



THE HEIST AWARDS



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BEST UNDERGRADUATE PROSPECTUS



GOLD

Company: The University of Manchester

In 2018, The University of Manchester had just reached the end of a three-year cycle of refreshing, rather than reinventing, its prospectus. In the intervening period, it had launched its Stellify initiative, encouraging students to do more and be more.

Research showed competitors' prospectuses were very informational, which they saw as an opportunity to be distinctive. Furthermore, they'd learnt the most important factors for Manchester students were employability, reputation, social life and location. This led to the development of the University's ideal brand archetype – the explorer – as a barometer of the prospectus' content.

With Instagram as one of the target audience's main communications tools, the work of Annie Leibovitz inspired a bold new front cover featuring students with lecturers in the Whitworth Hall, where students start and end their time at the University.

A narrative structure also helped the reader to 'wander through knowledge', a phrase borrowed from one of the University's most familiar academics, Professor Brian Cox. Bulky copy was replaced by creative layouts inspired by feature-led, visually rich publications like the University's magazine and conversion campaigns.

An accompanying pocket guide was styled as a passport, in keeping with the explorer theme. And in response to recruitment colleagues' experiences, the course index was replaced by a table featuring all the entry requirements and UCAS codes in one handy, scannable place.

In-house focus groups' first impressions were positive. Externally, the prospectus was very popular too. As well as impressive hard copy distribution numbers; the online version saw impressive viewing and dwell time figures – proving it appealed to readers' sense of curiosity and adventure.



Judges Comments: A stand-out prospectus with a strong narrative that portrays a true sense of community at The University of Manchester. An Iconic piece of work.



BEST UNDERGRADUATE PROSPECTUS



SILVER

Company: Falmouth University

Falmouth set out to completely re-design their undergraduate prospectus. Previously, it had been more of a stand-alone document. This time, they wanted it to feel authentically part of an integrated campaign.

Before starting, though, they held student focus groups to learn what content they expected and wanted to see. And with this research in hand, they set the objective to better tell the Falmouth story.

Content would be improved. The design refreshed. And there would be a strong and consistent brand communicating that 'you can get real hands-on experience to kick-start your career at Falmouth'.

The end result – Falmouth's 'Get Real' brand platform – reflected the University's ethos in a relatable language. In particular, the keyword improved navigation of Falmouth's 'real' courses, careers and student life sections. This, together with the prospectus' contemporary design, clean typography and fresh imagery, provided easy navigation and a rich visual experience.

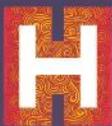
The Vice Chancellor's welcome was replaced with an introduction to exciting developments in the Creative Industries. And the prospectus also featured a number of real student and graduate stories to give readers a flavour of the kind of people who study there.

The storytelling element was extremely well received. As well as being promoted through University channels, the prospectus was shared by alumni who contributed on their social media channels too.

Internally, the Senior Management Team called it "a step change for Falmouth", and a member of the Vice Chancellors Executive said it was the most memorable strapline at a conference of senior HE executives.

Judges Comments: Stunning, impactful and beautifully executed with an uplifting story telling approach. This prospectus has it all, and is a triumph of creative direction.





BEST UNDERGRADUATE PROSPECTUS



BRONZE

Company: University of Sunderland

The University of Sunderland's undergraduate prospectus has long been one of its most powerful recruitment publications. But each one was 180+ pages and expensive to print and post.

Research showed that an effective prospectus should only show information relevant to the reader and, while also being available online, should be available in hard copy – as some students still wanted something to pour over with parents and influencers.

More anecdotally, staff pointed out that current methods led to low quality leads during fairs and the prospectuses were cumbersome to transport.

The solution was to streamline the product. An A5 prospectus featured better, bolder and more assured messaging, including a 'What Makes a Mackem' section that showed confidence in the University's local identity.

The prospectus was 'front-ended' with general information about the University, and then combined with details on three courses selected by users.

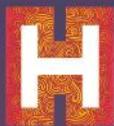
Perhaps most importantly, the prospectus was only available via an online form completed on the website or by staff members at an event.

On the plus side, this meant it could feature users' names on the cover, heightening a sense of affinity and belonging. However, the team appreciated that the volume of leads from fairs might decrease due to the process being more time-intensive.

However, the opposite happened. Leads increased, the percentage of people who received a prospectus and applied also increased – and the University saw a sizable growth in applications overall. Satisfyingly, the strategy has reduced waste too.

Judges Comments: An innovative approach for the University of Sunderland that took personalisation to a new level and delivered it with rigour.





BEST POSTGRADUATE OR SPECIALIST INSTITUTION PROSPECTUS



GOLD

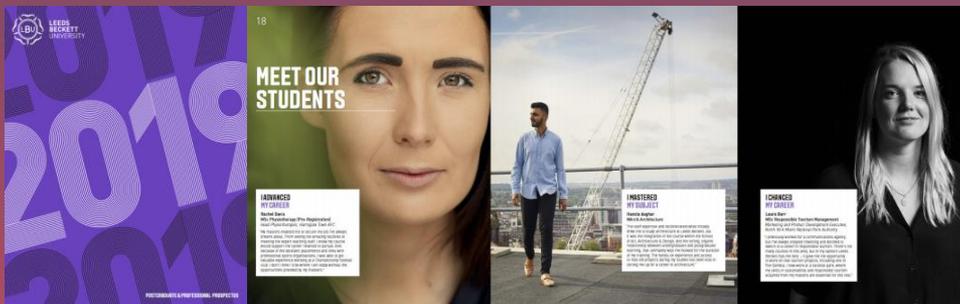
Company: Leeds Beckett University

Leeds Beckett University created a printed prospectus that's not only accurate and informative, but also eye-catching.

Before creating its postgraduate prospectus, the university used in-depth postgraduate journey research to reveal information on student's key concerns, including flexible study and funding. By addressing the real concerns of those considering postgraduate study and showcasing a truly amazing portfolio of courses, Leeds Beckett promoted a range of opportunities that makes it hard to ignore.

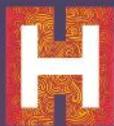
Carefully put together, the prospectus shows strong photography, bold typography and forward-thinking designs, while highlighting information on every aspect of university life. From the range of support services available, to entry routes and requirements, innovation and real students' life stories.

With information that truly sparks curiosity, this prospectus simplifies the customer journey and encourages students to keep wanting more from Leeds Beckett.



Judges Comments: A crisp, clean and cost-effective prospectus - it was clear to the judges that this was a very thoroughly researched prospectus. Led by insight and focused on the customer journey, the publication has a strong and consistent tone of voice throughout.





BEST POSTGRADUATE OR SPECIALIST INSTITUTION PROSPECTUS



SILVER

Company: St George's, University of London

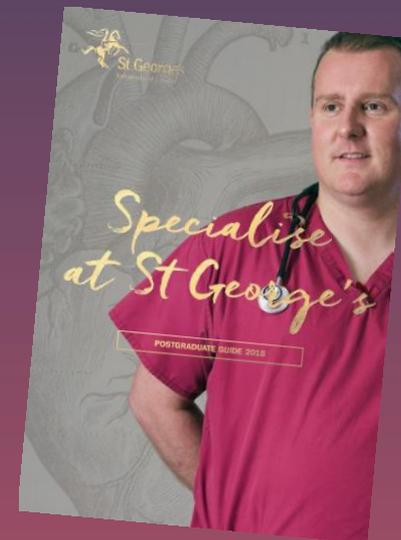
St George's is the only university in the UK dedicated solely to the study of medicine and health sciences. As a small, specialist university, with correspondingly limited resources for marketing and recruitment, the university had never produced a printed postgraduate prospectus before. But with market research indicating a prospectus is the first step in building relationships with students, they decided to create one that would evoke honesty and authenticity. A true reflection of what it's like to study at St George's.

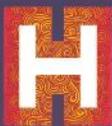
The aim was to channel the student's initial excitement, to nurture their passion for learning and to support all those who want to improve the world's healthcare and society.

With many intimidated by the idea of studying in a big, busy city such as London, the university focused on creating a vivid picture of St George's - a 'village London', in the friendly and diverse neighbourhood of Tooting. For those who couldn't visit the university, the prospectus played a vital role in giving them a real sense of place.

In short time and with limited resources, the university created a document that reflects the real spirit of St George's - small but focused, friendly but professional, small but mighty.

Judges Comments: An honest and authentic prospectus which would give a true reflection of what it's like to study at St Georges, University of London. It engenders a strong community feel.





BEST POSTGRADUATE OR SPECIALIST INSTITUTION PROSPECTUS



BRONZE

Company: University of the Arts London



UAL managed to create a strong emotional connection with its prospective arts and media students, by creating a visually striking prospectus, showing what life is really like at their university.

