

Vaccines for Anti-Vax Land

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Permian Basin region
of Texas and New Mexico

BACKGROUND

A year after the launch of the COVID-19 vaccine, there were two Americas:

One that embraced the vaccine, and one of “Anti-Vaxxers” that rejected it. The latter tended to live in close-knit rural, conservative areas and refute mainstream sources of information.

In one sparsely-populated, desert area, the Permian Basin region of west Texas and New Mexico, the COVID-19 death rate was higher than the national average—in some counties double the national average.

Vaccine hesitancy in this highly rural and ultra-conservative region was fanned by media narratives from decidedly anti-vaccine Fox News, where 54% of the population got most of their information.

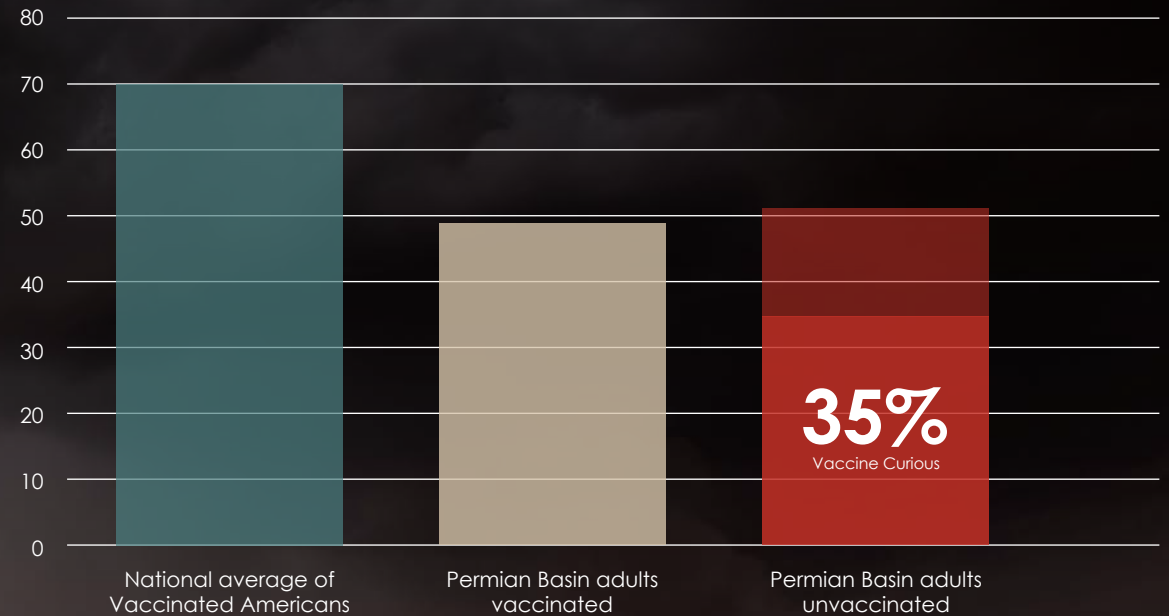
The Permian Strategic Partnership, a non-profit collective supporting communities across the region, saw an opportunity to solve what the US government couldn't: eliminate the threat of COVID-19 to the prosperity of the Basin.



AUDIENCE

Of the 51% of the Permian Basin that was unvaccinated, 35% were “Vaccine Curious”: either undecided on or considering getting the vaccine.

We needed to motivate this group to take action, but that meant understanding exactly what was stopping them from doing so.



While this audience was concerned about vaccine side effects, we learned their REAL fear was not the shot, but the social rejection, ostracization, and harassment they faced from those closest to them—their spouses, parents, even their children—if they got vaccinated.

It became clear, to increase vaccination rates we needed to neutralize the anti-vaccine rhetoric that had stigmatized the life-saving decision to get vaccinated.



Covid-19 is crushing this corner of rural America. Getting the vaccine can still feel like an act of treason.



Anti-vaccine groups take dangerous online harassment into the real world.



A Dad Made Fun Of His Son For Getting a COVID-19 Vaccine.

“I’m seeing students who are vaccinated and don’t want to tell anyone they’re vaccinated. I have an employee who was on her way to get vaccinated and was having a panic attack. She was the first one in her family to get vaccinated.”

Educator in the Permian Basin

STRATEGY

Get

The “Vaccine Curious” of the Permian Basin

To

Confidently seek out the COVID-19 vaccine

By

Redirecting Anti-Vaxxers' animosity away from their neighbors and toward a common enemy—COVID-19

IDEA

Attack the virus Not the vaccinated

“Attack the Virus, Not the Vaccinated” was an integrated campaign asking anti-vaxxers to stop ridiculing people who were considering the shot, and instead redirect their animosity toward the real enemy: COVID-19. The campaign championed outstanding community members and their legitimate reasons behind their decisions to vaccinate.



