

Silver Anvil Highlight: Lock It and Pocket the Key

The St. Louis
Police

Department's
[public
relations](#)

program aimed
to develop
citizen
empathy,
cooperation
and
participation

in a campaign to reduce auto thefts in St. Louis, Missouri through its campaign slogan, "LOCK IT AND POCKET THE KEY."



Launched in 1970, the campaign's goals were to reiterate the upward spiral of auto thefts before the campaign, and the reductions achieved since the beginning of the program. Additionally, it wanted to point out that auto thefts represented a per capita loss of \$1200-\$1500; that juveniles committed 80 percent of them; and stress the importance of citizens viewing the subject with serious concern.

The campaign sought to achieve a general familiarization and acceptance for the slogan through repetition, and convince individuals that cooperation and involvement with the slogan were fundamental to reducing auto thefts.

To achieve this, Mayor A.J. Cervantes held a press conference to launch the program, and provided regular updates. The campaign also obtained editorial endorsements from various media outlets.

The campaign was publicized further with the distribution of posters to business establishments, arranging special interviews and feature articles, public service announcements and through company-employee publications.

Special events were held which included a demonstration by a reformed auto thief, and placing "LOCK IT..." stickers on the city's 10,000 parking meters. Citizens received reports on the campaign's progress through news releases, auto theft statistics, and the acknowledgement of citizen support and cooperation.

The "LOCK IT AND POCKET THE KEY" campaign showed immediate results. By the end of 1970, auto thefts decreased by 9.8 percent, preventing 1,409 auto thefts from occurring. Over its 2-year span, auto thefts in St. Louis were reduced by total of 2,569.

For more information, click here: <https://bit.ly/2018anvils>.