

**Black / Minority Ethnic Communities (BMEs)**

This section explores social and cultural factors that impact on communications with ethnic minority communities and gives

**Small / Medium Enterprises (SMEs)**

A comprehensive look into the issues facing businesses, how they deal with information and communications and how best to talk to them.

# Cultural barriers to wider dissemination



- Ownership lies with the commissioning department
  - Permission to share not always granted
- Others have real concerns about sharing more widely:
  - Sensitivity of subject
  - Competition for target audience's attention (ie recruitment)
  - Competition for funding
  - Fear that results will be leaked or taken out of context
  - Internal disputes about who owns research (policy/coms)

# Systems and process barriers to wider dissemination



- Co-ordination
  - The complete picture?
- Coding, storing and accessing information
  - Where is it?
- Shared access to electronic knowledge archives
  - How can I get hold of it?

## Why does it matter?



- Efficiency and effectiveness
  - Knowing what we know and using it well
- Because true innovation only happens through the combination of different knowledge sources

# Strategies for the future

*Effective knowledge management cannot take place without extensive behavioural, cultural and organisational change .....technology alone won't make a person with expertise share it with others....The mere presence of technology won't create a learning organisation.*

- A knowledge management strategy
  - Linked knowledge repositories
  - Underpinned by a knowledge culture

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