

DBA Design Effectiveness Awards 2016

400

Submission title: Collect+ Brand Strategy & Identity Development

Industry sector: Industrial Transportation

Client company: Collect+

Design consultancy: 400 Communications Ltd

Submission date: 26th June 2015

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2. Executive summary

Collect+ offers a simple and convenient way for people to send parcels, collect online purchases or return unwanted items to more than 300 online retailers. Using a network of nearly 6,000 local stores, and operating outside nine-to-five opening hours, it provides a dynamic alternative to out-of-date delivery models. At just six years old, Collect+ is a relative newcomer to an industry dominated by established providers – but this hasn't stopped it becoming the UK's largest independent store-based parcel service.

Targeting additional growth, in 2012 Collect+ appointed 400 to redefine its entire brand experience. In particular, 400 were briefed to help Collect+ address the lack of differentiation among competing providers. Looking for standout in a dull and commoditised sector, Collect+ needed to evolve their brand into a more credible proposition that would enable them to compete with consistency and confidence.

400 undertook a forensic review of Collect+'s brand, market and sector, and through workshops devised a robust strategy for the brand's positioning, messaging and tone of voice. 400 also refined the Collect+ visual identity, reinvigorating the brand and introducing a strong visual element that brings to life the concept of convenience and simplicity through emotive images and icons.

Brand engagement across the store network was also essential, and through competitions, guidelines and communications, 400 helped to incentivise in-store articulation of the new brand.

As a result of 400's work, Collect+ has been shown to fit seamlessly into the busy lives of consumers. The project, like a Collect+ parcel, has been successfully delivered.



Collect+ brand identity
and strapline

3. Project overview

Outline of project brief

Collect+ challenged 400 to develop a brand strategy, and visual and verbal identity, to support its growth ambitions. The company needed a new customer-centric brand experience that would enhance its overall business credibility and make Collect+ a household name.

The new brand strategy and identity needed to:

- + Help Collect+ achieve stand-out and reflect the company's innovative, inclusive and straightforward values and characteristics
- + Deliver a strong visual style to unify disparate communications
- + Help increase store network brand engagement
- + Encourage customers to use the Collect+ network not only for returning parcels, but for collecting and sending them as well
- + Bring the strapline 'Parcels made easy' to life
- + Appeal to a range of audiences, including major high-street retailers, e-tailers, logistics experts, e-commerce strategists, the media and industry observers
- + Help Collect+ become the best-loved parcel service in the UK.

Description

Using an extensive network of local stores and operating outside normal nine-to-five opening hours, Collect+ offers a simple and convenient way for people to send parcels, collect online purchases or return unwanted items to online retailers.

At only six years old, Collect+ is a relative newcomer to an industry dominated by established providers such as Royal Mail and DHL. In this short space of time, it has become the UK's largest independent store-based parcel service by bringing flexibility and value for money to the often frustrating process of sending and receiving goods.

A joint venture between PayPoint and Yodel, Collect+ was founded on the principle that customer convenience is everything – with its unique values and approach extending to major retailers and everyday shoppers through a pervasive brand experience.



Point-of-sale signage

Through its network of local stores, petrol stations and shopping malls, Collect+ enables customers to get on with their lives by freeing them from wasted hours spent queuing in post offices or waiting for deliveries. It allows them to send, receive and return parcels at a time and place most convenient to them.

Collect+ is driven by a strong desire to challenge the status quo by providing better, simpler delivery solutions to meet the needs of consumers and businesses. At the time 400 started working with them, Collect+ was the trusted partner of a number of retailers, processing a significant volume of parcels a year.

Yet despite its initial success and growth trajectory, taking Collect+ to the next level in an already crowded market presented a number of challenges. In particular, a lack of differentiation among key competitors meant the 'convenience USP' had become more difficult to articulate.

Additionally, disparate and disorganised communications materials meant the company lacked credibility among prospective clients, while its identity failed to reflect the simplicity of its offer and the serious nature of its ambitions. Collect+ urgently needed to reinvigorate its brand and reassert its credentials as a major player in UK parcel delivery.



