

# Harrison's Fund

Raising awareness of  
an unknown disease.



**CATEGORY**

14.0 Design for Society

**CLIENT COMPANY**

Harrison's Fund

**DESIGN CONSULTANCY**

Pearlfisher

**CURRENT DATE**

July 2012

## Executive summary

Sometimes you are confronted with an overwhelming challenge that shakes you, making you question everything in life.

When Alex and Donna Smith's son, Harrison, was diagnosed with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, they established a charity to research into a disease that affects one in every 3500 male births yet of which is little known or understood.

Harrison's Fund has a huge objective – to find a cure for this fatal disease. Critically, the Fund needed to raise awareness of this unknown disease in a crowded category where everyone has a story to tell.

Pearlfisher took the cause to its heart and created a strong brand identity to celebrate Harrison's cheeky personality, inspiring a positive call to action. The results prove the integral role of design in the charity fundraising sector.



Harrison's Fund brand identity launched in December 2012. **Only six months in and it was exceeding all fundraising targets.**

First year targets were surpassed more than **three times over** with funds reaching an amazing **£100,000.**



**6 businesses** have approached the charity to become corporate partners.

Harrison's Fund is one of 5 core charities on the Duchenne Alliance team, together helping the Alliance to reach a funding level of \$1.5 million dollars.



Importantly, Harrison's Fund has been invited to join the International Duchenne Alliance as one of only ten global foundations leading the conversation on Duchenne.



But the achievement isn't just in numbers. It's the accomplishment of a huge vision. To make people aware of an invisible disease.

In the first 6 months since launch, online awareness has increased by a huge

**700%!**

Inspired by an impactful identity, Harrison's Fund has put Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy on the agenda for the first time.

## Project overview

### Outline of project brief

To create a powerful identity that captures Harrison's character and makes his Fund a success. To raise awareness of an overlooked disease that very few people know anything about whilst increasing funds for research and development of a cure.

- Direct money towards researchers who have the best chance of finding a cure for Duchenne before it takes the lives of Harrison and thousands of young boys like him.
- Provide the charity with a voice and a presence, and a means of communication that will immediately resonate with lives affected by the disease – and potential donors.
- Bring the mission of the charity to life in a cohesive brand, the identity of which stems from Harrison's captivating, charming and cheeky personality.
- Reflect a vision to make the most of every second and how together we can all make time for change.

For Pearlfisher, failing to accomplish these goals wasn't an option. It was something we simply had to achieve.



## Description

Transmitted genetically and targeting the X chromosome, Duchenne is a disease that affects one in every 3500 male births. It causes progressive muscular weakness and is fatal in every case.

It was this nightmare that Alex and Donna Smith faced when a blood test diagnosed that their exuberant and energetic son, Harrison, had inherited Duchenne.

With the positivity they have passed onto their son, Alex and Donna set up Harrison's Fund to raise much needed awareness of this life limiting illness. Whilst recognising the excellent care and services provided by other wonderful charities, the sole goal of the Fund is to aid a major breakthrough and find a cure for Duchenne as soon as possible. Over the past few years, advancements in gene therapy, molecular medicine and research funding have brought new hope for those suffering with Duchenne.

These are great steps but Alex and Donna knew that to make bigger leaps, Harrison's Fund really needed to shout louder, stronger and with greater conviction to raise awareness of the disease.



### Overview of market

The charity sector is crowded with a huge number of children's charities both overseas and within the British Isles. There are so many worthwhile causes and each one has a story to tell.

But the real challenge wasn't just about standing out – it lay in making people aware of the disease in the first place. Aside from the young sufferers and their families, very few people have even heard of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, let alone know what it does and how many people it affects every single year.

Making society aware of the disease was the key challenge and a huge undertaking that Harrison's Fund faced.

### Project launch date



December 2011

Size of design budget - This was a pro-bono project.



PRO-BONO

## Outline of design solution

**Cheeky, energetic and bursting with life.** The essence of the new design centres on the power of positivity and is expressed through a young, imaginative, informal and fun personality.

Many other charities representing diseases tend to stay relatively close to mellow tones and scientific logos which appear rather sober and scientific. Dark blue, the most frequently used colour, draws allusions to grief and sadness.

None of this reflects Harrison's brightness or the hope that his Fund brings.

We wanted to engage and inspire so we created a brand that was different to the charity branding norm. A **brand that is positive, direct, determined and upbeat with tonnes of impact.** Across letterheads, business cards, t-shirts and the website homepage, the brand identity is **human and confident.**



Using a hand drawn type style, the new marque introduced of the Harrison's Fund logo. A smiling face with three attentive expressions; a wink, a twinkling star and tongue poking out, all underlined by 'fighting Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy'. The call to action 'make time' provides a reminder of the charity's mission and a short-hand way to access the charity. The identities contrasting colour palettes of orange, purple and green (which references the infamous twinkle in Harrison's eyes) reflect the energy, exuberance and positivity that Alex, Donna and Harrison are synonymous with.

Nothing about the design is overly worthy or builds on a sense of loss.

**Every aspect for the design is about positivity, what can be achieved and how the most can be made of every second.**



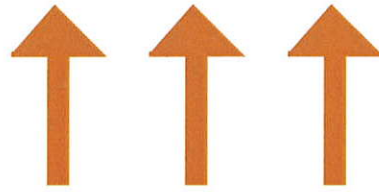


## Summary of results

Fundraising figures

First year target = £30,000

actually raised **£100,000**



in its first year, Harrison's Fund aimed to raise £30,000 but is already set to raise over £100,000 - an incredible three times the figure they had hoped for.

