

Title:
10 years in type

Category:
2 Print

Sub category:
1.2 Business-to-Business - printed material
promoting products or services to other business
users.

Client company:
Fontsmith

Design consultancy:
Thompson Brand Partners

Date:
20 July 2012

FOR PUBLICATION



2. Executive Summary

10 years in type

Fontsmith is a type design studio, dedicated to designing and developing high quality typefaces. After 3 years of flat trading, an increasingly congested market and reducing marketing budgets, the business owner knew he had to do something significant, to kick-start the next phase of growth at Fontsmith.

Thompson Brand Partners unearthed 2 key insights that underpinned their brand-led approach – the need to get into a designers 'special things box' and the need to create a buzz to raise Fontsmith's profile.

To achieve both, a celebration of Fontsmith's first '10 years in type' was developed, with the idea of telling the font stories as they have never been told before. That and exceptionally high quality print have been cherished by the target audience, delivering some fantastic results.

Against all 5 project objectives, 10 Years has delivered big style:

(Word count 195)

53%

Increase sales
– up 53% year-on-year

255%

Increase sales of
corporate licences – up
255% year-on-year



Raise awareness
– website visits up 50%



Generate new business
leads – 613 new warm UK
leads generated



Open up international
markets - 689 new warm
international leads

415%

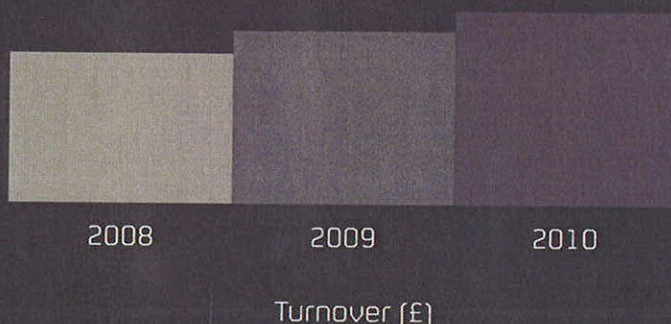
And it has already
delivered a 415% return on
investment in the first
year alone.

3. Project overview

3.1 Outline of project brief:

Fontsmith is a London-based type design studio, set up by Jason Smith in 1999. It is dedicated to designing and developing high quality typefaces for independent release, as well as bespoke fonts for UK and international clients.

Between 2008 and 2010 business for Fontsmith was generally flat. The initial buzz following launch and early high profile successes like the UEFA Champions League was replaced with lower levels of awareness (especially among upcoming young designers), increased levels of competition, and a need to persuade clients of the value of crafted type in helping make brands distinctive.



During this period Fontsmith relied on printed direct marketing campaigns, promoting new library fonts to an existing database of leads. Each booklet was designed to promote a specific typeface, rather than helping to build the Fontsmith brand.



The business owner, Jason Smith, recognised that something significant needed to be done to re-energise Fontsmith. His ambition for business success remained, so he recruited Thompson Brand Partners to provide the marketing and design expertise to help push Fontsmith onto the next level. Thompson was an existing Fontsmith customer and right at the heart of the target audience spectrum, so made for an ideal partner.

The objectives of the brief were as follows:

- 1 To increase sales.
- 2 To specifically increase sales of corporate font licences
- 3 To raise awareness levels of Fontsmith among target audiences in UK and Europe.
- 4 To generate warm/hot new business leads.
- 5 To open up international markets beyond Europe.

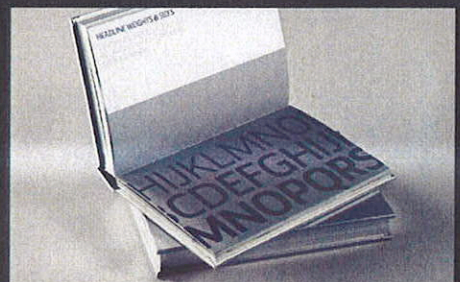
3.2 Description:

As a specialist type design agency, Fontsmith gets involved in a wide range of type-related design work. This breaks down into 3 areas:

1 Custom and bespoke design work

Working with agencies and clients, the Fontsmith team of designers is commissioned to help design type solutions, including logos, brand identities and typography, for use in advertising, broadcast, online, literature, packaging and the full range of brand communications. These commissions come via general awareness, networking and the recognition of Fontsmith as a leader in its field. Clients for this service are themselves designers.

