

# 'Just tick it' campaign

Evaluation report

January 2010

OFT1143

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# **1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 On 10 September 2009 the OFT launched the 'Just tick it' campaign. The campaign aimed to raise consumers' awareness of scam ticket websites and how to protect themselves from scams.
- 1.2 A small sum of £94,000 was invested into this campaign. The financial return was impressive. This campaign generated a total value of £785,050 worth of free coverage, through PR activities, up to 1 November 2009, and radio filler airtime, up to 30 November 2009. This is an eight to one return on budget allocated to the campaign.
- 1.3 Research indicated that 15 per cent of the campaign target audience, respondents who purchase tickets online, reported seeing or hearing something about scam ticket websites and how to recognise them.
- 1.4 The campaign generated 131 media articles, with an opportunity to see of 66,243,000 and equivalent advertising value of £743,620.
- 1.5 The radio filler advertisement has received 1,435 free plays which equates to a total advertising value of £41,430.
- 1.6 23,198 unique visitors have viewed the advice on the Consumer Direct website.

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Consumer Direct receives regular complaints about event tickets that are never delivered. Over recent years a number of websites claiming to sell ticket for the Reading, Leeds and V festivals – as well as the Beijing Olympics – shut down before sending out the promised tickets, leaving thousands of fans without tickets and or their money.
- 2.2 Qualitative research by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) carried out in June 2007, indicated that from the consumer standpoint, maintaining and policing the ticketing marketplace through education and cultural/attitudinal change is likely to be better received and more workable than legislative or bureaucratic manipulation. Tonally, a notional 'Buy real' campaign/message will be more motivating and relevant to the general public, alongside positive suggestions for avoiding disappointments and fraud, than would negative communications about what you are not allowed to do.
- 2.3 The aim of the 'Just tick it' campaign was to increase consumers' awareness of scam ticketing websites and provide advice on how they can avoid being scammed by these sites.
- 2.4 The campaign was launched on 10 September 2009.
- 2.5 A budget of just under £94,000 was spent on the campaign.
- 2.6 The target audience were consumers purchasing event tickets online, specifically:
  - consumers buying festival tickets, primarily 16–25 year olds
  - 25–45 year olds purchasing event tickets, often at prices higher than the face value of the ticket.

### **3 KEY MESSAGES**

- 3.1 The following short key messages were developed for use by the media and on promotional elements. More detailed advice was posted on the Consumer Direct website.
- 3.2 How has the website got these tickets to sell? Check with the venue to find out when tickets are being released for sale and when the tickets will be sent out.
- 3.3 Who is the website registered to? How long has it been registered? You can search for domain name registrant information using online search tools.
- 3.4 What are others saying about the website? Search the internet to find out what other people's experiences have been.
- 3.5 How can you contact the company? Check that you know their full geographic address and check they have a working landline phone number.
- 3.6 Can they provide ticket details? Ensure that the face value of the tickets and the seat location are clearly listed.
- 3.7 Do they provide refunds? Make sure that there is a refund policy in case something goes wrong.
- 3.8 What else should I check? Visit [www.consumerdirect.go.uk/ticketscams](http://www.consumerdirect.go.uk/ticketscams) for information on all the things you need to look out for.

## 4 CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

- 4.1 A wide range of activities were undertaken to publicise the campaign's key messages.
- 4.2 Detailed advice was issued on the Consumer Direct website [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketscams](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketscams). A mock scam website and a reveal page were developed to highlight to consumers how professional scam sites can appear and what they need to look out for when buying tickets online, [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/tickets) and [www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketadvice](http://www.consumerdirect.gov.uk/ticketadvice).
- 4.3 Consumers were directed to the information on the Consumer Direct website using online methods: Pay Per Click advertising, banner advertising, emails, links from partner websites, Facebook and Twitter.

Figure 4.1: Banner advertisement



Figure 4.2: Example of support for the campaign



- 4.4 An extensive PR campaign supported the launch of the online advice. This included information in a large range of publications and support from celebrities and industry bodies. Regional coverage was also stimulated by local authority Trading Standard Services.
- 4.5 A radio filler advertisement was developed to promote the issue of scams ticket websites and to encourage listeners to visit the Consumer Direct website for further information. This advertisement was placed as filler for stations to use for free.
- 4.6 A flyer was developed in English and Welsh. This highlighted the key campaign messages and directed consumers to the Consumer Direct website for further advice. To date the flyer has been disseminated by local authority Trading Standard Services at university fresher fairs.

