



The Age Of Stupid

The Age of Stupid stars Pete Postlethwaite as a man living alone in the devastated world of 2055, looking at old footage of seven real people from today and asking: why didn't we stop climate change when we had the chance?

The Age of Stupid is an ambitious film that arrived with a splash on 15th March 2009, with the Guinness World Record-winning 'People's Premiere' in London's Leicester Square. The event used just 1% of CO² emissions in comparison with a normal film premiere and was satellite-linked to 61 cinemas across the UK. In September 2009 the film launched worldwide with a global premiere in New York where the film was linked to 700 cinemas in over 50 countries.

The Age of Stupid campaign was uniquely ambitious, dynamic and far-reaching. When the film was released it garnered huge publicity, which in turn created wide ranging public awareness around the issues it conveyed. *The Age of Stupid* has been seen by individuals, corporations and political leaders around the world. But what is truly remarkable is that audiences, more often than not, didn't just watch the film and walk away, they made a commitment to change and in doing so, a movement was born.

Budget

Production Budget: £450,000

What the Critics Said...

"*The Age of Stupid* is more passionate, more emotionally charged than the Al Gore-fronted *An Inconvenient Truth*... Bold, supremely provocative, and hugely important, her film is a cry from the heart as much as a roar for necessary change."

The Telegraph

"One of the most important films of the year (perhaps decade) is about to be released. Take note. While this film is about the collective future of humanity, this film is equally or more important because it represents the future of film, film culture and film distribution and marketing."

Huffington Post

"This is about human nature, greed and personal responsibility. It aims to scare and galvanise — and it's pretty good at both."

Sydney Morning Herald

IMDB
6.8/10 (1,869 votes)
User Reviews Average

Rotten Tomatoes
79% Critic Aggregate
Average 6/10
14 Reviews

AWARDS

Grierson

Best Green Documentary

Sunny Side of the Doc

Best Green Documentary

Most Likely to be a Cinema Hit

Birds Eye View

Best Documentary

Middle East Film Festival

Jury Special Mention

Reel Earth Film Festival

Best Film

Sun Child Festival

Best Investigation of Environmental Issues

Hawaii International Film Festival

Best Feature

WHO SAW IT?

Cinema: screened in **71** countries and on over **700** screens

Broadcast: shown on TV in **14** countries

Est. global audience: approximately **6 million**

Festivals: **70** Internationally including IDFA, Sheffield Doc/Fest and San Francisco with carbon friendly skyped q&a's

Online Trailer Views (YouTube): **1.2million**

Facebook: **30,316**

Twitter: **4,625**

Website: **1.2m** unique site visits

Mailing list: **17,800** members

THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign and the film are in a sense interchangeable; the film is a call to action, imploring the audience to reconsider their role in and impact on the world. As such, the film's campaign was always at the heart of the project.

The campaign evolved through the production and distribution phases, on the way gathering a hugely impressive range of partners and supporters and culminating in the launch of the 10:10 campaign, which continues to go from strength to strength today.

Campaign Aims

1) Launch of the Not Stupid action campaign, supported by NGOs including Greenpeace, ambitiously aimed to turn 250 million viewers into 'climate activists'.

2) The launch of the 10:10 campaign in September 2009, which aims to cut 10% of UK emissions in a year.

How the Campaign Worked

The campaign had huge scope from raising production funding, to securing large and relevant audiences to the launch of a new independent campaign with real tangible goals.

This film and the campaign surrounding it secured political and corporate engagement whilst also sowing the seeds for a significant grassroots movement that would eventually grown into an international campaign.

Fundraising

The Age of Stupid is notable for the pioneering way in which it was funded; the entire budget was raised via their crowd-funding scheme.

620+ ordinary people and groups - including a hockey team and a women's health centre - invested between £500 and £35,000. All the investors received a percentage of the film's profits, as did the crew and key contributors. Under the terms of the crowd-funding contract, the film's income is shared out once a year for ten years. In January this year they made the second annual payment, totalling £280K.

In total they raised £900,000 for production and distribution through crowd-funding, which is currently the largest amount of money raised in this way for an independent film.