The project highlighted information on student environment, the tools they'll be using and what they could be creating at UAL. The student experience was at the heart of this project that uses a bold front-cover message for creatives all over the world - "Because the world needs creativity"

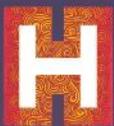
UAL's prospectus is all about being bold, simple and direct, allowing the stories of its students and academics to take centre stage. To make the project even more visually striking, UAL used beautiful stickers, showcasing student life at UAL.

The idea of using stickers also led to an Instagram campaign, inviting students to tag images of their own work with the hashtag #stuckonual. UAL then shared their favourite posts and turned the best ones into stickers that now feature in the new prospectus.

'This prospectus really sums up what we're here for - to promote creativity in the world - and prove that our students are our most inspirational resource.' - Catherine Mansfield, University of the Arts London

Judges Comments: A wonderfully creative prospectus which also gave targeted student advice. Judges loved the stickers and the opportunity to create a personalised experience.





BEST STUDENT RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE



GOLD

Company: University of Hull

Project Name: Healthcare Family Campaign

The University of Hull shows its commitment towards the NHS Trust by providing them with the best healthcare talent out there. They train nurses, midwives, operating department practitioners and paramedics, to deliver the highest standards of healthcare. But the university's commitment didn't seem to solve the NHS crisis, that leaves one in eleven posts vacant - most of them representing the nursing workforce.

So, to address this recruitment challenge, the University of Hull created a project that would highlight healthcare as an accessible and attractive career path. The campaign also put a spotlight on the main benefits of studying at Hull – a modern campus, top-level facilities and flexible training, demonstrated 100% employability and much more.

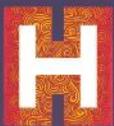
With plenty of research to back it up, this project used social media engagement, which informed the launch of a series of PR, communications, recruitment and engagement activities.

Alongside social channels, by using local news as an effective way to reach potential students, the university also shared case study stories. This innovative approach was designed to fit a relatively niche and specific audience – those who wanted to make the dream of becoming a nurse, paramedic or midwife a reality.

The Healthcare Family campaign received a phenomenal response from both prospective students and the university staff.

Judges Comments: The judges applauded University of Hull for taking advantage of multiple media outlets to deliver a solid, authentic and professional campaign with strategic intent and delivery.





BEST STUDENT RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE



SILVER

Company: University of Sunderland

Project Name: In the Moment - Using Confidence and Consistency to Increase Applications

The University of Sunderland aimed to drive up student recruitment for 2019, by using an integrated engagement and experience strategy.

The experience would improve on-campus event attendance, increase the quality of UCAS Fair interactions, enhance the open day experience and much more. And that's how the 'In the Moment' campaign came to life.

At the heart of the campaign, the university built a new, clear, consistent brand that cut across all tactics. The new messaging was bold, confident and focussed - centring on the 'moment' when people make a decision. A deep magenta colour was used to help achieve cut-through and key calls to action, talking about upcoming open day dates and inviting students to learn more about the University of Sunderland.

By putting student engagement at the top of the list, this project exceeded all its objectives - increasing the number of interactions and driving up vital engagement. This new, assured self-confidence resulted in higher quality leads from Higher Education fairs, and ultimately, an 8% increase in applications.

And this is just the beginning. The initiative is part of a three-year plan which will continue to be refined, until 2021 and beyond.

Judges Comments: With clever, meaningful messaging, the University of Sunderland delivered a great campaign utilising personalisation, humour and engaging content.





BEST STUDENT RECRUITMENT INITIATIVE



BRONZE

Company: Leeds Trinity University

Project Name: From 5 annual events to over 1000 - a new personalised approach to Applicant Visits

As one of the UK's smallest universities, Leeds Trinity University is proud to be renowned for its unique sense of community. Every student has the opportunity to receive personal support to realise their potential, with small class sizes and more one-to-one time with lecturers.

To showcase their values and to attract more students, LTU previously participated in the Applicant Days events - a critical part of the undergraduate decision-making process. But as a small university among large universities, their message seemed to fade, and attendees only showed a limited interest.

Having this in mind, for 2018, the Marketing, Student Recruitment and Outreach Teams piloted a new approach, that aimed to significantly increase interest in LTU. So, instead of large events, they offered an individual Applicant Visit to each applicant, right after they received their offer – which reflected perfectly the university's 'Name, not a number' ethos.

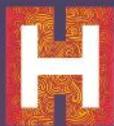
Applicants were given a wide choice of dates and timeslots, as well as a menu of activities to ensure the visit was truly personalised to their interests. They were met and accompanied by a member of the Student Recruitment/Marketing team and a trusted student ambassador, and all visits included a meeting with an academic.

As parents and carers are key in an applicant's decision-making process, LTU invited applicants to bring as many guests as they wished. Even more, they created a parent pack with information tailored to their needs and answered all their questions.

At an institutional level, the pilot was a resounding success. By rethinking the Applicant Day experience, LTU put a spotlight on the strength of being a smaller institution, while better considering the needs and expectations of applicants.

Judges Comments: Unique and innovative with good results - the judges were blown away by the level of personalisation at the heart of this campaign.





BEST INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN OR INITIATIVE



GOLD

Company: University of Glasgow

Project Name: Future World Changers

Future World Changers is a content-led campaign created by the University of Glasgow, to celebrate and support its ambitious students – those who want to make the world a better place.

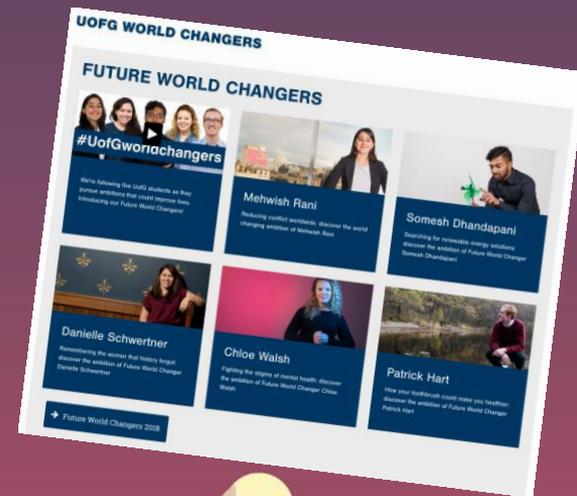
The project involved five of the university's current students, each of them representing different countries - Canada, India, Pakistan, the UK and the USA. The scope of this project was to promote the University of Glasgow to potential international applicants, by highlighting the diversity and the opportunities they could find here. The students and their world-changing ambitions acted as a catalyst to create compelling copy, photography and video content for a microsite, social media and other e-communications.

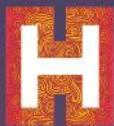
The campaign was a tremendous success, with video content gaining over one million views on the university's Facebook channel. One of the most viewed videos, shows the story of an ambitious student, with a dream to create sustainable energy solutions for remote Indian villages. To find more solutions for his dream, he's taken to the Scottish island of Eigg, which is off-grid and generates all of its energy through solar, wind and hydro power.

With a staggering success, the Future World Changers generated applications and enrolments across all key target markets, considerably increasing the number of international students coming to University of Glasgow in September 2018.

'Our FWC students became fantastic ambassadors for the University, participating in student panel sessions on our Open Days and various society activities throughout the year'

Judges Comments: University of Glasgow's 'Future World Changers' campaign had just the right balance of authenticity and advocacy. Their great use of video and targeting to key markets stood out to the judges and made for a particularly memorable and meaningful campaign.





BEST INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN OR INITIATIVE



SILVER

Company: University College London

Project Name: UCL Accommodation International Student Welcome



Every year around 40% of UCL's students come from overseas, leaving their homes, friends and family behind, to come and study in an unfamiliar city. UCL understood how vital it's for every single one of their students to feel at home when joining university, so they started planning their International Welcome.

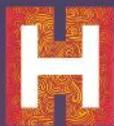
Every hall staged different events for international students - all designed to help you socialise, stay calm and make friends - culminating in a big 'Welcome' experiential event. They recruited 130 UCL student ambassadors to help international students move in. And even created world-food stations, for those who were a little homesick.

Students could watch helpful videos created by UCL ambassadors, directing you to the best places in your new area. Additionally, student project managers created the supportive booklet: "How to live happily in halls" for every new arrival. This guided students in gentle steps - from their room, to their hall, to community culture, to their local area, and so on.

This year, UCL can say that, while their international students may have travelled far to study, they really felt at home in the UK.

Judges Comments: In addressing a very significant issue, UCL developed a campaign with good, solid creative at its core and delivered excellent results for a very worthy initiative.





