



CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019 GOLD WINNER

Category: Integrated Campaign

Company: Tyne and Wear Metro

Entry title: If you Wannabe there go by Metro

Brief and objectives:

The in-house team at Metro were briefed to maximise revenue from a Spice Girls concert at Sunderland's Stadium of Light on 6 June 2019, by getting as many people as possible to choose Metro to travel to and from the event.

The target for the event was to double the £16.5k revenue achieved from the previous concert at the same stadium in 2014, and so be in line with £35k per night achieved from Ed Sheeran concerts at Newcastle in 2018.

We would go on to exceed both, generating £41,000 additional revenue from more than 16,000 passengers who chose Metro for the event, which had sold about 40,000 tickets. This was a record for both passenger numbers and revenue from a single concert at Stadium of Light.

This high impact campaign would also underpin Metro's core brand proposition to be 'Part of Everyday Life' – so the natural and trusted choice for travel to big events – by generating a feelgood atmosphere, shared content and positive feedback.

Stadium gigs mean queues and crowded trains, we wanted to change that image both to benefit our brand reputation and because happy people reduce the risk of operational incidents and delays; with a train every six minutes we could afford neither.

The idea, research and planning:

The Communications/Marketing team helped generate the service plan for stadium concerts as a saleable proposition unrivalled in the UK rail industry. Trains run into the early hours across the network and dozens of extra customer service staff are rostered, funded from anticipated revenue gain.

Planning meetings with the venue and promoter helped understand the audience, largely 25-44 female dominated and not typical Metro users. The challenge we identified was that, as the first concert in Sunderland for five years, we were targeting a new audience unfamiliar with our offer, 80% of whom (based on postcode data from the promoters) would be

travelling from Newcastle addresses or hotels and likely to consider taxis, Uber or private cars as an alternative.

Ed Sheeran in 2018 had demonstrated the impact we could get from a short high-impact campaign that built crossover between paid for and owned content, generated earned impact and coverage in the media through providing the right package, and used humour and empathy with the audience to generate shares. A new feature would be exploiting staff and on-station assets as owned content platforms to reach audiences physically and both promote and shape the tone of the event.

Market research suggested a short campaign would have maximum impact in the last seven days before the concert, when people would start to plan their journey.

Strategy, tactics, creativity and innovation:

We used a co-ordinated mix of earned, owned and paid-for content over seven days to raise awareness of our offer, aimed at generating further shared reach from word-of-mouth and social media. This comprised:

- An 'all you need to know' FAQ microsite on our home page
- Matching content provided to local media from 30 May to 6 June
- Heavy promotion through the My_Metro Twitter account linked to Spice Girls social media and interacting with posts and content around the tour
- Google Adword and Keyword advertising targeted against user searches for the concert with click-throughs to our FAQs
- New hand-written eye-level information boards at stations giving an informal party feel
- Conventional radio ads channelled through Smooth, the station best matching sales demographic
- A branded special event ticket on the home screen of ticket machines making advance and on-the-day purchase simple and supporting the message Metro was the easy way to travel.

The earned media campaign used staff volunteers in Spice Girl costumes and facemasks to generate impact from imagery that carried our brand collateral. Adverts used official tour imagery and light-hearted messaging based on song lyrics to drive the message that trains ran late, alongside useful information.

Delivery:

Social and digital messaging was impactful and shareable. It was cheesy, like the Spice Girls:

- "Viva Forever (or 1am at least)"
- "Stop Right Now (please use Stadium of Light station)"
- "What we really, really want is to get you home (trains are running until 1am)"
- "If you've gotta get with your friends, go by Metro".

The tone was consistent with the atmosphere we sought to create on the night.

Delivery in the hours before the event designed to create a feelgood factor included:

- The facemasks retained as a hand-out for concertgoers creating friendly engagement between staff and customers
- Additional blow-up 'microphone' hand-outs anticipating the 'karaoke' atmosphere
- A busker employed to play Spice Girls songs at Newcastle's Central Station
- Staff volunteers recruited to lead 'spontaneous' singalongs on stations and trains
- I-walkers – mobile digital screens carried in backpacks – deployed for the first time to play hits interspersed with service messages
- Extra staff on social media provided real time updates throughout the night.

Measurement and evaluation:

We recorded:

- 16,000 additional journeys compared with normal Thursday traffic – a 14.5% uplift
- £41,000 additional revenue – 250% higher than the previous Stadium of Light concert by One Direction (2014) before an integrated campaign like this had been mounted, and a record across more than 20 previous concerts
- Revenue was 17% above the average for Ed Sheeran in Newcastle (2018) despite that being a larger crowd
- More than 3,000 Spice Girl event tickets sold, alongside established day products
- Microsite generated 2,182 views over seven days, with 36% of referrals generated from Twitter and Facebook; 20% from within the site and 30% from digital advertising
- 21 mentions in regional media from 30 May to 6 June including ITV, Metro, Smooth and Planet Radio and major web channels Evening Chronicle and Sunderland Echo

- Metro videos posted on Twitter to advise passengers on the day generated 9,900 views, as part of our intense social media campaign
- Passenger-generated posts, pictures and video were viewed more than 150,000 times. One video of staff member Dave Wilson, planted to lead an on-train singalong, was viewed 113,326 times and shared 926 times on Facebook.

Budget and campaign impact:

A total campaign budget of £7,000 was made up of:

- Radio advertising and i-walkers: £4,650
- Busker £100
- Merchandise (facemasks and blow-up Mics): £154
- Photography: £100
- Adwords/Keywords spend £100.

All further activity was delivered by the in-house team; additional duties for customer service and social media staff were required operationally and are not included.

The campaign generated a Return on Investment of 3.69 to 1 based on additional revenue of £25,500 compared to a benchmark concert at Sunderland in 2014.

Goodwill generated from the positive projection of delivery on the night has not been quantified.