



CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019 GOLD WINNER

Category: Best Use of Social Media

Company: Tees Valley Combined Authority

Entry title: Tees Valley 'Enjoys' Flower Power

Brief and objectives:

Tees Valley, an area previously not known for securing large-scale, national events, was chosen to host BBC Radio 1's Big Weekend music festival for the first time.

The event provided an opportunity to amplify the message of Enjoy Tees Valley, the region's first destination marketing service in seven years, on a regional and national scale. To do so, our objective was to create an engaging activation for festival-goers that would be shared widely via social media, with a secondary aim of regional media coverage.

The activation needed to directly engage 15% of the 64,000-strong crowd (9,600 people), with a target audience of predominantly 16 to 25-year-olds. Our £10,000 budget was predicated on spending no more than £1 on each person engaged in our activation. It would also have to satisfy BBC editorial guidelines, add value to its event and secure the corporation's support to go ahead.

The idea, research and planning:

The Big Weekend audience would primarily be Radio 1 listeners, a large proportion aged 16 to 25. As a public sector communications team with an average age somewhat older than our target audience(!), we needed to undertake detailed research to understand what would work and be appealing.

We conducted primary research at a local college, engaging over 130 students, soft market testing a series of ideas. As 85% of Big Weekend tickets would be allocated locally, those we asked were individuals likely to actually attend the event, rather than a representative sample of that age group. The most support came for a large flower wall, that festival-goers could take selfies at, posting them across social media, increasing visibility. We needed to go very big with this wall, rivalling walls used by celebrities in terms of size, texture and ambition.

While we could use our colours within the flowers, research was clear that we would have to adopt an innovative, fun approach to using our brand: a simple brand within the flowers would actively put people off due to being too corporate and commercial.

The most important finding was advice to use field marketers at the wall, giving people confidence to hand over their phones for pictures in a safe environment, and helping to sell in the opportunity and use clickers to capture numbers for evaluation.

We planned to use additional supportive props to push our brand, with field marketers on hand to help, with the wall facing west so “the light was good for the ‘gram” (Instagram).

We also had to plan for and satisfy health and safety requirements for all weathers, given the 64,000 people in attendance.

Strategy, tactics, creativity and innovation:

- Go Big:

With the Big Weekend firmly within the top 10 UK festivals for attendance we knew that, to make an impact and be seen within the park, we had to go big, bold and beautiful. The wall was made up of 15 panels, around 3,500 flowers, covering 160sq ft.

- Branding:

The flowers were in Enjoy Tees Valley colours, blending turquoise into white. This bright blue satisfied our “bold” requirement however if the wall was too branded, it would be unappealing. The subtle EnjoyTeesValley.com logo sat in the corner, with further branding coming from prop signs bearing #BigWeekend and #EnjoyTeesValley, encouraging social media sharing and extend the wall’s reach.

- Procurement:

We selected a local supplier to produce the wall, a home-based micro-business. With the majority of the audience being local, and the event being a coup for the region, we wanted to extend that ethos to the creator, encouraging positive media coverage and BBC buy-in.

- Location:

We worked closely with the BBC to secure a prime location within the event space, next to facilities and food outlets to maximise footfall in a high-traffic spot.

- PR:

We previewed the wall, placing a story with print and broadcast media, involving the creator and a Combined Authority representative, amplified via social channels. This had the dual purpose of increasing exposure for the Enjoy brand, while building anticipation that the wall would be at the event.

- Field Marketers:

We commissioned branded “Enjoy” field marketers to administer queues and encourage people to use the wall by raising awareness, selling it in to the public and providing a safe environment with good customer experience. They also prompted people to tag Enjoy in social media images of the wall.

Delivery:

We employed scaffolders to erect the wall on site, delivered props and briefed the field marketers to encourage people to take pictures at the wall. We briefed the wall into the senior BBC producers and DJ Greg James, who was the face and voice of the Big Weekend and could highlight the wall during the weekend.

We also liaised with the creator for PR and had Combined Authority officers on site throughout to ensure it ran smoothly.

Measurement and evaluation:

The inclusion of the wall at the festival demonstrated that we satisfied BBC editorial guidelines and they thought it was a good fit, with an event coordinator at the organisation stating that she loved the wall.

More than 16,000 people were involved in over 4,000 photos (we engaged 25% of the audience – 67% above our target – with spend at 62.5p per activation (37.5% cheaper than our target).

Across social media, the wall generated:

- 356,546 impressions
- 187,131 reach
- 2,798 engagement (liked, shared or posted content including the wall).

BBC Look North (reach: 800,000+) featured the wall in a news story and bulletins leading up to the event. It was covered four times in print and online Middlesbrough-based daily paper, the Gazette (readership: 52,670), with further follow-ups in image galleries.

Budget and campaign impact:

Budget:

- Flower Wall: £3,635
- Selfie Lights: £410
- Props: £340
- Scaffolding: £2,604.12
- Marketers: £2,880
- Total: £9,869.12.

Impact:

The phenomenal popularity of the flower wall meant that it has been, and will be, used at other big ticket events in the Tees Valley region.

These include concerts by Take That (circa 31,000 in attendance) and Jess Glynne.

We are now planning to use the wall across the summer to build upon and amplify the success from the BBC Big Weekend, with four organisations having also contacted us requesting its presence at their events!