Fit for Champions

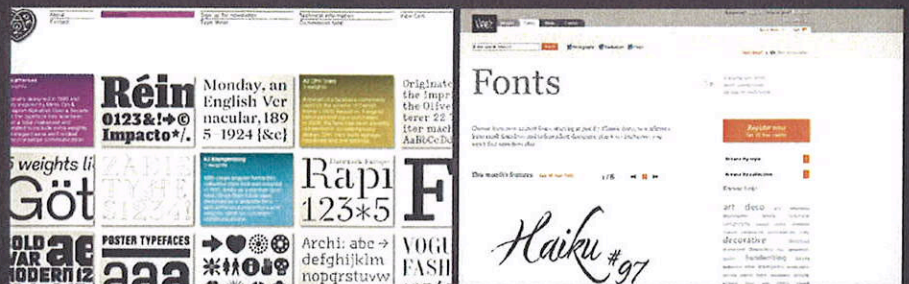


Channel 4

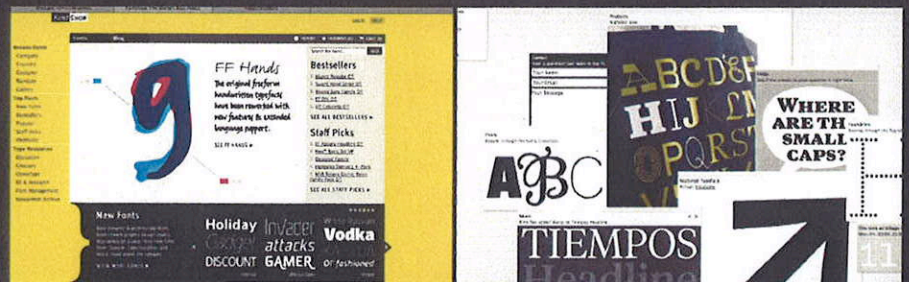
3.3 Overview of the market:

The type design market is very specialist by its nature, dominated by a small number of players. Over the last 10 years, the number of players has increased significantly, adding to the choice of fonts and type agencies, thereby increasing competition. This competition has led to downward pressure on fees and a squeeze on margins. This choice has also increased the need for each foundry to raise its profile and make sure it can be seen and heard in an increasingly congested marketplace.

The type foundries design and create the typefaces. These include: Fontsmith, Linotype, Hoefler & Frere Jones, Emigré, Dalton Maag, Suitcasetype, Lineto, Porchez, Feliciano, Underware, Commercial Type, t26, Monotype, Foundry,



The font shops are where you buy the fonts. These include: Veer, Font Shop, Fontfont, youworkforthem.com, ourtype.com, hypefortype.com, Village, Letterhead, Linotype



3.4 Project launch date:

Project start: October 2011
Pimlico teaser launch: February 2011
10 years in type launch: August 2011

3.5 Size of design budget:

The total project budget was £69,000, including print, distribution and mailing costs. This can be divided down as follows:

Design fees £19,000

Print £40,200

Collation, distribution and mailing £9,800

3.6 Outline of design solution

Even though we were members of the target audience of designers ourselves, we started the project by carrying out extensive research among the design community (both in the UK and internationally), digging for insights into where and how designers look for type. From over 100 qualitative responses, the answers to 'where do you look for new typefaces?' centered around 'beautifully crafted mailers', end-of-year press round-ups and type foundry newsletters.

The research provided two key insights that the work must respond to:

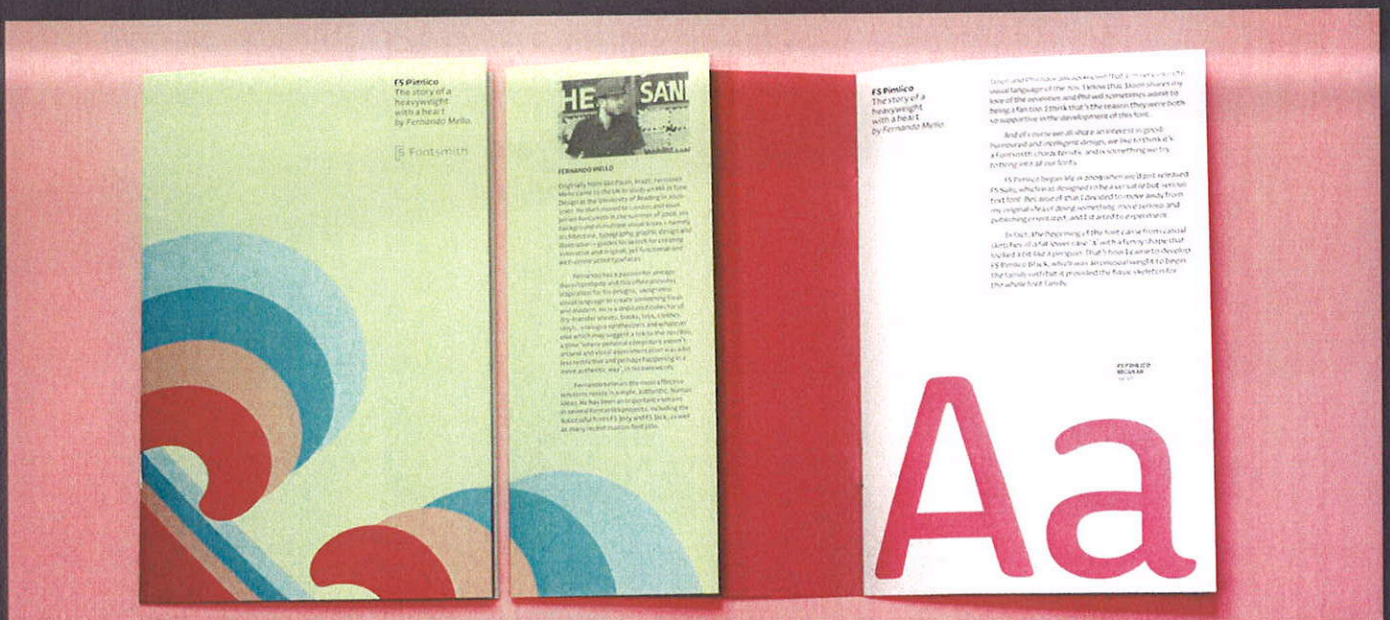
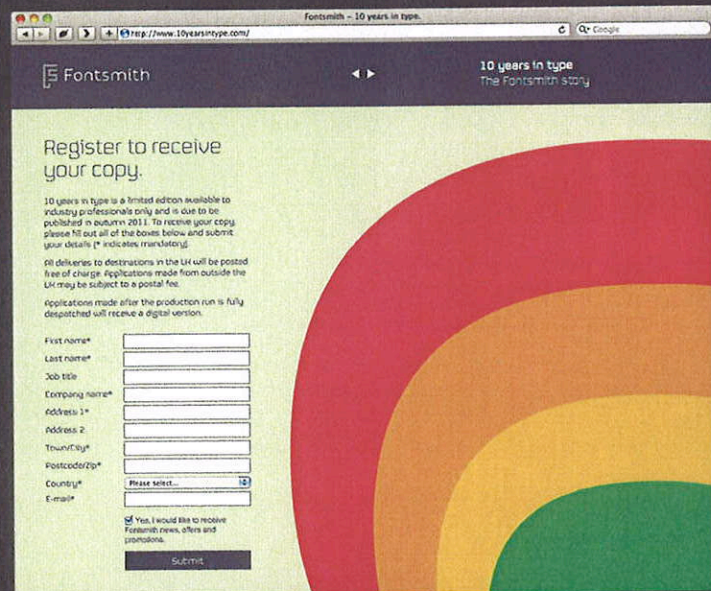
1. That we need to create a new buzz around Fontsmith and raise its profile in the press and specialist cool type blogs, so as many designers as possible are aware of Fontsmith, and the name is front of mind when the next type job comes up. We also need to make Fontsmith cool.
2. That designers respond more to beautifully crafted pieces of print than digital communications. Outstanding print is cherished and kept close at hand, in their 'special things box'. We found that all designers have one of these, and this reference material is looked at on an almost daily basis, increasing the chance of it being front of mind.



In order to achieve both, we decided on a celebration of the first 10 years of Fontsmith. This enabled us to look back at the highlights so far, to talk about the custom/bespoke and corporate licence services and to look forward with the future launches of a range of new fonts in the product development pipeline.

The timing of the release was crucial. Rather than wait for the full 10 Years publication, we recommended a teaser mailing of the new product FS Pimlico in March 2011 to achieve two things. Firstly the new product would not get lost within the bigger mailing and secondly it would help to gather pre-registrations for 10 Years mailing.