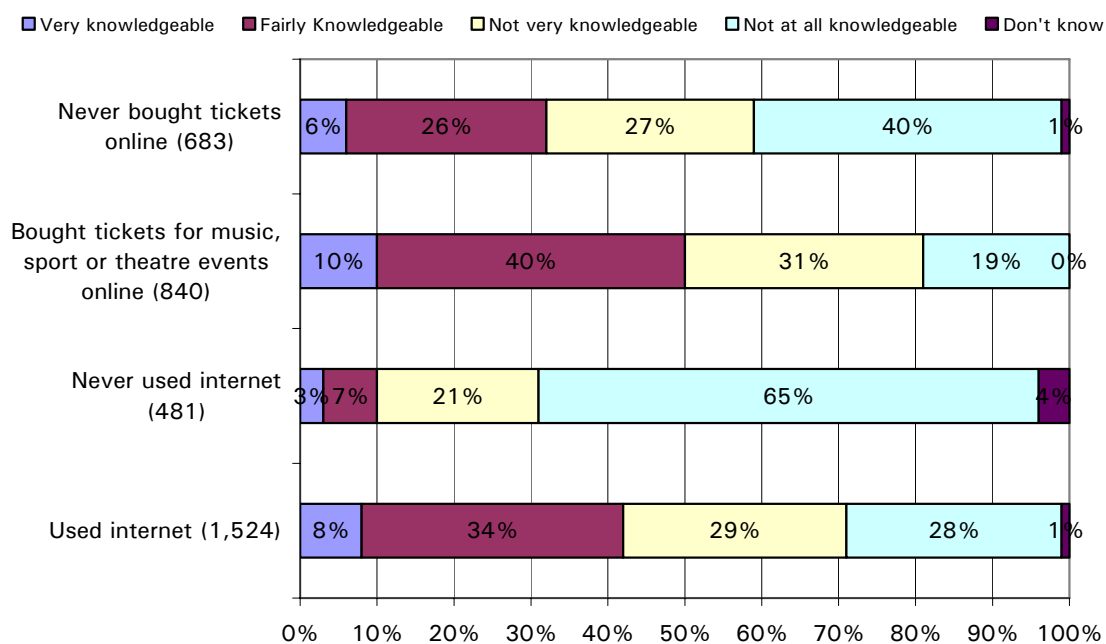
Figure 4.3: Flyer



## 5 OMNIBUS RESULTS

- 5.1 Questions were placed on two waves of the GfK NOP, UK telephone omnibus surveys conducted on 16–18 and 23–25 October 2009.
- 5.2 Unsurprisingly, respondents who had purchased tickets for music, sport or theatre events online reported higher levels of knowledge about scam ticket websites than those who had not. Half of those who had bought tickets online said they were 'very' or 'fairly' knowledgeable about scam ticket websites compared to approximately one third (32 per cent) of those who had not. Similarly, 42 per cent of those who had used the internet said they were 'very' or 'fairly' knowledgeable about scam ticket websites compared to 10 per cent of those who had not.

