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Travel and Tourism /
Public Sector

Client company:
Glasgow Prestwick
Airport

**Design
consultancy:**
STAND

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THE FABRIC WHICH BONDS US

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper describes the value of a brand development process in enabling a workforce to deliver their own future and that of an iconic business, economically crucial to the community in which it has existed for in excess of 80 years.



This brand development project repositioned Glasgow Prestwick Airport to meet its commercial ambitions to deliver a new future for this west coast of Scotland business. Glasgow Prestwick Airport is crucial to the economic wellbeing of the area, and before being purchased by the Scottish Government in 2013, it was facing closure when its New Zealand based previous owner failed to attract a private sale.

To many, Glasgow Prestwick Airport was a tired, dated airport providing a low cost, no frills alternative to Scotland's main airports. Re-establishing the airport's relevance with travellers and commercial customers alike was therefore at the heart of the brand objectives.

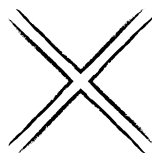
And of course, audience understanding was at the core of the solution. The brand is credited with the many successes achieved by the wider team over the past year, opening doors and giving the employee a sense of pride and confidence in delivering their roles. Whether bidding for new routes against the higher-profile competitors, competing for the lucrative military contracts or ensuring that the passenger user experience is delivered with excellent customer service at its core, buy-in to the new brand and to the values that underpin behaviour has ensured its success.



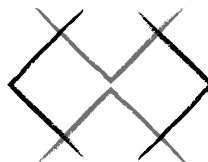
THE PROJECT

Glasgow Prestwick Airport required the development of a single brand to cover its products and services: passenger air travel, freight, military, private aviation, commercial property, other auxiliary services (corporate functions, car parking) and securing a Spaceport licence.

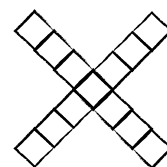
The single identity was recognition of the need to break down 'silos' that existed between departments and provide a clear focus to fully capitalise on the strengths and opportunities to deliver synergy and cross-pollination across the business - building brand equity through the scope and scale of the wider operations.



Saltire
(With a twist)



Hub
(Outwards + inwards)



Unity
(Working together)



Glasgow Prestwick Airport



This new brand (and the process of developing it) was a tangible demonstration of the step change being made by the business leadership to convey their ambition for the airport and the forward-looking strategy that was being put in place to ensure sustainability and success.

As the branding was an early action of the strategic plan, it needed to be flexible enough to cover a range of different emerging priorities. Importantly, Glasgow Prestwick Airport wanted to move away from the perception of a 'no-frills' airport and its provincial image.

With its audiences identified, the airport recognised the need for an identity that would give partners confidence in their approach to quality, functionality, and customer service – ultimately making it a serious competitor in its sector by embedding great user experience as its USP.

THE BACKGROUND



The previous owner used a brand consistent with the other airports in their portfolio. The branding style was initially developed for use at Wellington Airport in New Zealand as part of the Wellington city brand. The original brief for the branding was intended to be fun, friendly and humorous. Instead, the brand and its extended elements, including illustrated characters (in particular, a drunk man in a kilt) was criticised and ridiculed.

In 2015 Stand was appointed to work with Glasgow Prestwick Airport on a project to reposition and rebrand the airport as a viable competitor in the UK's air transport market.

Serving the west coast of Scotland for over 50 years, and with little investment during this time, the airport had lost its shine. The terminal building had remained mostly unchanged since the 70s, when Prestwick was the gateway to international travel for Scotland. And although the employees delivered good service to the passengers, the environment fell short of the efforts of employees or their aspirations for great customer experience. The impact of this on employees only increased the jaded sense of the place. Confidence was low across the business and silos were formed – further eroding the opportunity to build brand equity.



The previous 10-year old brand (with its **'Pure, Dead, Brilliant'** strapline) was universally disliked by this straight-talking West of Scotland community.