BEST INTERNATIONAL STUDENT RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN OR INITIATIVE



BRONZE

Company: Arts University Bournemouth

Project Name: AUB on the road: Ripping up the rulebook with augmented reality



While many students in the UK can visit the Arts University Bournemouth during Open Days, for the vast majority of international students, visiting wasn't an option. With international students generally unable to attend Open Days, the university was missing out on a valuable tool to convert these prospective students to applicants.

Knowing this, the AUB created a completely unique experience that allows any prospective student to experience the campus, no matter where they are. The AUB AR app.

AUB AR, is an augmented reality app, that allows students to take a virtual tour of the campus and explore it from every angle. Users can focus their smartphone cameras on the university's key headline, 'Join the Dots', that's found across all the marketing material. From this marker, the AUB AR app springs to life with animation and 360-degree imagery.

'AUB AR was an ambitious project that had no example to follow. International students and their tutors alike were surprised by what the international team and agents could show with as little as a postcard and an Ipad.'

Judges Comments: Daring, innovative and seamless. Arts University Bournemouth utilised technology to bring alive their offer, and demonstrated great use of a new tool.





BEST ALUMNI, DEVELOPMENT OR FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE



GOLD

Company: Newcastle University

Project Name: Celebrating 30 Years of MBA Excellence

2018 marked Newcastle University Business School's 30th year of Association of MBAs accreditation (AMBA) - a key milestone in the school's history. At the same time, the region geared-up to welcome the Great Exhibition, capturing the spirit of the city.

These events offered the perfect opportunity to showcase six months of collaboration with Newcastle's MBA alumni. By selecting one alumnus to represent each cohort between 1988-2018 and matching them with a location in the North East that has a link to that year, the university embarked on a journey to tell a story about pride in its graduates and its region.

The campaign launched in June with an animated video showcasing the alumni photography, and a Celebration Weekend - brought to a close with the gala dinner at the BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art. The celebrations continued throughout the year, as Newcastle released an alumni story with each week.

Born out of a challenging year of MBA recruitment, and with an AMBA re-accreditation visit looming, this project achieved the impossible. It re-engaged MBA alumni by celebrating their successes, and increased MBA recruitment by 61%.

This project re-enforced key elements in Newcastle University's vision and mission. It highlighted academic excellence through alumni stories and demonstrated civic commitment to regional heritage, by using stunning locations for its photography.

'We are privileged to have heard and shared the powerful and inspirational stories of our MBA alumni and thankful for the time they willingly gave up contributing to this campaign. They are the true measure of its success.' Ginny Glithero, Newcastle University

Judges Comments: The judges felt this campaign was clean, authentic, inspirational, flexible and scalable. A very worthy gold winner.





BEST ALUMNI, DEVELOPMENT OR FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE



SILVER

Company: University of Essex

Project Name: Donate Your Pennies

Donate Your Pennies (DYP) is a giving programme exclusively for University of Essex. Built to embed a culture of philanthropy among the university's staff, DYP helps students who might be encountering financial difficulties. Launched in June 2016, it rounds down participants' salaries to the nearest pound, with the additional pennies going towards bursaries.

To encourage staff giving, University of Essex emphasises on participation, rather than actual amounts. This way, all staff feel like everyone's contributing equally, regardless of seniority.

This campaign focuses on promotional effort, making it easy for both new and existing staff to join the scheme. Messages about DYP are printed on payslips and featured on the university's online HR portal. Staff newsletters feature interviews with members of staff on why they signed up to DYP. Posters and takeaway cards in all-staff areas feature sign-up instructions. And those who donated receive regular thank you messages.

To promote the giving programme, the DYP team even talked to staff at the University's Celebrating Excellence Fair and convinced them to sign-up then and there. Furthermore, after a year in the scheme, all members receive a DYP-branded 'Penny' piggybank, delivered to their desk. This spreads awareness of DYP around offices and encourages more sign-ups. Penny proved so popular, that larger branded pigs were also introduced in campus retail outlets.

Donate Your Pennies continues to grow from strength to strength, with the number of people signing-up increasing every month, since it launched back in June 2016.

'We set out to embed a culture of philanthropy across the University, and through DYP we feel we have made a huge start to making all staff part of that culture.' - Alison Edge, University of Essex

Judges Comments: A courageous campaign in a challenging climate, this simple yet effective initiative from the University of Essex exceeded set up costs and now provides a base for sustainable fundraising.





BEST ALUMNI, DEVELOPMENT OR FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE



BRONZE

Company: Loughborough University

Project Name: Staying In Touch

Loughborough University knows former students can be some of its most passionate supporters. They can help guide current students and support the university's lifeblood through networking, advocacy and much more. But with over 170k alumni in their database, around 45k seemed to have stopped keeping in touch.

The 'Staying In Touch' campaign came to life to help build engagement with the lost alumni community, by focusing on the stories of three alumni of different age groups, who did keep in touch with the university.

After sending out direct mail pieces and cross-referencing LinkedIn and Raisers Edge, Loughborough University was finally able to approach the lost students, via a web platform. Once on the platform, the lost alumni could reconnect and update their contact information.

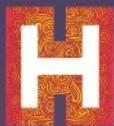
As part of the project, an additional web page and a 'Staying In Touch' blog were developed. These were created to feature pieces on alumni news and internal news. A wide-ranging social content plan embracing Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube and Weibo was also built, to spread the word and encourage former students to get back in touch.

Furthermore, scheduled emails helped amplify the story and encouraged people to reach out across their networks, to ultimately help re-engage with the lost members of the #LboroFamily

The campaign had significant traction with graduating students too. They showed great interest in joining the alumni community, as a result of what they had seen across the social channels. Even more, 'Staying In Touch' prompted a groundswell of alumni pride, and led to offers such as mentoring, guest speaking and news stories - which made the #LboroFamily grow even more.

Judges Comments: The judges were particularly impressed with this effective approach to rekindling the flame with lost alumni, all whilst creating evergreen content for future campaigns.





BEST MARKETING INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE



GOLD

Company: University of East Anglia

Project Name: Thinking Without Borders

University of East Anglia's 'Thinking Without Borders' initiative talks about great breakthroughs and tales of collaboration. By analysing their own research, the university collated and mapped-out hundreds of stories that shared five key themes - climate, health, resources, equality and culture.

To show the bigger story of how these five elements and the university's research overlap, the 'Water' 'Words' and 'Guts' stories were created. The Water Story for example, covers everything from undersea robots to the burden of carrying water. It's packed full of individual stories and it highlights the five that relate to the key themes the most.

The stories focused equally on the impact of the university's social care researchers, writers, historians, business experts and health professionals. Furthermore, they reflected the latest trends and best practice in modern communications, with emotive, compelling, and recycled content. For more details, viewers were encouraged to visit the university's website.

University of East Anglia delivered and communicated the impact of research with powerful content that grips the imagination. The 'Thinking Without Borders' campaign generated over 20,000 views and created an organic internal bond and springboard, without any paid media.

'The powerful content and storytelling of 'Thinking Without Borders' is now a cultural rallying cry and stimulus for our future vision and plans.' - Angelina Bingley, University of East Anglia

Judges Comments: Thoroughly researched and well-considered, the University of East Anglia's 'Thinking without Borders' campaign is intellectually creative and brings to life complex research ideas in a truly innovative way.





BEST MARKETING INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE



SILVER

Company: London School of Economics and Political Science

Project Name: LSE IQ podcast

LSE's IQ is a monthly podcast, where LSE academics and other experts answer pressing, intelligent questions about economics, politics or society. The project was a bottom-up initiative and the idea was instigated by people within LSE's central communications division and the Film, Audio and Media Relations teams.

Once the pilot podcasts were produced and well received by both professional services staff and academics, the team was given the go-ahead to continue producing the podcast on a monthly basis.

IQ is one of the few scripted podcasts in higher education that brings academics from different disciplines together. During the sessions, they're encouraged to use their own different research to debate the same issue. Recent issues include, 'Why haven't we won the war on drugs?', 'Why is social mobility declining?', 'Should we fear the rise of the far right?' and 'What's the secret to happiness?'

The aim of the LSE IQ podcast is now to highlight the relevance of academic research when dealing with important societal issues, as well as promoting research in a new and fresh way, for all those who may not have an interest in academic research just yet.

Judges Comments: The judges praised this project for the obvious passion, creativity and commitment of the team behind it. A refreshing way to showcase research excellence with phenomenal results.