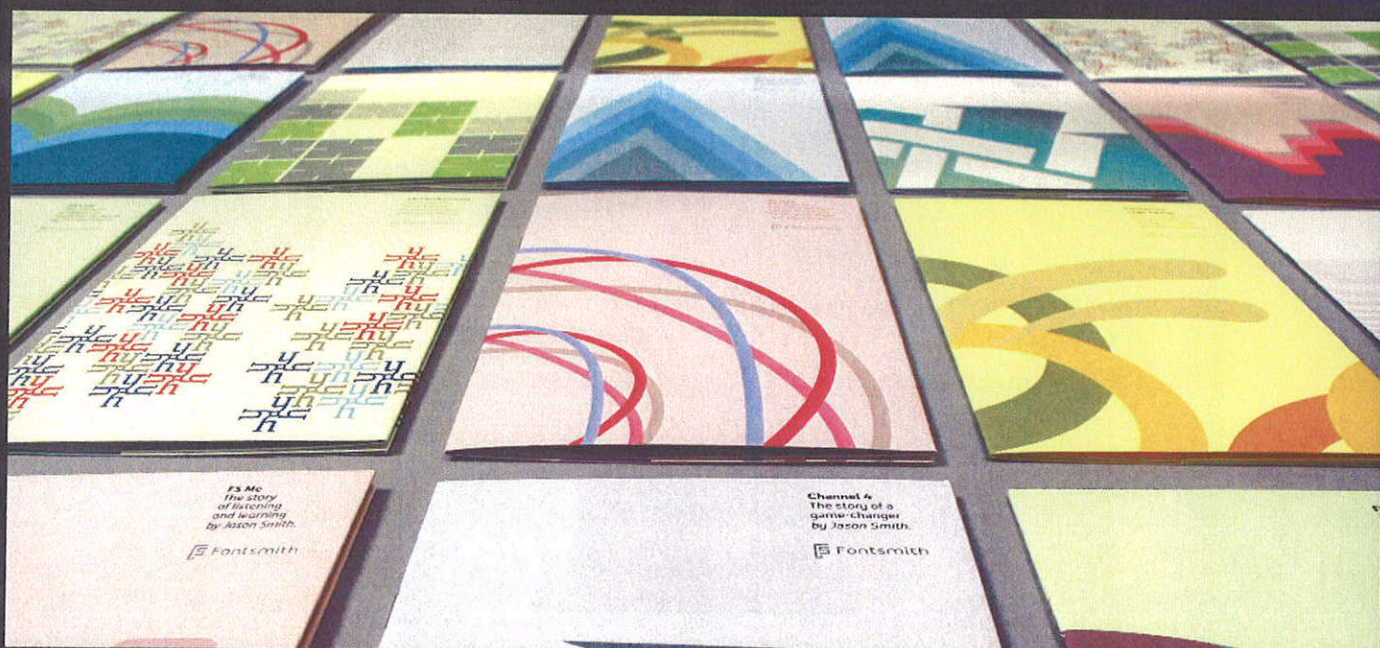
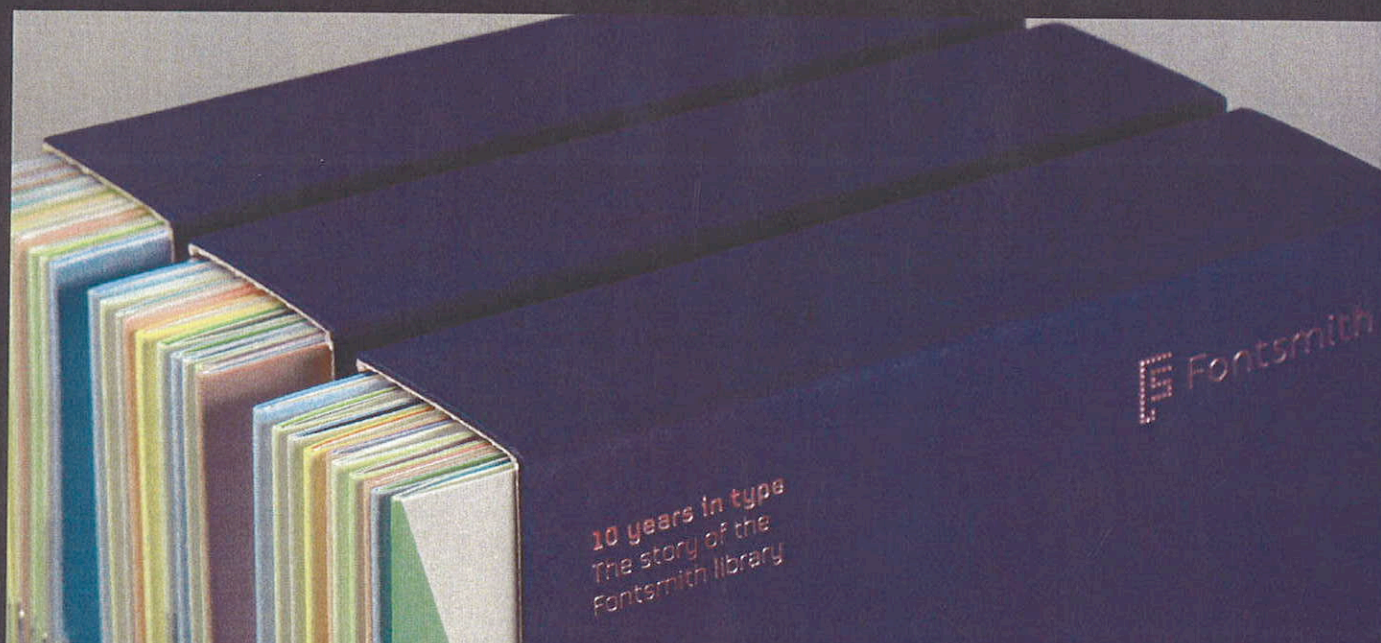
The FS Pimlico mailing went out in March 2011, supported by press and blog activity. Interest levels were extremely high because of the new product launch, but also due to the distinctive creative treatment of the print. With appealing new graphics, sensuous papers and high quality finishes, the booklet went down extremely well.