It was, therefore, a priority action for the newly appointed non-executive board, put in place by the Scottish Government to revitalise the airport and prepare it for sale back to the private sector, to reposition the brand and future-proof its place as a key player in West of Scotland economic growth. Attracting new business (across the airport's full remit) would be a key performance indicator to the success of this process.

The brand development process facilitated a conduit to breaking down the barriers that existed within the business (military, cargo, VIP and potential spaceport) by creating a unified vision.

THE AUDIENCES



Attracting new airline business is a key aim – new airlines, bring new routes, bring more passengers



Although Glasgow Prestwick Airport accepts that it is a regional airport, it does serve a relatively large population base throughout the West of Scotland and it also gains customers from the wider central belt for routes unique to Glasgow Prestwick Airport. It is connected to Glasgow City (40 minutes) with excellent road and rail connections, given that Glasgow Prestwick is the only airport in Scotland with its own mainline railway station – 2.1 million people within a 60 minute drive.

The brand needed to appeal to this large, diverse population base - retaining the no-frills customers but at the same time appealing to affluent and business customers within its catchment. It also needed to appeal to a global audience who may begin and end their Scottish visit here.

And in addition to passenger air travel, Glasgow Prestwick Airport recognised the need to build its corporate, military (highly profitable business and a crucial target) and private aviation customer base – supporting the requirement for a brand image that is professional and appealing to a luxury market.

Ultimately the brand image needs to position Glasgow Prestwick Airport as a viable choice for all business areas.

BUDGET & TIMELINE

Glasgow Prestwick Airport allocated

£10,000

for brand development and website design.

The timeline from appointment to first stage implementation was

13 WEEKS

OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION

Glasgow Prestwick Airport required a visual identity that would work when marketing directly to passengers as well to a B2B audience: airlines considering new routes, military, and executive aviation customers.



Defining and communicating the airport's USPs and marrying them with the 'needs' of the diverse audiences was key to the output.

- The airport hosts a range of aviation activities – including training, military use, freight, passenger transport, private aviation and search and rescue operations.
- It has the longest commercial runway in Scotland (3KM).
- The only airport in Scotland with a direct rail link.
- The weather conditions at the airport make it very resilient, and it frequently takes diversions from other UK airports.



- Glasgow Prestwick Airport has the highest level of regulation in relation to resilience planning possible for a UK airport. The only other airport in the UK to have this level of regulation is Stansted.
- Glasgow Prestwick Airport is located on the doorstep of some of Scotland's most striking scenery, best golf courses and major tourist draws including whisky distilleries, so could be an ideal place for passengers to begin and end their exploration of Scotland.

OUTLINE OF DESIGN SOLUTION (CONT)

Stand conducted a fully consulted, stakeholder-engaged process. This process included the non-executive board, the executive team and local community/businesses. Most importantly the employees across the wider Glasgow Prestwick Airport business areas were all consulted (Air Traffic Services, Passenger Handling, Security, Airport Fire Service, Fixed Base Operations, Airport Bond, the new business teams responsible for military, domestic airline and even the team supporting Glasgow Prestwick's efforts to secure a Spaceport licence).



The resulting brand reflects the professional, quality, 'boutique' positioning of the airport. Agile, slick, well-connected – with user experience and customer service at its core. The brand has been implemented across a range of communication materials from wayfinding signage (an example of using the flexibility of the brand to improve user experience in a functional, practical way) to employee uniforms, website, animations, sales presentations, and advertising campaigns. Including the positioning materials to support Glasgow Prestwick Airport's bid as Europe's first Spaceport!



The output from this in-depth consultation process created the insight that produced a design strategy embedded in organisational truths: connectivity, agility and the ambition to deliver a 'boutique' user experience to every customer (whether a passenger travelling on a 'no-frills' passenger flight on a well-earned once a year holiday or a VIP client looking for a slick reception and departure). To deliver sustainable, safe and top quality services to all customers is at the core of the airport's objectives.

