



elmwood

People Can!

A voice for the unheard

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Sub Category
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Client
People Can

Design Consultancy
Elmwood

Date
June 2012



2. Executive summary

People Can



PEOPLE CAN

After: People Can logo



Before: Novas Scarman logo

People Can is a charity and social enterprise. They work across England and Wales supporting those with greater needs and fewer opportunities in life, such as homeless people, ex-offenders and those suffering domestic abuse.

Previously known as *Novas Scarman*, they needed a new identity in order to achieve three objectives:

- Unite and engage staff and service users
- Raise the charity's profile to attract more funding opportunities
- Provide a better quality of life and more life chances for service users

The identity we created was a fantastic success, and helped them achieve their three objectives – all in the face of the recession's brutal funding cuts.

2. Executive summary continued

People Can

Three high profile projects won



of service users avoided eviction

Uniting staff and service users

Staff went from being 'splintered and hiding in silos', to feeling part of one strong organisation with a clear vision, and are working with service users on new Can Do initiatives, such as catering clubs and stage productions.

Raising the profile to attract more funding

The Young Foundation (inventors of NHS Direct, Which? and Open University) loved the rebrand, and awarded *People Can* one of three high-profile pilots to develop their Community work.

Improve service users' quality of life

People Can had a target of **65%** of users to complete planned moves from the short-term residential services. In quarter 4 of 2011, following the rebrand they achieved **85%** of users completing a move – that's **20%** more than expected.

The charity also had a target of **95%** of users of the floating support services maintaining their accommodation and avoiding eviction. They achieved **99.7%**.

Finally against a target of **95%** of users not being convicted of further offences while receiving support from *People Can*, they achieved **98%**.

More online visibility

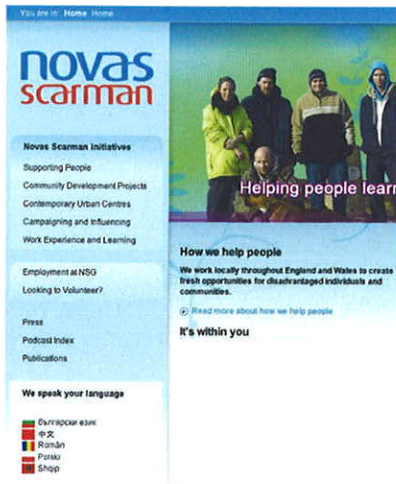
They're now the global number one entry under '*People Can*'. They've also made the second page of Google under 'Homelessness'.



People Can newspaper

3. Project overview

People Can



Before: Novas Scarman website



People Can map

Outline of brief

The brief was to create a new brand identity from scratch. It had to differentiate *People Can* from competitors, appeal to diverse audiences, and engage and inspire staff and service users. Personality, credibility and visibility were essential.

The objectives:

1. Unite and engage staff and service users to get them fully behind the brand
2. Raise the charity's profile to attract more funding opportunities
3. Provide better quality of life and life chances for service users:
 - Target of **65%** of users completing planned moves from short-term residential services
 - Target of **95%** of users of floating support services maintaining their accommodation and avoiding eviction
 - Target of **95%** of users not being convicted of further offences while receiving support from *People Can*

Description

People Can is a charity and social enterprise working across England and Wales helping those with greater needs and fewer chances, such as homeless people, ex-offenders and sufferers of domestic abuse.

Before this rebrand, the organisation was called *Novas Scarman*, and was formed from a merger of three organisations: Novas had a trailblazing record for employing service users, the Scarman Trust pioneered the 'can do' asset-based approach to community development, and PATH tackled workplace inequality via high quality traineeships for people from black minority ethnic backgrounds.

People Can take the best of this heritage and unite it behind the simple 'Can Do' principle. Often called 'asset-based', *People Can* have a strengths-based, client-led approach. So whether in a community setting or a homeless hostel, the focus is on people's talents, passions and skills rather than their problems. And the way forward is built around that, which instantly makes problems seem manageable – even surmountable. Because, when people in crisis put their skills to practical use, they're better placed to create a positive future.

3. Project overview continued

People Can

‘Our common belief is that by using their talents to help others, people in crisis can build their self-esteem and a better future. As problems grow but resources shrink, it’s vital that we do more with less and keep the focus where it matters: the people and what they can do.’

Maff Potts,
CEO
People Can

Overview of market

CEO, Maff Potts, sums things up: ‘*Novas Scarman* (as they were previously known) had gone from Charity of the Year to being investigated by the Government – we were toxic.’