**"These stories
were told as
never before"**

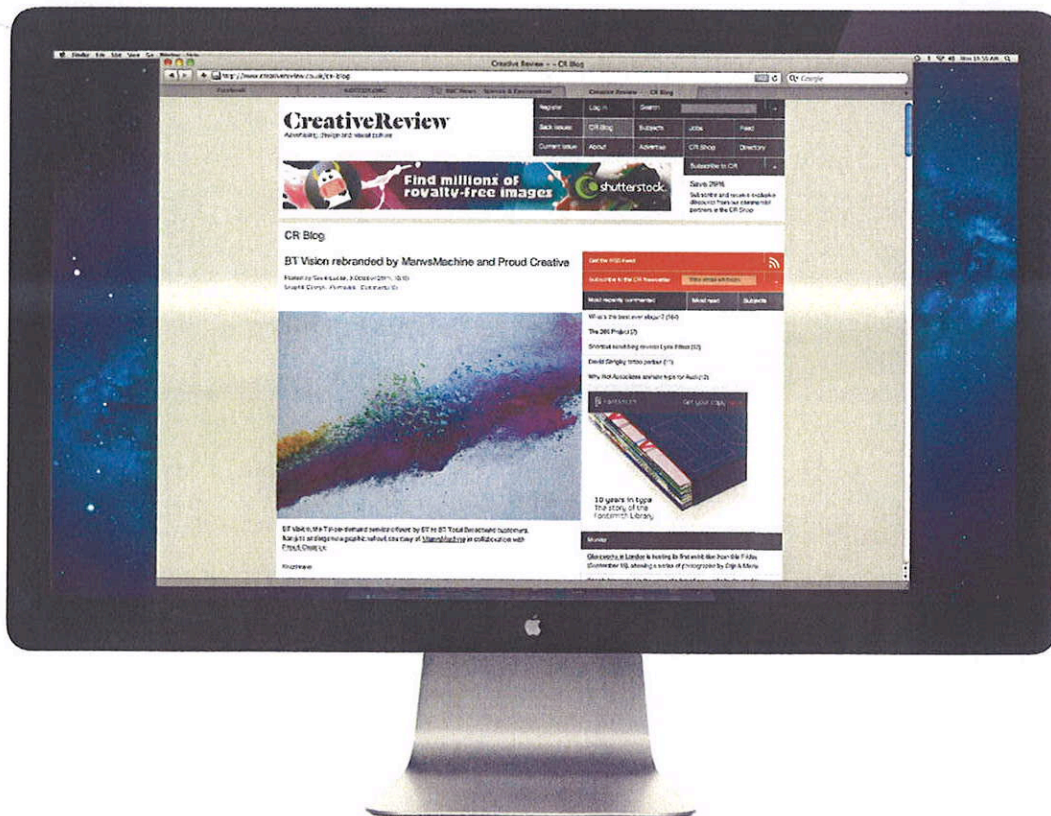
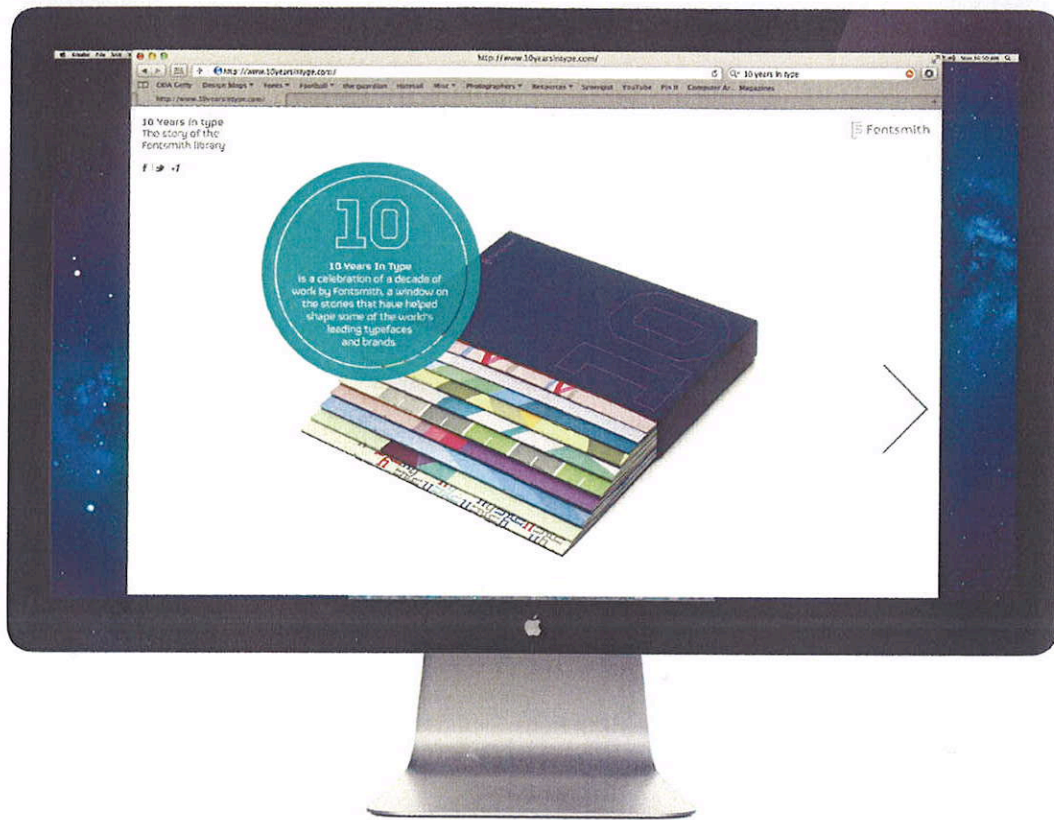
The 10 Years mailing itself was a very high quality slip-case containing a set of 10 booklets telling the stories of Fontsmith's key products and services. These stories were told as never before, supported with reference material, sketches, anecdotes and quotes from the type designers, providing the audience with a depth of information not released before.