BEST MARKETING INITIATIVE TO PROMOTE RESEARCH EXCELLENCE



BRONZE

Company: Leeds Beckett University
Project Name: Transform

With more than 50% of academics contributing to research activity and many more studying for a research degree, people at Leeds Beckett are undertaking work that transforms the lives of individuals - and organisations - every day.

To raise awareness of their academic's transformative research and work, Leeds Beckett created the 'Transform' campaign. Focusing on real people doing amazing things, this campaign shines a light on the world's biggest challenges, and how researchers at Leeds Beckett approach them all - from shaping dementia care, to childhood nutrition, access to clean water and cybersecurity.

This inspirational and transformational integrated project used case studies, PR activities, social interaction and striking visuals to make an impact and to communicate the value that Leeds Beckett adds into the community, region, and the wider society.

Judges Comments: An impressive and interesting campaign from Leeds Beckett University that built institutional pride by focusing on real people doing amazing things.





BEST USE OF INNOVATION IN EDUCATION MARKETING



GOLD

Company: Arts University Bournemouth

Project Name: AUB on the road: Ripping up the rulebook with augmented reality

AUB has a strong conversion rate for students who attend Open Days. But for the vast majority of international students – an increasingly important audience – visiting isn't possible.

Which is a shame, because AUB's campus is their USP: a stunning, state-of-the-art creative hub, with industry-standard technology and spaces.

The international recruitment teams needed a tool that celebrated that campus. That could be delivered 'on the road', even where internet access was limited. So, they worked with design agency Bond & Coyne to create an app that helped any prospective student to experience the AUB campus, no matter where they are.

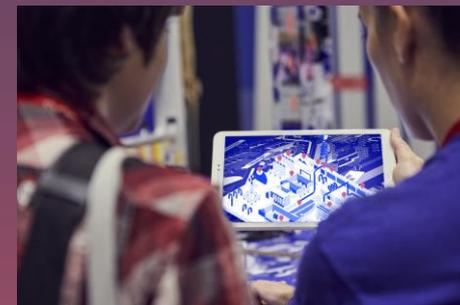
AUB AR is an augmented reality app that allows students to take a virtual tour of the campus and explore it from every angle. Users simply focus their camera on the University's marketing campaign line, 'Join the Dots', and the app springs to life.

Animation and 360-degree imagery is embedded within the app. And if there's an internet connection, it's easy to click through to the University's website for more detailed information about studying at AUB.

On launch, the app was quickly sent to all the University's agents. The team fed back that there were screams of excitement. It drove a huge increase in international applications – including a sizable improvement in applications from people who didn't attend an open day.

AUB AR is the first of its kind in university marketing. It taps into the way young people research universities, and their relationship with mobile technology. But equally, it delivers an experience that was sorely needed, and reflects the University's reputation for creative arts and innovation.

Judges Comments: A demonstration of a truly innovative and seamless campaign, this was an ambitious, daring and well-considered creative leap for Arts University Bournemouth.





BEST USE OF INNOVATION IN EDUCATION MARKETING



SILVER

Company: Loughborough University

Project Name: Don't Just Take Our Word For It

UCAS data on 'savvy, sassy and smart' students showed the vast majority of students felt reviews were important in their firm reply choice. Yet no UK university had made reviews an easy-to-find element of their websites – or anywhere through their process.

So, since Loughborough's approach to student recruitment revolves around authenticity, late in 2018, it became the first in the UK to show live student reviews on its website.

The project complemented a series of useful guides, 'how to' films and video case studies for LGBT+, BAME and other disadvantaged groups. But in particular, the reviews aimed to cut through the marketing noise and add depth to the University's proposition at both the enquiry and research stages of students' journeys.

The solution involved StudentCrowd, an independent student review site, who worked with the team to direct feed its real time ratings and comments to the University website. This content was shown alongside links to other key sites (that didn't have an API to pull through), including What Uni?, The Complete University Guide, Google and Student Hut.

Naturally, there was the potential for technical failure or, worse still, negative feedback. So they started with a soft launch before letting the wider community know what they had done. And between that and the full launch, the live review page garnered impressive viewing figures, and a dwell time 75% longer than site's average.

It's a simple idea, well executed. And fearlessly, considering the potential for bad reviews. It has also set the standard for truth and user generated content in HE marketing.

Judges Comments: Forward thinking and brave - this entry from Loughborough University stood out from the crowd.





BEST USE OF INNOVATION IN EDUCATION MARKETING



BRONZE

Company: University of Aberdeen

Project Name: Transforming Student Recruitment & Enquiries

The University wanted to dramatically increase the number and quality of student applications. Along the way, they wanted to reduce costs, speed up the process and mine data to aid decision-making.

It was no small task. The legacy applications system sent enquiries to one email, monitored only during business hours. And queries were forwarded to Schools or other staff without being recorded.

The solution was comprehensive. As well as raising its profile and generating leads, a dedicated enquiry team was established – with six full-time and 10 part-time staff. In turn, the University's recruitment website was rebuilt, as were the online prospectuses.

Microsoft Dynamics 365 took over customer management, and was integrated with chat and enquiry features fuelled by Crimson Consultants' Student Recruitment Accelerator.

It worked seamlessly. A huge number of unique, on-brand emails were smoothly delivered, and opened at far better rates. Users enjoyed simplified journeys, from the website to online chat and enquiries. And the team could see customers' entire interaction history when answering emails, web forms and live chat enquiries – they could even prioritise enquiries to maximise conversion and ROI.

The system greatly reduced the number of call reports – saving Student Ambassador staff time – and that meant a number of 3rd party contracts could be cancelled. Already, the University has seen an impressive rise in January 2019 postgraduate numbers.

The team now efficiently responds to thousands of enquiries from prospective students and parents each month. More broadly, the system has effectively involved all staff in recruitment: CRM really is part of everyone's vernacular.



Judges Comments: Described as a lovely, integrated campaign with proven operational effectiveness, this is a fantastic example of how good business practice can deliver real, impressive results.





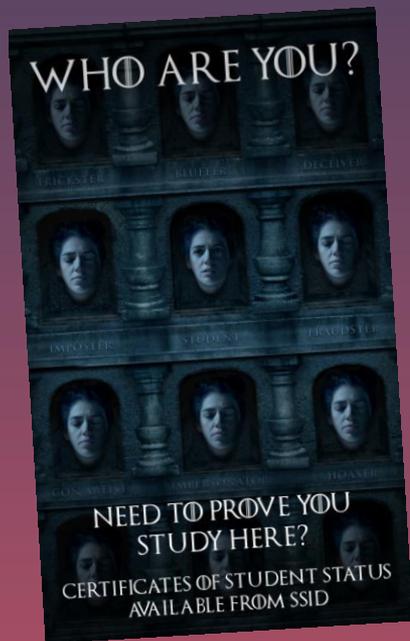
BEST PR / COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN OR INITIATIVE



GOLD

Company: The University of Sheffield

Project Name: Student Administration Film series



The Student Services Information Desk is the first point of call for students to access important information and support. In 2018, they approached the Student Communications Team (SCT) to devise a campaign that would raise the profile of three key services: student ID cards, Council Tax Exemption Letters and Certificates of Student Status. The results were ambitious, innovative and hilarious.

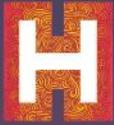
In preparing for the project, the six-person SCT analysed the reception and impact of previous campaigns, and created detailed production, marketing, social and visual communications plans. Three films were produced using Hollywood-style effects at a fraction of the cost. They paid homage to Lord of the Rings ('One Card to Rule Them All'), Harry Potter ('Council Tax is for Muggles Not Students') and Game of Thrones ('A Student Has No Status').

Whether they were recreating a shower of letters with a leaf blower (Harry Potter) or digitally animating a tall-ship sailing through university landmarks (Game of Thrones), the team kept costs low and production values high. For the Lord of the Rings film, they even formed a mutually beneficial relationship with a local forge – offering them footage that could be used to attract new customers.

The films smashed their targets, reached over 593,900 people and created a surge of pride, with students tagging their friends with comments such as: "This deserves to break the internet." and "This video is filed under reasons: Why my uni is better than yours."

Judges Comments: Highly creative campaign which turned a series of potentially dry topics into engaging propositions. This campaign demonstrated strong engagement metrics and 'university envy' from students at other institutions.





BEST PR / COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN OR INITIATIVE



SILVER

Company: Loughborough University

Project Name: Heart 2 Heart

Loughborough University's challenge was to create a strategic, event-led CSR initiative aimed at staff, students, alumni and the local community. It needed to address the shocking statistic that only 8% of patients survive a cardiac arrest because people don't know emergency CPR. Their response was 'Heart 2 Heart'.

