

# University of Leeds

## Promoting Positive Behaviour

### “Italladdsup” energy reduction campaign

#### Section 1 About the project

##### Summary

As a large, research intensive University with over 38,000 staff and students, energy reduction is always going to be a challenge. With a target of a 24,400 tonne reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2020, ‘italladdsup’ was designed to grab attention, increase the importance of energy reduction and communicate the idea that with such a large community individual actions combine to make a big impact.

#### Section 2 The results

##### The problem

With a new challenging carbon reduction target there was a need to raise the profile of energy saving at the University, where it is often seen as the responsibility of Estate Services. With a large and diverse community that is used to having initiatives, projects and opportunities sold to them, a campaign was needed that would grab attention, cut through other communication and get the key messages across.

##### The approach

###### Preparation

A communication consultant was included in the invitation to tender as well as carbon/environmental consultants. The communication consultant was chosen to support the campaign as they had the most innovative approach and were much stronger in identifying the best way to communicate messaging and fit the campaign within University culture.

The campaign was developed to minimise associated environmental impact. The materials used were designed to be re-used or recycled and procured from local companies. Perhaps the best example being the straw bales used in the campaign launch that were taken away and used by local gardening projects. The carbon footprint of materials and associated travel was also calculated. This helped deflect potential criticism over material usage to ensure focus on messaging.

The 6 month period before the campaign launch was used to engage with key stakeholders and ensure buy-in from senior management.

###### Implementation

The first section of the campaign was a ‘teaser’ which involved big numbers located all over campus representing the number of students and staff at the University. The idea being that with such a large

**UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS**

##### Profile

- HEI
- 30,761 students (includes full and part time students)
- 7,814 staff
- Urban

# Winner's case study

community, small individual actions add up to a big difference. The approach worked well in creating a buzz at the beginning of the campaign and creating a captive audience for the future communications.

Future messaging concentrated on areas of high potential to save energy. This included messaging on lighting, computing and heating systems. However, the most effective parts of the campaign were focused messaging on shutdown periods over Christmas, Easter and the summer. These were backed up with clear instructions, and importantly senior management messages and support.

To maintain interest campaign branding was also used to highlight non-operational sustainability. A good example of this was the academic showcase series held during Climate Week that showed ways in which University academics were positively influencing global sustainability.

## Review

Pre and post campaign surveys were used to help judge the effectiveness of the campaign. This combined with available energy data, feedback and support from University academics led to the development of the second year of the campaign which is now in process (<http://hotspots.leeds.ac.uk/>).

## Our goals

There were three main goals for the campaign:

- 1.) To raise awareness on the increased importance of carbon reduction at the University, therefore making it easier to implement carbon reduction initiatives.
- 2.) To motivate staff and students to take action to save energy through communicating that individual actions add up to a large difference due to the size of the University community.
- 3.) To provide information of key areas where energy can be saved

## Obstacles and solutions

Audience numb to communications due to the amount of messages they receive	The two weeks teaser campaign grabbed everyone's attention partially due to the scale, but also as people didn't know what it was about. This meant we had a captive audience when the message was revealed.
A need to increase the priority of carbon reduction at the University	The 6 months previous to the campaign launch was used to get backing from senior management and was vocally supported by the vice-chancellor. The level of investment in the campaign and its scope also highlighted that this was an issue that the University is taking seriously.
Carbon Reduction seen as an Estate Services issue	The communications and theme of the campaign was about individual actions adding up to a big difference due to the scale of the University community. The aim of this was to encourage collective responsibility for carbon reduction.
Staff feeling that small actions are meaningless due to the scale of energy usage	The main message of the campaign 'italladdsup' aimed to get people to make those small changes that had previously been ignored. Numbers were used throughout the campaign to show how making small changes could add up to a large difference. These were based on University data and used a mixture of financial and CO2 savings.
Energy reduction can be a very dry topic to communicate!	The nature of the teaser campaign, the style of the ongoing messages and the links to Climate Week (live band playing etc) were all intended to make the message and subject more palatable.

## Performance and results

- An estimated £42,000 & 245 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> saved during shutdown periods. Based on electrical savings only (half hourly data from generating station complex).
- The campaign sent out a strong signal to the University community that energy saving was priority. This allowed us to set back heating temperatures in academic buildings which were generally set at 21C over the Christmas period to allow staff and students to use if necessary. Unfortunately, due to inconsistency with data we were not able to measure these savings accurately.
- Large increase in personal willingness to take action to reduce energy consumption from 54% per-campaign to 90% post campaign.
- The campaign reached a large audience, with the website having had over 21,000 visits in the first 6 months of the campaign. The high visibility of the teaser also ensured good coverage and the University social media was very active trying to guess what was going on.
- The increased profile of energy reduction led to people questioning other areas of environmental sustainability and has meant increased enquiries to the SD team. This has benefited programmes such as Green Impact where there has been a large increase (up by 50%) in participating teams and quality of submission.
- Large increase in correspondence from staff and students identifying potential areas for energy saving. Many of these (e.g. requests for timers for lab equipment) had paybacks within a year.

## Section 3 The future

### Lessons learned

- The teaser campaign was very expensive, therefore for similar campaigns it would be worth considering high impact but with reduced costs. This was taken into account when we re-launched the campaign in November 2012.
- Don't try and do too much. We planned a lot more than we implemented, this was partially due to underestimating the time involved but also through wanting to avoid message fatigue.
- Keep any website simple. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances the two people who were involved in the original briefing session were absent for the development of the site. Due to this and the pressure of a launch deadline we ended up with an overly complicated site with too much information on it. As a result the website had a major overhaul before the campaign re-launched in November 2012.
- Availability of metering data was an issue. We have had on-going problems with our metering software which enabled us to measure campus energy use (for shutdowns etc) but meant it was difficult to monitor and feedback data on individual buildings. This has made it difficult to monitor individual campaigns + feedback data to motivated individuals.

### Sharing your project

The project was also entered in the Guardian sustainable business awards and as a result a case study was published on their website. The campaign has also won an award for design effectiveness and has helped raise the profile of the topic in the design profession. The team is currently working with the Socio-Technical Centre (<http://lubswww.leeds.ac.uk/stc/home/>) to measure the effectiveness of this years campaign and to test different engagement techniques.

### What has it meant to your institution to win a Green Gown Award?

The campaign involved a wide cross-section of University staff. Winning gave us the final seal of approval for the campaign, meaning external recognition from the sector and helped to re-invigorate everyone involved for next years work.

### Further information

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