



CIPR PRIDE  
AWARDS 2019 GOLD WINNER

**Category:** Outstanding In-House Public Relations Team

**Company:** Greater Anglia

---

**Number of staff employed - including executive / support staff - and annual public relations budget:**

1 Head of Corporate Affairs (Jonathan), 1 Media Relations Manager (Juliette), 1.5 Media Officers (Lucy, Kerri - part-time).

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

We support Greater Anglia's overall business objective of attracting new customers and increasing revenue, by promoting our positive progress to key audiences and stakeholders, to improve our reputation, awareness, likeability, trust and deepen understanding of the railway.

A small team with a tight budget, our passion for what we do has led to fantastic results including a 31% year on year increase in positive media coverage, doubling awareness of our transformation programme in East Anglia and a 25% increase in reputation in our latest stakeholder survey. Our most recent brand survey showed that 52% saw us in a positive light - higher than our two nearest competitors.

We have sent out 550 press releases since July 2017, resulting in 6759 items of positive coverage.

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

Our overall strategy and direction are set by Jonathan in line with wider company objectives and targets.

Over the last three years, Juliette has led a move to organise our work into campaigns, enabling us to establish communications priorities, work more efficiently, improve our planning and content generation, integrate with social media, evaluate our work more effectively and achieve our aims.

We have established our own news channels, including a Twitter account @greaterangliapr for news, which gives journalists quick access to our stories, rather than having to scroll

through service updates on the main account. This account is successfully generating positive coverage.

We aim to be the best press office in the region. We operate 24/7, with 100-200 enquiries every month from regional, national and trade media which often require us to act as a spokesperson or provide statements. We also work tirelessly to build positive relationships with all our key regional and trade media contacts.

Internally, we produce Q&As on hot topics to enable colleagues across the business to answer customers' questions with consistent messaging. We have brought together other internal departments, who were managing different social media channels, to create a new strategy with a unified voice, which has also enabled us to use more of the company's channels for PR messages.

Being part of the community we serve is important to us. We have a wide-ranging stakeholder engagement programme, led by Jonathan, that enables us to build positive relationships with our various audiences such as rail user groups, business organisations, local communities, charities, MPs and industry partners. With our Station Adoption initiative, we have 200 people across our network getting involved with their local rail station, acting as our ambassadors within their communities.

We sponsor and support charity events, offering free rail travel as prizes for fundraisers. Over the last three years, Jonathan has organised three charter trains for East Anglia's Childrens' Hospices (the most recent in May 2019) that have raised over £50,000, maximising wider goodwill and stakeholder perceptions.

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

Juliette, Lucy and Kerri are CIPR members, Kerri is an Accredited PR Practitioner. Lucy is an Associate and current holder of the CIPR Outstanding Young Communicator award. She completed the Advanced Diploma in 2016 and the Crisis Communications Diploma in 2017.

The team attends rail industry PR best practice events and CIPR workshops, including the regional and national CIPR annual conferences.

Juliette has organised communications training, using external trainers, on many subjects including press release writing, producing newsletters, using social media, media law and media relations/interviews to improve skills of the PR team and other colleagues.

### **A summary of recent outstanding achievements:**

We're especially proud of our highly effective campaign to promote our new trains programme (described in the next section) and the money we have raised for EACH.

We've also run an influencer campaign, working with microbloggers in East Anglia, to inspire people to try a day out with their families by rail. This has been successful in creating positive user-generated content, recommending rail travel to others, with 90% of people who read the blogs saying they feel inspired to try it for themselves.

Last autumn, as part of an accessibility campaign, we ran a social media poll asking for customer opinions about wording for hidden disability badges. The posts were our top posts on Facebook and Twitter that month. On Facebook, our post had 91.2k impressions and 15k engagements. Responses from customers were overwhelmingly positive and the story was picked up by media across the region, with the team giving interviews to BBC Radio Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex.

In May, we successfully delivered the launch event for 'Norwich in 90' with stakeholders and media riding the first ever train to travel from Norwich to London in 90 minutes. We facilitated BBC Look East broadcasting live from the train. Guests had photos taken with a photo prop during the journey and tweeted with our suggested hashtag. The press release and launch event generated 47 items of positive coverage achieving 1.8 billion views. 7 tweets received 49.2K impressions with some of the highest engagements of all our tweets to date. 29.4K impressions received on Facebook, with 1K engagements.

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

Our new trains campaign started in 2016, when we announced we were replacing every single train with brand new trains. Working closely with marketing and internal communications, we launched a campaign, which would be PR-led until the new trains started to come into service (in mid-2019).

We wanted to raise awareness and build excitement, by marking every milestone. It has involved every member of the team, with stakeholder and media trips to train factories in Switzerland and Derby incorporating live social media; video and photography of trains being built and arriving in East Anglia shared extensively on social media; a media opportunity and ministerial visit to new train simulator; virtual reality roadshows; and thought leadership articles in trade press.

The outcome has been increased awareness of new trains and positive media coverage.

Our most recent brand survey showed that the team doubled awareness through positive media coverage (769 articles in total generated through 28 press releases). The budget has been minimal – just £15,000 in the last year.