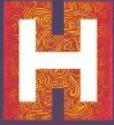
The event was held on February 14th, 2018. Their Chief Finance Officer, a part-time Emergency First Responder, had the idea to train people in CPR. They gave themselves the objective of training 1,300 people over a 24-hour period while raising awareness of BHF's work.

Using the Valentine's theme, LU created video stories, PR angles and social media content, alongside detailed PR and internal comms strategies. They presented participants with certificates and Love Heart sweets, ran a special 'couples' Valentine event and a child CPR session aimed at parents. They also created a day-long Spotify playlist of 'heart-related songs', custom Snapchat filters, personalised messages from the CFO, SU President and VC, together with infographics driving traffic alongside a Thunderclap - which reached over half a million people.

Delivered in less than 15 weeks, this was a powerful initiative – truly unique within UK Higher Education. Supporting local organisations to carry on training others across the wider community, it delivered a long-lasting legacy on a shoestring budget. It also raised £259.95 for BHF and improved awareness for other methods of support, including on-campus clothing banks. They secured TV, radio and press coverage and social media stats showed incredible engagement – trending 5th in the UK on Twitter with 258,568 impressions. Most importantly, they trained 1,497 people in CPR, an amazing 15% above target.

Judges Comments: A professional and slick community engagement campaign which delivered strong results, significantly contributed to the regions health agenda and left a lasting community legacy.





BEST PR / COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN OR INITIATIVE



BRONZE

Company: Middlesex University

Project Name: Pepper goes to Parliament

On 17th October 2018, Middlesex University made history at the Palace of Westminster. Pepper, their resident robot, gave evidence to the House of Common's Education Select Committee's inquiry on the Fourth Industrial Revolution. It was a challenge set by Robert Halfon, Chair of the Select Committee – and answered courageously by the Middlesex team, given the high stakes and complex logistics involved.

Staff and students programming the robot had to work closely with public affairs colleagues to ensure that the robot understood the key messages typically given during evidence. From taking Pepper through security (eyed by sniffer dogs) to performing numerous rehearsals, everything had to run without a hitch as the session was being aired live on Parliament TV. Middlesex were careful to ensure that Pepper's appearance wasn't seen as a gimmick but complementary to other witnesses - and driven by human interaction.

Pepper became a global phenomenon, reaching over 42 million people across national broadcast and print media, international media and sector media. MU had exceeded expectations in their objective to influence key decision-makers, and build their reputation as an innovative university, actively addressing future skills needs and gender equality in STEM. The students who were involved in the evidence session are now building their profiles as STEM role models. And in December 2018, Pepper was listed in the top 10 most influential 'people' in education.

Judges Comments: An innovative and high-risk campaign requiring careful execution by the team, but one which delivered strong rewards. An excellent example of a team who were risk aware but not risk averse.





BEST COMMUNITY / BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN



GOLD

Company: Queen's University Belfast

Project Name: St Patrick's Initiative

In 2016, three men were arrested for assaulting a policeman with a bottle. Hundreds of people rioted and chanted pro-IRA songs. Roads were blocked by young people and fires were lit on the streets. Groups were jumping on cars and climbing onto three-storey roofs. Riot police and police dogs were drafted in. And all that was happening on St Patricks Day, in the Holylands area - the residential area behind Queen's University Belfast. So, the blame was naturally placed with the University.

As an educational institution, Queen's University have a duty to care for their students, but limited powers regarding off-campus behaviour. Each year, this behaviour and media reports require crisis management. But what wasn't being reported was that the area houses a large proportion of students from other institutions too. This antisocial behaviour was not only harming the Queen's brand, but also intimidating vulnerable residents and impacting students' future careers.

But rather than simply avoiding the problem, Queen's wanted to find a proactive solution. So, they decided light humour was going to be the way to share advice on responsible behaviour - all delivered through a gif-based blog.

Youth influencers, such as BelfastLive, and celebrity alumni were also encouraged to share the blog, through audience-appropriate social posts. A social media toolkit containing artwork, tracked links and example posts were developed for key influencers. And by using Talkwalker, the university monitored student's real-time activity and refined information on the run up to the crisis period.

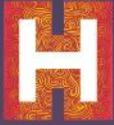
But most importantly, the Queen's social media team found an opportunity to be where party-goers hung out. They made this possible by using Snapchat's SnapMap and locating hotspots of activity in the area, while watching the party in real-time, through snaps and videos.

'Queen's University Belfast has been invaluable in supporting our activity to address antisocial behaviour in the Holylands area. By sharing Talkwalker social listening learnings and supplying SnapMap hotspot intelligence of antisocial activity, we have been able to better allocate our resources to ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable residents, students and non-student visitors.' – Belfast Police



Judges Comments: Totally unique, this project stood out to the judges for it's innovative and collaborative approach, that took a negative situation and turned it into a truly positive campaign. A shining example of the value of social media, which formed an initiative that would appear to be leading the way.



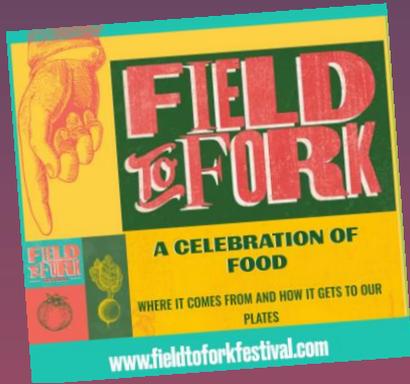


BEST COMMUNITY / BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN



SILVER

Company: Harper Adams University
Project Name: The Field to Fork Festival



In 2017, Harper's marketing team initiated one of the most ambitious projects. To unite the university's community, including students, academics, professional services and alumni, under the same cause. And they did so with the biggest single combined outreach and civic engagement project the university had ever undertaken.

The starting point of this project was the university's mission to use higher education and research, for the delivery of a sustainable food chain and rural economy. The idea was to create a festival that celebrates this mission by engaging, entertaining and educating.

That's how The Field to Fork Festival (F2F) came to life. The festival showcased 35 new interactive, educational sessions, designed to bring to life the story of food from field to fork. Even more, those who made it to the festival on the last day, also enjoyed a live music stage, kids' entertainment, festival food and drinks and exciting walking tours.

The sustainability of food, land, energy and the science and ethics of farming and food production, are key preoccupations in a world whose population is predicted to grow 2 billion by 2050. And F2F proved that if universities are determined, strategic and ambitious in the way they engage with their local communities, they truly have the power to make a change.

'Giving back is not just a "nice thing to do" - it underpins our mission as civic institutions dedicated to making a difference.' - Simon Pride, Harper Adams University.

Judges Comments: A brave and bold project that put Harper Adams University at the centre of the conversation around food provenance. A successful and incredible achievement given the timeframes and scale of the project, and a perfectly authentic fit to the University's values.





BEST COMMUNITY / BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT CAMPAIGN



BRONZE

Company: Middlesex University

Project Name: Middlesex University STEM Festival

The STEM Festival is an exciting and inspiring day, full of wonders and innovation. Held by the Middlesex University as part of British Science Week, the event included interactive activities and demonstrations exploring Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. The activities were made to inspire school children and local residents, as well as to inform people on the research and teaching taking place at Middlesex University.

The event was open to both school children and the members of the public, who could register to attend for free. But, while school children were made aware of the STEM event via invitation, members of the public were a bit more difficult to reach out to.

That's why Middlesex University had to find new ways to attract the community. From printing out leaflets to putting up a 'pop-up' stand at Brent Cross Shopping Centre, the news about STEM was spreading. Even more, one of the university's resident robots was sent to interact with members of the public in the shopping centre, giving them a flavour of what was to come.

A further challenge was to make sure that the school children who attended on the day, engaged with as many activities as possible. This problem was solved by running a competition on the back page of the brochure, which awarded stars for every exhibit visited. When the school children had collected all of the stars, they could enter a competition for the chance to win a prize. This ensured that the day ran smoothly and the different school groups moved around, enjoying all of the activities on offer.

'With little budget, and using the expertise of Middlesex research and teaching staff, we created a vibrant event with buy-in from senior staff across the University and the local community.' - Matthew Offord, MP for Hendon

Judges Comments: An excellent community-based project with real purpose and relevance. The judges were particularly impressed by Middlesex's creativity, which saw them utilise a shopping centre and a robot to maximise engagement with their local community.





MOST EFFECTIVE DIGITAL OR SOCIAL INITIATIVE



GOLD

Company: Queen's University Belfast

Project Name: St Patrick's Initiative

On St Patrick's Day 2016, three men were arrested for assaulting a policeman with a bottle. Hundreds of people rioted and chanted pro-IRA songs. Plus, a young man was spotted defecating down a chimney. All in a residential area behind Queen's – which led to the University being blamed.

