



Category: STEM Campaign

Company: Stone Junction

Entry title: Not just the poor relative

Brief and objectives:

In 2016, 53% of science, technology, engineering and maths (STEM) businesses anticipated difficulty recruiting skilled workers. It's not surprising when the default portrayal of manufacturing is dark, dirty and male dominated.

FTSE250 listed engineering company Renishaw is the largest private employer in Gloucestershire and its 124 apprentices are an essential part of its operations.

In 2016/17, the company was recruiting for a record 45 apprentices across four schemes in Gloucestershire and South Wales, with applications closing in March 2017.

Our objectives were:

1. Increase applications to Renishaw's general and software apprenticeship schemes by 15% between June 2016 and March 2017
2. Raise the profile of Renishaw's engineering apprenticeships and education outreach programme in the same period, generating 65 clippings focussed entirely on young people, outreach and apprenticeships
3. Reinforce the value of an apprenticeship by generating eight quotes from apprentices, media and outreach partners
4. Raise the profile of Renishaw as an employer using local and trade media by generating 351 clippings in all media, one per £100 spent on PR, between June 2016 and June 2017
5. Build the brand online by generating 280 online clippings and reaching 10,000 people, gaining 100 likes across LinkedIn and Facebook from June 2017-18 (80% of total clippings should be online).

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

We identified the key UK bodies that produce reports on apprenticeships and engineering employment, including Engineering UK, EE, ACCA Global, and the Royal Academy of Engineering. Actionable conclusions included:

- Engineering UK reported in 2016 that only 37% of STEM teachers were confident giving engineering careers advice and 21% of STEM teachers believe a career in engineering is undesirable.
- The ACCA Global report identified that 31% of respondents had never received apprenticeship advice. Just 5% answered that their parent or guardian would prefer them to do an apprenticeship rather than go to university. The report concluded that apprenticeships are viewed as the 'poor relative' of Universities.
- Using the reports, we identified parents, teachers, young people and engineering businesses as core audiences

Stone Junction conducted dozens of interviews with Renishaw to understand its programme and its apprentices' experience.

Four Stone Junctioneers presented at Renishaw's marketing conference, allowing us to establish their views on existing PR activity against objectives.

Strategy:

- Target young people through social, local and trade media, print and online
- Target teachers through education publications to raise career profiles and build confidence giving advice
- Target parents using local media, raising Renishaw's regional profile
- Use trade and local media to raise the profile of Renishaw amongst engineers and local citizens
- Report on Renishaw technological developments, presenting engineering as a creative and rewarding career
- Use trade and local media to promote Renishaw's schools outreach programme to encourage other companies to do the same
- Produce materials for young people, explaining how to start their career
- Invite journalists from local and trade media to tour Renishaw's South Wales facility, learning about the technology and education opportunities.

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

From our research, we chose four target groups, selecting topics and tactics to suit:

PARENTS

- Press releases for local media on Renishaw's apprenticeship schemes, success of local apprentices and latest technological innovations.

TEACHERS

- Thought leading content for education media including opinion pieces and blog posts
- Press releases covering Renishaw's education news stories.

YOUNG PEOPLE

- Press releases promoting the successes, skills and value of Renishaw's apprenticeships
- Opinion pieces explaining routes into two key apprenticeships: embedded electronics and software engineering, targeting the lack of apprenticeship advice
- Thought leading articles promoting Renishaw's technologies and engineering innovation
- Promote content on social media: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn.

ENGINEERING BUSINESSES

- Press releases, opinion pieces and case studies promoting the outreach work Renishaw does with schools
- Thought leading articles promoting Renishaw's technologies and engineering innovation.

We monitored the efficacy of these tactics using monthly media reports, analysing the coverage quality and stakeholder group targeted.

Implementation of tactics:

CONTENT

- Weekly news items demonstrated the successes of Renishaw's apprentices, technical innovations and outreach programme
- November 2016: We produced an in-depth case study explaining Renishaw's partnership with a local school, encouraging the message to permeate through to schools before the apprenticeship application deadline in March 2017
- Twice monthly content explained the routes into the engineering sector available at Renishaw, redressing the reported lack of understanding
- Weekly articles, quotes and features on the skills shortage, including a call to action for businesses to work with young people
- Articles published on Renishaw's social channels throughout the campaign, targeting and engaging young people

MEDIA RELATIONS

- September 2016: We invited key local and trade media journalists to visit Renishaw's healthcare and education facility in Wales, encouraging positive media coverage prior to the March 2017 deadline
- October 2016: Secured an opportunity for Renishaw to participate in a roundtable for Education Technology magazine, targeting teachers and colleges with messaging about the skills shortage and marketable technologies such as 3D printing.

Measurement and evaluation:

OBJECTIVE ONE

- 17.8% increase in applications compared to 2016, (target exceeded by 2.8% - 64 additional applicants) an increase of 27% on 2015

OBJECTIVE TWO

- 86 clippings focussed on Renishaw's apprentices or education outreach programme (target exceeded by 32.3%)
- Ranked in the The Raconteur's top ten UK apprenticeships
- Renishaw's profile reached such a level that Theresa May and Phillip Hammond chose it's Gloucester HQ to launch the 2017 budget

OBJECTIVE THREE

- Eight quotes promoting Renishaw's outreach programme and apprenticeships (appendix one)

OBJECTIVE FOUR

- 460 clippings - 87 print, 371 online (target exceeded by 31%)
- Renishaw's core messages reached 2,972,019 people in print media alone
- For every £76 spent on PR, we achieved one clipping
- Coverage highlights: The Financial Times, The Times, The Raconteur, Wales Online,

The Engineer, The Manufacturer

- Local media highlights: South West Business Insider, Gloucestershire Echo, Bristol Post, Stroud Life, Cotswold Life, Bath Chronicle.
- Additional online coverage: Punchline Gloucester, Western Daily Press, South West Business, Gazette Series, reaching parents across Gloucestershire

Results from local and trade media journalist visits:

- Coverage of Renishaw's South Wales Facility on Wales Online and BBC Wales
- Coverage online, in print and in the newsletter of The Engineer

Participation in Education Technology Roundtable results:

- Seven clippings in: Education Technology (print and online), Edquarter, Independent Education Today - good exposure to teachers

OBJECTIVE FIVE

- Facebook: Stories entirely focussed on apprentices and education reached 43,695 people, were shared 513 times and generated 530 likes.
- LinkedIn: 314 likes of Stone Junction generated content on apprentices or outreach
- Social target exceeded by 727%
- 371 online clippings (target exceeded by 32.5%).