

## Basic Information

*Region (Check Region):*

Anglia, Thames and Chiltern

*Category:*

27. Independent PR Practitioner of the Year

## Entry Information

*Entrant company name:*

Louisebcomms

*Entry title:*

A time of new beginnings

## Entry

*An overview of your experience, your commitment to professional development and how you contribute to the industry:*

In April 2020 I posted on LinkedIn

“Easter is a time of new beginnings, including for me. Following redundancy, as a result of the current pandemic, I find myself taking a leap into setting up on my own. You can find all the details at [www.louisebcomms.co.uk](http://www.louisebcomms.co.uk). Whether you are a big or small business wanting to grow your brand and stay connected with customers at this difficult time or if you need help supplementing your fab in-house then do get in touch #pr #freelance”

My previous experience of 20 years at Lansons, with 10 years as a Board Director building it into one of the UK’s leading communication consultancies for financial services. I specialise in corporate communications for financial organisations, to achieve their communication objectives with customers, investors, employees, the industry, regulators and the wider public.

In November 2019 I moved out of London to join an Ipswich based PR company, as a Board Director, but was unfortunately made redundant in April 2021 because of the pandemic. As a single mum at the start of a pandemic and with a child to home-school I took the decision to set up independently.

Having been in the situation myself of having no job in a pandemic, I have also been keen to help others wanting to start out in PR with mentoring and give them a voice. Michael wrote a blog for my website on what the next generation of PRs can offer -

<https://www.louisebcomms.co.uk/post/the-next-generation-of-pr>

In addition am pleased to be part of the FIPS (Financial, Insurance and Professional Services) group, supporting these vital sectors for the Suffolk economy

<https://www.fips.org.uk>. This is unpaid, but I believe we should give our time and to raise the profile of financial services in Suffolk is important to me.

Peter Basford, Chair of FIPS, Suffolk

“It has been great to have Louise as an expert in financial services PR based in East Anglia and helping our region’s fintech and professional services grow. Louise has also been volunteering her time to help FIPS as we look to build the financial sector in Suffolk for future generations.”

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*Outline your work-related achievements over the last 2 years, including your business objectives and/or plan:*

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The business plan was to keep the house! It has been a lot of hard work but I’ve gone from nothing to five corporate retainer clients in a year. I have also worked on numerous projects and been ‘white labelled’ by bigger agencies for my expertise. I feel a bit like the A-Team and those that need me, know where to find me &#128521; 18 months on and I have been privileged to work with the most inspiring clients and colleagues. A fantastic advantage of running your own company is choosing to work with companies that want to make a real difference.

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*Provide an outline of a work-related challenge you have faced in the last 2 years, including details of what happened, how you overcame it and what you learnt from it:*

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PR has had to adapt over the past year to Covid and reputation management and truly putting clients at the centre of communications strategies is now a priority for financial service companies.

What has made LBC particularly successful is the network I am able to call on: from specialist PR freelancers to Rhotic media, a team of incredibly talented financial journalists. I have utilized the CIPR network and events to ensure I stay connected and as a sounding board when needed, particularly in balancing the highs of winning (and undertaking) amazing projects, to the worries of losing a pitch and trying not to take it personally.

I have tried to make the most of lockdowns. Pre-coronavirus many financial companies based in London would have only considered working with PR consultants based in the City. However, the lockdown has profoundly changed all that. Companies are no longer considering consultancies based on proximity but focusing on qualities such as expertise, knowledge and value for money. With the majority of us working remotely, financial services companies are needing new skills from their PR consultancies:

- Pivoting PR - strategic advice for a new era
- Making communications more relevant to the issues their clients are currently facing
- Issues and crisis communications management plans bine reviewed and in many case rewritten
- Putting in place communications strategies with greater flexibility to be able to react faster to a changing news cycle next time

This has been really good news for me as it has offered me the chance to work with big corporate organisations (P&C but include Confused.com and Leigh Day on the Woodford legal case) and new fintechs who want a PR professional with financial knowledge where I can make an immediate impact.

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*Provide an outline of a piece of work you have delivered in the last 2 years that you are particularly proud of, including details of the brief, objectives, strategy, tactics, outputs, outcomes and budget:*

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Being able to choose amazing companies who want to make a difference is a huge plus of being an independent consult and Gretel is a fintech doing just that. LBC has worked with Gretel over the past year as it looks to launch a revolutionary platform that will reconnect UK adults with their lost and forgotten savings, pensions, insurances and investments. In the year of 'virtual' the PR brief for Gretel was to build brand awareness quickly to generate interest amongst financial organisations in the UK as well as directly with connecting the UK public with their lost and forgotten financial accounts. Using LBC expertise in the financial services space we have achieved coverage across national, fintech and financial trade outlets tapping into the news agenda – including child trust funds 'coming of age' and the pensions dashboard. In addition we have grown Gretel's LinkedIn presence with thought-leaders comment to build credibility in the dormant asset space. [P&C budget was £30,000]

Duncan Stevens, Chief Executive Officer, Gretel

"Having worked with you for some time now Louise your success doesn't surprise me one bit. You bring knowledge, professionalism, amazing results and, above all, humour to everything you do. It's an absolute pleasure to work with you and Karen. Here's to many more amazing years for you and the team."

A full list of Gretel's fantastic coverage can be found at <https://www.gretel.co.uk/media-centre>

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## Supporting Information

*Additional supporting information (images, artwork, clippings and other media):*

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Provided

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