

PRIDE AWARDS 2017

Category: Outstanding Public Relations Consultancy

Company: Weber Shandwick

Date of incorporation, number of employees - including executive / support staff – and annual fee income:

Date of incorporation: 13 November 1989

Number employees: 56

Income: £notforpublication

Business objectives and analysis of performance against budget over the past three years:

Our business plan focusses on driving growth while leading in a continually changing marketplace. We've recruited more talent with different skills, invested in people development, and improved where we work - all while increasing revenue and profits.

Talent

Over the last three years our number of employees has increased by 22% to 56 people over three offices. We have driven up productivity - over-servicing is down 9% and revenue per employee increased by 5%.

Investing in people development

Our training budget has increased by 10% each year over the last three years.

Improving where we work

We have invested in new offices in Glasgow and Aberdeen – both larger, bright open-plan offices with superfast internet. We've created lovely areas for staff to relax and think. We are also better connected as the first agency to use Facebook Workplace - holding regular online meetings between the three offices. Our new cloud server provides access to our data wherever our people are to support remote and flexible working.

Increasing revenue and profits

Our revenue has increased by notforpublication% over the last three years from £notforpublication to £notforpublication and profit has soared by notforpublication%.

A brief overview of business / team strategy:

Our business plan has three strategic pillars designed to create value, focused on CLIENTS, PEOPLE and COMMUNITIES:

1. Consistent and exceptional client service

When we achieved a Net Promoter Score of 9.1 out of 10 in our client survey, we interrogated the results to find out how we could improve even further. We found that clients wanted us to focus on creativity, proactivity and analytics.

How did we respond to that?

We re-organised and structured so everyone sits in a specialist area of content production, integrated media, insights or client experience.

We created new posts and hired new people in roles including strategic planning, UX design, creative director, video production.

We embedded collaboration in all that we do. By moving to one P&L across offices we removed boundaries to ensure that the right people are on the right account.

Within a month of our reorganisation **we grew six of our key clients** by 10-50%.

2. Our people – the best possible employer

We have just gained **Gold Level for Investors in People** – only 7% of IIP accredited organisations achieve this and we are the only PR agency to do so in Scotland.

Our IIP assessor said:

“You are a forward-thinking organisation. Good team work is evident and the sharing of information and learning is the norm across Scotland. People feel:

- *Empowered and able to make decisions*
- *Valued and appreciated*
- *Involved and engaged.”*

We've invested in employee experience:

- An extra holiday every year after five years' service
- £1000 bonus on five years' service
- Paid sabbaticals
- All-staff trip to Blackpool
- Three staff every year offered one month global office swaps
- Mentoring scheme – with 80% of staff participating.

3. The communities in which we operate

Delivering pro bono work is important to our staff and our community. For the past two years, we've worked with Impact Arts – a charity that transforms lives through creativity – providing £2,800 of consultancy a month, free of charge.

Over the last year, we've developed their messaging, helped upskill staff and supported them in recruiting fresh talent. We created branding for a retail offshoot and also designed their annual report. Our digital gurus have helped refine their website, and of course we've used our media skills to bring fresh attention to their great work.

A summary of commitment to CPD and professionalism:

We introduced a competitive CPD programme two years ago. Investors in People (IIP)

noted how “people are enthused by the CPD competition, where they are required to achieve 100 points by a variety of learning experiences.”

IIP believes our CPD programme makes development “continuous, respected and shared.” Professional qualifications are valued with five staff currently funded and given time to complete Diplomas from CIPR and Chartered Institute of Marketing.

A monthly Engagement Award of £notforpublication recognises staff that have performed extraordinarily well.

The results:

- 95% staff retention over three years
- Over 25% of staff promoted each year
- All four trainees promoted to Account Executive within a year
- 100% say they are encouraged to achieve high performance
- 94% say their role allows them to develop the skills needed to progress.

A summary of recent outstanding achievements, including client list growth / retention:

In 2016 we set, and met, a target of 7 of our top 10 clients all to be over £notforpublication in revenue – just three achieved this in 2015. By February 2017 all our clients in the top 10 had exceeded this.

Over the last year we won accounts with Velux, Amazon, Calysta, Cityfibre and Akselos. All of these went straight in to our top ten by revenue. In addition we won work with Whyte & Mackay, Raytheon and University of Edinburgh Business School.

Accreditation and awards:

- Sunday Times 100 Best Companies to Work For
- Investors in People Gold
- Investors in Young People
- Living Wage
- Scottish Government Business Pledge
- **Four gold and five silver at the 2016 CIPR PRide Scotland Awards**
- **Five wins at the 2017 PRCA Dare Scotland Awards**
- Best One-Off Publication - Institute of Internal Communications Awards
- Our Chair, Nora Senior, was awarded a CBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours.

A summary of a campaign you are particularly proud of, including details of the brief, objectives, strategy, tactics, outputs, outcomes and budget:

We’re particularly proud of the truly integrated campaigns we’re delivering for clients across Scotland – something that sets us apart from competition. This campaign utilised our design, digital and PR capabilities to deliver staggering sales results for the client.

Sleep to Snow:

Caledonian Sleeper wanted to promote their London to Aviemore route to snow sports enthusiasts based in south-east England.

Objectives:

1. Secure 500 sales between London and Aviemore
2. Generate 3,000 blog views
3. Raise awareness of skiing opportunities in Scotland via the Caledonian Sleeper

Key insights showed 18-34 year olds living within Greater London and the south east had an interest in adventure-fuelled weekend breaks; 60% enjoyed last-minute breaks and often organised spur of the moment holidays or activities.

Tactics

- We partnered with outdoor enthusiast Sophie Radcliffe to showcase Scotland's ski scene
- We prepared press trips with London-based media for Newsquest London, the Guardian and TimeOut London
- We supported earned activity with highly targeted paid-for social and digital display adverts

Results

- More than 4,300 sales were generated directly from the campaign
- More than 6,500 blog views
- The busiest period ever in the history of the route

Budget and cost effectiveness

- The total budget was £notforpublication
- The campaign generated revenue of more than £notforpublication – almost £notforpublication for every £1 spent.