Designed around the idea of a modern Scotland and its connection to the world, the marque relates to the movement of people, freight and facilities. The marque also takes its cues from quality Scottish heritage derived from weaved textiles (tartan and tweed). Relevant across the business silos, the single marque works to unite all areas: connectivity is the fabric which bonds us.



SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

EMPLOYEE BUY-IN

In January 2016, as part of the employee engagement process, GPA conducted a survey of the 'hopes' of the staff for the rebrand.

Unusual for a business that has experienced little investment over a long term (and therefore including many areas where investment could have been seen to be more worthy), the brand development project was **welcomed by 89% of respondents**. Most comments predominated around the 'embarrassment' of the 'Pure, Dead, Brilliant tagline' and the need to see something tangible happening post buy-out.



“We are one big team... we have a real family feel, which is good.”

An employee survey conducted in June 2017 reflects how well the new brand has been adopted by the Glasgow Prestwick Airport team and confirms the impact it has had on their confidence and pride in the business.

74% of those surveyed felt that the design was a good reflection of the airport, with **40% saying that they had noticed passengers commenting unprompted** about the brand and **'treating them differently' since the rebrand**. *'...their comments are all about how great the place looks and how it's great to see the airport moving forward.' 'I think they take it more seriously now and realise we are on the way up again' and 'They all comment on how much better it is. They also say the previous branding was embarrassing – new branding is great.'*

Many of the employee comments are in line with the key messaging from the branding process. When asked "how Glasgow Prestwick Airport differ from their competitors" much of the feedback reflected the buy-in to the 'small, connected' benefits of working together for the brand. *'As we are one big team... (not lots of different organisations co-located) we have a real family feel, which is good. We all know each other and that helps with our service delivery.'* *'We have an image of going that bit extra than other airports for some reason in the majority of feedback. Quick & efficient service and transit is another comment I hear frequently'* and *'We are a small professional airport providing passengers ease of travel from the airport's front door to stepping onto the aircraft.'*



SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

EMPLOYEE BUY-IN (CONT)

One comment in particular captures the spirit of the team at Glasgow Prestwick Airport and the belief that they can now compete equally: *'We were never happy playing 2nd or 3rd fiddle to anyone. We have never stopped trying to improve and move forward regardless of how difficult this has become. This is what separates us from other airports, we refuse to lay down and roll over and this is the reason we will succeed.'*

Finally, and importantly, the comments reflected that the employee's increased pride in ensuring excellent customer service is intrinsic to the user experience. Many responses mention words such as *'friendly'* and *'personal touch'* and highlight Scottish values: *'(We) make more of our Scottishness and really care about our customer experience'*

Employees were also asked about their experience of working with business partners and the B2B audience. Only one respondent mentioned a negative comment around the 'perceived' cost of the rebrand (*'this must have cost a fortune was this tax payers money'*) and over **50% of the respondents** were able to recall statements with positive feedback: *'Everyone who has spoke to me about the brand has mentioned how professional we look, that it is cleaner and makes us look as though we mean business.'* *'Much more professional first impression'* and *'Terminal looking good and a vast improvement on the previous brand.'*

But the most impressive results are seen where the employees were asked if they felt a *'personal attachment to the company'*. **90% responded with 'Strongly Agree or Agree' statements**, which is an incredible result for a business who has experienced long-term lack of investment and who have just come from the brink of closure.



“

Everyone who has spoke to me about the brand has mentioned how professional we look, that it is cleaner and makes us look as though we mean business.

”

And **24% of employees** were 'extremely proud', and **46% 'proud' (aggregate 70%) to say that they worked for Glasgow Prestwick Airport**, with **26%** saying they were 'slightly proud' and only 3% saying they were 'not at all proud'. **66% of the employees** say they would recommend Glasgow Prestwick Airport as a good place to work.

