



CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019 GOLD WINNER

Category: Best Event

Company: University of Wolverhampton

Entry title: Dr Nuno receives Uni honour

Brief and objectives:

The University of Wolverhampton plays a pivotal role in the social, economic and cultural regeneration of the Black Country. Each year, it recognises the achievements of people who make a significant contribution to their field of expertise and the region with the award of honorary degrees.

The manager of local football team, Wolves FC, Nuno Espirito Santo, was nominated for an Honorary Doctorate in Sport and he accepted the award in recognition of the team's success under his leadership and his contribution to sport in the region.

Brief:

- To plan and execute a 'mini' graduation ceremony on the pitch at the last Wolves home match of the season.

Objectives:

- To contribute to the positive feeling in the city and wider region generated by the team's success during their first season back in the Premier League
- To raise the profile of the University's sports courses and partnership with Wolves to aid recruitment of students
- To gain positive exposure for our organisation in the media and social media
- To enhance and promote the reputation of the City, the football club and the University.

The idea, research and planning:

Idea:

Honorary Degrees are usually awarded at official graduation ceremonies in September, but the idea was presented to Wolves that the presentation could be done at a game before the

end of the football season. After consulting with Nuno, it was agreed that this could be done on the pitch before the last match against Fulham on Saturday, 4 May 2019.

This means that from the initial idea concept through to delivery there was ONE WEEK for planning and promotion of a scaled down 15 minute graduation ceremony.

Research and Planning:

What protocols would need to be followed to create a 'mini' graduation ceremony off-campus. Things considered:

- Which University officials needed to be present
- What needed to be 'officially' signed to ensure that the graduation was 'official'
- What gowns/caps needed to be ordered
- Which other representatives needed to be invited (other sporting related Honorary Graduates).

Due to the tight timescales, planning of the 'mini' ceremony which was due to take place on the pitch before the match was of paramount importance and took into consideration working jointly with Wolves on the following:

- The order of the ceremony
- Speeches
- Photography
- Press Interviews
- Video Interview
- Robing rooms
- Procession onto the pitch
- Social Media activity.

Strategy, tactics, creativity and innovation:

Our strategy was to target a large audience utilising the popularity of Premier League football to raise the profile of our Sports courses. We also wanted to highlight our partnership working with Wolves and the City of Wolverhampton Council with the objective of putting Wolverhampton on the map.

Our tactics centred on capitalising on the presence of the local and national media and utilising the reach of combined social media activity at a game which would be of particular interest in the world of football considering the club's positive performance in the Premier League.

In terms of creativity and innovation, we had to find a way to condense the occasion to fit in with the tight timescales without impacting on the historic and traditional importance of a graduation ceremony.

Working closely with Wolves, we worked out what the priorities were in terms of event logistics whilst at the same time not detracting from Nuno's focus on the match.

Delivery, including details of design, production and support teams employed:

A campaign group was set up internally which included:

- Corporate Communications
- Events
- Alumni
- Graduation Office
- Vice-Chancellor's Office
- A Multimedia degree student (for work experience).

Several meetings were held with the Wolves' PR Manager and Events team to create a bespoke 'mini' graduation ceremony. Due to the tight timescales, the event was planned in minute detail with focus on the following:

- A detailed walk-through from robing to processing onto the pitch
- Choosing music to accompany the ceremony
- Sourcing of equipment
- Designing signage for digital screens
- Drafting copy for the match day programme
- Drafting a joint press release
- Corresponding with invited guests
- Planning corporate hospitality for guests
- Checking and transporting caps and gowns
- Booking a photographer
- Planning social media activity including a Facebook Live and video interviews
- Editing video, updating the website and distributing photographs and press release to press/media.

The event was extremely well received by fans, members of the University and our partners at Wolves.

Measurement and evaluation:

The story received a huge amount of positive media interest and coverage, including being featured on BBC 1's Match of the Day, Sky Sports News, BBC Radio 5 Live, BBC WM, BBC News Online, the Observer, Sunday Telegraph, the Mail on Sunday, The Sun, the Portugal News, Express and Star, Birmingham Live and The Voice.

There were 72 media items which were 100% positive. The reach for the coverage was 4,791,204.

On the day, our hashtag #DrNuno was trending and our video received 602 likes and 115 retweets on Twitter, with more than 32,000 impressions and 10,000 views.

Comments included: "Congratulations Dr @Nuno what wonderful inspiration you are to our team, city and fans #wolvesaywe."

On Facebook, the Nuno video interview was viewed 5.8k times, with almost 200 likes/loves, while our Facebook Live was viewed 5.5k times, reaching 14,154 people with 1,881 engagements. On Instagram one post received 555 likes.

The story was well received on LinkedIn, with one post receiving 1,364 likes, almost 85,000 impressions and 46 comments including: "This is fantastic and very well deserved! Both Wolves and the university have some great people and it's really good to see them coming together."

Budget and campaign impact:

Costs included the hire of graduation gowns £586 and £220 for photography. Total cost = £806.

The campaign resulted in international recognition for the University of Wolverhampton and promotion of our courses on a global scale. The positive media and social media coverage highlighted the University's role and strong partnerships within the region and our course offering to a huge audience, which contributed to our overall recruitment strategy.

We also managed to deliver a first as this was the first time a football manager has received an honorary degree at a graduation ceremony at a football match.