If that wasn’t bad enough, staff were unmotivated, resistant to change, and there was no team spirit. Maff explains, ‘Everyone was splintered and hiding in silos’.

The rebrand was about more than just a new look and some positive spin. It had to reach far, far down into the depths of the organisation, change long-held perceptions and attitudes, and clearly communicate the range of services and innovative approach.

This was challenge enough, but the upcoming recession and its brutal funding cuts and job losses would be the real test. Already in a competitive market and with no public fundraising to fall back on, this made the competition for contracts even stiffer, especially as their main competitors are organisations ten-times their size.

Project launch date

October 2011

Size of design budget

Identity and guidelines: £29,000
Launch newspaper: £6,300
Total: £35,300



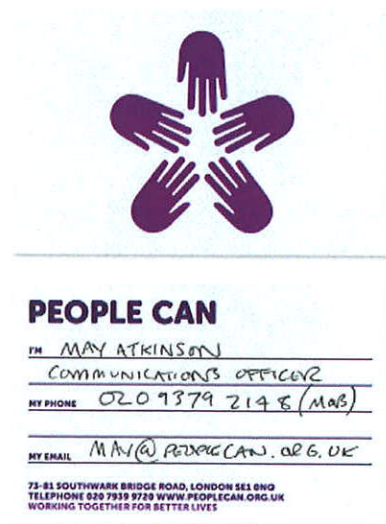
People Can newspaper

3. Project overview continued

People Can



Brand identity



Personalisable business cards

Outline of design solution

Getting noticed

Impact was essential if they were to stand out and be taken seriously by staff, service users and other audiences. The design had to embody the organisation's hands-on, people-centred approach, and no-nonsense yet compassionate personality.

Made out of hands, the striking brand identity was inspired by the all-hands-on-deck ethos, i.e. that of staff and service users coming together. It's a simple but strong badge of togetherness – a fist in the air for what they stand for. It also doubles up as a nifty language device – the asterisk in our 'frighten then enlighten' copy approach.

We created stationery for the new brand, which reflected the company ethos of making the most of people's individual contributions. Blank format business cards make them more personal and also avoided costly and extensive print runs.

Speaking the right language

Language was key to the identity. Where some organisations pull their punches, we wanted to express *People Can's* ballsiness, determination and deep engagement with the work they do. The tone of voice we created was provocative, authentic and compassionate, and a hard-hitting complement to the striking logo.

It was a genuine pleasure to be able to remove the jargon and lazy language often found in the sector. After all, nobody says to a new hostel resident, 'Hey Dave, do you want to unlock your potential?' or 'Vicky, how does a positive outcome with sustainable independent living grab you?'

Getting people involved

Many of their clients/service users go on to become *People Can* staff members. So we made this a feature, and used real-life success stories of ex-service users in the launch newspaper. It all came together to communicate the organisation's can-do attitude with a relevance, humanity and engagement not many others can lay claim to.

The *People Can* Heroes elected among the staff had incredible histories. Their Hero status had life-changing impact beyond the rebrand, helping many of them onto greater things. Sam Saunders, for example, was a trainee and since being made a *People Can* Hero has secured a job with another charity; and Mohamed had worked in the *People Can* Café after being interviewed in prison. After the café closed, he got the job of night support worker in the organisation's Soho hostel. His confidence has risen since becoming a *People Can* Hero, and he recently saved everyone from a fire by safely evacuating the hostel at night.

4. Summary of results

People Can

‘People Can and its message has very definitely survived because the rebrand was so strong, bold and very, very clearly set a new tone, voice and approach.’

Maff Potts,
CEO
People Can



Results

Even though they'd left their toxic past behind (being the subject of a government investigation, and having a disparate staff body with no team spirit), there were two significant challenges left to face. One was the recession. This put the new charity through a series of brutal funding cuts, job losses and the inevitable spiralling morale.

Amazingly, they pulled through (actually out-performing national averages in key performance indicators), which CEO Maff Potts attributes to the new identity, 'You'd expect staff to disengage after pays cuts and job losses, but Can Do activities are growing like crazy across the country with staff everywhere talking about the new language and vision.'