**Figure 5.1: Declared level of knowledge about scam ticket websites**



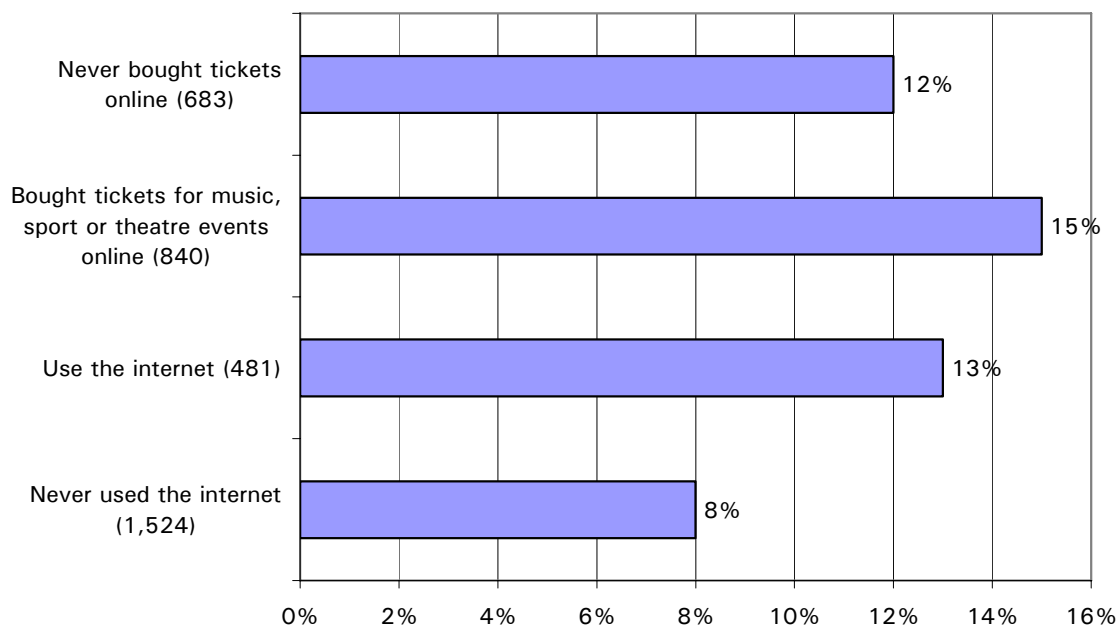
Base: indicated in brackets.

- 5.3 Younger consumers were also more likely to say they were knowledgeable about scam ticket websites. Nearly half (47 per cent) of those aged 45+ said they were 'not at all' knowledgeable about scam

tickets websites compared to a quarter (26 per cent) of younger respondents. This reflects the pattern of online ticket buying. For example, respondents aged 16–24 were twice as likely as those aged 25+ to buy tickets online once a month or more often (10 per cent compared to five per cent) and 64 per cent of those aged 65+ never buy tickets online compared to 43 per cent of younger respondents).

- 5.4 After just over a month of activity 12 per cent of all respondents reported seeing or hearing something about scam ticket websites and how to recognise them. Fifteen per cent of the campaign target audience (respondents who purchased tickets online) reported recently seeing or hearing something about scam ticket websites and how to recognise them.

**Figure 5.2: Respondents declaring having heard or seen anything about scam ticket websites and how to recognise them**



Base: indicated in brackets.

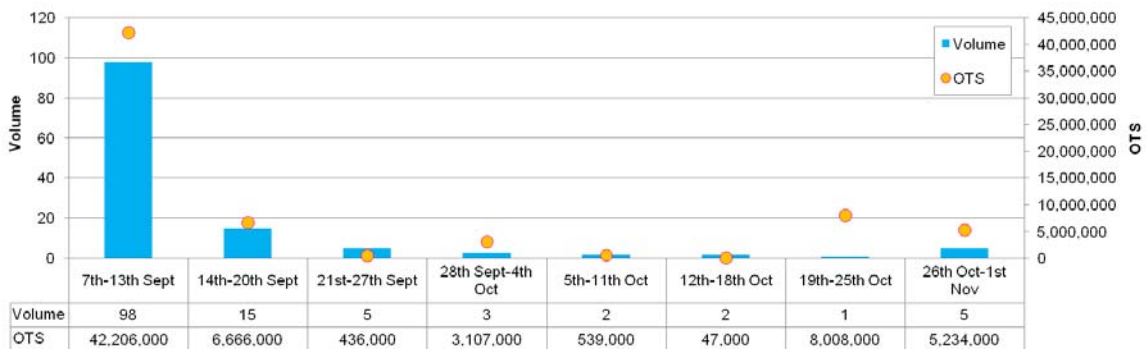
5.5 Consumers aged 16–24 were more likely to go to family and friends or the internet for advice and information about scam ticket websites, whereas those aged 35+ and those in social category DE were more likely to say they didn't know where they would look.

## 6 MEDIA EVALUATION

6.1 Media evaluation<sup>1</sup> indicated the campaign generated 131 items of coverage from 10 September to 1 November 2009.

