

# PRIDE AWARDS 2017

**Category:** Outstanding Small Public Relations Consultancy

**Company:** Fusion PR

---

**Date of incorporation, number of employees - including executive / support staff – and annual fee income:**

Fusion PR (UK) Ltd, formerly Round Table Solutions, is a full-service public relations agency based in Blyth, Northumberland.

Established in March 2013, Fusion PR employs five full-time and one part-time staff and represents clients across a multitude of sectors including manufacturing, education, tourism, energy and charitable.

**Business objectives and analysis of performance against budget over the past three years:**

It was always Fusion PR's objective to grow the business organically and create secure, sustainable jobs for talented, local people. Last year, turnover increased by 50 per cent and Fusion PR tripled its headcount through prestigious new business wins and further business development with existing clients.

In order to facilitate this growth, the company relocated to larger premises, offering plenty of additional space for further expansion.

**A brief overview of business / team strategy:**

Fusion PR's brand and company name reflect who we are and how we like to work.

Our integrated approach to all aspects of strategic communications is simple. Each member of our team is an expert in their specific field, which means that our clients receive a cohesive approach, brought together in one strategy and designed to deliver outstanding results.

The foundation of what we do is underpinned by excellent relationships with our clients, partners and target audiences. We take the time to really get to know our clients' businesses and seek to build close, mutually beneficial relationships based on trust and understanding.

It is this combination of public relations expertise, together with outstanding client relationships and an impressive network of contacts that defines Fusion PR.

**A summary of commitment to CPD and professionalism:**

The business has moved very quickly from an owner-managed organisation working with freelance associates, to an SME employing its own full and part-time staff.

This transition has seen Fusion PR put in place all of the corporate policies, procedures and insurances, including a workplace pension scheme, that would normally be expected of a much larger business, in order for us to compete for and win client work of national significance.

As part of the company's commitment to professionalism, we have a corporate social responsibility policy. This year, we've donated funds to the homeless charity, Shelter, and a local youth music organisation.

To further professional development, staff are actively encouraged to participate in extracurricular activities that will benefit their skills, the business and its clients. Three of the firm's account handlers are members of the CIPR, one of whom is secretary of the North East of England group.

In June 2017, members of the region's business community elected our managing director President of the North East England Chamber of Commerce. An endorsement of his standing in the region and a significant boost to the status of the PR industry.

### **A summary of recent outstanding achievements, including client list growth / retention:**

The last 18 months has seen Fusion PR win a number of prestigious client accounts, three of which are amongst the region's biggest ongoing investment projects: National Grid's €2 billion North Sea Link, Lynemouth Power's £350 million investment in a biomass power station conversion and AkzoNobel's new £100 million manufacturing unit in Ashington.

We have also generated fantastic campaign results with existing clients. Our work with Omega Plastics helped the firm win Company of the Year at this year's regional final of The Journal's North East Business Awards. We also delivered a Valentine's Day-themed campaign for Northumberland National Park Authority which secured regional and national television coverage with the BBC for its 'Poems in the Air' mobile application to encourage more visitors to the Park.

As a result of new client wins and increased workload with existing clients, we have increased our headcount and moved into larger office space within Blyth Workspace in Northumberland.

In May 2017, we took the decision to rebrand the business as Fusion PR (UK) Ltd. As the business expanded, we felt that the Round Table Solutions brand no longer reflected who we are and what we do. The rebrand was a team-focused exercise, with all colleagues shaping the brand collateral and website design.

### **A summary of a campaign you are particularly proud of, including details of the brief, objectives, strategy, tactics, outputs, outcomes and budget:**

One of our biggest clients is Northumberland National Park. Our work with the Park has a particular focus on the 2017 opening of its £14.8 million National Landscape Discovery Centre.

The Sill is a state-of-the-art visitor centre and a truly world-class facility and visitor experience in the heart of Hadrian's Wall UNESCO World Heritage Site.

It is the single most significant initiative to be undertaken in rural Northumberland in a generation and will transform how people engage with landscape, nature and the great outdoors.

Fusion PR has been involved with the project from the beginning. Working on a retainer fee based on 8 days per month, the key objective outlined in the client brief was to raise the profile of The Sill to capture the Park's target audiences (families, young people, walking and cycling enthusiasts, older generations) and promote its arts, activity and education programmes in the lead-up to The Sill opening.

In order to achieve this, we have taken a mixed-channel approach, combining the disciplines of traditional stakeholder engagement, media relations and paid-for advertising with digital including extensive social media activity and email marketing.

We have achieved fantastic results for The Sill during the course of the promotional campaign across regional and national press, specialist titles, online press and broadcast media. As part of a campaign to promote The Sill's Arts programme, we secured regional and national television coverage for 'Poems in the Air' as well as extensive print coverage (see supporting evidence for links).

Northumberland National Park is delighted with the results and widely regards Fusion PR as an extension of its in-house team.

"What has really impressed me with Fusion PR is how the team has taken time to understand our organisation, our culture, what we want to achieve and how we want to do it – real added value to our business!" **Tony Gates, Chief Executive Officer at Northumberland National Park.**