The other challenge was beginning merger negotiations with another charity just three months after launch. Even though the other charity had a strong, ten-year heritage of multi-award-winning services, it was agreed that *People Can* was the stronger name. External PR consultants and communications experts concurred, saying the *People Can* voice is compelling, strong and worth holding on to. Also, **90%** of staff responses to the merger announcement stated that they were desperate to keep the name. Fantastic for a brand just three months old!

Taking each original objective in turn, *People Can* has had fantastic results:

1. To unite and engage staff and service users

'The rebrand speaks to us as people'

Homeless people have said the language of the rebrand speaks to them as people rather than second-class citizens. They feel it's different from anywhere else.

'Refreshing and invigorating,' say happy stakeholders

Local authorities, health commissioners, probation staff, other charities, and homeless people. These are just some of the stakeholders at launch events far and wide to remark on how refreshing and invigorating it is to find passion and authenticity again.

Winning over the reluctant

People in all regions are proudly displaying the posters with the new language and logo in all areas of their projects. One previously resistant manager used the logo to make his own office signs for every door in the Bristol office.

4. Summary of results continued

People Can



Speaking the right language

98.8%

people satisfied with service

All hands back on deck

Thanks to the rebrand, staff now feel part of one strong, united organisation with a clear vision. Proud of the new identity, they're hard at work with service users on new Can Do initiatives, from fitness and catering clubs to stage productions.

Feedback from service users

Maff Potts, *People Can* CEO, said, 'Of course the staff work very hard, but I also think the rebrand galvanised people like never before, and also the service users themselves felt part of something. This has led to their perception that they are supported even more. My two favourite stats are...'

'How well do you think you are supported to develop any talents or skills you have?'

2011 Very & fairly satisfied = 94.2%

2010 Very & fairly Satisfied = 78%

2008-09 Very & fairly Satisfied = 66%

'What is your overall view of the service you receive from *People Can*?'

2011 Very & fairly satisfied = 98.8%

2010 Very & fairly Satisfied = 90%

2008-09 Very & Fairly Satisfied = 93%

Inspiring action

Inspired by the *People Can* vision and spirit, staff and service users have come together to create new initiatives, including:

- Can Do Music (recording compositions and making CDs and pop promos with homeless people who have come off the streets of Westminster)
- Can Do Fitness (offenders in Hackney starting their own running club)
- Can Do Catering (rough sleepers making food for the rest of the hostel, thus gaining skills and qualifications)
- Inspired by the *People Can* relaunch, one former service user (now trainee support worker) produced and directed a production of 'The Vagina Monologues' with a cast made up of prostitutes, domestic abuse survivors, homeless women, managers and support workers.

4. Summary of results continued

People Can



target exceeded by 20%

98%

of users avoided further convictions vs. target of 95%

Out performed national averages

2. To raise the charity's profile to attract more funding opportunities

Increased funding

The Young Foundation, a highly respected social innovation agency (inventors of NHS Direct, Which? and Open University) responded brilliantly to the rebrand, awarding People Can one of three high-profile pilots to develop their community work.

Since the rebrand, People Can have also been selected onto two frameworks and been awarded five grants/contracts in 2012, which could rise by another five over the next few weeks. This can be compared to three tenders won in 2011 under their previous identity as *Novas Scarman*.

Bigger web presence

After just six months, they're the number one entry – globally – under *People Can* (knocking a US organisation offering sexual orientation aversion therapy off the hot-spot!). They've also made the second page of Google under 'Homelessness'.

3. To provide better quality of life and life chances for service users:

People Can had a target of **65%** of users to complete planned moves from the short-term residential services. In quarter 4 of 2011, following the rebrand they achieved **85%** of users completing a move – that's **20%** more than expected.

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As well as those with specific targets listed above, here are some further key performance indicators where *People Can* are outperforming against the national average for charities of this kind:

National average	People Can	
23.3%	36.5%	No. of service users who secure paid employment as a % of those identified this as a goal.
76.6%	80.6%	No. of service users managing their mental health better as a % of those identifying that they need support with this.
61.5%	71.1%	No. of service users managing their substance misuse better as a % of those identifying that they need support with this.

