

A close-up of a hand holding a glowing, golden particle. The background is a blurred industrial setting, likely a railway workshop, with scaffolding and bright light coming from a window. The ScotRail logo is visible in the top right corner.

Doing our personal best



Marketing Star Awards 2015

CATEGORY

4. Sector; 4.5 Tourism and Leisure

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Chapter 1:

BACKGROUND, AMBITION AND CLARITY OF OBJECTIVES.



IN TRAINING

2014 was a significant year for the ScotRail Franchise for a number of reasons:

It was the final year of a 10-year-long franchise and the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games arrived at a sensitive time in the bid evaluation process. There was an increased focus on delivery and a less forgiving environment if any problems occurred.

Alongside the Ryder Cup, Glasgow 2014 was one of two major events this year. These events came on top of ScotRail's seasonal activity and put increased expectations on their ability to deliver.

ScotRail had originally been regarded a delivery agent of Glasgow 2014. However, this changed in February 2014 when ScotRail was pleased to announce its Official Supporter status as part of a FirstGroup partnership deal.

This was the ideal opportunity to increase visibility of the brand through association with the Games and to use them as a way of emotionally connecting with ScotRail's customers.

In order to make the most of this sponsorship opportunity, ScotRail set two clear objectives:

- **Brand** – Increase positive perceptions towards the brand among consumers, and grow awareness.
- **Cultural** – Involve staff as well as the communities ScotRail serve. We wanted to bring the Games to *them*, as well as taking *them* to the Games.



Chapter 2:

STRATEGIC THINKING AND EFFECTIVE PLANNING.

Preparing for the Games

Sponsorship of the biggest sporting event ever to take place in Scotland meant delivering a clear vision. A mission for ScotRail to unite behind, whilst also achieving the brand and cultural objectives. Rail operators rarely receive any thanks for getting people to their destination on time, yet social media is set alight with negative comments around disrupted journeys. With this in mind, we defined a focused mission for all communications:

To increase positivity towards the ScotRail Brand.

This vision and these objectives were unique for a train operator, as they weren't encouraging people to buy tickets. All games ticket holders received free travel on ScotRail, so they knew the network would be under

pressure. This made the task of increasing positivity even more challenging.

We recognised that to increase positivity towards ScotRail we also needed all ScotRail's staff to embrace the mission and recognise the part they played.

So our proposition had to be single-minded and flexible enough to support customers and staff, whilst also working through all phases and channels of the campaign.

This proposition was:

'Going the extra mile to improve your experience during the Games'

We wanted the campaign to champion the people of ScotRail and help to present the human face of the brand.



We developed a three phase plan:

Anticipate

Introducing the human face of the brand pre-Games.

Participate

Communicating to consumers how we would improve everyone's experience during the Games and encouraging ScotRail's staff to get involved.

Celebrate

Thanking everyone for giving their all.

An effective campaign needs a creative execution that's memorable, clear and motivating. So our single-minded proposition of **'Going the extra mile to improve your experience during The Games'** was given to a number of creative teams.

The response was a simple and impactful creative idea that championed staff and communicated our proposition in a very human way:

'DOING OUR PERSONAL BEST.'

We now had a robust framework to develop the campaign round.





Chapter 3:

ORIGINALITY, CREATIVITY, EXECUTION
AND IMPLEMENTATION.

Competing at the highest level

'Doing our Personal Best' showcased ScotRail staff doing their bit for our customers during the Games – but with a light-hearted sports-related twist. It was the first time we'd featured our people in consumer communications. It aimed to galvanise everyone at ScotRail by showing them what the business set out to do, whilst also demonstrating their commitment to customers.



Rallying the staff

The success of ScotRail's Games delivery depended not only on the advertising; we needed every member of ScotRail's staff to get behind the campaign to ensure its successful delivery. This was about everyone doing their **personal best**.

Internally a communications programme was delivered to introduce the campaign to ScotRail's staff. Incentives and rewards were offered to celebrate people doing their personal best. These encouraged every single department within the organisation to take part and go the extra mile.



The advertising campaign

The advertising campaign made heroes of the ScotRail staff to communicate our dedication to going the extra mile for passengers during the Games. The posters were

shot in a dramatic style, inspired by iconic sports photography. These images were used across all three phases of our campaign.

