

Entrant company name: **Red Consultancy**

Entry title: **Currys 'Save Black Friday' Campaign**

Category: **Corporate and Business Communications Campaign**

### **Objectives**

Love it or hate it, Black Friday is THE retail moment of the year and has dominated annual revenue since it came to the UK in the early 2010s. But opaque pricing and media negativity, primarily led by the annual Which? Black Friday report, has led to increased consumer cynicism and an erosion of trust in what should be a moment for consumers to get stand-out deals.

Our objectives were:

- **PR output & message** – land a positive, tide-turning conversation in media – restoring trust in Currys pricing - evidenced by increased sales - while positioning Currys as a brand which champions the consumer
- **Share of voice** – at what is the year’s busiest retail moment, ensure Currys stayed ahead of big high street rivals
- **Sales** – ensure Currys had the best Black Friday commercially

### **Idea / Research / Planning**

We all remember the queues (and scrums!).

15 years ago, Black Friday offered unparalleled deals for consumers in the UK. But over the years, due to pricing loop-holes and misleading claims, consumers have rightly lost confidence, no longer believing Black Friday deals offer genuine savings. The worry is the eventual demise of Black Friday!

At the heart of our idea was for Currys to evolve their pricing structures and transparency, responding to the Which criteria laid out in their 2023 report. With full business backing and a six month + review of every deal, we could then confidently and proudly go out with a promise for customers, and an industry-leading rallying cry to other retailers: “join Currys, review your pricing and help us Save Black Friday”.

Our idea was to face into the backlash, admit where we'd fallen short in the past, and outline the huge efforts the business has gone to in order to ensure no prices in the Black Friday sale had been lower in the previous six months.

Our campaign would have two bursts of activity at the start and end of Black Friday month, with sustained coverage around great deals in between. This would ensure we had maximum opportunity to lead a positive conversation, promote great value and restore consumer confidence.

## **Strategy / Creativity / Innovation**

### **Strategy: Implement a Minimum Pricing Standard using the criteria Which? laid out as a criticism**

Facing into headlines and growing consumer mistrust, we worked with Currys to ensure their pricing was in line with the gospel of consumer rights - the Which? Black Friday report. This meant ensuring no Black Friday deal had been cheaper in the last six months, and the majority of deals were the lowest they'd EVER been.

### **Innovation: Industry-Wide Call to Action:**

1. We faced into the criticism, included Which? early on with our commitment and efforts, and positioned Currys as THE industry leader.
2. Going out six weeks ahead of Black Friday, we urged other UK retailers to adopt the same standard to combat consumer cynicism and prevent the event's decline. Our simple call to action? Save Black Friday.
3. We responded to the new Which? report, highlighting the data was based on 2023 pricing, not what was actually live in store in 2024.

**Creativity:** Placards at launch reinforced our rallying cry to Save Black Friday. Partnering with independent consumer champion Angellica Bell added third party credibility and our bold leadership stance called on industry-wide adoption of the new pricing standard we had developed.

## **Delivery of Tactics**

### **BURST ONE**

We launched our campaign as Currys Black Friday deals went live six weeks ahead of the day itself. Supported by consumer data on declining Black Friday trust and fronted by consumer champion Angellica Bell and C-Suite spokespeople, we kicked off a

strategic media relations plan with our commitment that no deals had been lower in the six-months previous, and our rallying cry for the industry to join us. This launch moment drove widespread national coverage.

## **SUSTAIN PHASE**

Always-on tailored pitching allowed us to showcase an ever-evolving range of best buys and deals to UK media and drive a drumbeat of product on page coverage throughout the month. We underpinned this with a reactive statement responding to the new Which? report when it went live, ensuring Currys' initiative - which took the Which? pricing protocol into account - was included in the media coverage.

## **BURST TWO**

Culminating on Black Friday itself, our groundwork to this point - coupled with a further report revealing trending products, best deals and sales surges over the past month - ensured we were the retailer of comment with multiple Currys segments throughout the morning on This Morning plus segments on Sky Business News and BBC Radio.

## **Measurement/ Evaluation/ Impact**

We were successful against all our objectives...

### **Objective 1: Land positive PR output and messaging**

We won hearts and minds with this campaign. Not just appearing in deals round-ups but getting the Currys commitment to consumers out in widespread media, rich in key messaging. The campaign delivered an 1,087% uplift on KPIs.

475 pieces of editorial coverage (against KPI of 40) including:

- 24 x broadcast pieces (against KPI of 2)
- 99 x national pieces (against KPI of 5)

### **Objective 2: Improve share of voice**

Currys dominated the conversation – ranking #1 for Black Friday Share of Voice during the period against key competitors Amazon, AO, Argos and John Lewis.

### **Objective 3: Help drive sales**

Increase in sales YoY – the strongest Black Friday for Currys since 2022. 20% increased traffic to Currys.co.uk at Burst One launch (vs prior day).

Dan Rubel, Brand & Marketing Director:

“Black Friday matters – to our business and to our customers. And that’s why this was more than a comms campaign, it was a business commitment. We faced into criticism

head on. We challenged ourselves to do better. We challenged the industry to do better. And, as a result we were able to redress the growing mistrust. PR has proven itself to be a key component of our Black Friday success in 2024.”

*The text in this case study is presented as submitted in the original award entry. Where necessary, entrants have removed or redacted information considered sensitive or confidential.*