

Basic Information

Region (Check Region): Yorkshire and Lincolnshire

Category: 28. In-House PR Team of the Year

Entry Information

Entrant company name: West Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service

Entry title:

WYFRS - Making West Yorkshire Safer

Entry

Number of employees within the PR team and annual PR budget:

There are 7 members of the Corporate Communications Team with an annual budget of £70,000

Business objectives and analysis of team performance against budget over the last two years:

WYFRS's core business aim is to 'Make West Yorkshire Safer'.

The team supports this with the provision of both a MarComms, PR and internal communications function for the organisation. The team also provide in and out of hours crisis communications provision to update residents and provide safety information.

The team includes staff with specialism including digital, campaign planning and PR and we work collaboratively on projects to provide best value to the organisation.

The team works collaboratively with partners to support our blue light and public sector colleagues in providing public safety information.

We work to tight budgets and KPIs and continue to be adaptable and creative to provide effective and best value communications. During the past 2 financial years we have remained on budget while growing the engagement with our communications.

A brief overview of business / team strategy:

Team strategy is to communicate key information to internal and external stakeholders in a

timely manner in order to support delivery of the Service

A summary of commitment to CPD and professionalism:

As well as completing formal training such as an apprenticeship, leadership and management training and specialist digital marketing qualifications the team also undertaken role specific training and in house training to upskill.

The team also train other members of the organisation on best practice and are points of contact for support and advice eg social media training for those using corporate accounts.

The team use learning and evaluation from previous campaigns to bring in changes and adaptations to work enabling us to better engage with our key audiences and provide value for money communications.

There is also a push from within the team to continue to learn new and existing technologies and processes. They attend appropriate training and update sessions such as equality, inclusion, mental health awareness and attend inhouse all staff briefings to keep their knowledge of what's happening at WYFRS up to date.

The team is the custodian of the corporate image and reputation of our fire and rescue service. They promote and support the embedding of our values and behaviours and the professional Fire Standards endorsed by our sector and HMICFRS.

A summary of recent outstanding achievements:

- Developed and ran a number of award winning and shortlisted external behaviour change and safety campaigns including Moorland Fire prevention awareness, firefighter recruitment and social media
 - Developed an out of hours communications provision to support our operational colleagues. Resulting in April 2021 in 603 unique pieces of press content, a 68% increase in traffic to incidents on our website and our third highest month on our social channels
 - Developed and ran an internal communications campaign to respond to Covid-19 (see below)
 - Supported national campaigns including government Covid advice, water safety, flood awareness, and business safety
 - Supported staff wellbeing with a number of specialist campaigns including a new wellbeing toolkit, a fatigue awareness week and promotion of Have a chat and a brew
 - Ran wholetime and on-call firefighter recruitment campaigns
 - Developed and adapted campaigns to include changing risks due to behaviour changes during Covid such as Bonfire Night and Stay Safe
 - Supported other teams at WYFRS to adapt during Covid eg helping our Prince's Trust team move courses to Facebook
 - Promoted corporate priorities around equality with promotion of WYFRS activities for Positive action recruitment, Pride, IMD and IWD
 - Continued to learn and adapt our ways of working to respond to audience need eg introduction of new staff podcasts and all staff briefings during Covid.
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A summary of a campaign you are particularly proud of, including details of the brief, objectives, strategy, tactics, outputs, outcomes and budget:

Brief and objectives

Create clear/ concise crisis communications to staff during the Coronavirus pandemic, giving important policy information, updates and direction.

Strategy

- Tailor information delivery (platforms and messaging) to different audiences,
- Reassure staff of the measures in place to create a covid safe working environment
- Communicate work to support communities during the pandemic
- Emphasise wellbeing support to staff
- Reiterate NHS messaging
- Align communications directly with Government announcements
- Create and maintain strong connection with leadership team

Tactics

- Created Coronavirus branded intranet page with FAQs
- Utilise a new text alert system
- Sent out a weekly staff magazine, via email and text alternating between a BAU version for normal organisational news and a special Covid edition
- In June 2020 piloted a new 'all staff briefing' Let's Talk which now runs quarterly.
- Created a Be Covid Winter Wise video to remind staff of the hands, face, space message.
- Designed a 'Wellbeing Ways' toolkit to support staff's mental health. Supplemented by mini-campaigns to encourage staff to take a break and have a brew and to be fatigue aware
- We encouraged staff to submit photos for the 'Your Space' page on the intranet for more light-hearted good news stories
- We created sickness flowcharts and absence cards to assist with a step-by- step guide
- We created a staff absence gif/counter on the homepage of the intranet updating the number of staff absent due to covid each week
- Created monthly 'Managers Matters' e-newsletter to prompt managers around key dates, actions or information to remind staff about.
- Designed and sent hardcopy thank-you card to all staff to recognise efforts during covid.

Outcome and Budget

Measurement, evaluation and impact:

- Staff magazine - 67 editions (March 2020 - end of May 2021) with top story averaging 800-900 clicks
- Managers Matters bulletin– delivered to 250 managers monthly from November 2020.
- 42 Podcasts – at height of pandemic - 2,000 listens per broadcast
- Quarterly staff briefings – Each round of five sessions creates 10 hours of senior management availability to discuss matters with staff. Averages around 500 staff attending/ watching on catch up.
- Covid survey (May 2020) – 667 completed, or just under 50% of staff
- Survey results:
 - o We are receiving timely communications 94% agree
 - o The Communications I have received have been helpful and reassuring 86% agree
 - o We are kept well informed with updates 93% agree
- Hardcopy thank you card sent to all 1,400 staff
- Intranet Coronavirus page - currently averaging 10,000 views per week. Peaked at 16.5k early in the pandemic.

- Text alerts – 1,232 staff (88% of 1,400 staff) signed up to receive text alerts
 - 129 people submitted 'thank yous' in recognition scheme
- Cost £600
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Supporting Information

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

Provided
