

Basic Information

Region (Check Region):

North West

Category:

29. Small PR Consultancy of the Year

Entry Information

Entrant company name:

Viva

Entry title:

Viva bounces back with Head of Happiness

Entry

Number of employees and annual fee income:

Viva is a 10-people and two-dog agency in Lancashire. We have seven full-time and three part-time staff. Our annual fee income is £462k and our turnover has risen from £367k in 2018 to £491k by financial year end in 2020 – a rise of 33%.

Despite Covid, our turnover for 2020 was our best ever — we were formed back in 2002 — and we grew the team accordingly with two new members.

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

Objectives:

1. Create a culture of wellbeing and openness
2. Drive growth by retaining and attract new business through a distinctive offer — as an impact-driven solutions provider
3. Make a positive difference to our community

1. Culture

We also recognise humans do the work here, not machines, and so we have wrapped a supportive culture around them. We invest heavily in training and care for our people.

Pre-Covid our team took it upon themselves to buy their own Viva hoodies and post-Covid we stay connected through a virtual office on Zoom, have freedom to take a 20-minute walk out whenever, do yoga and bootcamp sessions, learn new ideas together and take notice of how we are each coping.

Our team is encouraged to volunteer, and everyone has 16 hours a year to devote to a

cause close to their hearts.

In the last 12 months we've taken a huge step that makes Health and Wellbeing central to who we are. We've taken on a Health and Wellbeing Manager (our designated Head of Happiness) to help us embed health and wellbeing firmly into our culture.

Sickness absence is low, six of the team had 100% attendance in 2020, staff retention is high (we had one person leave last year as they were moving to Edinburgh) and we are enabling keen volunteers to train as Mental Health and Suicide Prevention First Aiders.

2. Growth

Our turnover rose to £491k by our year end (Aug 31 2020).

That was up from £367k in 2018, to £403 in 2019 – a rise of 33% over two years.

3. Community

We actively support local charities and community groups with pro bono support (last year a hospice and homeless charity, this year a children's charity). Despite Covid our turnover for 2020 was our best ever and we grew the team accordingly with two new members.

Business Hero: Viva was named a British Chambers of Commerce UK Business Hero 2020 for the pro bono work we carried out on behalf of our local community during the first Covid-19 lockdown. We were one of only 16 businesses listed from across the region.

We teamed up with Studio Up North to collaboratively create Weave Together – a platform to champion and showcase the amazing range of businesses in our local Rossendale Valley, providing much-needed visibility during a time of crisis. We supported 24 local businesses through this initiative.

In 2020, we provided more than 180 hours of free-of-charge time to three charity/community groups – Inspire Youth Zone in Chorley, Nightsafe Homeless shelter in Blackburn and Pendleside Hospice in Burnley.

Staff used more than 90 hours of time volunteering for projects and charities that were close to their hearts.

A brief overview of business / team strategy:

Our central focus is on delivering work with measurable and meaningful impact – individuals in the team are measured against this metric.

Our team's monthly client meetings are focused purely on how we are managing to hit the agreed impact KPIs and what we need to do if a correction needs to take place. This focus ensures we enjoy good relationships with clients.

A summary of commitment to CPD and professionalism:

We know that to produce good work, you need great people who understand what great looks like.

We have a training budget for each team member, organise weekly sessions and look at training needs in regular one-to-ones.

We know that by giving people absolute clarity about our expectations and the right tools to do the job, we've delivered great results for our clients and financial results too.

A summary of recent outstanding achievements, including client list growth / retention:

Growth: From a business perspective, the team won a series of new accounts over the last 12 months, worth more than £150k. These include two NHS Health Trusts, and two local authorities.

We also won a major contract with Team Tempest, the Ministry of Defence-led group being the UK's future combat air system.

Business bounce back: In March 2020, 40% of our work was either put on hold or cancelled forcing us to furlough three staff, and we work with a number of charities who were particularly badly hit by Covid.

By the first week of May, we had been able to replace all of that work with new contracts while continuing to support one of those FOC for six months — Pendleside Hospice.

We ended 2020 having had our best year ever and increasing the team with two new recruits.

A summary of a campaign you are particularly proud of, including details of the brief, objectives, strategy, tactics, outputs, outcomes and budget:

Global hearing specialist Amplifon wanted to use founder Charles Holland's story to gain positive publicity and inspire brand loyalty in the UK market.

Viva created The Amplifon Awards for Brave Britons in 2016 – a campaign inspired by Major Holland's bravery – which celebrated unsung heroes of British life at an annual awards ceremony.

We usually host the awards over a prestigious lunch at The Army and Navy Club on Pall Mall, but of course, for 2020 we had to think again and go virtual on Zoom.

We enlisted Rachel Burden from 5Live and BBC Breakfast to host. She was incredibly professional, holding the show together with ease and was able to carry out live interviews with all our winners in a very natural way.

We also brought in a production company Bigtank. They filmed Rachel, made sure the sound levels were good and mixed in professional graphics with her visuals.

The fifth Brave Britons campaign was undoubtedly our most successful and importantly, the feedback from both guests and our client was very good.

We had the most entries:

230 entries in 2020

185 entries in 2019

(24% increase)

We had a record number of newspaper/online mentions:
272 in 2020
207 in 2019
(31% increase)

Budget:
Media relations: £24k
Social media: £12k
Event activity: £10k

Supporting Information

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

Provided