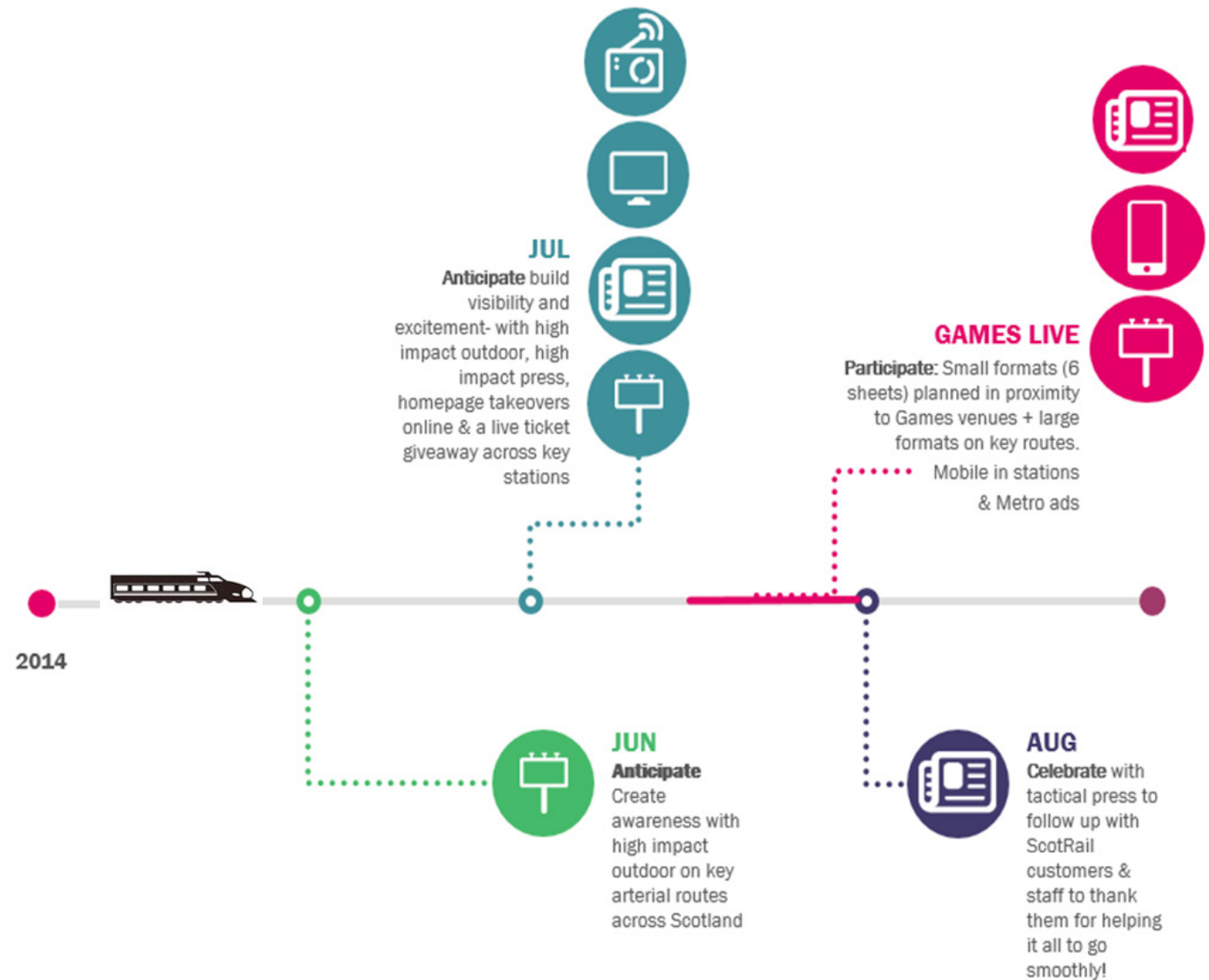


The Media Strategy

For the first phase, '**Anticipate**', we wanted to create a sense of excitement and visibility that would build as the Games got closer. Mediacom hand-picked 41 of the best premium outdoor sites on the arterial routes into Glasgow. They rotated the posters to ensure fresh, exciting placements and owned these for the 6 weeks leading up to the Games.

In July, we layered high impact press, online homepage takeovers and finally a live ticket giveaway across Radio Forth, Clyde and a Scotland-wide Bauer networked show on the Saturday before the Opening Ceremony to really ramp up excitement in the lead up to the Games.

Digital activity and social media support was amended tactically to support the campaign and help direct travellers around disruption. As the Games approached, the media all moved closer to the venues and affected routes in our '**Participate**' phase. Around venues, high impact outdoor was brought more into the pre-games experience with 6 sheets planned in proximity to games venues. Meanwhile, in station geo-targeted mobile warned travellers of upcoming disruption on their route, whilst high impact ads in Metro targeted commuters.



In addition, to bring the fun of the Games to the heart of our network, we renamed several ScotRail stations giving them a Commonwealth Games theme. 'Cambuslang' became 'Cambus langjump', 'Musselburgh' became 'Muscleburgh' and 'Polmont' became 'Pole vault', amongst others.

This activity was positively received by the public and picked up on **Buzzfeed**.



Like any race, it was all over in a flash! The last task was to celebrate a successful Games by thanking customers and staff publicly for their contribution and road-blocking the same titles we'd targeted to build excitement.



