

Bringing the story of hope to life a campaign for Tesco

Background

Through its UK regeneration partnerships, a significant number of Tesco's new stores are helping to revitalise disadvantaged communities by creating employment opportunities for long term unemployed local residents, many of whom have experienced significant barriers to work.

Since 1999, Tesco has been involved in more than 20 regeneration partnerships, creating more than 4,000 jobs and helping to reduce worklessness in some of the most deprived areas of the UK.

The first of these regeneration partnership stores, Seacroft Leeds, was opened in 1999 with a blaze of publicity.

Since the opening of this store however, this successful story of Tesco's approach to working with the long-term unemployed had remained virtually untold.

With a number of major regeneration partnerships underway across the north, the time was right to deliver a communications strategy that would help bring Tesco's approach to working in partnership with the public sector and the positive impact on the long term unemployed to life in the eyes of the wider public.

The challenge

IPB was asked to tell the story of Tesco's impact, through a media and stakeholder campaign for its Gorton store in East Manchester. The partnership had embarked on a drive to recruit more than 350 staff from the area, one of the most deprived in the North of England.

Half of those employed by Tesco had been previously unemployed for six months or longer – and some had not worked for decades.

We were asked to create a 'buzz', to raise awareness locally of the access to jobs and support on offer to help residents back into employment.

We had to explain how the partnership works, placing a particular emphasis on the real stars of the programme: the long term unemployed candidates.

Importantly, this campaign was to act as a springboard for promoting regeneration partnerships elsewhere in Manchester and across the North of England.

As such, a wider objective of this campaign was to engage stakeholders and influencers with an interest in Tesco's work in other regeneration areas.

What we did

We developed an integrated PR and communications strategy, using the journey experienced by the Tesco trainees to develop a moving, coherent story about the impact that finding a job was having on the lives of families in Gorton.

Media campaign: we introduced the concept of the regeneration partnership store to the regional and local media, including the Manchester Evening News and North East Manchester Advertiser, Gorton's local newspaper. Through this campaign, using local people to tell the story, we demonstrated how Tesco's work with Jobcentre Plus the Learning and Skills Council and Manchester City Council was having an impact, changing lives and restoring hope to the area.

Each week throughout the two month training campaign, we released new information about the progress of the trainees.

Capturing results on camera: during the eight week training programme, we followed the trainees with a film crew and captured the emotion, energy and the success stories to produce a ten minute DVD. This was the first time 'real life' footage of the impact of Tesco's regeneration activities had been captured in this way. As such, we were adding human depth to the already impressive track record demonstrated by Tesco's employment statistics.

The DVD would be used by Tesco as a tool to demonstrate the effectiveness of its regeneration partnerships to political stakeholders and partners across the North of England.

Celebrating the graduates' success: we were asked to organise a 'graduation ceremony' to celebrate the success of the 130 local people who had completed the training and secured work at Tesco's Gorton store.

This ceremony was held at the resplendent Gorton Monastery, itself a figurehead for regeneration activity in East Manchester after undergoing an incredible transformation to be brought back into public use after standing derelict for years. The event was hosted by BBC TV's first Apprentice, Tim Campbell, and was attended by local MP Sir Gerald Kaufman and senior representatives from Jobcentre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council and local authorities from across the North West.

The media were also invited to the event, and given the opportunity to speak to Tim Campbell, representatives from Tesco, their new employees and partners.

Bringing the story of hope to life a campaign for Tesco

Results

- The media campaign delivered a number of impressive hits, with coverage secured in the Manchester Evening News, North East Manchester Advertiser, New Start, The Grocer, and a number of business and training publications and websites. BBC GMR and Channel M also attended the graduation ceremony and broadcasted from the event on the day.
- The DVD has been well received by Tesco's stakeholders, and has been used at a number of events and presentations in connection with regeneration partnership activity across the North.
- The ceremony was incredibly successful, with more than 200 people attending on the day. This approach has been replicated for the launch of other Tesco stores in Manchester, which IPB have also supported.
- IPB's approach to developing compelling, robust communications to support Tesco's work continues apace. Since Gorton, we have been involved in partnership activity in areas including Leigh, Bolton, Eston, Eccles, Leeds, Liverpool, Huddersfield and Doncaster.

What the client said

- “ Our approach of working with a range of public sector partners to deliver jobs for the long term unemployed was brought to life superbly by IPB's hardworking and integrated communications campaign. ”

Michael Kissman, Tesco Corporate Affairs Manager

