



Category: Best Use of Media Relations

Company: WPR

Entry title: All that glitters is...gravy?

Brief and objectives:

Hungry Horse, part of the Greene King portfolio of managed pubs, is a value brand, known for its generous portions, tongue-in-cheek personality and quirky menu additions.

In autumn 2017, the Hungry Horse marketing team came to us, wanting to making a noise around the brand at Christmas – over what was likely to be a very tough trading period for the casual dining sector.

The team wanted a low-cost campaign that saw Hungry Horse, ‘festive menu’ and Christmas mentioned in the same breath. It had to reach the brand’s audience on the channels where they were most active, and do it at scale.

The principal objective was to raise awareness of the brand at a key trading time, and that was to be measured by reach, campaign engagement and sentiment.

Specifically, the targets were to deliver:

- Two or three national articles
- 20-25 regional articles
- Mention of ‘Festive Menu’ in 60% of coverage

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

Brand research, coupled with our own insights, showed that target market under-indexed on consumption of print media and visited news sites and apps relatively infrequently. They were shown to be active followers of viral sharing sites, UNILAD and LadBible being prime examples, and far more likely to follow a publisher on its social channels than they were to visit its website, or use its app direct.

Briefed to reach the brand’s audience where they were most active, and at scale, we immediately recognised a need to devise a campaign that was ‘social first’ – in other words, purposefully designed to hit publishers’ social feeds, over and above other online coverage.

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

Upon receiving the brief, we pored through content shared by the likes of UNILAD, Mashable and Pretty52 to identify themes that would sit at the sweet-spot between their/our audience's interests, and our brand's USPs.

All the evidence supported our gut instinct - we had to tap into a burgeoning food trend, and come up with a menu addition that would stand out from the crowd.

We also accepted that, for operational reasons, the addition had to centre on the existing menu (turkey with all the trimmings), and be easy to execute in pub.

All this in mind, we proposed that Hungry Horse launch the UK's first ever 'glitter gravy', giving guests at one Hungry Horse the chance to add 'a touch of sparkle' to their festive fayre.

Implementation of tactics:

The brand team quickly agreed, so we got to work.

Making the gravy was the easy part; packaging it up in a way that would appeal to viral sharing sites was the challenge.

Experience had taught us that, if we were to secure social coverage, we needed video to accompany the press release; our analysis of publishers' posts proved that UGC style video secured the highest engagement rates, certainly on Facebook.

Glitter gravy made, we recorded a simple mobile video, using portrait format, but resized to 'square' to ensure the piece was social media ready.

With the video shot and ready to go, the next step was providing editors with irresistible clickbait style headlines that would help to meet their own click through targets, in turn ensuring we met ours.

IS THIS THE MOST FESTIVE GRAVY EVER?

PUB LAUNCHES UK'S FIRST EVER GLITTER GRAVY

Christmas time is all about glitter and sparkle, but a pub has taken this to a whole new level after launching the UK's first ever GLITTER GRAVY...

Then we got selling.

Measurement and evaluation:

What happened next, exceed our wildest expectations.

- Within a matter of hours, 20 national/viral news sites had shared the story on their social channels including the absolute giants – UniLad (with 38 million followers), VT (22 million) and Pretty52 (5.5 million)

- Coverage also came from other hugely high-profile titles including Metro Online, The Sun Online, BBC News, The Independent Online, OK!, Fabulous, Yahoo, AOL, MSN News and Mashable UK – all this against a target of two or three national hits
- Asked to secure 20-25 regional articles, we delivered an unbelievable 297, with coverage for nearly every single one of Hungry Horse's 280+ pubs nationwide
- Better still, nearly all national and regional titles shared the story on their social channels, including the branded video and links back to the Hungry Horse brand page and/or website
- Across the board, coverage was key message-rich, with multiple brand mentions, images, videos, backlinks, quotes, and details of the festive menu (95% included brand mention, 91% the video, and 94% details of the festive menu, against a target of 60%)

Budget and cost effectiveness:

In order to understand the effectiveness of the campaign, it is important to stress the budget, - just £2,606 from start to finish.

- Fee accounted for £2,396
- £210 was allocated for a photographer and supply of edible glitter

Effectiveness was to be measured by reach, campaign engagement and sentiment.

For £2,606, we delivered:

- A staggering 506,000 campaign engagements – people who liked or commented on the earned social coverage in a matter of days. Over half a million people engaged with content against a backdrop of absolutely no paid media whatsoever
- An exceptional 207,000 video shares. Over 200,000 people took time out of their lives to share the content on their own channels, many pledging to hunt the product out too
- A mindblowing 45million organic video views. Again, not a penny was spent on paid media.

To put this into context, we had delivered a cost per engagement of £0.003 and a cost per view of £0.00006. We had never seen anything like it, and probably never will again.

In fact, glitter gravy become an internet phenomenon, so much so it was discussed on TV programmes across the globe – NBC News and the Today Show in the US, SBS in Australia, and Loose Women in the UK.

The goal was to get Hungry Horse, festive fayre and Christmas uttered in the same breath, at scale. We never imagined that 'scale' would mean coverage from America to Australia, and that 45million people would watch our creation. But they did – taking awareness of Hungry Horse to new heights at a critical time for the brand.