

The logo for the CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019 Gold Winner. It features the text 'CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019' in white on a black background, followed by 'GOLD WINNER' in large, multi-colored letters (pink, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple).

Category: Outstanding Young Communicator

Entrant name: Emma Hynes MCIPR

Company: Midnight Communications

Demonstrate your commitment to professional development and your career growth:

Midnight hired me as an Account Assistant after my graduation and I'm on the SAE fast-track. I was promoted to PR Executive after nine months.

Personal development is important to me. I've completed sessions with Brighton Chamber, PR University, PRCA, Social Brighton and Markettiers, and attended CommsCon. I am a CIPR member and working towards accreditation. I also motivate my colleagues to follow my lead by organising pizza and study nights.

The breadth of my work, working on behalf of B2B and B2C clients, has been a baptism of fire. I also feel privileged to be trusted with sensitive and complex work, writing on behalf of MPs, CEOs and solicitors.

I have put my hand up for everything from new business pitches to new accounts and been rewarded with new knowledge and responsibility.

My bosses quickly recognised my aptitude for copywriting. Now, I edit my colleagues' work and work with an experienced journalist on writing projects.

While I have always been academic, PR allows me to flex the commercial part of my mind. Now, I'm able to unite my creative flair and my analytical side and work on fast-paced, strategic and sensitive campaigns.

Outline your work-related achievements over the last two years and how they contribute to the wider industry:

Developing relationships with national and broadcast journalists is one of my greatest achievements, including selling in the Annual Tulip Festival at Arundel Castle to BBC Breakfast, Good Morning Britain, BBC One South Today, ITV Meridian and BBC Radio Sussex. The success of this campaign is outlined in this entry.

I have also worked with the Metro on profile pieces for Arundel Castle, developed a relationship with Daily Mail Online to secure three exclusive features for Red7, secured

coverage in Forbes and Times Raconteur for a cyber security company, and worked with Press Association, Mirror, i, Closer, Women's Weekly and more.

My social media skills have been noticed and I'm now considered the in-house guru.

I'm responsible for seven social media accounts, six of which are organic. I taught myself LinkedIn advertising and strategy, launched and managed a LinkedIn campaign on behalf of a large insurance company, which has a CTR of 1.08%, far outperforming B2Linked.com's quoted average of 0.4%.

I have harnessed my social media knowledge to create a new revenue stream for my agency – an in-depth social media audit and strategy document that we sell as a product and use for training. Early feedback from a client shows that it works - Instagram likes tripled two weeks after implementing our recommendations!

I'm adept at spotting opportunities, for example nominating a client for a 'fraud fighter' award, for which she was shortlisted, and arranging for another to judge awards in her sector.

I'm also considered one of the true creatives, regularly coming up with ideas in brainstorm – many of which have been rolled out.

Outline the biggest work-related challenge you've faced in the past two years, including details of what happened, how you overcame it and what you learnt from it:

We had a client that was new to business and to PR – a veteran starting a tech company.

There were sensitive issues to navigate, from a spokesperson that could not be named due to national security, to a scandal that a page on the dark web had (erroneously) connected to our client. My calm approach helped ground the team.

It was also a challenge to be a young female on this account. Despite having a good understanding of tech and the military, my client preferred my male colleague and at first, I spoke through him. It was also an issue for me that PTSD was frequently discussed, because we were working with veterans, as I have personal experience with the disorder. In both cases, I learned to maintain professionalism. Discretion is, after all, key to good PR.

Then, though the CEO was extremely happy with our work, the company's backer pitted us against another agency, which made me even hungrier than ever to prove my worth. I went on to secure coverage in a host of national and top tier media, outperforming the rival agency.

Dealing with these issues, I learned that I can embrace high-octane situations and that I thrive under pressure. I learned to be louder and more direct in a highly competitive field.

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

I am most proud of my work on the campaign for Arundel Castle's 2019 tulip festival.

Brief: Arundel Castle hosts one of the UK's largest tulip festivals with 60,000 blooms at their peak for just two weeks in April.

Objectives:

- Increase visitor numbers, in particular for the Easter bank holiday weekend
- Boost website traffic
- Grow social media audience and increase engagement
- Generate national, regional and gardening coverage
- Reach HNW gardening enthusiasts and families
- Prioritise broadcast and online coverage.

Strategy:

Create a national buzz and make the tulip festival a diary event.

Tactics:

Identify, invite and secure coverage with broadcast outlets, national print media, regional press and gardening titles.

BBC Breakfast was chosen for the TV exclusive, the Daily Mail for print and online.

Good Morning Britain was offered a St George's Day angle for the red and white tulip labyrinth tulips.

Outputs:

Live broadcasts on BBC Breakfast (x7 features on 8th April), BBC Radio 2 (breakfast show), Good Morning Britain (x2 clips), ITV Meridian, BBC South Today and BBC Sussex. A Daily Mail photo exclusive was secured in print and online.

Coverage for the festival was secured in 63 titles, a 163% increase on 2018, with a reach of 231m across national, regional and gardening press, including 21 broadcast items.

The campaign for Arundel Castle, June 2018 – June 2019, achieved 800 items of coverage, a 13% increase.

Outcomes:

A 154% year-on-year increase in visitor numbers for the Easter bank holiday weekend, with more visitors on the Saturday than in living memory!

Increased website traffic by 196% in April vs March. Social audiences grew, with nearly 400 new Facebook followers in April and 60+ new Twitter followers.

2019 Budget: PR fees = £42,000, Marketing fees = £84,764. 2018 cost per acquisition was just £0.70 to get a (typical) return of £22 for an adult ticket. ("fantastic value for money," NRG Marketing).