

Entrant company name: **Virgin Media O2. Agencies: VCCP faith, Broadcast Revolution**

Entry title: **Daisy vs The Scammers**

Category: **Best Use of Content**

“Hello, I’m calling from your bank as we’ve noticed suspicious activity on your account.”

For millions of Brits, often the most vulnerable, these words signal the start of a phone scam which could cost them their life savings.

At Virgin Media O2 (VMO2), we’re investing millions to keep our customers safe from scams– but with the UK facing a fraud epidemic we know how important awareness is in the fight back.

That’s why we set ourselves a challenge; to make fraud advice engaging so people take notice, raise awareness of the relatively unknown free national reporting number for scams (7726) and demonstrate how we go above and beyond to protect consumers.

The idea, research and planning

Our research found whilst 1 in 5 Brits experience a fraud attempt weekly and 71% wanted to get their own back against scammers, most people were unwilling to bait the scammers themselves.

Enter the grandmother scammers will never forget. Acting as our ‘Head of Scammer Relations’, Daisy is an AI granny created using cutting-edge technology, programmed to take scam calls and waste fraudsters’ time.

We gave Daisy her own phone numbers and worked with renowned scambaiter, Jim Browning, to train the AI before seeding the numbers online. Soon, Daisy started to receive scam calls.

By keeping fraudsters in meandering conversations about everything from her family to her passion for knitting on 1,000+ real scam calls lasting up to 40+ minutes, Daisy prevented scammers from reaching others. But most importantly, after a few weeks of

gathering intelligence on their tactics, we unveiled her to the world to drive mass fraud awareness.

Creativity and innovation

Daisy's older persona, a deliberate choice, plays on the biases of scammers who often view the elderly as an easy target. However, we smashed this stereotype and made Daisy the unlikely yet powerful hero.

The model combines different AI tools to understand what's being said and respond in real-time. Her voice was trained using an employee's grandmother real voice and her interests and traits were inspired by people in our lives.

We worked closely alongside our legal team to ensure all risks were considered and overcome, including how scammers got Daisy's number and data privacy questions.

Strategy and implementation of tactics

We knew before launch that seeing truly was believing with Daisy.

With almost no-paid-for spend behind it, our multi-layered strategy was centred around our media relations and creating high-quality assets to launch this compelling story.

Our hero video, created for media, combined in-studio filming with innovative AI-generated content of Daisy with audio of her engaging with scammers. Influencer Amy Hart fronted the campaign and video, bringing authenticity as a scam victim herself.

We created a media package containing AI generated images of Daisy and longer-form audio content. This was backed up with a news story supported by research showing Daisy was addressing a real-world problem.

The sell in was handled completely in-house, leaning on our existing media contacts with conversations under embargo to create buzz. We secured campaign-focused interviews with showbiz journalists to broaden our reach, alongside a dedicated broadcast day with company spokespeople.

After stress-testing the tech, we allowed journalists the opportunity to interview Daisy, who was adapted to have a spokesperson persona.

Measurement, evaluation and impact

Daisy went viral, securing 1,800+ pieces of coverage and over 1 billion earned impressions (independent earned media tool Agility).

This includes many of the most viewed TV and radio shows including Good Morning Britain, This Morning, Good Morning Britain, the picture round of Have I Got News For YOU, BBC Morning Live, BBC Radio 4, Channel 5 News– as well as landing in every major newspaper.

Capturing public imagination, Daisy simultaneously appeared in UniLAD, whilst also prompting feature pieces in The Times and The Spectator helping bring our message to every demographic. Despite minimal spend (<£20k), the campaign blew up on social, generating 930,000+ organic YouTube views with hero video watched 8.7m+ times across owned channels achieving 88% positive sentiment (versus 27% KPI).

Influencers including LadBible, Daily Mail and Chrissy Teigen (42m followers) shared the video. Third party TikToks alone generated 12.7m+ views, meanwhile the Guardian's YouTube video pulling together Daisy clips has attracted 978k+ views and counting.

Picked up organically by news outlets worldwide, it became a discussion point on ABC's The View with Whoopi Goldberg, appeared in the New York Times and has been dubbed into Korean, French, Spanish and Mandarin to name just a few.

Independent and representative public polling found the campaign achieved our highest proactive story recognition of 2024, with 17% unprompted recall from the British public (11.4 million UK adults). This translated into real brand impact, with a 6.7% uplift in favourability among those who recalled the campaign. A month on, recognition continued to poll at 12% demonstrating lasting impact.

Satisfaction with VMO2's efforts to tackle fraud increased 10% in 7 months– significantly outpacing competitors– and awareness of 7726 rose significantly from 18% to 26%, empowering more people to act against scammers. We saw an 8% MoM increase in 7726 reports.

WHY DAISY SHOULD WIN

- 1) We went viral and smashed every metric we set ourselves– delivering one of 2024's most memorable campaigns to drive fraud awareness, change consumer behaviour and position VMO2 as a fraud prevention leader. We invested in creating great content that despite no marketing spend, attracted tens of millions of views across our own channels, news outlets and via organic online reach.
- 2) We took calculated risks, including allowing an AI bot to act as a company spokesperson, and completely tore up the conventional rule book of what a fraud awareness campaign should be.

We took on scammers in a very British way, and won. As Andy Hamilton observed on 'Have I Got News for You', the reason it really resonated was because we had taught Al the 'art of the wind up'.

The text in this case study is presented as submitted in the original award entry. Where necessary, entrants have removed or redacted information considered sensitive or confidential.