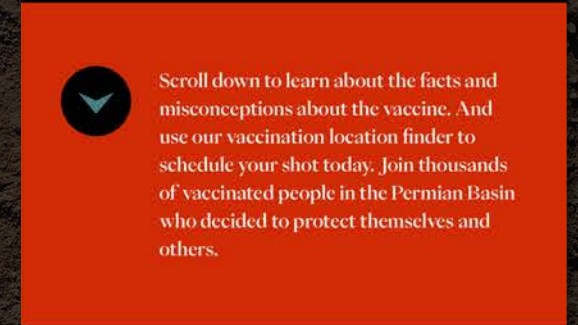
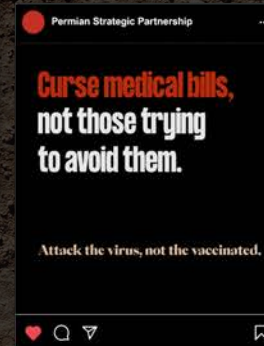
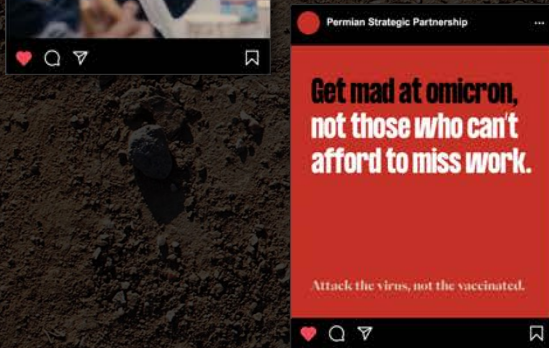
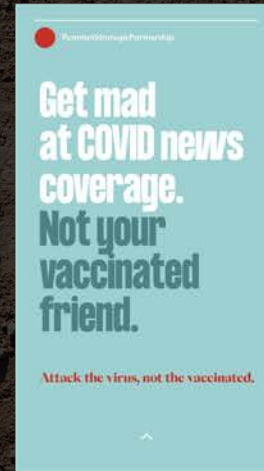
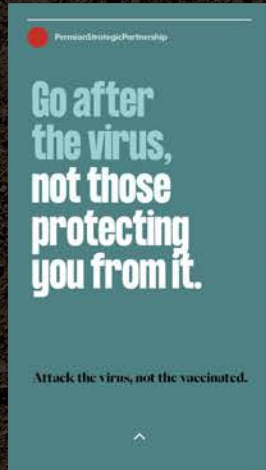
IDEA

This multimedia effort of PSAs, print, billboards, radio, digital, and social media surrounded the Permian Basin with messages of safety and support.

The PSAs, featuring community members' vaccine stories, were aired on conservative channels like Fox News and other bilingual networks to directly combat anti-vaccine narratives. The messaging appeared everywhere in the region from local doctor's offices to small town truck stops and convenient stores. Other online media complemented these stories in microtargeted placements that allowed residents to engage with them discreetly.



IDEA



Helping them find a safe place to get vaccinated

All communication directed people to AttackCOVID.org, an unbiased and comprehensive hub for vaccine information. This website also directed users to a vaccine distribution database so, they could find the provider closest to them.

For those without healthcare provider access, we included guidance from the Texas and New Mexico state health departments about upcoming vaccine events and in-home vaccination programs.

AttackCOVID.org

RESULTS

Together with Permian Strategic Partnership, we helped solve what the US government couldn't – increasing vaccinations to eliminate the threat of COVID-19 to the prosperity of the Basin.



VACCINATION RESULTS



↑ **73%**

Increase in vaccinations among the "vaccine curious"



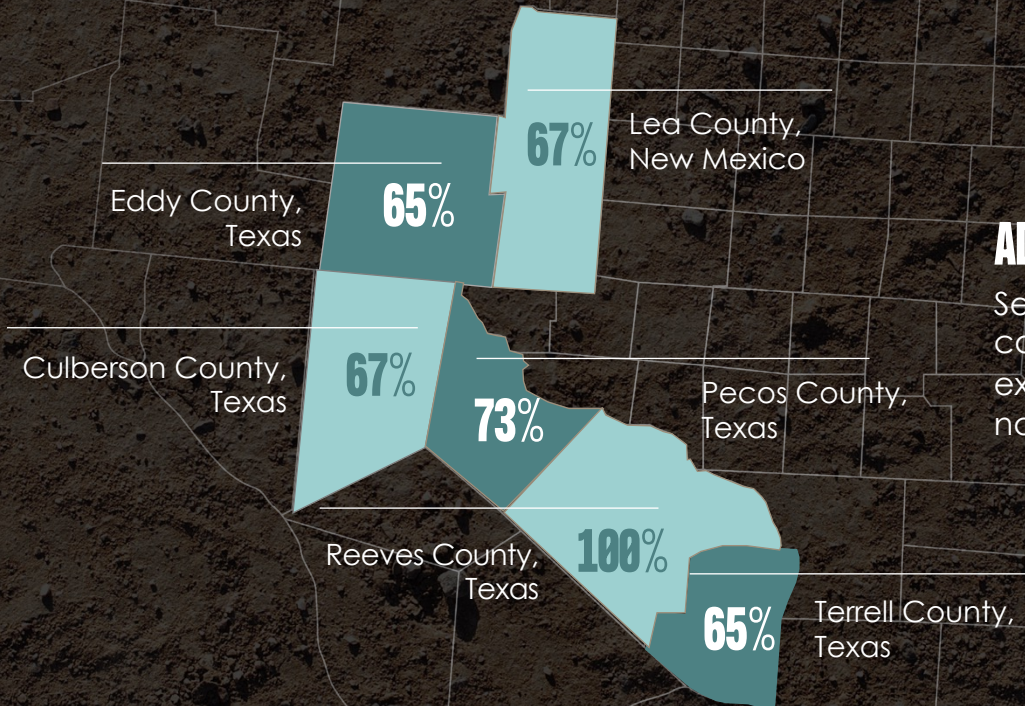
↑ **49% to 62%**

Increase in vaccinated adult population in the Permian Basin.



+ **39,000**

More people received the COVID-19 vaccine in the Permian Basin



ADULT VACCINATION RATE

Several ultra-conservative counties neared or exceeded the 70% national target by May 2022

COMMUNITY RESULTS



Over
\$607 million
savings in healthcare costs

Decrease in total healthcare costs associated with the virus (i.e. 60% decrease).



Over
12,500 people
avoided a hospital visit

Total decrease in COVID-19 related hospitalizations (i.e. 73% decrease).



Over
1,600 lives
saved

Total decrease COVID-19 related deaths (i.e. 72% decrease).

