



CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2019 GOLD WINNER

Category: Best Use of Influencer Relations

Company: Gardiner Richardson and Tyne and Wear Metro

Entry title: Pop Pay As You Go campaign

Brief and objectives:

Tyne and Wear Metro wanted to encourage more customers to purchase Pop Pay As You Go (PAYG) cards and explore the endless journeys across the network.

This project aimed to showcase the Pop PAYG scheme and encourage people to travel by Metro in spring/summer 2018.

Objectives:

- Raise awareness of the Pop PAYG card
- Promote endless journeys across the Tyne and Wear Metro network
- Promote cost saving benefits of the Pop PAYG card.
- Promote how Pop PAYG is easy to use.

The idea, research and planning:

Following successful influencer activity in 2017, as part of Tyne and Wear Metro's Autumn Leisure Campaign, we proposed more influencer activity at key times of year for 2018 to support the ongoing promotion of Pop PAYG.

The Pop PAYG smart travel card, launched in 2015, originally cost £5 but in 2017 it was made free. It allows public transport users in the North East to top up their Pop PAYG card to pay for journeys as they make them, enabling them to save money on every trip they make on the Metro. The card can also be used to buy tickets on all local buses in the North East.

The aim of the campaign was to highlight Pop PAYG is an easy way to pay for transport across Tyne and Wear and is an ideal way to travel around the region throughout spring /summer.

Metro also wanted to highlight that using a Pop PAYG card is 30p cheaper than Single Tickets and daily cap fares are 40p cheaper than Day Tickets.

Planning and research was key to the campaign's success. It was important to ensure Metro worked with the right influencers to fit their brand considering follower numbers, audience size, domain authority, page authority and social platform analytics.

After robust research we devised a list of potential family and lifestyle influencers. It was important for us to work with influencers who live across the Tyne and Wear Metro network in order to highlight how easy it is to travel to destinations via Metro.

Once the influencers were sourced, a detailed schedule was created outlining dates for their days out on the Metro, location of their days out and proposed publication date of posts. The terms of engagement with the influencers were made clear in the form of an email contract covering: outcomes, deadlines, channels, key messages, payment and expenses, final results and analytics from influencer following live blog post.

We had to factor in holidays, key dates and events and make sure the influencers activity was spread out over spring and summer. Individual influencer briefs were prepared and deadlines agreed in advance.

Strategy, tactics, creativity and innovation:

Two strands of activity were planned for key times of year to tie in with Metro's Pop PAYG promotion. In spring 2018 we worked with three North East influencers – New Girl on the Toon, Life in Geordieland and My Boys Club – to promote how easy it is to use a Pop PAYG card and to travel across Tyne and Wear on the Metro.

We arranged for the influencers to visit attractions and venues in Whitley Bay, Tynemouth, and Sunderland and ensured we had a contingency plan in place in case of any disruption on the network. Ahead of their days out the influencers were asked to order a Pop PAYG card and talk about the process of ordering one as part of their post. They were also asked to talk about teaming up with Tyne and Wear Metro on their social media channels a couple of days before their day out, on the day and then share their experiences of the day's activities via a blog post and promote their blog on social media.

In addition to this activity we celebrated Metro's supporting partnership with the Great Exhibition of North by promoting their limited edition Great Exhibition of the North Pop Pay As You Go card. The PAYG cards were given to Get North Makers volunteers and were available to the public for the duration of the exhibition. As part of the Great Exhibition of the North activity we worked with Drummond Central, Metro's creative agency, to create a GEON inspired free adventure book to encourage families to get out and about during the summer and explore all the fantastic things the region has to offer, via Metro using a Pop card.

We also teamed up with another two North East influencers – Sprog on the Tyne and Shay Kennedy to promote the limited edition Great Exhibition of the North Pop Pay As You Go card and the exhibition's trails. Shay Kennedy followed the design trail and went out in Newcastle and Gateshead, while Caroline Lennox (Sprog on the Tyne) and her family followed the innovation trail and enjoyed taking inspiration from Metro's new adventure book.

Tactics employed: media relations, social media activity, influencer relations, and design/creative by Drummond Central.

Delivery:

The Pop PAYG campaign was a collaborative campaign between GR, Drummond Central and Tyne and Wear Metro.

PR:

- Initial planning session, research and created influencer schedule
- Sourced and liaised with influencers
- Researched potential journeys and key attractions across Metro's network
- Prepared influencers' briefs
- Negotiated influencers' fees
- Regular project conference calls
- Monitoring and evaluation report.

Ethical considerations, including how the campaign has abided by the CIPR Code of Conduct, ASA Regulations, the CAP Code and Google guidelines:

We adhered to the CIPR code of conduct, ASA Regulations and CAP code by being transparent at all times that our influencer activity was paid for content. We instructed each influencer to ensure their social media posts and blog posts were fully disclosed as sponsored content, using 'ad' or #ad in captions.

Measurement and evaluation, including the outcomes achieved via organic and paid-for activity:

Influencers:

- 204,913 reach from engagement with five influencers.

Pop PAYG - 2018/19:

- 1,510,893 total number of journeys made – this was a year on year increase of 74%
- 36,082 cards used – this was a year on year increase of 49%
- £2,908,640 total value of top-ups – this was a year on year increase of 64%
- 1,817 Pop cards sold during period of influencer activity.

Website:

- Visits to Pop PAYG information page up 38% y-o-y
- Visits to Pop PAYG shop page (purchase page) up 17% y-o-y.

Budget and campaign impact, including payments such as gifts and/or experiences in-kind, and influencer expenses:

- PR fees £3250
- Blogger fees £579
- Total: £3,829.