

## Basic Information

*Region (Check Region):*

South of England and Channel Islands

*Category:*

29. Small PR Consultancy of the Year

## Entry Information

*Entrant company name:*

Transform Communications

*Entry title:*

Transform Communications Small Consultancy of the Year

## Entry

*Number of employees and annual fee income:*

7 people with income of £281,047.

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

As a PR and marketing communications firm, Transform Communications has gone from annus horribilis to annus mirabilis in just 12 months! We had hovered around £200,000 for two years and when we won new business we were pulled into delivery. We knew things had to change. We mapped out a 10-year plan to give focus to the business, with budgets and forecasts to achieve ambitious targets. And then COVID-19 hit.

From March to June 2020 our income reduced to 25% of projected revenue. As a result of the team's hard work and resilience, August 2020 was our best month, winning our largest client and a healthcare PR contract. The team returned. We revised our forecast to £220,000. In October we revised again to £250,000, achieving this in November. We ended the year 41% up on turnover.

It was teamwork, sheer graft and collaboration that saw us through the pandemic. Since August we have grown the team, acquired new clients, and retained all existing clients.

The highlights:

- By March 2021, Transform's turnover increased 41%, our best ever year.
- 217% up on Profit before taxation. Achieved through growth, investment, and tight control of expenditure.
- More than doubled headcount (from 3 employees in June to 7 in February 2021).

- Increased our client base with 11 new clients.
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*A brief overview of business / team strategy:*

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As part of our strategy, we mapped out our:

- Proposition – focus on campaign strategy and long-form thought leadership.
- Ideal customers – our strength lies in B2B and four key sectors.
- Team – new roles in Sales and Marketing and increasing delivery capability.
- Figures – putting in place planned forecasts, demonstrating when we have the cash flow to grow the team.

We practise what we preach. Investing in brand, marketing and rebuilding the Transform Communications' website. New digital content marketing services, reflecting the move to online, launching Transform Digital Marketing in October.

To mark the end of a challenging year, we confirmed a new office in February 2021. While remote working was great, we missed the team bonding, spirit, collaboration and communication that makes our business unique. The team now work flexibly, with office days scheduled to fit in with client meetings, calls and project planning. Giving us the benefits of working from home combined with the uplift of coming together as a team.

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*A summary of commitment to CPD and professionalism:*

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COVID-19 demonstrated that we took a collaborative environment for granted learning from each other, honing and refining our skills. We changed our approach with remote working.

We have a daily meeting, plus a team social mid-week. Recruiting two team members, who have only met us a few times face-to-face, means we've formalised our operations and processes. We've created our Operations Manual for virtual inductions and appointing a Quality Assurance Manager, where nothing leaves the office without her stamp of approval.

We joined learning webinars - from Using LinkedIn for Lead Generation to Growing a Business, Well-being to Navigating Adversity.

Our Account Manager attended CIPR training on Planning and Managing PR Campaigns, sharing her learnings.

We've undertaken DiSC personality profiles to better understand each other's personal preferences.

We share our expertise through Transform Talks and our Podcast and in 2020 raised £1,300 for local charities. We've covered 'Death in the Time of Corona', 'The Apology Clause' with an internal comms expert, 'Finding your Purpose' and 'Creating Soul in Organisations'. We've been invited to speak on Crisis Communications and Thought Leadership. And we've appeared in numerous publications giving tips and advice on PR & Marketing.

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

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- 2020/2021 was our best year, 41% up on income and 271% up on Profit before Taxation. We've achieved this through growth plus tight control of expenditure.
  - We retained all clients. Even those who initially put programmes on hold.
  - In August we had our best ever month's trading.
  - We have recruited two new full-time hires.
  - We have worked with 11 new clients.
  - We changed our branding and designed a new website.
  - We launched a separate business. Transform Digital Marketing Ltd is already profitable after four months of trading.
  - Finalist for the CIPR Excellence Awards for Best Use of Content and the Bath Life Awards.

A client recently told us we are unique because all PR agencies make big promises but we're the only one that has delivered what we said we would – and more. This is reflected in the awards our clients receive: Bristol Life Awards finalist for Anderson Financial Management, Digiday Publisher of the Year finalist for HELLO! Magazine, CIPD award for PSI International and our own as finalists for the CIPR Excellence Awards and Bath Life Awards.

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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:*

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Transform Communications developed a PR strategy for Bristol-based Anderson Financial Management. The objective was to extend the reach of the business to specific audiences across Bristol and the surrounding areas.

The budget to research and draft the long-form content piece, along with blogs and LinkedIn posts to drive downloads, was £2,483.

Initial research revealed a lot of guidance available for entrepreneurs starting a business, but little to support them afterwards. During the research phase, the Andersons team shared that they love working with clients who ask questions and really engage with their finances. And so the plan for the 'Curious Investor's Guide to... Scaling-up a business' was conceived.

With COVID-19 we moved to an online campaign, focused on social media and the use of blogs and social posts to drive downloads by a business audience. Along with native LinkedIn articles and posts acting as teasers to download the full Guide, we maximised opportunities with the now virtual Bristol Life Awards. This included posts promoting nominations, tagging past winners / high profile individuals in the business community, and short videos to capture attention.

#### Business results

- The outcome of the campaign included an increased turnover, funds under management and new clients for Anderson Financial Management (figures supplied privately).
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#### Social media results

- 1900% increase in engagement rates on Anderson LinkedIn posts.
- 989% increase in post impressions.

- 72% increase in organic followers to the Anderson LinkedIn company page since the Guide.
  - 152% increase in the number of LinkedIn company page views.
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## **Supporting Information**

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

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Provided

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