The slip-case and booklets were designed to be cherished, and immediately got the community talking. Blog posts and comments increased as the mailing date neared, and expectation rose. Even though the mailing had been initially restricted to a print run of 1,000 copies, partly to build its value, this was increased to 1,800 because of the high level of interest.



The mailing was accompanied by a 10 Years website and press activity in response to the buzz that was being created.

(Word count: 496)



4 Summary of results

53%

Increase in sales

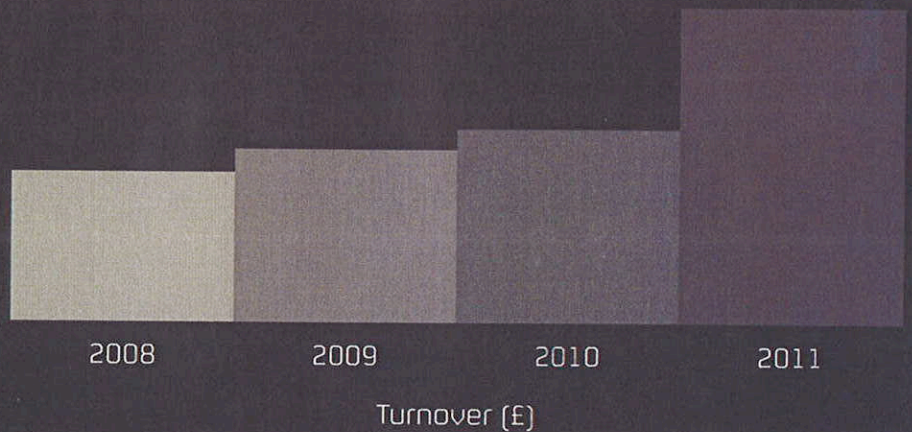
Reaction to the mailing carried on through the rest of 2011 and resulted in our objectives being met through the period to June 2012.

We have included specific results achieved against each of the objectives set out in the brief:

1 To increase sales

Fontsmith sales increased by 53%.

Custom fonts	up 22%
Corporate licences	up 255%
Web sales	up 4%
Total	up 53%



Profits have increased in line with the turnover increase, but the client prefers not to disclose profit figures.

Won major commissions for bespoke fonts from new clients including Mahou and Jaguar.

Mahou

A NEW BESPOKE TYPEFACE FOR
SPAIN'S BIGGEST BEER BRAND

CON LA COMPRA DE UN PACK
DE MAHOU CINCO ESTRELLAS
**REGALO
DE DOS COPAS**

LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY'S
GETTING A NEW JAGUAR.

