

Passport to Business Benefit

Brief

The Used Kitchen Company (TUKC), a recycler of second-hand privately owned kitchens and ex-display (showroom) kitchens since 2005, sought greater market share in the showrooms sector, to ward off competition.

It wanted:

- business growth/additional sales
- to encourage more homeowners (buyers and sellers) to embrace kitchen recycling.

Success required:

- More showrooms (currently recycling displays) to choose TUKC in preference to competitors
- More showrooms to recycle rather than 'skip' kitchens

PR Objectives:

- capture 50%+ share of voice in kitchen trade titles
- find a catalyst to inspire kitchen showroom partnerships
- differentiate TUKC through a hard-to-copy initiative
- establish credibility through thought leadership
- maximise exhibition presence at kbb Birmingham (March 1-4, 2020)

Idea, research and planning

Recognising the growing importance of sustainability for all businesses, we saw green motivations as the catalysts for showroom partnership and engagement.

To find a 'hook' for a suitably compelling sustainable initiative, we:

- conducted extensive desk research
- discovered Defra's largely unadopted 'Resources & Waste Strategy' (2018) and analysed this and all subsequent commentary.

- identified a reference to 'product passports', as ways to reduce landfill pressures and extend product lifespans.
- married up themes with existing TUKC consumer research statistics
- pitched a 'Kitchen Passport' idea to TUKC, as an industry (possibly UK) 'first' and a ground-breaking sustainable initiative for the kitchen trade, building a business case as to why TUKC should do this for company benefit/growth.

Strategy, creativity, innovation

Strategy

We suggested:

- unveiling Kitchen Passports as a groundbreaking 'first' at the trade's biggest show, kbb Birmingham
- creating a 12-page press pack, inclusive of further research on the importance of eco-principles within consumer buying trends
- creating a sustainability teaser, but holding the story back until the pre-show Friday, to secure media exposure on the exhibition's home page throughout kbb's 4 days
- making an exhibition 'noise' through social media initiatives – to get exhibitors talking, without breaking exhibition leafleting rules
- creating a digital 'Kitchen Passport' for a second 'launch' on World Environment Day (June).

Creativity

We:

- produced demo Kitchen Passports - passport-sized booklets, with pages documenting a kitchen's 'date of birth', features (materials used); places travelled to (previous owners); and dismantling, recycling and ultimate disposal instructions.
- deployed powerful language e.g 'extending a kitchen's cradle to grave lifespan', 'making better use of the planet's finite resources' and 'creating a sea-change in the kitchen sector.
- turned TUKC's small stand into 'Passport Control', engaging other sustainability-focused exhibitors to point visitors towards it.
- developed a 'big figure' – the tonnage of kitchen waste already saved from landfill – which Passport take-up could boost.

Innovation

We created branded selfie frames, carrying messages such as:

- 'Give Kitchen Passports Your Stamp of Approval'
- 'Going Green at TUKC Border Control'
- 'Kitchen Passport for Kitchen Sustainability'

We encouraged stand visitors/other exhibitors to support us, by using these and posting selfies on their own social media, using show hashtags.

This raised show awareness significantly.

Delivery, Implementation of Tactics

What occurred:

1. Launch

We launched as above, when kbb Birmingham still went ahead, despite real Covid concerns.

Key conversations were held with various kitchen manufacturers, who embraced the unique concept with gusto.

Independent showrooms were engaged by the Kitchen Passport and show website lead story.

Lockdown one came within two weeks. Kitchen showrooms and manufacturer production lines closed until July.

Trade title 'Essential Kitchen and Bathroom Business' closed. Kbb Review ceased print and furloughed all but one editor, producing online editions only, for 5 months.

Almost immediately, messaging tone switched to 'subtle' and 'concerned', with this largely maintained, as kitchen showrooms have been non-essential retail outlets throughout subsequent 'tiers' and lockdowns.

2. Media Relations

Catapult created:

- positivity-focused thought leadership pieces

- 'helpful' content - press releases suggesting positive actions for showrooms to embrace
- feature material for the few pre-planned features running
- placement of opinion pieces/podcast interviews
- materials for mykitchenpassport.com's launch (lockdown one)
- national press consumer pieces, to boost TUKC's trade kudos.

3. Awareness Days

To retain the spotlight, we have created two forthcoming awareness days.

'No Skip Sunday' is March 28, 2021, when, clocks go forward and, deprived of an hour, we may be tempted to 'skip' kitchens, amidst DIY frenzy, rather than recycling them.

'Kitchen Passport Week' starts on San Pasqual, Patron Saint of Kitchens' feast day (May 17), and will be a focal point for Kitchen Passport promotion.

Trade editorial has already been generated for both.

4. Manufacturer Contracts and Partnerships

We have produced retailer engagement ideas for every manufacturer partnering with TUKC, suggesting how to inspire their showrooms to recycle more kitchens.

We arranged a special pizza oven deal with Valoriani and have promoted a donation-per-kitchen-sold scheme brokered with the Kitchen Bathroom Bedroom Specialists Association (KBSA).

We have leveraged a possible partnership with kitchen food waste app Kitche.

Significant new contracts are in place with kitchen manufacturers/retailers MHK, Symphony and Mereway Kitchens.

Measurement, evaluation, impact

Marketing

- 62 editorial pieces – despite trade title closures/online-only lockdown versions
- Home-page editorial on kbb Birmingham website throughout show
- 85% share of voice (trade titles)
- 244 brand mentions

- 45 web links (18 = valuable follow links) – generating more TUKC website traffic
- editorial reach – 5.7m
- thought-leadership positioning
- new monthly column in Kitchens, Bedrooms & Bathrooms
- podcast, opinion and radio interview opportunities generated
- go-to expert positioning

Unique

- Delivery of a UK 'first' – Britain's first product passport
- New copyrighted business asset – Kitchen Passport and mykitchenpassport.com

Business Benefit

- Kitchen listings conversations with significant number of engaged independent showrooms at kbb Birmingham
- Contract with European giant MHK, to list displays from all MHK UK-based showrooms
- Contract with Mereway Kitchens, for recycling of all Mereway retailers' displays
- Contract with Symphony, to recycle all Symphony displays

+ 'No. 1 partner' positioning in eyes of kitchen trade manufacturers and showrooms.