

North East Lincolnshire Council

Project: Marketing the Diploma in North East Lincolnshire Area: External communication materials

The Diploma was launched in 2008 as a new qualification for 14-19 year olds. The Government charged all local authorities to provide access to all 17 Diploma lines of learning by September 2013. North East Lincolnshire intends to have this provision in place for September 2011.

Diplomas have been developed by a consortium of employers, schools, colleges and universities to help young people of all abilities realise their potential and gain the knowledge and skills needed in a 'real world' environment.

North East Lincolnshire recruited Customer Plus in May 2008 to create a marketing and communications plan, and produce all the materials required for a successful introduction of the Diploma.



Aim and Objectives

To develop a communications and marketing strategy and produce all required material to support the implementation of Diplomas in North East Lincolnshire from September 2009.

Objectives:

- to identify all stakeholders to the Diploma
- to develop the key messages to target different stakeholder groups
- to determine the means for dissemination of information
- to produce all materials that need commissioning
- to create a timeline for the roll out of activity

Delivery

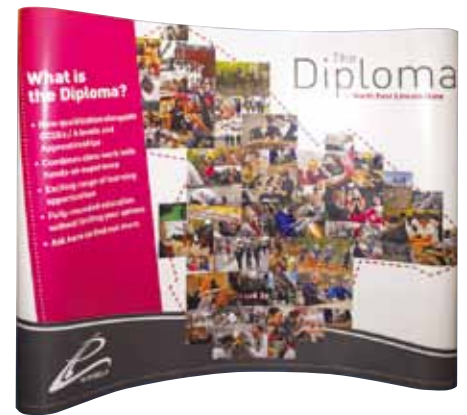
Educational initiatives are usually complex, and this was no exception. It was therefore essential that we adopted a very clear planning process at the outset.

Customer Plus employed a principle of stepped communications, designed to take stakeholders carefully from 'unawareness' to 'action'. It was recognised that any attempt to shortcut the process was likely to lead to confusion and inertia.

There were several distinct stakeholder groups or audiences and the intended action for each varied. For students, we focused on encouraging them to sign up to the Diploma; for teachers a willingness to recommend the Diploma; and for parents and employers (often an overlapping audience) an understanding of the benefits of the Diploma.

Part of the planning process was therefore to identify a lineage or seniority in the audiences. For example, it may lead to confusion or lack of willingness to engage if students were better informed than teachers.

Once the planning stage was completed and the materials required had been identified, we began to produce the items to the specification and timelines set out in the communications plan. The materials included an exhibition stand, informative brochure suite, posters, practitioner's guides and 'Diploma Explained' booklets.



Client feedback

“The quality of the work Customer Plus produced, the customer care, and the attention to detail have all been first class.”

Andy Clough, Advisor for Student Achievement, NELC

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