B2B marketing brochure

Overview of market

The UK parcel delivery market has experienced a recent paradigm shift. Now focused almost exclusively on convenience, it has become a commodity market driven by the rational benefits of price, service and convenience.

Consumers today live their lives on the go, ordering goods via their mobiles and tablets as they travel, watch TV or work. Micro-businesses are thriving as they leverage technology to sell their products online. As a result of the growth in online shopping, UK parcel volumes have grown steadily per annum since 2005.

With providers competing within this expanding sector, the promise of convenience and ease has become a universal USP. All major delivery companies are broadcasting their efforts to make customers' lives easier by minimising waiting time, uncertainty and cost. For Collect+, whose values and characteristics are genuinely predicated on simplicity, transparency and a straightforward customer experience, this presented a problem. Wanting to expand its market share, the company found its core message being drowned out by the undifferentiated drone of heavyweight competitors.

In order to succeed, Collect+ required a new strategic approach to set itself apart from established institutions such as Royal Mail, without distancing itself from its founding principles. It would also have to provide colour and differentiation within a homogenous and unengaging sector without diluting its core offer – that is, without compromising on convenience. A major challenge, but also a clear opportunity, lay ahead.

Project launch date

Late 2012, with research, strategy and initial creative presentations made early-to-mid-2013, and collateral materials rolled out late 2013.

Size of design budget and production costs

Strategy and Design: Under 100k, covering research, strategy, workshops, creative development, photography, copywriting and design and artwork of materials, including brand guidelines, brochure, sales welcome pack, point of sale for nearly 6,000 stores, and a wide range of merchandise collateral.

Production: Under 100k over two years to cover all of the above.

Point-of-sale with B2C
marketing brochure



Example of branded
merchandise



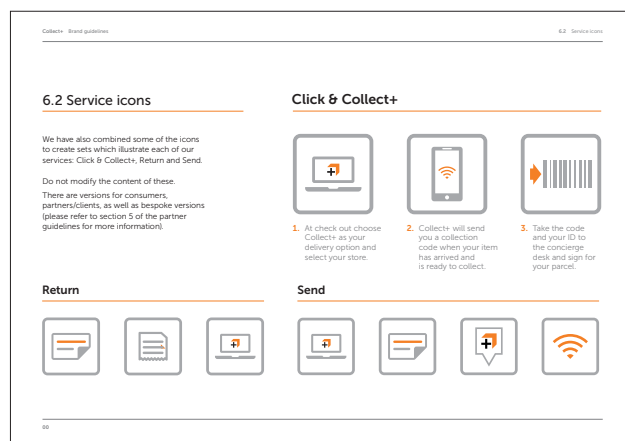
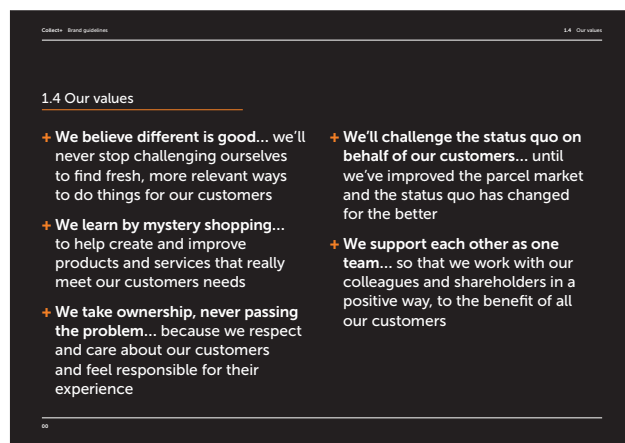
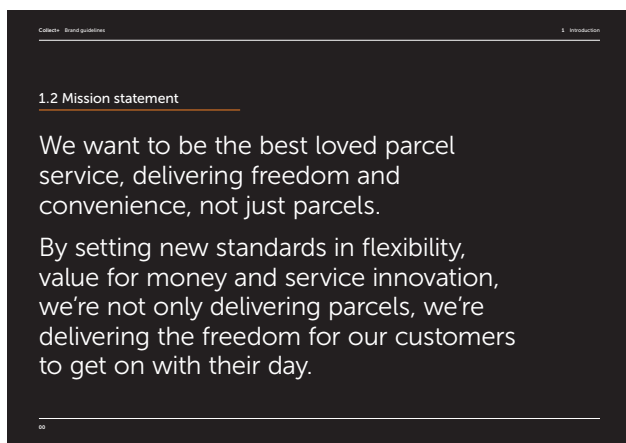
4. Outline of design solution