CEO, Harrison's Fund, Alex Smith said of the new design:

**“I put the majority of this uplift to the branding – we instantly appeared professional, well thought through and with the tone of voice and image that allowed us to bring Harrison himself into the ‘conversation’”.**

Following the increased brand profile, Harrison's Fund has received **huge numbers of people** who want to do amazing things; from walking mountains to running marathons, three mile open water swims and Three Peaks climbs, the support has been incredible.

A great story again from Alex who describes that whilst wearing his Harrison's branded top, a lady approached him, they got talking – and now she is cycling across Vietnam and **raising over £3000** in the process. Amazing what happens when something catches your eye and **design gets you talking...**

**x2**

In other news, the Fund has already **had to expand the amount of tables** for its Sky High black tie Ball this coming September as there has been **double** the interest anticipated.

## Corporate Partnerships

# 6 ORGANISATIONS

Harrison's Fund did not target for any corporate partnerships, wanting to wait until the brand took off - but since launch they have been approached by 6 organisations who want to be official sponsors of the Fund.

“It is a testament to the quality of the design that businesses from multiple industries think that Harrison's Fund is a fantastic brand fit for their businesses.”

Alex Smith, CEO, Harrison's Fund



Quote from Trustee William Rolt, Archibald Ingall Stretton

“ Working at some of London’s top agencies I’ve had the privilege to work with and for some of the most inspirational brands including some of the most well-known and iconic charities, such as Save The Children, Anxiety UK and Coppafeel! Working with these charities made me aware of the importance of the brand. How it reflects the aims, personality and direction of the charity.  
When I was approached to be trustee of Harrison’s fund this was at the forefront of my mind. I didn’t want to be involved in something that was just like all the other charities out there. And I knew we needed a brand that would enable us to get the cut through we needed in a very over crowded market.

The brand that Pearlfisher has created does this in abundance. They have taken on Harrison’s cheeky chappy characteristics and reflected in all our corporate facing literature. It is a brand we are very proud of now and will be for many years to come. ”

#### Quotes from supporters

“Shortly after the diagnosis of our son in October 2011 with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD), I came across Harrison’s Fund’s website when I was doing research into this awful disease. I found the charity’s website was very comforting and easy to read.”

“The branding and the logo helped give a very positive spin on something that is very devastating. We were so influenced by the whole ethos and approach of Harrison’s Fund that it led us to getting in touch with the Smith Family (the Charity’s founders) something that we have not regretted.”

“The Harrison’s Fund Logo is something that I am proud to have on my Facebook profile and something that many of my friends have also added in order to help raise awareness. The Harrison’s Fund logo always reminds me of Harrison’s happy smiley face and also that a lot of work is being done towards finding a cure for DMD.”

“Harrison’s Fund is a fantastic charity raising awareness of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy with the sole aim of funding researchers to help a cure. As a parent of a boy with DMD myself, this charity is a great inspiration for us as a family wanting to get involved in fundraising and raising awareness. It’s simple yet effective design makes it fresh, fun and vibrant which all help it stand out in a very cluttered market. Having received various forms of marketing from this charity from a cross section of media I am always clear on its aim with its clear and bold brand identity. It certainly helps us spread the word via social media in a bright and optimistic way.”

Emma Hallam, founder of DMD charity Alex’s Wish.

But figures and quotes aside, Harrison's Fund has dramatically increased the awareness and profile of Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy.



Since the brand launch they have been up for being named Charity of the Year whilst online awareness has increased by a huge 700% on through a presence on Twitter and Facebook social media sites.



**Joined the International Duchenne Alliance**

A massive testament to the brand was that within just 3 months of launching, Harrison's Fund was invited to Colorado to join the International Duchenne Alliance and they are now part of the inner circle of just 5 other global Duchenne charities working with the Alliance. Their voice is highly respected and internationally recognised.

Quote from Rago PhD, Founder, Duchenne Alliance

**“Harrison’s Fund is leading the Duchenne Alliance as an early adopter of innovations that increase our global marketing reach and ability to raise funds for critical biomedical research. Their web site is refreshingly upbeat, engaging and unforgettable. It’s easy to make time for Harrison, ; ).”**

Quote from Christine McSherry, Founder, Duchenne Alliance in the United States comments:

**“Harrison’s Fund is a grassroots charity that has instantly seized the opportunity to leverage itself within the global spectrum of all Duchenne organizations through the international collaboration of the Duchenne Alliance. The Alliance is proud to recognize Harrison’s Fund for its creativity in branding. The design and overall feel of their branding demonstrates the local and international - world wide reach of the organization - stimulating donor confidence and ultimately raising awareness and funds for Duchenne.”**

Harrison’s Fund is leading awareness, understanding and support in the fight against Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy on a massively growing scale.

## **(No) other influencing factors**

With a tight budget, there was no room for costly advertising, no resources for direct mail and no time for expensive PR campaigns – though none of these would have been necessary.

**The scale of fundraising support, increased awareness of the disease and growing profile of Harrison's Fund is down to the new design identity alone.**

### **Research resources**

Client data and trustee, supporter feedback.

Duchenne alliance [www.duchennealliance.org/](http://www.duchennealliance.org/)