When asked for general thoughts, many of the comments were for the branding to be further implemented across the portfolio (due to budget, the full rollout will happen over the next two years as areas of the airport required refurbishment or renewal). Capturing the impact on the spirit of the business, one of the comments reflects the recognition of the opportunity: *'(The) new branding signifies progression and a determination to move on to a more positive future for everyone associated with PIK. It's time for everyone to pick up the baton and run with it.'*

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

PASSENGER EXPERIENCE

A passenger survey was conducted in June 2017. Of the **107 respondents**, 87% had flown from the airport previously. Although 84% of respondents quoted price and convenience as their reason for choosing GPA, **16% said that the new brand had been influential in their decision.**



54%+

of respondents agreed that their perception of Glasgow Prestwick Airport had improved as a direct result of the rebrand.

61.5%

felt that their experience of passing through the airport had improved.

When asked for their reasons for this – the words ‘professional’, ‘serious’, ‘upmarket’, ‘modern’, ‘appealing’, ‘confidence’ appeared across all comments expanded ‘It’s lost its run down image. It now gives the impression of an airport that has got its act together and is now determined to get up and go.’ ‘Although I love Glasgow Prestwick Airport I have never liked the ‘pure dead brilliant’ it brought down the area. The changes are more classy and professional and will hopefully attract more new customers’.

Interestingly, some respondents had recognised the negative impact of the old branding: ‘Old branding was cheap and tacky and this reflected on the airport and airlines. Also appeared to make some groups of passengers act and behave in a way that confirmed the old branding’. ‘Thought previous branding to be tacky and unprofessional. Feel the airport has now ‘grown up’’. Customers also had hopes for the impact of the new brand: ‘new branding restores professionalism to the airport that it is serious to compete and bring in new airlines and routes.’ ‘I am hopeful new flights will be encouraged.’

Comments to support this experience were rooted in interaction with the employees: ‘Staff members appear to be taking a little more pride in working for the business, which makes the journey through the airport more enjoyable for all’.

‘Friendly staff. Does seem to be a better welcome and better experience.’ ‘I find all the ground side staff are so friendly and helpful. Nothing is too much bother and they all look happy and smiling. I travel with my husband who needs wheelchair assistance and Glasgow Prestwick airport are the best anywhere from check-in through security to boarding the aircraft.’

Most interesting are the comments around the rebranded infrastructure. Glasgow Prestwick Airport has made no changes to the terminal building other than the new brand implementation. ‘Now feels like a proper airport again rather than the poor relation’. ‘It has modernised, feels new and clean’. ‘More like an international airport rather than a local one’.

Significantly the survey showed insight that passengers linked the new branding to customer service: ‘It has a new clean vibrant image, something clearly reflected in staff morale.’ ‘The previous experience was of a very tired building and tired staff.’ ‘Staff members appear to be taking a little more pride in working for the business, which makes the journey through the airport more enjoyable for all.’ ‘Staff all look the part and are doing the job well.’

SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

PASSENGER EXPERIENCE (CONT)

When asked if the brand had impacted on whether they would choose to use Glasgow Prestwick Airport in the future, **19% answered 'Yes'.**

'The airport looked tired and the old branding was totally twee. It is a convenient airport for us and with the investment and new look it has encouraged us to use it more rather than travel north or south into England.'
'Convenient, friendly, cost effective and safe.'

However even those who chose 'no' (predominantly quoting convenience and price as key drivers to their decision) many recognised the impact of the new brand as part of their response: *'For me it's about availability of suitable flights. I would hope the new brand would be part of a suite of measures to attract new business to the airport.'* *'Because I'd probably use it for convenience whenever I could but it is so much more pleasant now to use.'*

When asked how Glasgow Prestwick Airport differed from its other Scottish competitors, the key messages defined in the new brand were clearly acknowledged: connectivity, agility, simplicity, convenience and friendly/personal were all referenced across the comments.