400 began with strategic research and development, getting under the skin of the organisation through rigorous market and brand analysis, staff workshops and communications audits. They shadowed Collect+ pitches and meetings, observing the sales process up close and immersed themselves in the customer journey, from call centre interactions to the in-store experience.

Armed with strategic insight, 400 developed the new brand positioning and messaging. They decided that the recent market paradigm shift would make it difficult to differentiate the brand on convenience alone, so developed more engaging, emotional messaging that would stand out from the rational benefits promoted by competitors.

Next they refined the company's visual assets. While retaining its original look and feel, they made the logo typographically sharper and more adaptable to ensure it could work across different sizes and formats. A robust colour palette was created, plus stringent guidelines to complement the logo. 400 also enabled partners to use their own colours within the logo chevron and tailor the Collect+ brand to their own visual identity. Through this brand adaptability, Collect+ has become a key component of retailers' offerings, increasing service uptake and improving customer perceptions.

Brand guidelines, verbal identity, values photography and iconography



400 introduced a strong photographic element, art-directing a suite of over 100 photos that brought to life the concept of convenience and simplicity for consumers using emotive, Instagram-style photography. This style communicates freedom, fun and spontaneity, showing people what they could do with the time Collect+ would save them. It also reinforced the Collect+ brand values, which are based on improving the parcel market for the benefit of consumers.

Arranged in engaging image grids, which were deployed across a new portfolio of B2C and B2B materials, the photos depict how Collect+ fits seamlessly into the busy lives of consumers. Key visual messages were reinforced through iconography illustrating the Collect+ process, and a new verbal identity echoed the everyday focus of the visuals, putting the consumer at the heart of the Collect+ brand experience.

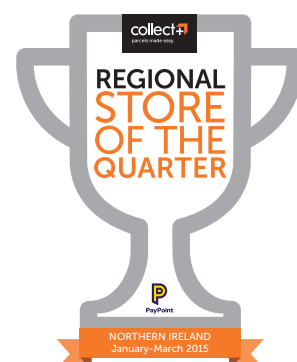
Next, 400 developed a new programme to help stores articulate the Collect+ brand. Through 'Store of the Quarter' competitions, staff were incentivised to live the Collect+ vision and values, with rewards for parcel volumes handled and customer satisfaction. Regular newsletters, guidelines and other communications enabled consistency of message to be applied across the entire Collect+ customer journey.



Image grid composition, illustrating how the Collect+ service fits seamlessly into the customer's day (top left to bottom right: Lifestyle, Store, Parcel Process and Time)



Through their rigorous, collaborative approach, 400 delivered a brand strategy and positioning which enabled Collect+ to communicate with consistency and confidence. Through the no-nonsense visual and verbal identity, 400 reinforced the message of ease and convenience, communicating clearly what other brands were trying but failing to say. Bringing the strapline 'Parcels made easy' and the brand values to life, 400 created a platform of professionalism from which Collect+ could target new high-end clients and realise their growth ambitions.



Store incentive campaign collateral

5. Summary of results

With a relatively small budget for strategy, design and production, 400's work has positively impacted every aspect of the Collect+ business. Since the rebrand, the company has moved into profitability for the first time and is handling hugely increased volumes of parcels.

