



Category: Public Sector Campaign

Company: Syndicate Communications

Entry title: Shakespeare's Celebrations

Brief and objectives:

Shakespeare Celebrations, which is wholly run by Stratford-upon-Avon District and Town Council, is dedicated to celebrating William Shakespeare's life. Each year a Birthday Parade is organised in his home town of Stratford-upon-Avon. Syndicate worked to support the Celebrations weekend, which ran from April 20th to 22nd 2018. To engage a broader scope of visitors, this year the Celebrations included the UK's First National Living Statue Competition.

Our objectives were to:

- maintain an ongoing stream of positive news stories using spokespeople from the two Councils
- encourage visitors to Stratford-upon-Avon, focusing on the Birthday Parade and the Living Statue Competition
- provide content for social media to engage and also increase followers
- engage with and respond to all media enquiries
- organise media accreditation and manage media and a Press Centre on the day of the Parade.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

Our strategy was to deliver an integrated public relations campaign using press activity, events, partnership communications and social media. We aimed to develop national media, PR and partnership activity to drive overall awareness and recognition, and use travel, regional and local media, and PR and partnership activity to achieve engagement and action with the audiences- footfall.

The National Living Statue Competition was the UK's first of its kind and so was used as a strong message throughout activity.

Insights into the UK Domestic Tourism Market were vital. We discovered that 25% of short domestic holidays were booked between one month and one week before travelling. This helped to shape our strategic approach and tactics to target travel guides and media to promote the weekend celebrations from late March.

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

Partnerships

We developed strong partner relationships to deliver our objectives and create a legacy:

- Enhanced activity by connecting with networks – included content in media releases, supported social media and posting and retweeting of our content. Partner content was included in media packs
- Used partner owned media channels –websites, printed publications, e-bulletins and reciprocated with ours
- We secured a media partnership with the town's main printed media- The Stratford Herald, who were provided with additional material, interviewees and some exclusive content

PR and Media

We developed 'hard-working' content for use and re-use in PR and Media activity:

- Created content from key messages, narrative and 'stories', such as media releases, quotes, social media content, videos and photography
- Arranged interviews with key spokespeople and opportunities for filming and photography
- Encouraged programmes to be presented from Stratford-upon-Avon – e.g. BBC Midlands Today broadcasted live
- Targeted releases at travel guides, 'What's On' guides, family publications, national media travel supplements, regional media travel pages
- Set up and managed a press centre on the day of the parade, which included accreditation (for security) and media packs

Social Media

Social media was a key element of communications activity. In addition to Twitter and Facebook accounts, to take advantage of the Living Statue Competition, we also set up an Instagram account. We:

- Increased content and activity – linking to videos, games, articles, other channels, using engagement tactics such as posing questions, posting facts, hashtags
- Followed/liked local people, key media and stakeholders

- Set up a Facebook event, encouraging people to attend.

Implementation of tactics:

The campaign was scheduled to run over six months, which would be a challenge to deliver based on the limited budget. To combat this, our strategic approach was to have key sprints in activity. Content was planned as follows:

Sprint 1- November

Key messages, narrative and collateral were developed. Key spokespeople were briefed, and we researched and created feature stories to highlight the Celebrations throughout the campaign period. We developed a series of posts for the Councils to use in activity, looking both forward at the next Birthday Parade, but also highlighting the positive outcomes from past parades. During November we also created and issued content highlighting the dates and structure of the next event in April, and also the UK's First National Living Statue Competition. Quotes were used from representatives from the councils.

Sprint 2- January

Again, media releases were developed, specifically adapted to drive content in local, national and travel media. The focus was on the parade and the competition but using different spokespeople. More social media posts and photography were provided for the Councils' teams to post.

Sprint 3- March

For this Sprint, we worked with a 'statue' to develop a top tips film, which was used both on the councils' and partners' social media channels and with media. Coverage was gained locally. We also focused on engaging media with the aim of getting into forward planning diaries to encourage media attendance over the weekend. We set up and used Eventbrite to manage media registrations for the weekend, which was very effective, but also enabled our team to be used more effectively.

Sprint 4- April

The next main phase of activity took place in April and over the Birthday weekend with:

- Media circulation of the plans for the birthday weekend, including timings
- Engagement with media to encourage attendance, highlighting the Living Statue Competition
- Physical management of media accreditations, press centre and media area for the Parade
- Preparation and circulation of media packs, including 'What's On' guides and detailed instructions
- Arrangement of filming and 'live broadcasts' (TV and radio) throughout the weekend.

Measurement and evaluation:

Outputs

- Accredited 45 people from 24 different media.
- Generated 150 pieces of media coverage, including local, national and travel print and live broadcast news. Coverage gained on media's own social media. Coverage gained during all 'Sprints'.
- Mainstream media total reach was 14.4m people, and almost 12m individual impressions on social media
- 100% positive coverage
- Analysis highlighted 'Shakespeare's birthday celebrations' featured the largest number of times (122) in media coverage, followed by 'UK's National Living Statue Championship' (120) and 'Shakespeare's Celebrations' (107)
- Social media impressions peaked during 'Sprints'
- @Shakespearescel analytics received 69,800 individual impressions from January to April.
- Over 1400 online social media references to the campaign. Twitter had the largest share of coverage, (533 Tweets referencing the Celebrations). Instagram was second with 158 references, accounting for 18% of clips.
- #shakespearesbirthday had over 1.1m impressions during the campaign.

Outcomes

- Received positive feedback from media
- Stratforward, using smartphone signals, recorded footfall in the town at over 60,000 people during the weekend. This was an increase of 5000 from the previous year
- Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust welcomed 8,000 visitors over the weekend, which was an average increase of 45% on other weekends in April
- Images of the statues taking part in the Living Statues Competition were syndicated in national, local and international media, as well as online.

Budget and cost effectiveness:

The campaign budget was £10,000. With mainstream media engagement of 14.4m, the cost per thousand people engaged was below £0.01 (£0.00069).