Naturally, what was becoming an annual event was drawing large volumes of negative social media activity. But what wasn't being reported was that the neighbourhood houses a large proportion of students from other institutions, along with people as young as 13 who were drawn to the area.

The University's response started well before St Patrick's Day. Close collaboration with Public Engagement, Police, Belfast City Council and key influencers like BelfastLive and celebrity alumni saw them promote blog posts on the risks of antisocial behaviour – which garnered over a thousand unique views.

And on the day, Queen's Social Media Manager used Snapchat's SnapMap to deliver social intelligence to Public Engagement and Police who intervened in real-time – helping intoxicated people safely down from roofs, and a young child found moving through a riot area without an adult.

The difference in online commentary was stark, with numbers of negative comments almost reduced to zero. It's an astonishing social media exercise that, rather than simply kill the party, safeguarded lives.

"Queen's University Belfast has been invaluable in supporting our activity to address antisocial behaviour in the Holylands area. We have been able to better allocate our resources to ensure the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable residents, students and non-student visitors." - Belfast Police

Judges Comments: A totally unique and pro-active campaign that combined intelligent messaging, technology and collaborative working to deliver a real result that benefited the University, their students and the local community. A fantastic use of social media with extremely beneficial results.





MOST EFFECTIVE DIGITAL OR SOCIAL INITIATIVE



SILVER

Company: University of Hull

Project Name: This is Our Clearing

In their annual Marketing Innovation challenge to find cut-through during Clearing, the University of Hull saw 'This Is Our Clearing' as an inside-out social media concept that would amplify its messages to the outside world.

The idea was to inspire staff across the University to be a message platform, and reach their like-for-like demographic of parents – potentially hundreds of thousands of new feeds.

In fact, social media software had shown that, hypothetically, the equivalent of all their staff could reach as many as over a million parent influencers. In reality, not every member of staff was particularly active on social media, but the concept revealed the opportunity. Internal comms and social media colleagues combined to drive awareness. A special 'This Is Our Clearing' brand was created, and 50 reusable water bottles were thrown in as a sign-up incentive.

Staff were sent daily personalised emails – tailored to their faculty or service area – with schedules of when posts were going live and how to promote them.

And it was a huge success. More people signed up than expected. The University's average Facebook reach increased by well over half, and Twitter figures dramatically increased too.

The reach would have cost thousands if it was manually boosted – and wouldn't have been as trusted. But by using its people, the University organically stayed front-of-mind for potential applicants and their closest advisors. Plus, the initiative kept Hull riding high in the Edurank tables alongside the big-hitting audience-favourites from Oxbridge. Perhaps it doesn't have as many followers, but they are highly engaged.

Judges Comments: A well-presented submission, this entry stood out to the judges for its unique approach to a clearing campaign, which harnessed the power of employee advocacy on social media.





MOST EFFECTIVE DIGITAL OR SOCIAL INITIATIVE



BRONZE

Company: Leeds Beckett University

Project Name: Clearing - our evolution of a winning formula

After the award-winning Becky the Chatbot Clearing campaign in 2017, the University wanted to evolve its digital and social activity. Not only that, it knew clearing would be even fiercer this year: applications from UK students were down nationally, and the regional picture was bleak too.

The response was to drive recruitment by becoming a national source of useful information for Clearing advice. Why? Because their research showed people wanted help during this period - a virtual arm around their shoulder, with more video and student-generated content.

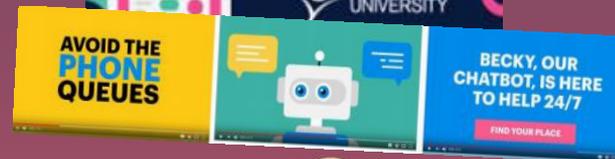
To deliver this, Becky the Chatbot was given more of a persona and used in digital advertising. In particular, the campaign highlighted its ability to make offers outside of office hours – a clear advantage over many competitors.

In turn, the University's Student Blog Squad generated authentic content showcasing the experience of coming to Leeds Beckett through Clearing. And the University also produced useful Clearing advice films, including a Clearing Funding Advice animation.

A celebratory pack, including a balloon and party popper, was mailed to all main cycle applicants who had a place at Beckett too. Along with details about a social media competition, #BeBeckett, that would be seen by applicants' peers.

The campaign increased prospective clearing students by over 50%. Greater video content was at the forefront: Snapchat, Instagram Stories and the University's own social channels combined with digital ads provided content where and when students needed it. But, most importantly, it was content itself that made the big impact, positioning Leeds Beckett as an enabling force, proved by things like Becky the Chatbot's 24/7 service.

Judges Comments: A brilliant and thorough campaign built on previous successes - the judges loved the very human angle on the technology used in this campaign.





BEST WEBSITE



GOLD

Company: Keele University

After ten years of service, Keele's core website wasn't fit for purpose. The design and templates were outdated. It wasn't fully responsive. And with over 12,000 pages split across dozens of distinct sections, it suffered from complex and confusing user journeys. It needed transforming. And the team had just 12 months to do it.

The project started with 100 people, face-to-face meetings with staff and local college students, and almost 700 further sets of opinions collected from surveys. The team worked with their digital agency to produce stakeholder personas and complete content reduction and card sorting exercises. Then, they designed a range of templates based on atomic design methodology to promote consistency and re-usability.

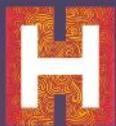
Phase one, launched in April 2018, included the homepage, a 'Study' section – including all course pages – and 'Discover' and 'Connect' sections. Together with a new course search and site search, this accounted for 1,500 core pages and 50% of site traffic.

An opt-in survey was hugely favourable in terms of the site's navigation and content. The site loads noticeably faster, and improved content and metadata led to high SEO scores and increased search and direct web traffic. And the University enjoyed its biggest ever undergraduate intake - and the second highest growth in the entire sector.

On time and 10% under budget, the team tackled a range of issues, from writing 30,000 lines of code for the CMS templates, to knocking extra KBs off images to improve mobile download speeds. No small feat when you consider they only have 2.5 full time employees on the team.



Judges Comments: A very strong team that has developed a responsive and well researched website. A textbook approach to redeveloping a website, and delivered with passion.



BEST WEBSITE

SILVER

Company: Swansea University



Swansea's old website had been in place for around eight years and had grown organically. It served both internal and external audiences, and its 33,000 pages had been published by over a thousand authors with varying degrees of skills, knowledge, and experience. The result? A raft of out of date, duplicated and inaccessible content.

It was in dire need of review - a complete reimagining with a far better focus on the user, accessibility, responsiveness, brand consistency and compliance.

The new site would be repositioned as a recruitment-only piece. Research extended into eye-tracking and card sorting exercises, as well as testing with users in the UK and in China and Nigeria.

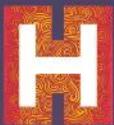
Plus, 90 departments have a presence on the website. So part of the migration involved creating training packages and workshops to help a streamlined cadre of 280 web editors to better engage with users.

The dual focus on technology and people had a big impact. Open day page views more than doubled, alongside sizeable traffic increases across the site. There was a positive quantifiable and anecdotal response to new content, and a third-party content delivery network (CDN) sped up download times abroad.

Although an extremely challenging and complex project, the site was delivered and launched within 12 months – two months ahead of schedule. The small but ambitious team developed new skills along the way too. Indeed, the project was deeply influenced by the research of the Neilson Norman Group, and two members of the team attended and successfully passed exams to evolve their approach to user centric design.

Judges Comments: Unashamedly student recruitment focused, this was more than just a website project. A good example of change management and up-skilling teams to deliver cultural change and ongoing effectiveness.





BEST WEBSITE



BRONZE

Company: Plymouth Marjon University

While Plymouth Marjon University last launched their site in 2015 – by late 2017 it looked mediocre.

They wanted their 'wow' factor back: an exciting and on-brand user experience tailored to a primary audience that might not know exactly what they wanted, and needed answers to questions like 'is there a course for me?'. But also wanted a site that still served their secondary audience of students, staff and other stakeholders who knew what they wanted - and wanted that information, fast.

The project was split into three phases: creating new layouts for course pages with added content and SEO. Enhancing the search and browse experience. And the new first impression – an updated homepage, new subject intro pages and an interactive virtual tour.

Now live, the site's seen great leaps in year-on-year views, with improved SEO delivering better organic results. In fact, Open Day bookings increased by almost a third– and they had to add new dates to meet demand. Further innovations included 'questions you'll ask on this course' features, pitched as 'the debates that go on in the bar after the lecture is over' and snappy module descriptions no longer than a tweet.

