



Category: Best Event

Company: Acceleris

Entry title: Catch of the Day

Brief and objectives:

The Fishing News Awards is designed to celebrate the hard work and dedication of British and Irish fishermen. Having successfully relaunched the Fishing News Awards in 2016 after an eight year absence, publishing group Kelsey Media aimed to vastly expand the event in 2017 through an increase in nominees and voters, along with increased awareness and engagement from the fishing community.

After Acceleris' involvement in relaunching the awards in 2016, we were reappointed in September 2016 to lead the promotion of the 2017 event.

Objectives:

- Devise a strategy to increase the number of nominations and votes for the 2017 Fishing News Awards
- Encourage wider engagement with the Fishing News Awards from the fishing community
- Enhance sponsor value through mainstream media coverage and heightened social media engagement
- Re-build a sense of pride in the fishing industry and the role it plays in feeding the nation.

Rationale behind event, including research and planning:

Fishermen work in one of the most challenging environments in modern society, routinely battling against rough seas, cold weather and fierce storms. Coupled with extended periods away from home, fishing is not for the faint of heart. However, despite working through these conditions to provide the nation with food, recognition of the achievements of fishermen is few and far between. The Fishing News Awards seeks to address this.

Many fishermen are extremely modest about their own achievements so the awards had to be designed in a way to avoid triggering this response. This posed a unique challenge: how to celebrate the achievements of an industry that largely shuns the spotlight.

In order to ensure the awards process was received in the right way, we devised a communications strategy built around promoting the idea that the awards are all about recognising commitment and innovation within the fishing community, rather than an opportunity to boast about one's own achievements. This was crucial to obtaining the positive response from the fishing community required to make the awards a success.

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

Our strategy was built around targeting a very niche sector - those employed within the fishing industry and its surrounding areas, and immediate family members and friends.

This strategy took on three distinct strands: generating nominations, encouraging people to vote and finally promoting the winners.

We developed a series of press releases, targeted at regional press in coastal areas and fishing trade press, designed to generate awareness of the awards' return and encourage people to get involved. In addition, we devised a social media campaign to run parallel to press activity to achieve the same goals.

This highly regionalised approach, including a tactic to invoke local pride through highlighting last year's winners, was meant to create a sense of friendly rivalry between the various areas of the country. By playing on Brixham's success in the 'Port of the Year' category in 2016, we not only encouraged those in Brixham to nominate and vote again in 2017 in an effort to retain the crown, but also provided additional motivation to those in neighbouring ports to nominate themselves in an effort to win. This approach also lent itself well to the ceremony, with groups from most large fishing communities throughout the UK attending and supporting their area.

The strategy continued to serve us well in post-event activity, with winners scattered throughout the UK generating interest in local press/radio, in turn supporting the overall message of celebrating the fishing industry as a whole.

In addition to this, we worked with the Fishing News editorial team to develop a content strategy for the awards in the newspaper, including features on the reputational benefits of awards and external recognition, to help bolster entries.

Finally, we secured quotes for use in all press releases from the event host, Rory Bremner, to leverage press interest in his involvement.

Implementation of tactics, including details of design, production and support teams employed:

Acceleris actively targeted coastal areas, particularly those with a large number of people employed in the fishing industry, with a launch campaign designed to generate immediate interest and lead to nominations and, later, votes. In order to do this, we embarked on an intensive media relations campaign, creating and issuing localised press releases and liaising with journalist contacts made during the previous year's campaign to secure coverage. In addition, we began a concentrated social media campaign targeted at fishermen and their families to encourage nominations. Following this, we initiated social media pre-promotion of the event prioritising engagement with shortlisted companies/individuals using #FishingNewsAwards.

Later in the process, the goal of our activity shifted to promoting the good work of the fishing industry to the audience we had built up over the preceding months. As we were keen on this being an inclusive event to support the fishing industry as a whole, we elected to live tweet the entire evening, allowing those unable to attend in person to join in.

Measurement and evaluation:

- 5,277,949 opportunities to see (and counting – coverage is still being achieved on a daily basis at the time of writing)
- 48% increase in pieces of coverage across local, trade and broadcast media
 - 92 pieces – 2016

- 138 pieces – 2017
- 124 of these were regional pieces in coastal areas – leading to excellent exposure for the awards sponsors in their key markets
- Achieved 38,374 organic impressions on the day of the awards
 - 67% increase in direct engagements with live event tweets
 - 47% increase in Retweets
 - 82% increase in Likes
- Generated a record spike in Google search interest for ‘Fishing News Awards’
 - 118% increase on previous record daily searches
- Secured impressive referral rate figures
 - 34% referral rate from social media – proving efficacy of our posts
 - 41% referral rate from organic searches – showing increased awareness of the brand itself
- Number of nominations almost trebled
 - 180 nominations – 2016
 - 492 nominations – 2017
- Number of votes almost doubled
 - 2,611 votes – 2016
 - 5,193 votes – 2017

Budget and cost effectiveness:

Our nine month campaign in support of the event was delivered for £8,000. Solely looking at press coverage, the campaign resulted in 660 opportunities to see or hear about the Fishing News Awards for every £1 spent.