4. Summary of results continued

People Can

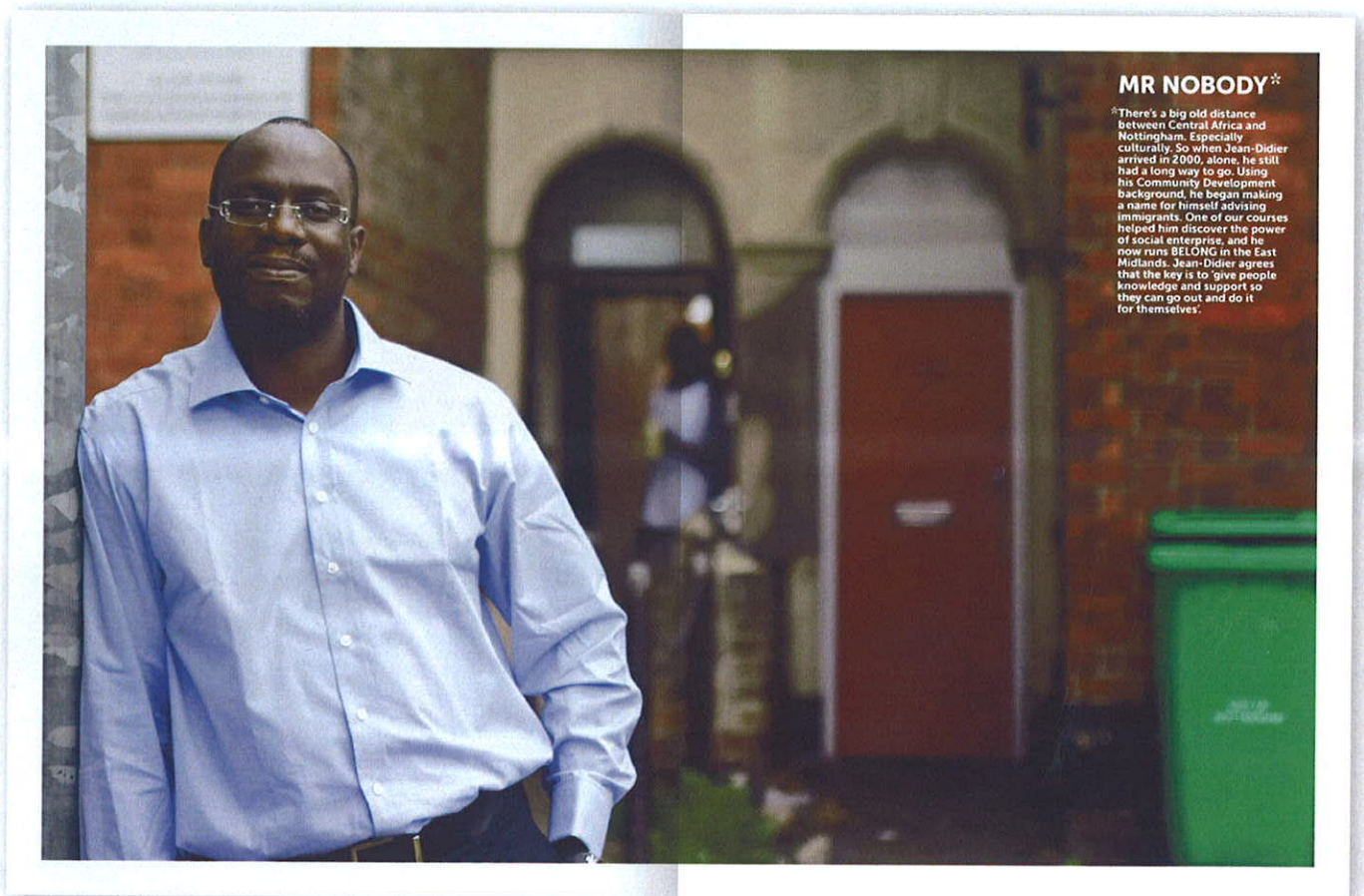
A genuine inspiration

People Can Heroes and their success stories were a key part of the rebrand, and these individuals have been greatly encouraged by the experience. One has gone on to work as a night support worker in a rough sleeping hostel in Soho. Another *People Can Hero*, a former crack user who attempted suicide after suffering a personal crisis, says it was her *People Can Hero*-status and subsequent sense of belonging that made her determined to recover and get back to work so that she wouldn't let anyone down. Others, Mohamed and Sam, are making a real difference in the jobs they hold.

...All in only six months in the face of a recession.

Exceeding expectations

And, if all that wasn't enough, our business card design has saved money on costly and unnecessary extensive print runs.



People Can newspaper

5. *Other influencing factors*

People Can

Other influencing factors

People Can hired a PR agency (AMAZON PR) and, using the new brand identity, made use of Twitter and Facebook.

Research resources

Client data