In attracting so many funders they also gained ambassadors for both the film and the issues who would go on to promote the word of mouth interest in *The Age of Stupid*.

Not Stupid

The campaign around the film began with Not Stupid, the aim of which was to turn 250,000,000 viewers into climate activists.

Not Stupid was launched on the night of the film's UK premiere on 15th March 2009. The premiere was a Guinness World Record-breaking event. Linked by satellite to 62 cinemas, the "green carpet" event caused only 1% of the usual emissions for a premiere.

Not Stupid's activities included a certificate presentation live on the BBC's flagship news analysis programme, Newsnight, and a giant coal power station chimney in Italy having the word STUPID painted down its length.

However, then director Franny Armstrong developed a new idea, which would reinvigorate their campaign aims, and the campaign evolved from Not Stupid into 10:10.

10:10

Launched on 1st September 2009 at Tate Modern in London, the aim of 10:10 was to cut 10% of UK emissions in a year.

An amazing 10,000 people signed up on just the first day, most notably the British Prime Minister and his entire cabinet.

Since that day 10:10 has become an independent campaign, which has gone from strength-to-strength - now with 110,000 individuals, 4,000 businesses, 1,700 educational establishments, 1,600 organisations, and 176 local councils (who represent over 25 million people) signed up.

Supporters include: Vivienne Westwood, Colin Firth, Royal Mail, O2, Adidas, Tottenham Hotspur FC, Edinburgh University, King's College London, York University, Liverpool University, The National Union of Students and the Women's Institute to name just a few.

The 10:10 campaign has been hugely successful, in terms of commitment across society from local groups, to companies to governments. A truly ubiquitous message; one can see 10:10 posters on the London Underground, local GP's surgery, in schools and universities.

10:10 soon went global and there are now autonomous 10:10 campaigns in 46 countries.

Community Engagement

INDIE SCREENINGS

The Age of Stupid team developed new software, "Indie Screenings", which calculates license fees on a sliding scale and thus allows anyone anywhere to hold a screening of the film. Crucially, the organiser keeps any profits for themselves or their campaign. This empowers and engages audiences before they have even seen the film because, in a sense, it hands the film and its issues directly back to the audience.

With thousands of screenings worldwide raising over £110,000, Indie Screenings ensured the film's impressive reach from church halls to university campuses, local pubs to town halls. But it wasn't just community groups who used the film; the NHS organized over 100 screenings, in hospitals, surgeries and medical schools, whilst the British Council screened the film over 80 times in 24 countries.

Other notable screenings include Kofi Annan's gala screening in Geneva, attended by Franny Armstrong and Pete Postlethwaite, the European Parliament, the World Bank and UK Environment Agency.

SCHOOLS

In partnership with Action Aid they created a schools pack with exclusive clips from the film, lesson ideas and activity booklets. These packs have been used in over 1500 schools to date.

10:10 also have a wide-ranging schools programme and have recently launched "Solar Schools", encouraging schools to generate their

own energy by raising the cost of solar panels from the local community.

Campaign Impact and Achievements

The campaign's achievements have been considerable, not only in terms of the hugely successful crowd-funding model they used, and in securing a wide range of audiences, but the fact that their initial campaign ideas led to the launch of 10:10.

10:10

To date the 10:10 campaign has raised over £830,000

Signatories to the 10:10 campaign have started to report back with their emissions savings. The campaign hopes that with these successes other agencies and businesses can follow suit.

Political and Public Sector Change

- UK Government: **13.8% emissions cut**, £13 million pounds saved - 300,000 civil servants were involved in cutting over 100,000 tonnes across 3,000 Government buildings. The Minister for Climate Change, Greg Barker, said "Thanks to the inspiration of 10:10, Government no longer just talks a good game on ambitious energy efficiency". They have now gone one stage further, announcing a new target of 25% savings by 2014/15, this time to include transport emissions.
- UCLH Hospital: **13% cut** - By combining small tweaks (auto-shutdown software on PCs) with large-scale strategic rethinks (a waste-busting shake-up of the procurement system), UCLH has led the health sector's move towards a more climate-friendly way of working.
- London Underground: achieved their **10% cut** across all 10 participating tube stations, including Bank, Earl's Court and Victoria.
- The Science Museum: **Cut 17%** through changes to temperature control within the museum.

