

The logo for the CIPR Pride Awards 2019 Gold Winner. It features the text "CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019" in white on a black background, followed by "GOLD WINNER" in large, multi-colored letters (pink, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple).

Category: Travel, Leisure or Tourism Campaign

Company: Clarion Communications and The Edinburgh Dungeon

Entry title: #VoteWallace

Brief and objectives:

With the summer months key for driving visits to The Edinburgh Dungeon, the seasonal show provides a fun experience and additional reason for thrill seekers to head into the depths of the city's visitor attraction. However, with the show competing against the hundreds of other shows and experiences during the renowned Edinburgh Fringe, it needed more than a 'one hit wonder' event listing to stand out amongst the saturated Festivals market.

With the capital receiving droves of tourists, competition is fierce, and the challenge is great - why would anyone pay to go to a Dungeon during the summer when there are free activities throughout the buzzing city?

The objective would be to get the show into the public psyche, generate conversation, drive footfall and moreover, keep that momentum going throughout the summer season.

The idea, research and planning:

Everyone knows who Braveheart is, don't they?

Even if you haven't seen the film we all know it's when Mel Gibson donned his face paint and tried his best at a Scottish accent whilst famously shouting FREEDOM! With or without Mel, us Scots would argue that William Wallace is a national hero. A Scottish icon. A figure who surely should be recognised just like St. Andrew – even have his own national holiday?

But alas, he doesn't. So, when The Edinburgh Dungeon wanted us to create noise for their new show 'Braveheart's Revenge', we knew we had a bona fide topical debate that we could tap into and metaphorically poke to get people talking.

To provide insights and determine strategy, we undertook research to understand the true feeling towards Wallace and if the public would welcome a national day to honour him. The results found:

- The majority of Scots (72%), would support a day to celebrate William Wallace
- Almost half (42%) think he is the bravest Scot ever

- More than a third (38%) have more of an affinity with Wallace than St Andrew, Scotland's patron saint.

Our research showed that there was a definite desire from the Scottish public to celebrate a day in honour of William Wallace, and in fact more than a third felt he was worthier as their national hero than current patron saint, St Andrew.

Strategy, tactics, creativity and innovation:

Armed with a small budget and the challenge of making an impact, we came up with a creative idea that we believed was simple to execute and that would generate great exposure and significant impact during the dungeon's key trading period. We would campaign to try and give Scotland what they wanted - a national day to honour our greatest hero – Sir William Wallace.

We hoped that with the debate around an extra holiday, combined with the nation's love of William 'Braveheart' Wallace, we could harness this patriotic passion and create a raft of activations and news content that would excite media and in turn put the dungeon on the map.

To bring it all to life, we knew we could tap up the highly skilled and talented actors who were part of the summer show and who would naturally convey the passion and pride of Scotland's very own Braveheart himself.

Delivery:

Armed with our research, the first phase of activity saw the results of the research issued to media, with a tease about how this news would 'mobilise voters' to make a stand. After the first wave of coverage landed and over the course of the following week, we undertook a series of picture stunts across Edinburgh and Glasgow with actors from the show to drive further media coverage.

This included a march up the Royal Mile with medieval actors waving placards to #VoteWallace, followed by Wallace himself riding through Glasgow on horseback to seek votes – not an easy feat due to the local authority red tape! The last activation saw Braveheart alight an Edinburgh tram to the airport to undertake 'border checks' on unwitting passengers.

We canvassed MSPs and key stakeholders to get their support and to add significant voices to the debate, and we offered residents living in any 'Wallace Street' across Scotland free entry into the show, utilising local media to reach potential residents.

Measurement and evaluation:

#VoteWallace generated coverage in every Scottish national newspaper bar one, widespread regional coverage and it inspired impassioned debate and conversation across social media and online platforms. Coverage reached mainland England national news and racked up 76 pieces and a combined total reach of over 100m, with examples including:

- The Scotsman picture story – headlined ‘Freedom! (or just more annual leave): Poll find Scots back new holiday in Wallace’s name
- The Edinburgh Evening News picture story – headlined ‘Army storms city centre’
- The Evening Times story – ‘William Wallace actor saddles up for national day vote call’
- The Metro picture story – captioned ‘Day of Freedom’
- The I picture story – headlined ‘They’ll never take our Placards’
- MSP for Elderslie (Wallace’s place of birth) took the debate to Cabinet Secretary for Scotland.

More importantly, the campaign for the show was fundamental to driving people to the dungeon during the summer, with 57% of visitors in July citing the Braveheart show as the reason for their visit, while visits to the dungeon website were up overall by 12%.

Budget and campaign impact:

The total budget for the campaign was £8,500, broken down by:

- Agency fee £5,000
- Activity costs, photography and administration £3,500.

Emma Jamieson, The Edinburgh Dungeon’s Marketing Manager said: “BRILLIANT! Media coverage for the same period YoY we had 12 clippings vs 76 pieces. Website visits in the campaign period were up 23% (the location with the highest growth) – our Braveheart media campaign was focused predominantly on this local market. Combining the analytics and all the marketing efforts it is safe to say there is a clear impact.”

With a carefully planned and curated combination of engaging content, quirky stunts and the possibility of an extra public holiday in Scotland, we successfully got the nation talking about The Edinburgh Dungeon and the Wallace campaign. We have also now set the scene to pick the momentum back up this summer which is extremely exciting.