85%

agreed that they
*'would tell others
about their positive
experience of the newly
branded Glasgow
Prestwick Airport.'*



And finally, general comments were invited: *'I only hope that the new brand helps to promote the airport to other airlines and that you are able to attract more airlines and widen the range of destinations that passengers can fly to from Glasgow Prestwick Airport.'*

And it wouldn't be a Scottish survey without some West of Scotland humour: *'Only thing I would have liked on the rebranding would have been to call it Robert (Rabbie) Burns airport with a silhouette of him but it is honestly a vast improvement on the previous.'*

“

Keep up the positive change, it's all for the better. New routes and airlines next goal.

”



OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

AND THE COMMERCIALS BACK THIS SUCCESS UP

The confidence and drive delivered by the new brand in portraying its 'serious about business' image has been evidenced over the past year:

- The airport increased property **occupancy levels from 58% in 2014/15 to the current 95%** - increasing revenue and **reducing rates costs by approximately £500k.**
- Chevron relocated their European headquarters to the airport in November 2016 - **creating in excess of 80 jobs.**
- Fixed Base Operations were brought in-house, increasing the income from this area by **£214k over the 2015/16 period.**
- A major US Government fuel contract was secured.
- The airport attracted four separate operators to work with them on bids for future UK Space Agency funding.
- The airport's concessionaires **invested £15k in food and drink facilities, and intend to invest a further 30k over the next two years.**
- The airport has attracted new marketing partners, including SPT, Arran Whisky, Turnberry and Glenapp, and are currently in talks with Scotrail, CalMac and the Glasgow Science Centre in relation to the airport.
- Ryanair have confirmed that passenger numbers are increasing by 12% at Glasgow Prestwick Airport year on year, and they have added a new route to Poland starting in October 2017.

The only way was up

An influence on this project is the baseline of the impact of this change. 'Pure Dead Brilliant' was a universally disliked brand, and it was criticised from the outset back in 2005. This criticism would have ensured that any new brand '*could only be better*', a commonly cited attitude from the employee survey in 2016.

However, this should not take away from the success and '*relevance*' of the new brand designs. The stakeholder process was rigorous, and the result is a brand that 'feels' right for the business and its employees. Passengers and commercial customers are citing, unprompted, the key messages that the new brand communicates.

Overwhelmingly the brand is '*liked*' – a survey conducted when the brand was launched in May 2016, by a Scottish tabloid '*The Daily Record*', **showed public likes at 84%.**

This level of '*like*' was reiterated in both the Employee Survey **(76%)** and the Passenger Survey **(93%)** conducted in June 2017.

An expert board and senior executive team

The rebrand was recognised as a clear first action by the newly appointed executive board, put in place by the Scottish Government to develop the potential of Glasgow Prestwick Airport and position it for sale back to the private sector.

This team are driving the business forward through their expert areas of responsibility, and this cannot be excluded from the re-energised focus of the business.

However, as recognised by the executive board, the brand would be fundamental to harnessing the silos and rebuilding spirit and pride in the employees - improving morale and seeing the tangible difference the brand has brought to their working

environment and the pride they take in their roles.

Competing for new business

Again, the business development team are experts in their field. But for them, the new brand has made a clear difference when competing against other Scottish airports for business – and in the case of the Spaceport licence, against other UK and European rivals. Finally, they have a brand that positions them as professional and business-like. The values of Glasgow Prestwick Airport are intrinsic in the brand's key messages – and these go-getters now have the communication tools to deliver those messages with confidence.

One thing to note

The budget for the implementation of this brand development is only £10k, a tiny amount that has required the client teams to work hard to achieve the work that needed to be done. Every penny needs to be justified and evidenced as '*value for money*'. This transparency has required a client marketer with courage and vision, and with the ability to gain the trust of the ultimate decision-makers who are responsible for the spend of public money.

The trusted relationship between client and agency recognised and respected the expertise of each other. As a result, a brand solution was created that improves the lives of the people who come in contact with it. From the passengers who experience excellent customer service as they pass through; to the wellbeing and increased morale of the motivated and proud employee; and ultimately to a business future-proofed to deliver a positive economic impact on the West of Scotland businesses and the community that surrounds it.