



Helena Partnerships

Project: Customer focus

Areas: Rebranding, customer service training, customer insight, employer branding

Helena Partnerships is the leading social housing provider and regeneration partner in St Helens following its successful LSVT (large scale voluntary transfer) from St Helens MBC. Customer Plus was engaged in July 2007 to rebrand the business so that its corporate identity better reflected the increased scope and quality of its services since transfer. Following the success of this project Customer Plus has been retained to advise on several projects to embed a customer focused culture resulting in Helena Partnerships receiving the Customer Service Excellence accreditation in 2010.



The brief

Customer Plus' original brief was to develop a new brand identity for Helena Housing. Helena's directors were concerned the existing brand identity did not reflect the nature of the breadth and quality of the company's services in the post-transfer era which had developed beyond the rental of bricks and mortar into community services, construction services, worklessness and property development. The new brand should also facilitate the delivery of these services in new geographical areas.

The aim was to build a brand identity which preserved Helena's core values whilst stimulating progress towards Helena's ambitious business plans.



Creating the brand

The process was driven by thorough research of Helena's customers, staff and partners as well as Customer Plus' own knowledge of the field of marketing social housing and community services. Whilst the option of a name change was considered it became apparent that Helena was a neutral name in geographical terms and its retention would maintain the goodwill of residents, staff and partners alike. Building on Helena's strong performance as employer and partner, the 'group' name of Helena Partnerships was established together with a family of brands to reflect the various operating units.

The visual identity was brought into the 21st century by restyling the Helena triangle and adopting a fresh, modern typestyle. The red of St Helens, long associated with its world class rugby league team, was also retained.

Living the brand

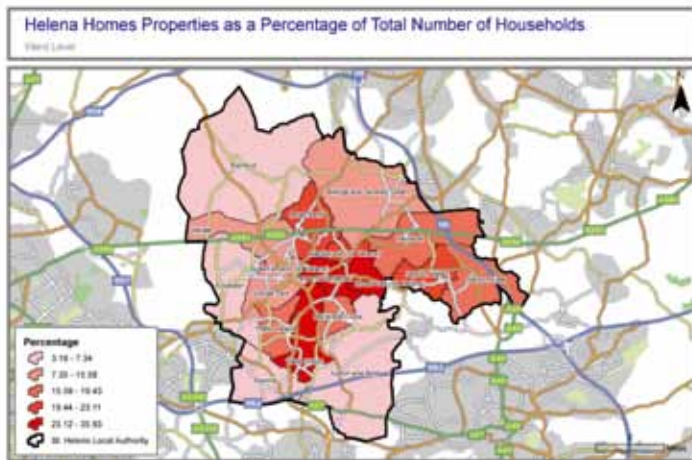
Customer Plus also introduced the concept of 'living the brand' stretching the initial design remit into a thorough evaluation of Helena's brand values and what it means to serve and be served by Helena. This activity was facilitated through a series of workshops involving key players from each business area to agree how the brand would come to life through products, behaviour, environment and communications.

A master project plan was created for launching the new brand which involved establishing a team of Brand Champions to ensure the rebrand penetrated every aspect of the business. All 500 staff were briefed on the what, why and how of the new brand so that come the launch date everyone was fully committed to the new direction.



Happy customers

Following the success of the rebranding, Customer Plus developed core behaviours to address the findings of a significant research programme into Helena Homes customers. With a view to raising the proportion of Helena Homes' very satisfied customers by 25% in three years, the behaviours were designed to address customer concerns about how key support services such as anti-social behaviour, tenancy enforcement and complaint handling were delivered. This training was so successful that Helena Homes reached its three year goal in just nine months.



Customer insight

Helena's directors continued to raise the bar and commissioned Customer Plus in partnership with Experian to create a sophisticated analysis of the characteristics and behaviours of its customer base in order to target resources and services more effectively. Quick wins included a significant increase in benefits received by eligible groups and more bang for Helena's food co-operative's marketing buck. Subsequently Helena has developed eight target customer segments each of which is targeted with relevant services through relevant channels thereby improving customer experience and cost-to-serve.

During this time Customer Plus has worked on a range of ad-hoc projects including employer branding, complaint management and senior managers' presentation skills.

Client feedback

“Customer Plus has worked in a very successful partnership with Helena to help us deliver our business goals. Balancing creativity and business sense Customer Plus has brought a fresh approach in helping us to raise our game. Customer Plus always practices what it preaches and delivers its work in a timely and responsive manner.”

Liz Haworth, Director of Neighbourhoods, Helena Homes

For further information or to arrange a free discussion please contact us.

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