6.2 The coverage generated an opportunity to see<sup>2</sup> of 66,243,000 people.

**Figure 6.1: Weekly volume of coverage and opportunity to see values**



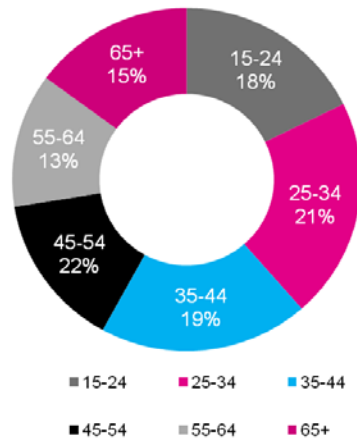
6.3 58 per cent of the media coverage generated reached the campaigns target audience of 15-44 year olds.

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<sup>1</sup> TNS Media Intelligence, Media Evaluation Report, November 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Opportunity to see: Calculated as circulation of publication multiplied by readers per copy for print publications.

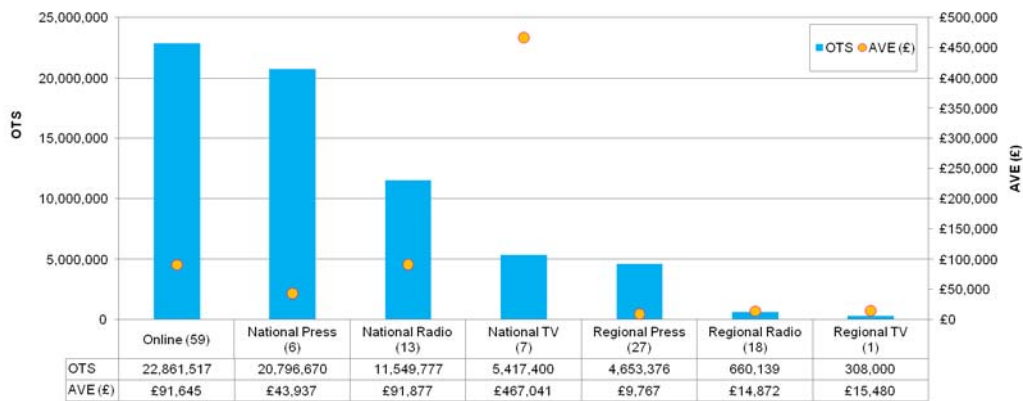
**Figure 6.2: Age groups reached by media coverage**



6.4 100 per cent of coverage was favourable.

6.5 The equivalent advertising cost<sup>3</sup> for the free publicity generated by the PR activity was £743,620.

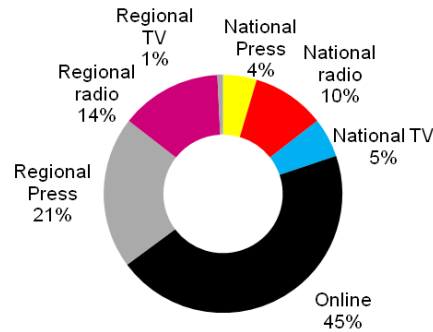
**Figure 6.3: Equivalent advertising costs for publicity generated**



<sup>3</sup> Advertising value equivalent reflects a monetary measure of newspaper space or broadcast time as if it were purchased for advertising purposes.

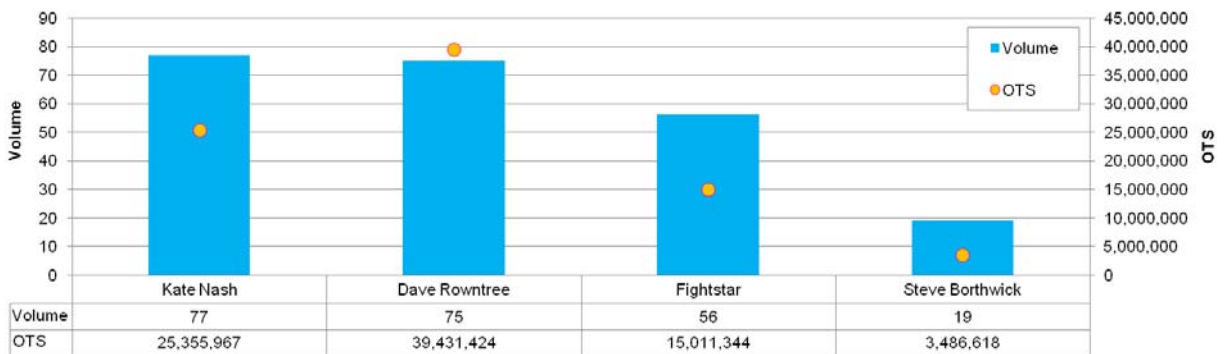
6.6 A wide range of media channels ran the story. Particularly important were those online channels, given that the target audience are online users.

