



Category: Education Campaign

Company: Telford College

Entry title: Define Your Future with Telford College

Brief and objectives:

Government-led area reviews informed Telford College of Arts and Technology (TCAT) and New College Telford to merge into a single FE college to serve Telford and Shropshire in 2016.

The merger was due to be formalised in December 2017, but the colleges were given special dispensation from the ESFA to trade under one in name in August 2017.

The campaign that ensued was the launch of Telford College.

The campaign lasted from April 2017 – October 2017, its objectives were:

1. To engage with 5% of stakeholders during the research project by May 2017
2. To reach 60,000 people across the relaunch campaign by August 2017
3. To attract 4,000 visitors and 400 conversions on the Define Your Future holding webpage by September 2017
4. To meet enrolment targets of 1,257 by September 2017
5. To increase brand score from 5.2/10 to 7/10 by May 2018
6. To attract 1,000 attendees to the first college event of the year by October 2017

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

TCAT and New College Telford did not have strong reputations within the local community and were classified as grade 4 and grade 3 by Ofsted respectively.

Both colleges had suffered five years of declining applications and were in financial difficulty due to consistent under-recruitment.

The rationale behind the campaign was to improve the new organisation's reputation within the community and stakeholders including parents, businesses and potential students.

The first stage focused on market research to:

- Define perceptions of current organisations with key stakeholders
- Garner input, feedback and perceptions of new branding options
- Establish the new organisation's mission and values
- Benchmark the new organisations against competitors

Once all market research was carried out and analysed, recommendations were provided to college leaders, and governors for final approval.

The sourcing of design work, collateral and key implementation features of the campaign was carried out.

This was the most difficult stage of the campaign as the budget had been reduced by 60% in comparison to the recent year, and the campaign also had to aid heavily with recruitment as the campaign was to be carried out in the sector's key phase of the recruitment cycle (May – September.)

With the relaunch campaign taking up the majority of the budget, there was little left for other activity.

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

Press - One of the key tactics employed was to build strong relationships with the local press to ensure that any releases had maximum coverage.

These relationships were built by offering exclusive interviews with the principal of the merged college on updates regarding the merger and what the merger would mean for the local community.

This resulted in 10 pieces of free coverage during the campaign. The college paid for a newspaper wrap which was delivered to 33,000 homes on the week of the launch to coincide with the first day of enrolment.

Digital – The first tactic was to merge the college's social media accounts to ensure that all organic social media pushed the message of a new singular organisation.

Due to the fact that the college's needed to retain each of their separate websites until December 2017 (at least) a new landing page with the merged college's strapline was created "Define your Future."

A promotional video was also created and pushed out on key channels.

Communications – The college employed a number of communication tactics. This included letters which launched Telford College to current students, parents and applicants.

An email campaign was created for local employers and an invite was extended to all local head teachers, school IAG staff and Future Focus to attend a networking events.

Events – The college created events with key stakeholders such as staff, Telford Business Board and schools. Enrolment was its traditional purposes, but an opportunity for the public to attend and find out about the newly-merged college.

The college also had a call centre to chase any students who hadn't enrolled and contact forms were created for students on the enrolment page and the "Define your Future" landing page.

The college ended its launch campaign the first new open event of the recruitment cycle.

Implementation of tactics:

The campaign was implemented over six months, with all outward facing marketing and collateral used to support recruitment.

This included merger FAQs for applicants with revision tips, "good luck" with exams and press interviews with the principal to focus on the key messages identified in the research.

Measurement and evaluation:

We used the following tools to measure and evaluate:

- Google analytics
- Facebook, Twitter and Instagram insights
- Media circulation and online stats
- Number of letters issued
- Email open and click through rates
- Number of leads generated
- Enrolment college reports
- Survey Monkey data

1. To engage with 5% of key stakeholders during the research project by May 2017 – the college achieved 10.5% from 6,000 stakeholders contacted
2. To reach 60,000 people across the launch campaign by August 2017 – the college achieved 82,432 people through all platforms
3. To attract 4,000 visitors and 400 leads on the Define Your Future holding webpage by September 2017 – the college achieved 4,783 visitors and 512 leads
4. To meet an enrolment targets of 1,257 by September 2017 – the college achieved 1,487 enrolments a 19% increase

5. To increase brand score from 5.2/10 to 7/10 by May 2018 – the college achieved 8.2/10
6. To attract 1,000 attendees to the first college open event of the year by October 2017 – the college achieved 1,506 attendees a 50.6% increase on the target

Budget and cost effectiveness:

- Mailchimp: £120
- Text messages: £350
- Survey vouchers: £75
- Executive staffing: £1,700 (Hourly rate x 12 meetings)
- SLT staffing: £1,336 (Hourly rate x 3 meetings)
- Comms staffing: 10,708 (Hourly rate x hours spent on project)
- Design concepts: £420
- Brand guidelines: £3,000
- Mail campaign: 600
- Focus group refreshments: £30
- DYF website: £500
- Newspaper wrap: £2,000
- Events: £2,500

Total: £23,339

The campaign lead to an increase in enrolments of 240 students which equates to £960,000 in funding - for every £1 spent the campaign generated a £41 return.