



Category: Best Use of Social Media

Company: DTW

Entry title: Bolton Food and Drink Festival

Brief and objectives:

Bolton Food & Drink Festival is one of the leading urban festivals in the UK. It has a great USP in that it allows people to see big names in the culinary industry at an affordable price, boosting the profile of Bolton itself.

Our social media objectives were:

- To contribute to an increase in visitor numbers year on year
- Engage with people attending Bolton Food & Drink Festival
- Raise awareness of the festival through engaging content
- Interact with stall holders and chefs to encourage future participation

We measured the following KPIs (compared to 2015):

- Increase the overall number of impressions to 600,000
- Increase the number of interactions & clicks (engagement) to 20,000
- Increase the number of video views to 50,000

Our objectives were to be achieved across the festival weekend – from the 26th – 29th August 2016.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

The first thing we did was to assess the successes of other food and drink festivals on social media to identify how they use social media for their marketing. This included engagement analysis of the Big Festival and Bolton's 2015 activity.

We used Facebook Audience Insights to assess the activity and demographics of who we wanted to engage with in order to achieve our objectives. Our three main target groups were:

- 1) Attendees/potential attendees of the festival
- 2) Sponsors and stallholders – important investors in the festival who would engage with social activity
- 3) Celebrity chefs – as the main attraction for many, coverage and engagement with these chefs on social would be important.

In advance of festival, we looked at key events taking place during it, assessing how we would cover the range of entertainment, chef demonstration, performances and stalls that would be taking place across the four days.

Strategy and tactics, including the types and variety of social media utilised, creativity and innovation:

We focused our strategy on the festival's key selling points:

- 1) Celebrity Chefs
- 2) Street entertainment
- 3) Stallholders & sponsors
- 4) The general public's love of Bolton and the festival

We adopted a 'social-first' criteria for creating content around those points.

We focused on the existing dedicated festival accounts on Twitter and Facebook, and launched the festival's Instagram account to engage with those using the festival hashtag on the platform. This enabled us to talk to our key stakeholders. across different demographics and platforms.

We used live streaming to open the festival to those from further afield to give them an idea of the atmosphere and entice them to attend.

Celebrities:

We used the celebrities coming to the festival to create powerful content for social media. This included:

- Live Periscope and Facebook Live broadcasting of demonstrations
- Clips of chefs talking about why they love Bolton and fun 'bits' for competitions
- Facebook Live interviews with Nadya Hussain and John Torode

We ran celebrity focused competitions giving away signed merchandise from the chefs. The live streams of the demonstrations were used afterwards as part of summary blogs of the festival.

Street entertainment/music:

We posted live streams of street entertainers in character talking about Bolton and interacting with the public, as well as posting pictures of bands in action, advising where they were performing.

Stallholders and sponsors:

We engaged with a variety of stallholders throughout the festival recording small clips, taking close-up shots of their food and tagging their social accounts. We interviewed key sponsors and promoted video footage of their stalls and events.

Attendees / potential attendees:

To ensure the public stayed engaged in the festival we responded to comments about the event on social media. This included dealing with any negative issues or comments and

retweeting/sharing positive feedback. In addition to this, we responded to comments and tweets in a chatty manner to reflect the festival's welcoming atmosphere. We also shared pictures of the public engaging with the different events of the festival, looking at the family activities that were happening.

We ran Storify blogs at the end of each day alongside a highlights video which we then promoted with a small advertising budget.

In this summary content, we ensured that we featured content from our key selling points, including positive tweets from the public. This enabled us to help drive footfall for the following day.

Implementation of tactics:

Phase 1 (July) Research and analysis:

We developed strategies from our comparator and audience research.

Phase 2 (August) Festival coverage:

Across the 4 days of the festival, we had a dedicated onsite social media manager throughout the festival as well as supporting festival organisers through training and communication.

We focused our activity during the festival, starting with some promotion in the week before, then finishing a day after with a highlights video.

Phase 3 (September) Evaluation:

We ran a full campaign evaluation which we shared with the client.

Measurement and evaluation:

We assessed the success of our strategy by running reports after the festival on the platforms and comparing our performance to the previous year's social media activity.

We exceeded our KPI targets:

- 521% increase in impressions to 1,931,017
- 514% increase in engagements to 72,566
- 193% increase in video views to 87,989

Post festival evaluation conducted by Bolton Council indicated that our social media activity contributed to the achievement of the wider objectives including a 31% increase in visitors to the festival from 2015 and positive results from an audience sentiment analysis:

- 88% felt that sponsors wanted to support the community
- 96% found it easy to find out about the Festival before they arrived
- 98% are likely to attend 2017's festival.

Budget and cost effectiveness:

This equates to a cost per engagement of 3p.

The campaign demonstrated a significant ROI for Bolton Council in social media activity for the festival – this has led to further investment in social media for the 2017 festival.