**Figure 6.4: Media coverage by media type**



6.7 We were extremely fortunate to have campaign support from musicians Kate Nash, Dave Rowntree, Fightstar, and England rugby captain Steve Borthwick and, after this evaluation, Muse. These celebrities were cited frequently in the media coverage generated.

**Figure 6.5: Volume of references to celebrities in media coverage**



## 7 ONLINE EVALUATION

7.1 Three pages dedicated to consumer advice on ticketing scams were developed on the Consumer Direct website. The first provides consumers with detailed information on what scam ticket websites are, how they work and how they can protect themselves. The second two pages are a mock scam ticket website. The first page looks like a genuine ticket website, showing how professional fake sites can appear. When consumers click on any part of this page they are directed to a 'reveal scam' page, which explains that the site is a fake and gives advice on the nature of ticket scams and how they work.

Figure 7.1: Screen grab of standard advice page



Figure 7.2: Screen grab of mock scam website

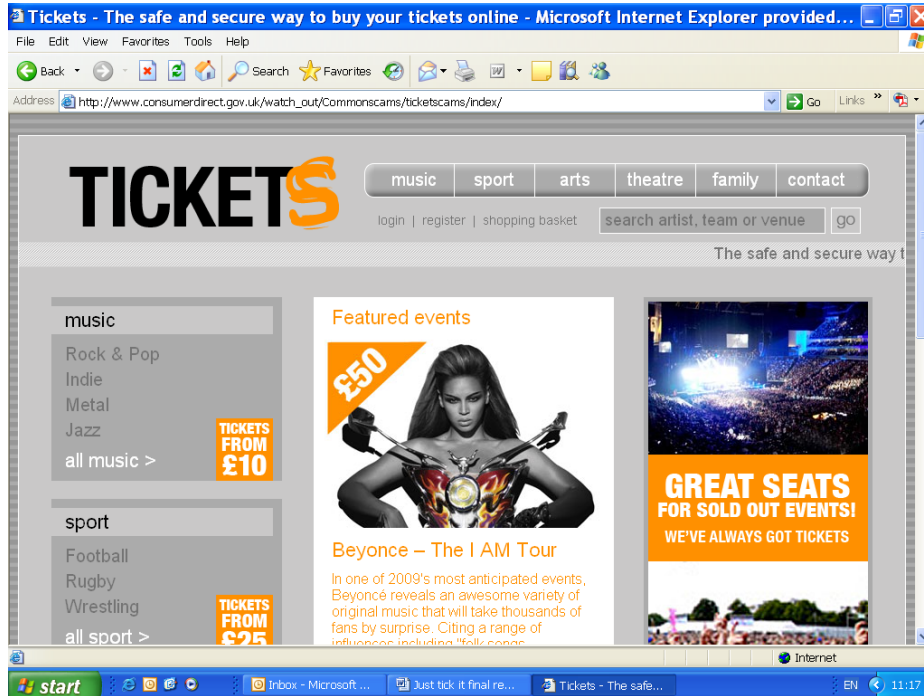
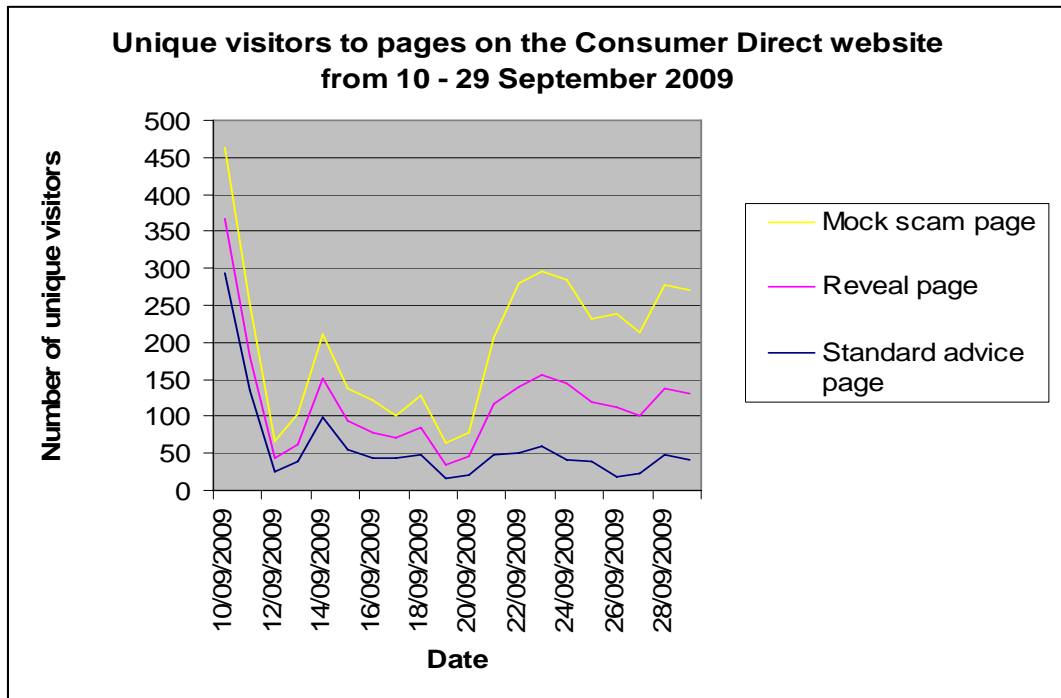


