

Entrant company name: **Launch**

Entry title: **Launch: Owning Long Term Client Care**

Category: **Best Long-term Client Care**

Launch's **Own It** strategic approach helps clients take ownership of a territory over the long term and is key to the very longstanding relationships the agency has with its clients.

### **How we support clients strategically**

At Launch, we believe our client tenure is so strong, in part due to our strategic approach that we have been consistent with, ever since we launched the agency in 2001.

With over 20 years working with bp, over a decade on eBay (11 years), Hyundai (11 years) and BDO (more than 15 years), we strategically advise our clients to get hold of their narrative and **Own It**.

Whether that's encouraging Hyundai to own 'tech, design and innovation' in all its creative campaign comms, or BDO to own 'high street shopping' through our industry wide and Launch created High Street Sales Tracker, we believe that ownership of a strategic territory helps clients:

- unify comms
- ignite the earned agenda
- deliver commercially

We started working with Hyundai in 2005 and today we're three years into delivering Hyundai's first ever nationwide UK CSR programme, created by us as a major ownable territory (more on this, on the next page).

Our decade long relationship with eBay has placed us at the heart of the brand's reputation, helping it own its position as a safe and trusted marketplace. We work closely with multiple stakeholders from policy and legal, to law enforcement and government affairs, tackling a huge variety of issues and media enquiries. Our knowledge, relationships and creative approach both delivers headlines and keeps the brand away from difficult stories.

And finally, for bp, a relentless strategy built around creative first retailer communications has managed to turn a slightly dry subject (fuel, EV charging and forecourts) into an engaging one, that drives headlines. Including initiatives like the world's first ever 'Green Driving Test', that saw over 300 positive national newspaper articles highlighting bp's efficient fuels. A single-minded press office focus ensures bp spokespeople are consistently alongside mainstream retailers on panels, at events and in the media.

These examples represent some of our current cohort of clients, but Launch worked with Tesco for ten years, Butlin's for over seven years and Ford for five years. For Butlin's, our ownable 'Old versus New' campaigning strategy, saw it successfully overturn outdated brand perception and hit all its new hotel commercial targets.

We did this by repeatedly placing 'old' Butlin's alongside 'new' Butlin's, in all our creative and award-winning work. For example, stick an old 1930's chalet from Skegness, right outside its new and shiny hotel in Bognor, forcing media appraisal of just how far the brand had come. Cue over 200 pieces of positive coverage.

### **Why our agency approach is successful**

Our Own It strategic approach aside, Launch started as the UK's first ever project based agency, back in 2001 – which might appear counter intuitive to long term client care. But, while the project ethos has evolved, the principles of 'hunger, hustle, creative first, meticulous delivery and accountable results' remain and have helped us turn projects into retainers and decade long relationships.

Our **Values**, launched in 2024, also reflect this;

entrepreneurially ambitious

creatively brave

commercial and collaborative

kind and thoughtful

For a small size agency, we also put **creative first**, and our agency team includes four creatives, including agency Founder Johnny Pitt and Head of Creative, Kevan Barber.

**Media relations and earned** has been a huge part of us too, ever since 2001. And while our offer has evolved (we were the first independent to go integrated in 2006), we have never stopped offering rigorous and accountable media relations. And now with a major Digital PR lens. Yasmin Khostovan, who joined Launch over 10 years ago is now Director of Media Relations.

**And finally, our people.** Launch's Senior Management team time reads: Founder (23+ years), three Directors (11, 11 and 10 years respectively), Head of Creative (3+ years), and Corporate Associate (3+ years). Our 'people first' culture benefits clients of course.

Case study In 2021 our client team was challenged by Hyundai's UK President to develop a CSR initiative for the UK, and they came directly to us with a very simple brief: create a CSR strategy and programme from scratch and with longevity, that connects with communities and demonstrates Hyundai's mission: Progress for Humanity.

Our starting point was finding the clear space that the brand could own.

We focused on the areas most impacted by lockdown measures and the cost-of-living crisis. And 43% of teachers reported cutting back on trips and outings even before lockdowns, further exacerbating the issue for schools.

And so **The Great British School Trip** was born.

Now in its third year the programme is on course to support 160,000 pupils take school trips by July 2025, with a strong focus on children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The campaign has seen us generate headlines for our Great British Creativity Gap, launch the UK's first National School Trips Week, and this year we've created a first of its kind school careers trip to The National Space Centre.

Some headlines include:

- **160,000 school children** on school trips over the 3 years of the programme
- **11,600 teachers** engaged
- **8,200 schools** reached
- Over **600 pieces** of coverage

The total annual investment for the programme is £1m, with the majority going to a bursary and trip fulfilment. The PR activation budget is approx. 20%.

*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.*