



Category: Arts, Culture or Sport Campaign

Company: Morrison Media

Entry title: Launch of Sirens Netball Team

Brief and objectives:

Scotland loves team sports but research shows that drop off rates of school children playing sports, especially girls, is high and needs to be addressed.

Morrison Media was appointed to provide marketing and PR support for the launch of the Sirens, Scotland's first professional women's netball team and to develop a strategy which would support their ambition to address both drop out rates at school and the underrepresentation of women's sports in the Scottish media.

The Sirens is a collaboration between Netball Scotland and the University of the West of Scotland (UWS) and is the first and only Scottish national women's sports team with a television deal, with Sky Sports Mix.

Our objectives were to:

- Sell tickets for the Sirens' first Vitality Netball Superleague match against the Wasps on the 21st February 2017
- Successfully launch the Sirens and raise awareness of the team amongst target audiences
- Present the Sirens as a valuable partnership between Netball Scotland and UWS
- Showcase the skills of the Sirens and position the team as an investment opportunity
- Present the Sirens as an inspiring team, tackling the underrepresentation of women's sports.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

The Sirens was founded to help build up the profile of netball and women's sport in Scotland. Discussions with the Sirens CEO revealed that our main priority was to 'sell out' the first game of the season. Selling tickets for the first match was therefore key to all activity.

Interest in netball was neutral at best amongst sports journalists and with space for minority sports already at a premium, our goal was to create a strategy which would determine a change in attitude.

Our research also found that:

- Women's sports made up just 7% of total sports media coverage
- 20% more males participated in sport compared to females
- Women's sport receives just 0.4% of total UK sports sponsorship deals
- Netball is the second most popular sport for girls in school.

Planning was centred around engaging with audiences and identifying opportunities which would appeal to them.

These included:

- Potential investors
- Potential fans
- Amateur netball teams
- Local and national government
- Scottish sports community
- Schools
- Scottish media

Strategy and tactics, including creativity and innovation:

Morrison Media worked closely with the Sirens to develop key messages based on the agreed objectives. These were:

- The Sirens is Scotland's first professional national women's netball team
- The Sirens is on a mission to tackle the underrepresentation of women in sport and inspire change - as well as win trophies
- The Sirens is Scotland's first and only national women's sports team with a television deal
- The Sirens is a partnership between Netball Scotland and UWS

We focused on positioning the players as ambassadors, working to tackle gender disparity in sport and targeting girls and their families to establish a fan base.

We also needed to identify opportunities which would help secure investment in the Sirens and advised that targets should include businesses run by women in Scotland.

Activity was divided into two key areas: *The Sirens are coming* and *The Sirens are here*.

The Sirens are coming:

We identified potential sponsorship relationships with Scottish organisations and facilitated introductions.

We developed creative media opportunities which would drive interest and engagement in the team and in netball.

We ensured that activity focused on the team's skills and high-profile international players and developed the Sirens' tagline #changingthegame, which was used in all social media activity in the run up to and during matches.

We worked with target media to establish positive relationships and an interest in the team and the game.

The Sirens are here:

We developed a range of media opportunities for the launch focused around the players, key messages and mission of the team.

We worked with the Sirens to encourage celebrities to attend the first match and invited them to play a short game and entertain the crowd. We also set up and managed interview opportunities with players before and after the first game.

Implementation of tactics:

The Sirens are coming:

Morrison Media established relationships with Cameron House Hotel and Resort and luxury skin care brand, Ishga. We arranged a photo call at Cameron House giving the media an opportunity to interview the former Jamaica captain on a boat on Loch Lomond, the day after she arrived in Scotland.

We placed a piece in Business Women Scotland to communicate the ethos of the Sirens and call for business support and contacted key sports journalists to discuss opportunities and activity which would appeal to their audiences.

The Sirens are here:

Morrison Media delivered a range of activities to launch the Sirens. These included:

7th March 2017 – Launch photocall with opportunities to interview the principal of UWS, Sirens CEO and players before the match.

13th March 2017 – Interview with Sirens CEO and a player on STV Live at 5 discussing tackling the lack of representation of women in sport.

16th March 2017 – Interviews with players set up for BBC Scotland's Reporting Scotland and BBC Radio Scotland to be broadcast on launch day.

21st March 2017 – Launch game with pre-match civic reception. The game was broadcast live on Sky Sports Mix and the players, coach and Sirens CEO were interviewed for match reports by various media.

Measurement and evaluation:

Over 40 pieces of coverage were achieved: 20 online, 9 print and 12 broadcast.

This generated an estimated 5.6m opportunities to see - 95% of coverage was positive and 5% neutral.

In February, #changingthegame was used 587 times on twitter - 261 times on the 21st February when it trended in Glasgow.

All key messages were used consistently across coverage.

All seats were sold for the first game of the season, filling the Emirates Arena.

We established two investment relationships for the Sirens with a value of £11,000.

Budget and cost effectiveness:

The first match of the season sold out and all audiences reached.

Added value: Morrison Media delivered *The Sirens are here* photo call, media management and launch game as pro-bono work.