GLASGOW 2014
XX COMMONWEALTH GAMES
Proud Supporter

PROUD TO BE PART OF THE STORY

ScotRail is operated by
First

ScotRail
SCOTLAND'S RAILWAY



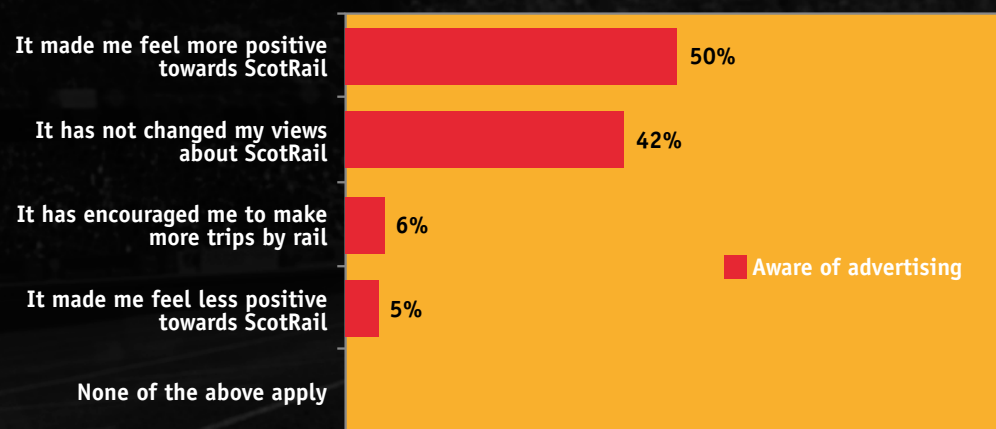
Chapter 4:

SCALE AND EVIDENCE OF RESULTS.

The MEDAL ceremony

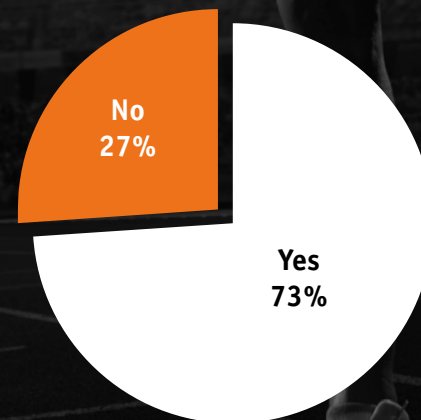
Once The Games finished, we were delighted to see that all of our hard work and training had paid off. We'd achieved unprecedented levels of awareness of the advertising, at 73% amongst frequent rail users. We also had the highest ever recorded increase in positive feeling towards the brand, with 50% of customers who'd seen the advertising, claiming they felt more positive about the brand.

Feeling towards ScotRail from the brand tracking survey



Base: All respondents who had seen a Commonwealth Games image
Source: MRUK July Brand tracking

Aware of sponsorship Frequent Rail users



Base: Frequent Rail Users
Source: MRUK July Brand tracking

High levels of digital engagement

On top of this we made great strides on digital platforms by gaining **25% more unique web users** and seeing an **increase of 63% on social media referrals** – opening up new markets for purchase and engagement.

Our Facebook page received **21.2 million impressions over the 10 days, which is an increase of 147% compared to the previous period.**

Not only did we engage with our audience, but we kept them satisfied throughout the games. A post-games survey by Transport Scotland revealed that **satisfaction rates amongst ScotRail passengers were up to 74%** during the games.

Although increasing the number of customers was not the objective of this campaign, it's worth noting that all this positivity and consumer engagement was taking place during a period of unprecedented passenger numbers.

In fact, there were almost **1 million additional recorded journeys** over the period, which is an increase of **36%** (with some days seeing an **increase of 50%** more passengers than average). This translated to an **uplift of 419,000 fare-paying passengers**, who were not attending an event, but were drawn in by the buzz of the Games.

The revenues generated by this increase in numbers generated an **ROI of £6 for every £1** spent on the campaign.

Figures shown represent daily averages before and during the Games.

Activity	Pre-Games	Games time	%Change
Web Users	38379	47859	+25%
New Web Users	19409	24349	+25%
Social media referrals	300	490	+63%
Natural SEO referrals	18606	26600	+43%
Booking engine visits	13726	17452	+27%
App downloads	595	833	+40%
App journey planning	33189	49092	+48%

The Champions

While we'd achieved excellent ROI and awareness, our overarching objective for the campaign was **to increase positivity towards the ScotRail brand** by demonstrating that ScotRail were **'Going the extra mile to improve your experience during the Games.'**

We wanted to see the results through our two key measures:

- **Brand benefit**
- **Cultural benefit**

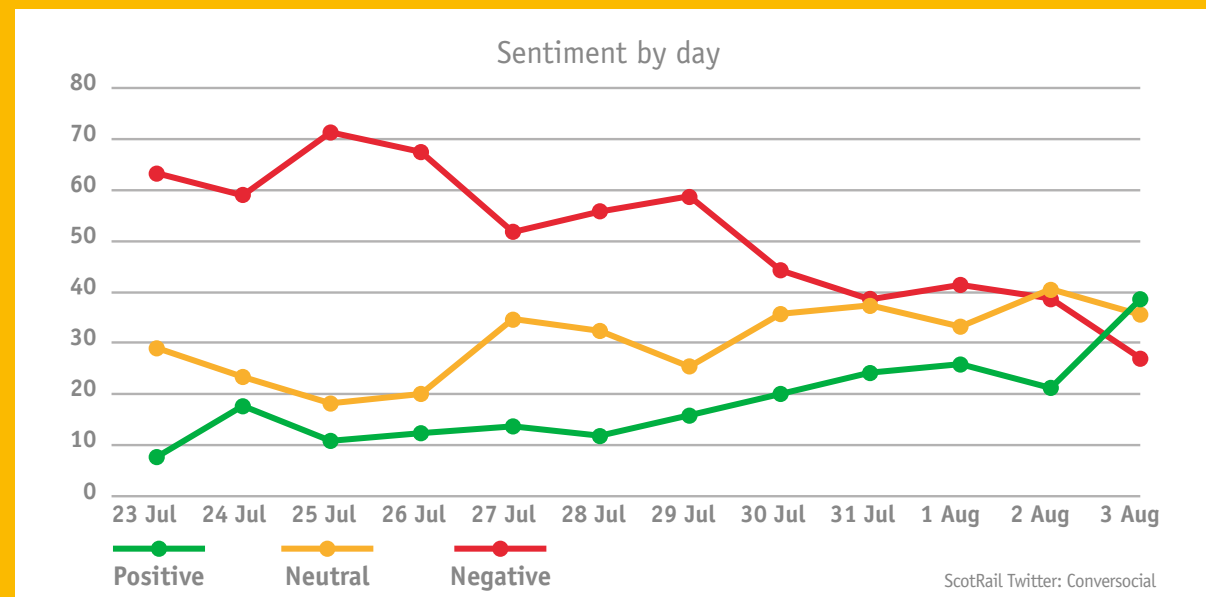
The following results show that we really did achieve our personal best.


The first medal winner is Brand Benefit

Half of all respondents who had seen the Games advertising felt more positive towards ScotRail. This is compared to an average of 38% during the lead up to the Games.

Even more encouraging was the positive sentiment and support that came through the qualitative analysis following the campaign.

Positive social sentiment on ScotRail's Twitter account increased dramatically from 9% to 40% throughout the Games period alongside a corresponding decrease in negativity (63% down to 28%):





MRUK undertook a brand analysis study amongst 450 respondents. This included six focus groups with consumers and staff. Their report found overwhelming support and warmth towards the campaign and the brand.

The campaign as a whole exceeded the public's expectations of ScotRail. ScotRail is felt to have “embraced” the challenge of supporting the Games but have also gone above and beyond; making a genuine effort to be part of it themselves, make staff feel involved and involve and look after the general public.

MRUK Brand analysis research September 2014

'These [posters] definitely made me think of Scotland in a more positive way.'

Female, Glasgow

'They have exceeded my expectations.'

Male, Edinburgh

'It shows a human side to a big corporate company.'

Online Research, Central Scotland

'They have gone above and beyond.'

Female, Glasgow

Source: MRUK Brand analysis research September 2014

The second medal winner is cultural benefit

Thanks to an innovative internal communications campaign and rewards package, ScotRail staff felt that the whole experience was overwhelmingly positive. This is despite the fact they had to work extra hours undertaking daily jobs that were more challenging than normal.

'It's amazing what you
can do with that
amount of morale.'

ScotRail staff member

'It didn't feel
like work.'

*ScotRail
staff member*

'The posters are brilliant,
they make you proud.'

ScotRail staff member

'Everybody gave 100%.'

ScotRail staff member

'I like how it brings the
employees into the heart
of the Games and makes them
the heroes of the company.'

Female, Glasgow

- Employees were very impressed with the advertising campaign and proud to be featured in the posters.
- Staff were very, very positive about the work they did during the Games, and the impact it had on them.
- It was felt to be good for morale and for working together.
- Employees were proud of how they and ScotRail responded to challenges during the Games.
- Some felt that it was more enjoyable than work normally is.

MRUK Brand analysis research September 2014

Staff clearly felt invigorated by the experience of the Games and have since expressed a desire to continue this way of working in the future.



Summary

This paper shows how ScotRail elevated their profile, increased warmth towards the brand, rewarded the communities they serve and revitalised their staff.

This was achieved by confidently grasping an opportunity and turning a challenging period into one of commercial growth and increased brand love.