By phase three, the website was much improved but still didn't quite capture the student-centred approach. That is, until a new prototype homepage used words like 'vibrant', 'bright', 'colour', 'happy', 'clear' and 'modern'. Test groups elicited some audible 'wows'!

The site has raised application numbers, a point proved by increased international applications – which aren't supported by any media. And the whole product is very 'Plymouth Marjon' - reminiscent of a pioneering challenger brand.



Judges Comments: A well mobile enabled website that tested extremely well with the target audience. The team at Plymouth Marjon University listened to their audience and successfully hit all of their goals as a result.



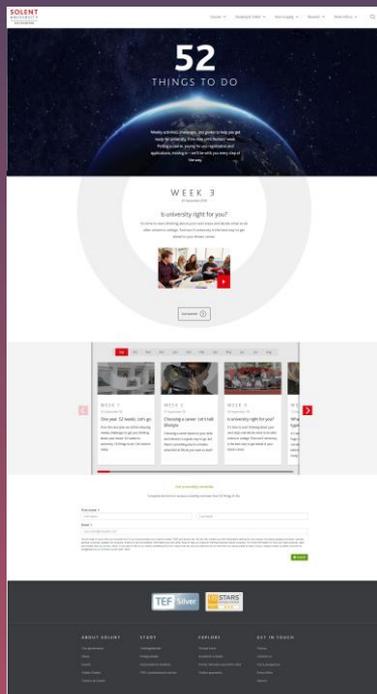


BEST USE OF CONTENT



GOLD

Company: Solent University
Project Name: 52 Things To Do



Solent University believes higher education should be accessible to all. And, with around 70% of its students being the first in their family to go to university, they wanted to create a campaign to help people better understand the process of applying, regardless of whether they were applying to Solent.

The resulting '52 Things To Do' campaign saw the team deliver content every week for a year. Topics ranged from applying for student finance to decorating your room in halls.

Each Monday a new article saw a full week of promotional activity across social, email, digital and search channels. It would start with an introductory video from a Solent student, followed by more detailed information, and rounded off with a task to help the audience take practical steps towards their goals.

There were references to Solent where appropriate, but the campaign is unmistakably aimed at simply helping students to apply to any university. For example, the third week's article was titled 'Is university right for you?'

Naturally, the biggest challenge was creating the sheer amount of films, tasks, quizzes and polls. However, the team excelled – seeing visitors flock to new articles in great numbers, and spending time reading previous ones in detail.

The content has really inspired. Tutors and careers advisors have mentioned that they use the campaign as part of talks in local schools and colleges. And perhaps most tellingly, 18 students told the team that 52 Things To Do influenced their decision to study at Solent.

Judges Comments: An elegant solution which delivers personal, highly relevant content in easily digestible, bite sized chunks. A real labour of love that required passion and commitment to keep it alive, the judges applauded the team at Solent who clearly put their heart and soul into this to create a content led campaign worthy of recognition.





BEST USE OF CONTENT



SILVER

Company: Loughborough University

Project Name: Gold Coast 2018

Loughborough is ranked number one in the world for sports subjects in terms of its research. So it's no surprise the team saw the Commonwealth Games as an opportunity to showcase their credentials.

The main objective was to promote Loughborough as an elite performance centre. But it was also important to celebrate the diversity of athletes representing the University, strengthen links for future advocacy, and inspire the next generation.

The team scoured internal and external media, and governing bodies' resources, to find archive footage to repurpose for the campaign. They then developed a website to host it all, along with an online medals table and the option to support its Sport Scholarship Fund.

Further evergreen #MyRoutine content was developed, focusing on 'behind the scenes' stories like Adam Peaty's training regime. This was allied with content crowd-sourced from students and other athletes who wanted to share their stories.

The fact that one of the PR teams was selected to support Team Scotland at the Games also gave the University added proximity to the action in terms of planning and executing content.

By its end, the campaign had enough content to see you through almost 120 flights from Loughborough to the Gold Coast. Viewing figures broke all estimations, the Sports Scholars Funds exceeded its target by almost 50%, and Loughborough's brand tracking improved to its highest ever score.

A labour of love for the two colleagues leading the project; the campaign was well received internally and by the press who, according to a recent survey, now regard the team as one of the sector's best.



Judges Comments: A very clever and perfectly aligned campaign that delivered multiple benefits and return. The judges described this entry as nothing short of amazing - extremely impressive, well executed and highly successful.



BEST USE OF CONTENT



BRONZE

Company: University of Hull
Project Name: #MyPlasticPledge

The University of Hull's #MyPlasticPledge campaign enhanced its reputation as energy and environment thought leaders. More practically, it's helped countless people make small behavioural changes which, collectively, will make a huge difference in protecting our oceans.

Designed to engage staff, students, stakeholders and the wider community; the campaign delivered engaging content at key points throughout the year, such as Humber Business Week and various music and arts festivals.

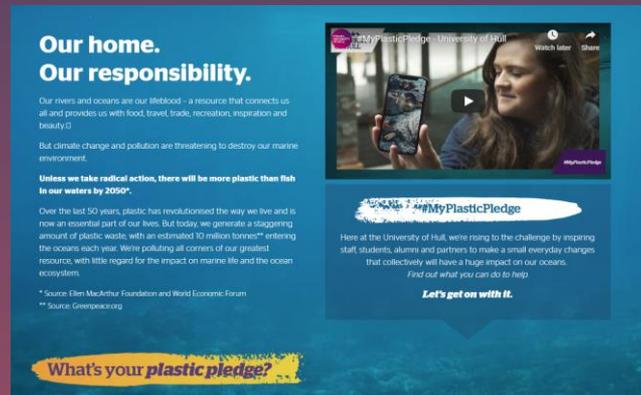
There was a mix of approaches. Creative elements such as a giant sea turtle, named Tilly, made from 15,000 pieces of locally-collected plastic, was a focal point for the British Science Festival. Research papers on a wide-range of topics, including the prevalence of microplastics in the UK's mussels, played a vital role too.

The team even arranged a 'Don't be Shellfish' picket line along the Humber, and created a 12 Days of Plastic Free Christmas Campaign that offered tips on how to reduce waste over the festive period.

The strategy was ambitious in scope and scale – and achieved great results. Hundreds of millions of people – were reached through traditional media, to say nothing of the millions more engaged through social media.

17 Environment-related PhD Scholarships were offered – over a third focusing on plastics. The University won a large research contract to find new creative ways to eliminate plastic waste. And Marine Biology applications went up 20%.

Just as importantly, there's been a groundswell of local support. A number of organisations have been in touch to partner with the University, which has also been invited to help create a citywide plastics group.



Judges Comments: Values led and topical, University of Hull delivered an excellent campaign with #MyPlasticPledge that was well executed and extremely impactful.





BEST LOW BUDGET INITIATIVE



GOLD

Company: Leeds Beckett University

Project Name: Student Blog Squad - peer to peer content with impact

Leeds Beckett is crammed with amazing students doing amazing things. And to recruit even more students to their already thriving community, the university created the Student Blog Squad project.

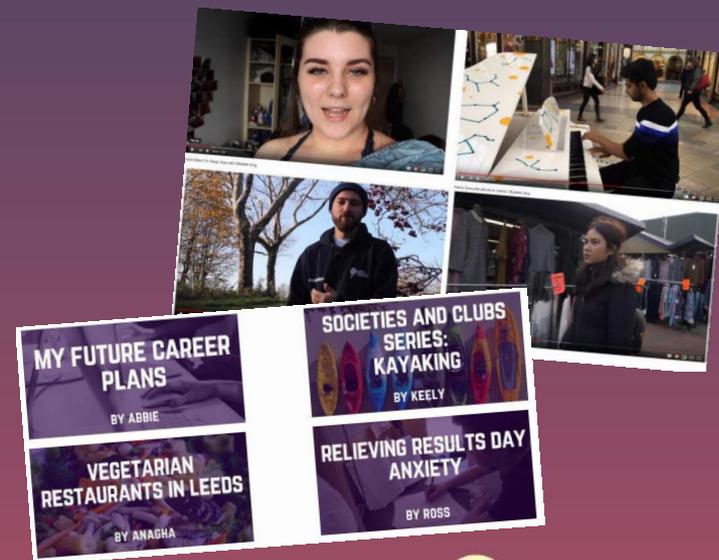
Knowing that student testimonials and authenticity were highly important to all potential students, Leeds Beckett created a campaign that would spark conversions by using authentic, student generated content.

The 'Student Blog Squad' was entirely formed of Leeds Beckett students - a team consisting of excellent, digitally savvy student ambassadors with the task to create stellar content on any student-related subject.

