

Region:	Yorkshire & Lincolnshire
Category number:	23
Category name:	Regional Campaign of the Year
Client name:	Ilkley Carnival
Title of entry:	“Ilkley Carnival takes on The Yorkshire Tour”
Consultancy:	Approach PR
Budget:	Nil – undertaken within Approach PR’s CSR commitment

Background

“Well done Ilkley Carnival. Best in my time in the town”. Jon Senior, Ilkley resident

“Great community event and spirit.” Vera Woodhead, Ilkley businesswoman

“Fantastic to be involved – best carnival yet!” Ilkley Grammar School

Ilkley Carnival is back– bigger and better than ever.

Strategic, high profile, creative PR and social media campaigns have been instrumental in the rebirth of this treasured community event.

From the brink of folding in 2011 to the success story of the 2014 May Day extravaganza, Approach PR has invested free of charge time, expertise and resources from media relations and social media to an advisory role on the carnival committee.

2014 saw Approach PR’s most persuasive and high profile campaign in the history of its CSR involvement. The carnival raised a record £15k profit which will change lives in the local community.

Brief and objectives

- Build on awareness raised through free PR campaign in 2012 and 2013
- Increase income through ticket sales and sponsorship
- Increase footfall
- Increase exhibitors and volunteers on the day
- Broaden the reach – get outsiders in!
- Be the biggest it has EVER been in Ilkley

How

- Create community buy-in, ownership, and interest in the carnival
- Create excitement through involvement
- Reignite the love for Ilkley Carnival with older and younger generations
- Broaden awareness with media coverage from January to May
- Utilise social media to engage with community, secure sponsors, exhibitors and sell tickets

Strategy and tactics (including innovation and creativity)

Parental engagement

Decision makers and influencers parents must be onside for the carnival to work.

We:

- **Involved** parents by writing PTA members for **their advice** on this year's theme
- **Feedback** their comments to the committee and "The Yorkshire Tour" was selected
- **Informed** parents about the decision and reinforced their role in "making it happen"
- **Emphasised** through the media: "*After consulting with Ilkley parents... the theme will celebrate Yorkshire with a nod to the Tour de France.*"
- **Engaged** with costume making and ticket buying parents online

Schools

Winning over headteachers who can influence parents, PTAs and teacher volunteers was imperative.

We:

- **Wrote** to 10 heads in January advising of the theme and encouraging involvement
- **Invited** pupil involvement in creating the carnival programme cover
- **Expanded** the 50% beneficiary process to include schools
- **Personalised** letters including images of their parade entries for all schools thanking their support and effort on the day
- **Created** certificates for every participating school in the parade

Retailers

Retailers are a "shop window" for Ilkley Carnival. Engagement ensures the carnival is advertised throughout the town and creates an inclusive atmosphere.

We:

- **Invited** past winners to launch the Window Display Competition on top of Ilkley's Cow and Calf rocks
- **Canvassed** all retailers
- **Attracted** the attention of the Yorkshire Evening Post who asked to adopt the initiative across Yorkshire to support the Tour de France!

Local businesses

Until our involvement, Ilkley Carnival did not proactively seek business sponsorship.

We:

- **Created** sponsor packages including:
 - Parade
 - Craft tent
 - Stage
 - Arena
 - Main
- **Secured** sponsors for all categories through media which communicated the credibility of and support for the event

- **Secured** sponsor media coverage, programme adverts, banners on the carnival field and credits throughout carnival day
- **Created** a social media Vine asking businesses to “sponsor in 2014”

Community groups and volunteers

Ilkley Carnival profits go back into local groups. This message needed reinforcing with high impact news and a “primary beneficiary” scheme where one group receives half profits raised.

We:

- Made a **media plea** for more beneficiaries to apply for carnival funds
- **Tweeted** for beneficiaries
- **Created** an easy application form via the website
- **Created a shortlist** of applicants to present to the committee
- **Announced** the selected LS29 Special Needs Support Group to press
- **Supported** non-successful applicants through twitter and media coverage

Additional creativity

We needed carnival standout in a year dominated by the Tour de France. We:

- Created a planner scheduling all social media and press activity from Jan-May
- Ensured Ilkley Carnival's theme was included in Tour de France-themed event coverage
- Created alternative carnival home page with a Yorkshire dialect translation
- Created all web copy including an overview of the charities benefitting from 2013 profits
- Drove website traffic through media and social media
- Broadened Carnival Creative from a “painting” competition to include digital submissions
- Created a social media Vine to attract sponsors, sharing through Twitter and networking hours
- Launched “Ilkley Rocks”: a three-day music festival over the carnival weekend to appeal to a wider audience
- Took NINE themed photographs to support media announcements
- Secured Stray FM as Carnival Ambassadors who gave free advertising and DJs at the event
- Created and supervised a stage plan involving acts, awards presentations and sponsor activity

- Inspired a local girl to create a Lego video encouraging local support. Seen by over 33,000 people following retweets from BBC Radio Leeds and national journalists
- Used Twitter to find a Wii for Ilkley Stroke Club – an unsuccessful primary beneficiary applicant. Answered within hours, the Wii was donated by a family who saw the post. The story made traditional media headlines.

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

General statistics

- Created 16 news releases in 15 weeks to announce carnival developments
- Generated 82 pieces of press coverage
- Reached 9,774, 501 audience with 50% of coverage outside Ilkley
- Secured two national press slots in The Metro including a half page picture story
- Secured four radio news stories with committee and beneficiary interviews
- Over 3,500 unique visits to the website on the day of the Ilkley Carnival event
- Over 30,500 unique visits between January and May 2014

Social media statistics

- 300 new followers since the account became active for Ilkley Carnival 2014 (41% increase)
- 100 new Facebook 'likes' since the account became active for Ilkley Carnival 2014 (69% increase)
- 646 Twitter mentions since November 2013 (averaging over 3 per day)
- 636 Twitter mentions since January 2014 (averaging over 4 per day)
- 162 individual account mentions since November 2013 (average of just under 4 tweets per account)
- 831 tweets and retweets since January 2014
- 1,111 retweets of @IlkleyCarnival tweets
- 79 Twitter mentions on the day of the event
- The hash-tag #IlkleyCarnival got used 205 times since January 2014 with independent users taking account for 44 of these.
- 139 posts on Facebook since January 2014
- 356 'likes' for posts and stories since January 2014 (average of 2.5 per post)
- Organic reach of 23,749 through Facebook activity since January 2014

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- Sun journalist tweeted: "...really good family fun"

Event statistics

- Sponsorship accounted for 33% of overall income
- Footfall increased by 2,000 people on 2013
- Profits increased by £3,500 from 2013 to £15,500
- Trade and charity exhibitors up by 213%
- Volunteer organisation support up by 31% with 28% MORE volunteer hours offered
- 1,200 schools, groups and businesses involved in the parade – the biggest ever

"It was without question the best Ilkley Carnival I've been to and I'm delighted to learn so much has been raised" **Kris Hopkins, Minister for Housing and MP for Keighley and Ilkley**