



Entrant company name: **The Marketing Pod, Xoserve and Fuel Bank Foundation**

Entry title: **The price of warmth**

Category: **Best Event**

Brief, objectives and budget

Xoserve, the central service data provider for Great Britain's gas industry, wanted to raise awareness of the challenges of living in a fuel crisis and advocate for a Just Transition. To do that, it partnered with the Fuel Bank Foundation (FBF) and The Marketing Pod (TMP) to organise an immersive event for energy stakeholders. The goal was to influence how attendees would make decisions that could push households into fuel crisis when reviewing future energy plans.

Xoserve also wanted to support the FBF in having at least one key energy influencer (Ofgem, DESNZ, or equivalent) to express further interest in supporting FBF (regular donation or sponsorship) within three months from the event, evidenced by written confirmation.

Xoserve's objectives:

At least 40 attendees from influential energy organisations in Jan-March (measured by targeted invitations versus attendance records).

Demonstrate a positive change in behaviour/perception from attendees when considering policies impacting those in fuel crisis by the end of the day. This would be measured by gathering at least four written or video testimonials.

Collect feedback through a short survey from at least 50% of the attendees, focusing on how the event changed their perception of those living in a fuel crisis. Produce and distribute to all attendees a digital report summarising the key discussion points and feedback from the event discussion.

Budget

Activity props (food, fake money): £70

Voiceover artists: £1,200

Agency spend: £25,000

The idea, research and planning

Strategy: We hosted an immersive event for energy, academic, and customer support influencers, featuring a mix of immersive activities to create an impactful experience that would drive meaningful discussions.

To immerse attendees in the mindset of living in a fuel crisis, each guest was assigned a persona based on real-life stories of people helped by FBF, including details about their families, income, disabilities, and housing situations. This ensured emotional investment throughout the day.

Six distinct, 20-minute experience zones were created, each simulating specific challenges of living in a fuel crisis. Guests moved through different zones with others who shared the same persona to complete practical tasks. This approach facilitated a sensory understanding with tangible and relatable experiences to deepen an emotional connection.

The zones were:

Think: Testing energy efficiency knowledge with a quiz to demonstrate how accessible information on reducing energy bills is to the public.

Touch: Simulated cold-hand tasks, such as prepping a snack or changing a nappy with cold hands from an ice pack, showing how simple activities can become challenging when living in a cold environment.

Listen: Hearing the personas' stories, acted by voiceover artists, in a cold, dark room to understand how they fell into a fuel crisis. Learn: Presentation on the benefits of a warm home by Catapult Energy Systems

Emotion: Guests filled out PIP forms while listening to their persona's worries and concerns through headphones, to demonstrate how the fuel crisis impacts people's ability to seek help in stressful situations.

Practical: A budgeting task, based on real incomes, to show the stark choices people have to make (such as choosing between heating and food).

After the immersive tasks, the afternoon session centred on discussions preventing households from falling into fuel crisis during the energy transition. Participants were challenged to think beyond data and consider the impact of policy changes on their personas.

The session prompted reflection on three possible scenarios: 100% hydrogen for heat, electrification, or no change—emphasising the need for people-centric policies.

Tactics:

- Targeted outreach to key influencers driving energy industry change, using Xoserve's strong industry connections, ensuring the right people were in attendance.
- Printed assets: persona lanyards, booklet and banners.
- Social media sharing with event hashtag, tagging Xoserve and FBF
- Opening/closing speeches from Xoserve's CEO and FBF's founder.
- Feedback forms for attendees to complete before the end of the day.
- Guests were asked to give verbal or video feedback about their experience.
- A digital report (instead of a printed one) to cut costs and facilitate sharing with colleagues for broader discussion.

Research:

To ensure the event's authenticity, we drew real-life details from the stories of those seeking help from FBF, including:

How people seek support (through food banks), hence the inclusion of these mechanisms in the budgeting activity.

Real-life testimonies of living in a fuel crisis, providing the "killer insight" to inform the personas.

Ethical and legal considerations led to name and location changes, with voiceover actors protecting identities, yet the narratives remained authentic. These real-life stories underscored the event's core message: energy decisions directly impact real people.

The event was hosted in Birmingham, in the West Midlands, as research showed the region has the highest fuel poverty rate.

The afternoon discussions were guided by the PEST (political, economic, social technological) model, encompassing the upcoming general election, the cost of living crisis, social versus private renting, and technology accessibility for energy support.

Output and outcomes:

Objective 1:

48 attendees

Event hosted on 21st March

17% from consumer support services (e.g. Citizen Advice)

17% from public body inc. Government (DESNZ, Ofgem)
6% from academia and think tanks
60% from energy organisations (networks, tech, supplier)

Objective 2:

Feedback showed an emotional impact on the audience that met event sentiment objectives. Attendees described the event as “human-centric”, “impactful”, “eye-opening”, “real”.

Six video testimonials from guests on their changed perception of fuel crisis because of the event.

Objective 3:

70% of participants completed feedback forms.

73% rated the event as "great" and expressed interest in future events.

Over 70% rated it 8/10 or higher for overall satisfaction.

Objective 4:

A digital report was sent out to all participants with a summary of the feedback and discussion points.

FBF objective:

On the day, several companies expressed interest in doing a similar event.

The event was so powerful that Ofgem, The Welsh Government and The Scottish Government approached Xoserve and Fuel Bank to repeat it. We recently organised another event in Scotland, one in Cardiff, and a fourth one is planned to go live soon in London.

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.