Figure 7.3: Screen grab of reveal page



7.2 From 10 to 29 October there were a total of 4,022 unique visitors to the three pages. The most popular page was the mock scam page.

**Figure 7.4: Number of unique visitors to scam ticket pages on the Consumer Direct website**



7.3 To promote the information available on the website we ran Pay Per Click advertising from 10 September until 12 November 2009. As indicated in the graph below, initially the daily budget was set low and then gradually grew as information was gathered on the most cost effective adverts.

**Figure 7.5: Graph indicating the cost and clicks over period of Pay Per Click advertising**



7.4 The Pay Per Click advertising drew a total of 23,198 people to the website. Most of the keywords achieved quality scores of seven and above, which illustrates that the adverts and landing page were relevant to the viewer.

## 8 RADIO FILLER

8.1 From 1 September to 30 November 2009 the radio filler has received a total of 1,435 plays which is a total advertising value of £41,430.

<b>Time of day</b>	<b>Number of transmissions</b>	<b>Value (£)</b>
Night	312	2,523
Breakfast	167	10,185
Mid Morning	2060	8,443
Afternoon	263	10,141
Drivetime	223	5,081
Evening	264	5,056
<b>Total</b>	<b>1435</b>	<b>41,430</b>

## **9 CONCLUSIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 The campaign messages have reached a large number of consumers. Research conducted one month after launch indicates a high level of knowledge of the issue amongst the target audience.
- 9.2 The campaign has been cost effective. A total value of £785,050 worth of free coverage has been generated to date through PR activities, to 1 November 2009, and radio filler airtime, to 30 November 2009. This is an eight to one return on budget allocated to the entire campaign.
- 9.3 The materials created for the campaign have longevity allowing the campaign to continue indefinitely. Industry and partners can continue to access these materials and use upcoming events as a catalyst to raise the issue with the local media and consumers.
- 9.4 During the development of the campaign significant time was allocated to liaison with industry and partners. This was vital to ensure key messages were appropriate, the activities carried out would appeal to the target audience and materials would meet partner's requirements. Future OFT campaigns should continue to ensure resource is allocated to undertake liaison with a wide range of partners during planning stages.
- 9.5 The OFT will continue to use large scale national and international events to highlight the issue of scam ticket websites and increase consumers awareness of how to protect themselves.
- 9.6 The OFT have, and will continue to, share their experience in developing this campaign with international consumer protection agencies.
- 9.7 This omnibus survey only considers campaign activity for a very limited period of time. Additional omnibus research will be conducted over the next six months to gather further information as to the impact of the campaign.

## **10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

- 10.1 We would like to thank all those people who supported the campaign including local authority Trading Standards Services, Kate Nash, Dave Rowntree, Fightstar, Steve Borthwick, Muse, Festival Republic, AEG Live and many more.
  
- 10.2 We would also like to thank all those people who helped in the development of the campaign including the Met Police Central E-Crime Unit, the Serious Fraud Office, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Iridium Security, local authority Trading Standards Services and the Serious Organised Crime Agency.