

CIPR Pride Awards 2014
Low Budget Campaign
South Yorkshire Sainsbury's School Games 2014 "Going for Gold"
HR Media

Brief and objectives

The South Yorkshire Sainsbury's School Games programme is designed to inspire more young people of all abilities and backgrounds to participate in competitive school sport through four levels of competition.

HR Media was tasked to develop a creative and impactful campaign to promote the Level 3 Sainsbury's School Games winter finals – a major, multi-sport festival for primary and secondary schools in the region – held in Sheffield in March 2014.

Within a very limited budget, our brief was focused on achieving four key objectives:

1. Maintain a high level profile for the Games through the media within a limited budget to achieve value for money spend
2. Position the Games as a must-attend, talked about occasion in the South Yorkshire schools calendar, increasing the number of pupils and schools taking part compared to the previous winter finals
3. Engage young people in the volunteering element of the Games providing opportunities for future leaders, media and PR professionals and photographers to showcase their talent and develop their skills in a live event environment
4. Attract sponsorship to secure the long-term future of event

Strategy and tactics (including innovation and creativity)

With a limited budget and a small team available to deliver a successful campaign, creativity was key to achieving the objectives.

It would have been impossible for one PR person to preview and cover this significant event. So to tackle this problem, we set up a partnership with a local university to recruit and train up a team of young PR students to volunteer at the Games giving them valuable live event experience but also increasing the coverage of the event.

With the majority of the target audience under the age of 18, we decided to focus our campaign work on social media to engage with young people through one of their most popular forms of communication – Twitter and Facebook.

Traditional media relations was also used to engage with the school's decision makers – head teachers and PE teachers – those who have the power to enter their school into the Games.

Implementation (including where, when and for how long)

Planning started in December 2013 with the creation of two partnerships which were crucial to the success of our campaign.

Firstly, we developed a partnership with Sheffield Hallam University to identify a team of PR students who would be utilised as media volunteers on the day of finals to capture content for media use and social media. We delivered hands-on training for the students in February 2014 so they were equipped to source photos, quotes from VIPs and students, write blogs, collate results and film video footage from seven sports events throughout the one-day event as well as supervise the media. These media volunteers were vital in ensuring significant coverage of the event through traditional and social media.

In the early stages of our four-month campaign, we created a partnership with Sheffield Newspapers to ensure a high-level of profile for the Games through relevant titles including the Sheffield Telegraph and the South Yorkshire-wide Star.

With the aim of engaging school decision-makers, the newspapers were supplied with relevant news and updates from January to March. In this time, we utilised two key standalone events in the run up the finals – badminton and trampolining - to build interest and excitement and position the Games as a must-attend event.

A limited budget meant we decided to focus social media activity around Level 2 qualifying events from January to March and during the winter finals in March with regular news and updates during this time on the Games' Twitter and Facebook accounts. During the Games, pupils were encouraged to share their experiences with tweets appearing on a live Twitter feed in the venue where the event was held. Social media details were promoted around the venue to encourage schools to create a buzz about the event.

During the four-month campaign, we also developed a database of local businesses to target during periods of high publicity for sponsorship or in-kind support of the Games.

***Research, planning, measurement and evaluation (outcomes and outputs)**

1. *Maintain a high level profile for the Games through the media within a limited budget to achieve value for money spend*

High profile local & regional media coverage across south Yorkshire region, print, online & broadcast media coverage

- 31 items of print, broadcast and online media coverage
 - Media reach of 2.2 million
2. *Position the Games as a must-attend, talked about occasion in the South Yorkshire schools calendar, increasing the number of pupils and schools taking part compared to the previous winter finals*
- Increased volunteer involvement by 88%, schools engaged by 60% and participant entries by 71% compared to previous games

- 236,000 Twitter impressions in the three months building up to the event
 - 166 retweets in the three months building up to the event
3. *Engage young people in the volunteering element of the Games providing opportunities for future leaders, media and PR professionals and photographers to showcase their talent and develop their skills in a live event environment*
- Recruited 10 media volunteers from Sheffield Hallam University PR course and trained up to cover Games
 - Volunteers given responsibility for social media, photography, video footage, sourcing results, quotes and interviews enhancing resulting media coverage
 - Increased event PR support by 400%
4. *Attract sponsorship to secure the long-term future of event*
- Secured Games T-Shirt sponsor – Xamax – through increased media presence

Simon Pugh, development manager at South Yorkshire Sport, which organises the Games, said: "HR Media has successfully built and maintained the profile of the Games and created a buzz about the event with key contacts generating substantial coverage

"The creative elements of the campaign such as the media volunteer partnership and media partnership were key to the success and achieving objectives within the limited budget."