Sector impact

Despite operating in a crowded marketplace dominated by well-established delivery brands, since the brand refresh, Collect+ has not only retained but grown its market share. During this period, Collect+'s annualised growth in parcels volumes has been significantly higher than the industry average, demonstrating the success of the rebrand in helping to meet Collect+'s growth ambitions.

This success has been aided by strong growth in the 'Click & Collect' channel, which Collect+ have pioneered in the industry. Between 2014-15, volumes for the Click & Collect service increased dramatically, reflecting the strong growth in customer awareness of these services across the UK retail landscape. Additionally, between 2013 and 2015, as a result of 400's flexible co-branding approach and strategy, Collect+ was able to expand its store network by 20%, providing firm foundations for future growth and business development.



Example of B2B service-focused collateral

Year	Clients	Stores	Parcels	Clients	Stores	Parcels
2011	XXX	X,XXX	X,XXX,XXX	% change YoY by measure		
2012	XXX	X,XXX	X,XXX,XXX	XX.XX%	XX.XX%	XXX.XX%
2013	XXX	X,XXX	XX,XXX,XXX	XX.XX%	X.XX%	XX.XX%
2014	XXX	X,XXX	XX,XXX,XXX	XX.XX%	X.XX%	XX.XX%

B2B impact

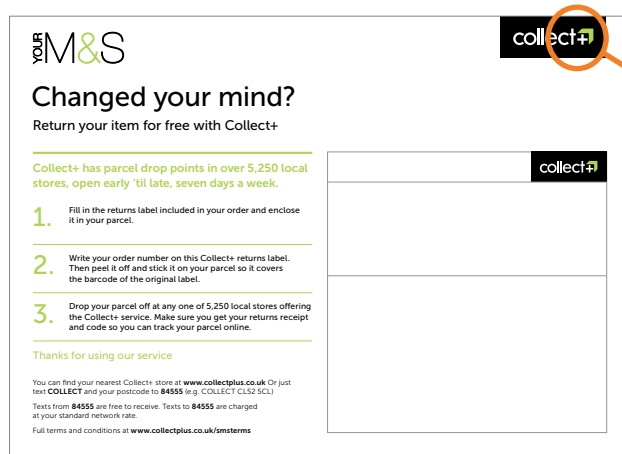
From a business perspective, Collect+ has experienced unprecedented growth and surpassed all client acquisition and parcel volume targets for the year.

Through its rigour and creativity, 400's work has reinvigorated the Collect+ sales team. New staff are now able to adopt the tone of voice quickly and the new materials (including sales pack and presentation) have empowered all sales personnel to communicate in a more consistent, cohesive and confident manner. As this confidence has spread, the team has become more proactive in targeting and winning more high-profile customers and contracts, which was a core objective within 400's original brief.



Retailer 'Welcome Pack' with USB of templates, guidelines and assets to enable seamless integration of Collect+ services into existing on-line retail environments. The pack was sent using the Collect+ network to demonstrate the ease and convenience of the services the recipient would be adopting

There has been a 100% increase in client uptake. In 2014/15, the company's commercial service performance was further enhanced by business wins which contributed to a significant growth in its client base, including retail brands such as John Lewis, Boohoo, New Look, Very, Marks & Spencer, ASOS, Virgin Media and House of Fraser. Furthermore, a number of new clients are currently 'in build' for launch during the coming summer period. And 400's innovative client collaboration strategy, whereby brand real estate is 'given away' on return flyers and retailer websites, has led to an overall boost in consumer confidence and recognition (see below).



Examples of co-branded collateral demonstrating how the Collect+ brand can be integrated into the retailer offering to increase service uptake and improve customer perception



Brand awareness

Another major objective for 400 was to help Collect+ achieve market standout. And indeed, since the launch and rollout of the rebranded work, prompted brand awareness of Collect+ has grown, as has increased consumer understanding, awareness and usage levels of the individual services:

Customer engagement has also improved in social media terms, with the company's Twitter followers increasing by 650% between November 2012 and May 2015.

"400's commitment to understanding the process even went so far as sitting in on sales presentations... The resulting solutions meant that our sales team were going to meetings better equipped and with more confidence than ever before – and the results show. Not only are we winning more new business, we've also been able to attract a higher calibre of client."