To support the Student Blog Squad, a Conversion Officer offered guidance, advice and helped build their confidence. With one-to-one advice and great support from the university's staff, the squad managed to create amazing creative content, that gave all prospective students an accurate, fascinating insight into the Leeds Beckett life.

'What's made this campaign such a success is that we've put both our prospective students and our current students right at the heart of it' - Charlotte Renwick, Leeds Beckett University

Judges Comments: A simple but effective campaign, Leeds Beckett University have clearly acknowledged trends inside and outside of the sector and have ended up delivering a peer led campaign with a super set of metrics.





BEST LOW BUDGET INITIATIVE



SILVER

Company: University of Sunderland

Project Name: DOSH - Opening the Door for Student Opportunity

Despite offering valuable, life-changing scholarships to its students, the University of Sunderland's Development Office saw poor take-up between 2016 and 2017. Ranging from £1,000 to £10,000, the scholarships are fully-funded by philanthropic donors and don't have to be repaid. So why were students not snapping them up?

To solve this issue, an eye-catching campaign was created – DOSH (Development Office Scholarships). DOSH used low-cost internal communications channels and free on-campus advertising space to raise awareness of the scholarships.

The essence of this initiative was to shift focus from the scholarship donor to the student, highlighting benefits of 'free money' and encouraging them down the funnel from awareness to application.

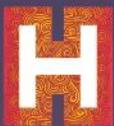
DOSH was heavily promoted to students via posters, flyers, emails, digital signage, face-to-face 'surgeries' with the Development Office, student newsletters, and social media. The branding was eye-catching and classy, shot in black and white and focusing on students in magazine cover style photography.

Further tactics included monthly, informal face-to-face workshops and the DOSH Money Month – a sustained, targeted activity that promotes DOSH each November and March.

The University of Sunderland successfully met three simple objectives for this low-budget campaign by raising awareness, increasing applications and awarding more scholarships.

Judges Comments: And the silver goes to... Bish, Bash DOSH! For delivering a focused campaign with longevity.





BEST LOW BUDGET INITIATIVE



BRONZE

Company: Loughborough University

Project Name: Gold Coast 2018

With the Commonwealth Games approaching, Loughborough University had a true opportunity to showcase its values in the sports sector.

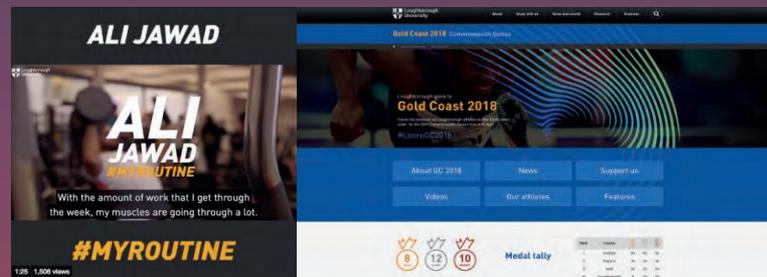
That's how the Gold Coast 2018 project came to life. A detailed campaign that identifies opportunities for build-up, daily coverage and recycled sports content. The campaign's main objectives were to secure media coverage focused on the university's athletes, to position Loughborough University as an elite performance centre and to celebrate the success of its current students and alumni.

As part of the campaign, Loughborough University developed a website to host an impressive amount of content – from information on athletes, sports and archive footage to an online medals table. Videos and written features profiling key Loughborough athletes were on the website too. And to show support, when signing up on the platform, people could also choose to donate to the Sport Scholarship Fund.

Furthermore, those visiting the platform could find evergreen content under the hashtag #MyRoutine. The content showed how a typical day looks like in the life of sporting heroes. Crowd sourced coverage was also linked to the #MyRoutine hashtag, enabling students and other athletes to share their Loughborough routines on social too.

By linking the website to their digital platforms, the university promoted plenty of content and Games teasers on social media. And on Twitter, a Gold Coast account was created, to provide real-time action highlights.

At the end of the campaign, the project was rounded off with a series of fun facts - one of them being the fact that it would take nearly 120 flights from Loughborough to the Gold Coast to watch all the videos consumed by viewers during the university's campaign.



Judges Comments: A huge well done to Loughborough University for engaging with the public and a specific stakeholder segment by utilising content that is well aligned with the institution. A truly creative approach for a minimal budget.





HEIST AWARDS' MARKETING TEAM OF THE YEAR



GOLD

Company: University of Dundee

Imagine asking someone to buy a house in a city they've never heard of without going to view it. That's the level of financial and emotional investment international students often make. And while the University of Dundee is a UK Top 30 and World Top 250 university – and 6th globally in this year's International Student Barometer – if you're not from the UK, it's unlikely you can point to it on a map.

So, for the last two years, the University's 16-strong marketing team have been bringing to life a new University-wide brand framework.

They've storyboarded, commissioned and produced a video telling the story of Dundee. And their wider campaign, #DiscoverDundee, has been huge. Every team member has taken on the role of brand ambassador – helping to run workshops for staff and students, communicating with alumni, and putting together a mini-site for academic staff to self-serve recruitment and reputation-building materials.

The team puts a lot of the new brand's success down to a new regional approach to marketing. Now Marketing Managers have responsibility for multiple Schools, and lead on a priority international target market. This has helped to combine recruitment and marketing plans, and create greater efficiencies, e.g. in trip planning and management.

"It can often be challenging for new university brands to reach across continents and inspire candidates thousands of miles away who have barely heard of Scotland, never mind Dundee. The new brand successfully achieved this by bringing coherence, clarity and contemporary relevance to our international communications." - Wendy Alexander, Vice Principal International

Judges Comments: A small but mighty and unified team, the University of Dundee marketing team impressed our judges with their unique approach to working across the institution and the undoubtedly phenomenal results they are achieving in the international space.





HEIST AWARDS' MARKETING TEAM OF THE YEAR



SILVER

Company: University of Portsmouth

It's certainly been busy in the University of Portsmouth's Marketing and Communications department. They've rolled out a range of large change projects at the same time as delivering a programme of organisational change. A host of new people – in some cases, whole new teams – have joined. And they've done this while navigating a shrinking target market, Brexit and the looming Augar Review.

Despite all this, they've achieved growth in leads, applications and enrolments. How? Well, a CRM project brought together every department. It also put users in control of their data and how they hear from the University. So, from GDPR to user-triggered and personalised communications, with enquiry management coordinated across the University, everything works more seamlessly.

An online transformation saw 350 sub-sites streamlined into a broader, more 'grown-up' University site. One with audited, consolidated content re-written into a new brand tone of voice and paired with fresh, rich imagery in a new brand visual style. The team's campaign strategy evolved too. From cyclical event management, there's now an 'always on' presence that drives lead generation rather than just recruitment activities.

Put together, the University looks and sounds different to the market – more welcoming, more future-focused, more provocative.

"The changes in our Marketing and Communications represent a complete step change. The team have ensured that we are no longer a 'hidden gem' and there is now a very slick window into the great work and achievements of the University" - Professor Sherria Hoskins, Executive Dean, Faculty of Science.

Judges Comments: It's clear to see how University of Portsmouth have gone the extra mile to deliver on their ambitious objectives. A great year delivered by a compact and cohesive team with the 'wow' factor.





HEIST AWARDS' MARKETING TEAM OF THE YEAR



BRONZE

Company: Loughborough University

Loughborough's 194 Marketing and Advancement experts cover areas from Creative and Print Services to marketing, research and policy, and evaluation. Everything, in other words, that could broadly be described as promotion or external relations, plus anything that doesn't quite fit elsewhere in the University.

In practice, the team's role is to find creative ways to re-purpose, reuse and develop PR material and evergreen content. And they build longevity and multipurpose thinking into the briefing process.

Examples include a Festival-themed clearing campaign that was one of the University's most successful ever. A total refresh of international recruitment also saw a healthy increase on 2017, and a new prospectus exponentially increased applications ahead of the market average.

The team were also the UK's first to make live student reviews available on its website. They created and delivered a life-saving CPR training event. And developed the award-winning Subject in a Box project – now used as a model by Cambridge University.

Plus, after becoming The Times and Sunday Times University of the Year, the team turned around a vast range of materials in just 48 hours for their biggest ever open day in September 2018 – including a film that's now organically seen half-a-million views. All just two days before the University caught the world's attention by hosting the Duke and Duchess of Sussex.

In fact, they turn an impressive profit, after winning a number of external contracts, including the School Games project, and web and PR tenders for Imago. Not bad for a team started from scratch just five years ago.

Judges Comments: A well-resourced and results driven team that are at the top of their game, Loughborough are clearly making differences to all aspects of the business including reputation, profile, recruitment and brand.

