

Client name: ASDA

Campaign name: ASDA Delivering Christmas Kindness

Category: Consumer communications

Budget: £52k (third party)

30 word summary

ASDA needed a PR campaign to emotionally connect with their customers at Christmas. By badging something delivery drivers were already doing, Mischief increased ASDA's SOV and upped consideration by 67%.

BRIEF / OBJECTIVES / BUDGET

It's Christmas 2020 and Asda have got a problem. While the likes of Tesco and Sainsbury's had captured the public's hearts with emotive ad campaigns, Asda hadn't yet done the same. The result, a marked fall in share of voice at the most critical point in the year.

Our brief was simple – could PR get it back? Could we provide the personal, emotional and surprising societal impact and share of voice that advertising could not? The answer was a resounding yes. A campaign that not only delivered tangible results and further proof of PR's right to play in bigger thinking.

THE IDEA, RESEARCH, PLANNING

To create an emotional impact, Asda had to tackle an emotional issue – we chose loneliness. It's an issue in 'normal' Christmas, but in a Covid Christmas, loneliness would become epidemic – cruelly targeting those who had an especially isolated year already. It was certainly a topic that would resonate with media and the wider public, but what right did Asda have to play in this space?

Throughout lockdown, we had received hundreds of reports of Asda drivers performing heroics. We saw 'extreme weather deliveries', 'voluntary deliveries' and even 'fancy-dress-to-cheer-up-kids deliveries' - but there was one 'service' that seemed to top them all...a quick chat.

For some, this conversation was just good customer service, but for others it was their **only** source of conversation. It was their only respite from loneliness. It was on this truth we built our campaign. In the past nine months, Asda had been on the frontline in the fight against loneliness, every single day. Their soldiers in this battle? Delivery drivers.

Our idea was simple – we were going to take these tales of customer service excellence and formalise them into a national, anti-loneliness movement, led by Asda delivery drivers.

STRATEGY, CREATIVITY, INNOVATION

The best examples of creativity lie in simplicity. A quick chat beats loneliness, some of our drivers were already having loneliness-busting chats with their customers, but there were obstacles to overcome to supercharge this service:

1. How do drivers know if someone needs a chat?
2. How do customers know that they can chat to drivers?
3. How can we encourage more conversation vs delivery time pressure?

To answer the first point, we teamed up with the Royal Voluntary Service to provide drivers with additional training on spotting the signs of loneliness AND how to start conversations shaped to combat loneliness.

To answer the second point, we introduced the 'Happy to Chat' badge – a badge worn by drivers, simply letting customers know they were happy and able to have a chat. This served to counter concerns raised in our research that lonely people 'don't want to be a burden'.

Finally, empowered by RVS research that showed just a two-minute chat makes a world of difference to lonely people, Asda relaxed their delivery time targets for Christmas and communicated it to drivers. This would allow drivers the time to chat with customers without fear of being penalised for 'slow delivery' and reinforce Asda's commitment to put people before profits. A wonderful example of a PR idea capturing the hearts of a whole business.

DELIVERY OF TACTICS

All of this is lovely, but to shift the dial on Asda's share of voice we needed to capture mass media attention AND public attention. Our execution was geared towards maximising this coverage, but also creating a huge moment on Asda's social channels too. To do this we:

- **Consumer news story:** Using a blend of our own consumer research and RVS statistics, we set the scene of a lonely nation and crucially, the role Asda drivers could legitimately play in solving this problem. Photography assets focused on the drivers and the new addition to uniforms.
- **Emotive social content:** Following some of the Asda delivery drivers who were already 'Happy to Chat', we created a genuinely moving piece of content that articulated the campaign in its entirety.
- **Broadcast Day:** To maintain momentum, Geoff (an Asda driver with an MBE) led the charge on a supremely successful broadcast day, held two days after the launch of the video/news story.
- **Driver-Customer Case Studies:** Arguably stronger than anything we could create ourselves(!), were the relationships we found between drivers and customers. They starred in content AND media interviews.
- **RVS partnership:** The Royal Voluntary Service who were not only fully supportive from a technical perspective, but also on-hand for campaign advice and media interviews.

MEASUREMENT, EVALUATION, IMPACT

Delivering Kindness delivered an incredible amount of earned coverage, great social engagement and incredible sentiment. But the results we are most proud of come from some stunning business-boosting analytics...and the resulting admirers!

Objective: Increase SOV in key audiences and in relation to competitors

- **Target** 50% volume increase and return to 'Top Three' most talked about supermarkets.
- **Achieved** 67% increase SOV amongst key audiences and a 3% increase in total SOV, resulting in Asda becoming the second most talked about supermarket in the period (previously 5th).

Objective: Increase propensity to shop with Asda through brand affection

- **Target** 25% increase in brand consideration, 10% increase in perception
- **Achieved**
 - o 67% increase in brand consideration (Fly Research)
 - o 23% increase in brand perception (Fly Research)

Objective: Achieve a mass media moment for Asda at Christmas

- **Target** 75 pieces of coverage, 3M social content views (with paid support)
- **Achieved**
 - o 275 pieces of coverage, 21 national pieces
 - o 9m views of social content, 561,000 social video engagements
 - o 100% positive or neutral sentiment.

BIGGER WINS

- In the week of launch, we were contacted by DCMS – who shared our campaign on their own channels, resulting in several MP endorsements
- Hundreds of Asda colleagues, including CEO Roger Burnley, took to social to share pride in the campaign
- And finally, Co-Op launched their “Happy to Talk” service in January, encouraging staff to reach out to customers. Imitation, flattery etc?!