Corporate Change

- Spurs FC: Most of Tottenham's 14% cut came from heating and lighting: thermostats were turned down at grounds and offices, and a six-figure investment in low-wattage floodlights is expected to pay for itself in electricity savings before too long.

Individual Change

- In a survey carried out for the Guardian newspaper in the UK, 17% of readers claim to have signed up to 10:10 and 53% say they have been encouraged to reduce their emissions because of 10:10 coverage

10:10:10 - The Global Day of Doing

In partnership with 350.org, on the 10th October 2010, coordinated 7,347 local carbon cutting events in 188 countries, including the President of the Maldives fitting solar panels to his roof and the city of Paris signing up to 10:10. The day generated 1000s of news articles worldwide, including an hour long primetime TV show in the Netherlands. It is now planned as an annual event.

To date, as a direct result of the 10:10 campaign, almost 1million tonnes of CO2 emissions have been saved. This is the equivalent to taking around 400,000 cars off the road.

Campaign Nuts & Bolts

Campaign Budget

£450,000 - raised by *The Age of Stupid* team via their crowd-funding model for distribution
£100,000 - UK Film Council, for the UK premiere
£55,000 - Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA) for the Global Premiere
£35,000 - Greenpeace International, for the Global Premiere
£20,000 - Oxfam Netherlands, for printing campaign materials

Length of Campaign

Just under 2 years:

The official campaign team was put together in May 2008 as the film was being finished off and closed in March 2010 two months after the Copenhagen Climate Summit.

In their application the team stated "In reality: we'll be talking about Age of Stupid till the day we die".

Official Campaign Partners

The huge range and scope of partnerships secured for the film was key to the success of the campaign. There were over 120 partners world wide stretching from global NGOs to

small campaigning organisations and green businesses, all of whom provided PR support in form of web pages, Facebook mentions, tweets etc.

These partners provided support in a range of ways from in kind support, financial donations and publicity but in whichever way they pledged their support they all combined to amplify the message and profile of the film.

The filmmaking team's three major global partners were:

Greenpeace: Helped fund Global Premiere. Promoted extensively. Nineteen national Greenpeace offices acted as Country Hubs, hosting their countries' premiere, securing media coverage, talking to the press and co-ordinating ongoing screenings.

Friends of the Earth: 5 country offices acted as country hubs.

Global Campaign for Climate Action (GCCA): Helped fund Global Premiere. Ensured *The Age of Stupid* premiere was an official event of UN Climate Week. Encouraged 250 member organisations to host premieres.

CONCLUSION

From the unique way this film was funded, to its record-breaking low carbon 'People's Premiere' to the creation of the hugely successful 10:10 campaign, *The Age of Stupid* is a groundbreaking example of the way in which one film can enlighten, engage and empower its audience.

The impact of this film built on the awareness of the issues and saw not just individuals but corporations and governments commit to, and exceed, a 10% cut in their emissions.

The Age of Stupid is a campaigning film par excellence and the continued impact of the 10:10 campaign is testament to the way in which one film can change attitudes, behaviour and may just change the world.



Director of The Age of Stupid, Franny Armstrong

Former pop drummer and self-taught filmmaker, Franny Armstrong has directed three feature documentaries - *The Age of Stupid* (2008), *McLibel* (2005) and *Drowned Out* (2003) - which have together been seen by 60 million people on TV, cinema, internet and DVD worldwide. Through her company, Spanner Films, Franny pioneered 'crowd-funding', which allows filmmakers to raise reasonable-size budgets whilst retaining ownership of their films; *The Age of Stupid* is the most successful known example, raising £800,000+ from 300+ investors - and the Indie Screenings distribution system. In September 2009, Franny founded the 10:10 campaign which aims to cut carbon emissions by 10% in one year and which now has autonomous campaigns running in 41 countries. Participants include: Microsoft, Spurs FC, 120,000 people, 1,500 schools, a third of local councils, the entire UK Government, the Prime Minister and the cities of Paris, Oslo, Brighton, Marseille and Mexico City. Franny is a Londoner born and bred.