JAGUAR

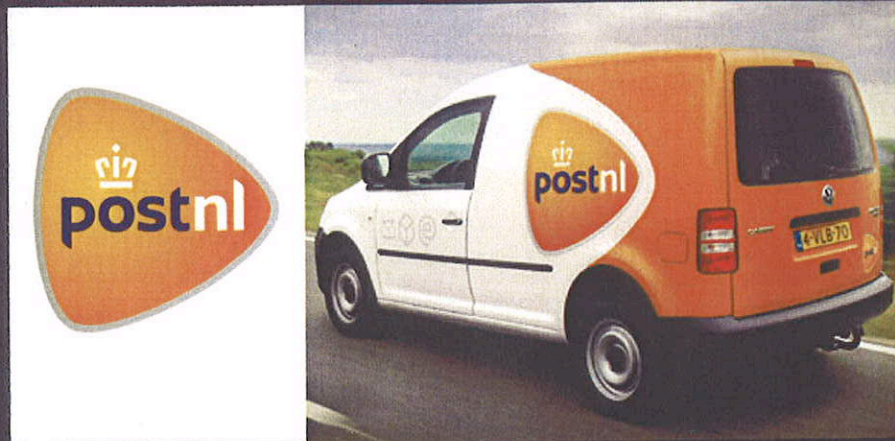
255%

Increase in corporate
licence sales

2 To increase sales of corporate font licences

Corporate licence sales up 255%. With no additional costs incurred, this represents almost pure additional profit.

For example, Post Netherlands TNT decided to use FS Jack on the basis of a corporate licence, having not been a Fontsmith client before.



50%

Average increase in
website traffic.

3 To raise awareness levels of Fontsmith among target audiences:

Average monthly visits to the Fontsmith website increased from less than 8,000 at the end of 2009 to over 12,000 by end of 2011. An average increase of 50%.

Many requests came in for Jason Smith to talk at conferences and events, including Typo London, Birmingham Type and Manchester Design Symposium.

TYPO
LONDON
2011
PLACES

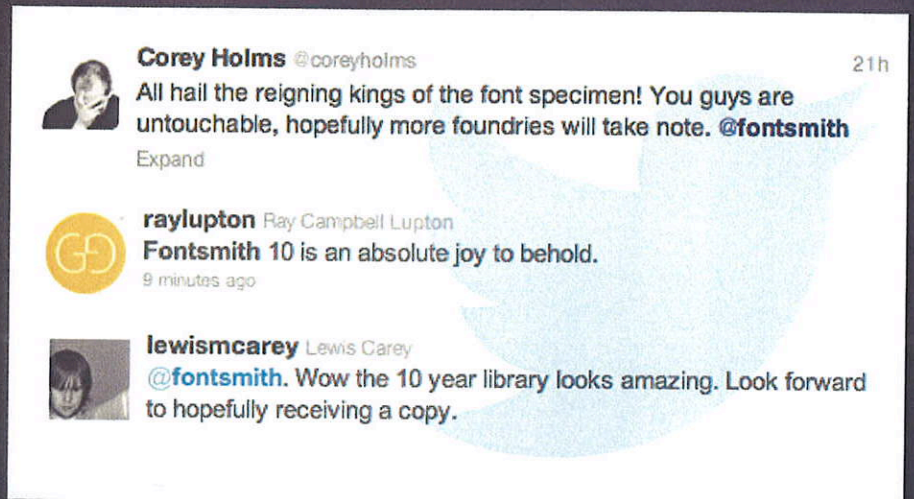
MANCHESTER
DESIGN
SYMPOSIUM

Jason also received requests to do talks at leading agencies, incl Fitch, VBat, Interbrand and Build. Usually Fontsmith has to call them!



Requests for opinions on type issues, helping set the agenda, positioning the brand as a genuine expert.

During the period, Fontsmith received enormous amounts of press and social coverage.



Fontsmith also received more approaches from type designers, is now collaborating on a new font with one, has employed an additional member of staff, got number of talented students lined up for placements. No staff have left in last year, too busy!

613

New warm UK leads

284%

More pre-registrations for 10 Years than budget.

3627

Referrals from 10 Years website

4 To generate new business leads

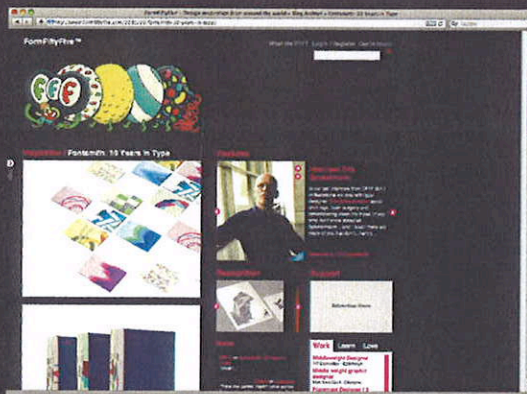
The warm lead database increased from was 2,225 in Jan 2011 to 2,838 in June 2012, an increase of 28%. This is the key contacts database used for Fontsmith marketing.

Total database contacts have increased to 10,396 (incl 8,374 agencies and clients).

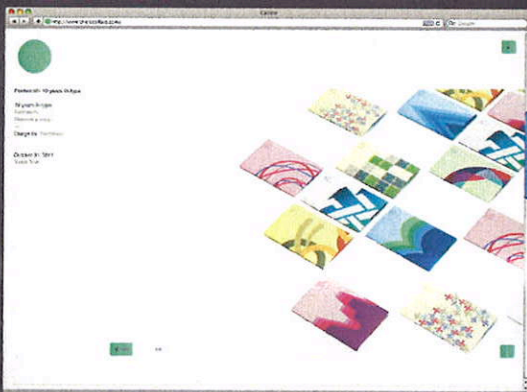
1,922 pre-registrations for 10 Years were received compared to a budget plan of 500, ie 284% more than expected. FS Pimlico marketing generated 4 times higher than planned.

Of the visits to the Fontsmith website from referring sites, for the four months from Sep 11-Jan 12, 3,627 were from the 10 Years site. This was more than 4 times the next best referral site, typophile.com.

The 10 Years slipcase was a must have for designers. Evidenced by extensive coverage on design blogs.



Form Fifty Five



Collate



NOTCOT

689

New international
warm leads

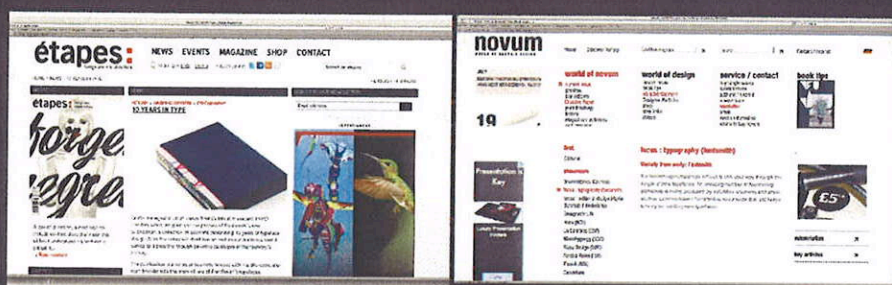
5 To open up international markets

Prior to the activity, Fontsmith had some international business, but it was looking to substantially increase the number of warm leads it had overseas and open up new country markets.

Of the 1,872 mailings of 10 Years, 689 were to new warm international leads.

This included new business in new markets to Fontsmith, including Albania, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, China, India, Mexico, New Zealand, Puerto Rico and UAE.

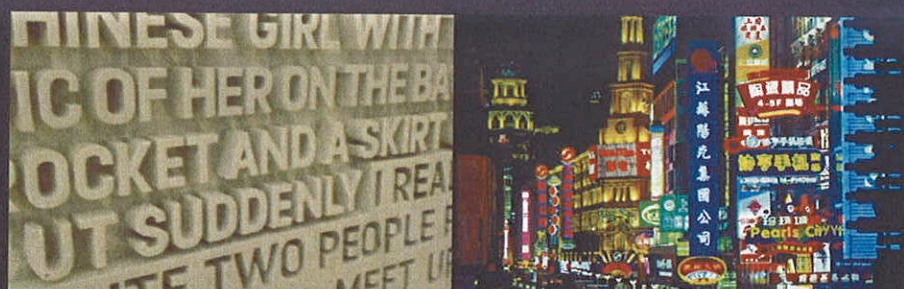
There was a huge increase in requests from international publications for Fontsmith copy and features – these included Page, Novum and ETAPES.



Major commissions were received from overseas clients for bespoke fonts incl Mahou, the largest beer brand in Spain.



Invited to participate in the Love Letters event in Shanghai.



Other results

The additional sales meant Fontsmith had to add to its team. Attracting high calibre staff was made much easier by the increased profile. This helped attract Béla Frank and Stuart de Razio to join the team.



The design industry also starting talking differently about Fontsmith. Before the activity, Fontsmith had been regarded as a corporate font specialist, focussing on usability. Now, Fontsmith is being talked about as the creator of beautiful things.



Leanne Mallinder @pia_leanne

28 Jun

More @Fontsmith type specimens by @ThompsonBP. Lovely, lovely lovely! Will go great with my others!
thisiscollate.com/2012/06/27/fon... via @thisiscollate



LeeRedpath Lee Redpath

@Fontsmith thank you for the beautiful 10 Years of Type box set, a truly lovely and informative collection. Keep up the good work!
25 minutes ago



mister_wright James Wright

10 Years In Type book set arrived today, love it, thank you
@Fontsmith fontsmith.com and beautiful design work from
@ThompsonBP

415%

Return on investment

The additional sales in the first year alone represent a return on investment of 415% on the total budget of £69,000, which includes print and mailing costs.

Jason Smith, owner of Fontsmith, on why the print has worked:

"In my view, the quality of the print has reassured designers to choose our fonts for corporate branding projects, including the library fonts introduced 4/5 years ago that have now come to maturity. The whole 10 years in type campaign has pushed awareness of Fontsmith hugely and helped change the type of project our fonts are being considered for. It's all about awareness and reassurance."