Paul Scratchley, Commercial Director, Collect+

Net Promoter Score

Collect+ has experienced a significant increase in its Net Promoter Score (NPS): a management tool which gauges the strength and loyalty of customer relationships and serves as an alternative to traditional customer satisfaction research.

Before the rebranding, the Collect+ NPS score was slightly higher than the industry benchmark. However, during the rollout and since, this score has risen steadily to reach a figure that represents an outstanding achievement for the sector. The top-down research was conducted using a YouGov survey among a group of 2,000 users.

Service balance and customer increase

Demonstrating the breadth of business improvements achieved, 400's rebranding work has also led to a more even balance of customers using all three Collect+ services, thereby meeting another of the project's major KPIs.

While the percentage of those using the Return & Collect service has remained relatively consistent, the number of customers using all three services has increased significantly. Factoring in the huge rise in overall users, this shows significant growth in the number of people buying into additional services. Indeed, a key measure of success for the Collect+ brand is the proportion of customers using multiple services, and the rebranding has led to a significant increase in the number of customers using network stores not only to drop off parcels, but to collect them as well.

On the company website, meanwhile, registered account holders have increased, with the majority of them being predominately 'send' customers, which illustrates the effectiveness of 400's messaging and leaflets around the Collect+ send service.

Customer satisfaction

The new brand development has also helped to improve customer satisfaction levels. TrustPilot Scores rose significantly from March 2014 to May 2015. An indication that 400's work is helping Collect+ move closer to achieving one of its original objectives of becoming the best-loved parcel delivery service in the UK.

Customer welcome email template



Store network impact

Since the rebrand, Collect+ customers have proven to be an important source of income and footfall for the stores within the PayPoint network with customers purchasing items when they drop off or collect their parcels.

Anecdotal evidence also suggests that shopping malls in urban areas such as Camberley, Cardiff and Leeds that have adopted the Collect+ branding for their parcel collection services have outperformed those that haven't.

Internal impact

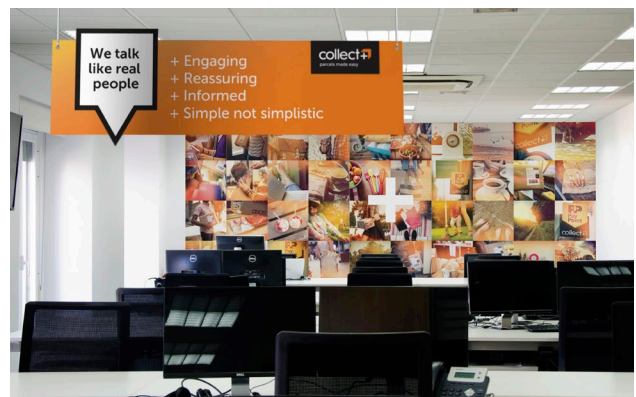
The Collect+ rebranding project has also had a hugely positive affect on employees across the business. Collect+ now looks and feels like an established market player, which has delivered a major boost to staff enthusiasm and morale. What's more, having been actively consulted and involved in the rebranding process, employees have wholeheartedly embraced the new brand.

Collect+ has also taken the innovative step of integrating and aligning the measurement of their brand mission statements to their commercial KPIs, ensuring consistency of brand engagement in all areas of the business. Additionally, staff are now actively encouraged to perform mystery shopping exercises in order to truly appreciate the meaning of 'designed around you'. This process has instilled not only a great sense of customer-centricity within the organisation, but has also helped to continually reinforce the Collect+ brand values.

"Collect+ continues to go from strength to strength as more and more consumers and brands are seeing the value of our pioneering parcel collections and returns service. This has helped us become a market leader in this sector and a clear alternative to home delivery or the Post Office."

Neil Ashworth, CEO, Collect+

Example of internal branded merchandise



Head office and call-centre environmental graphics reinforcing the Collect+ brand values and positioning

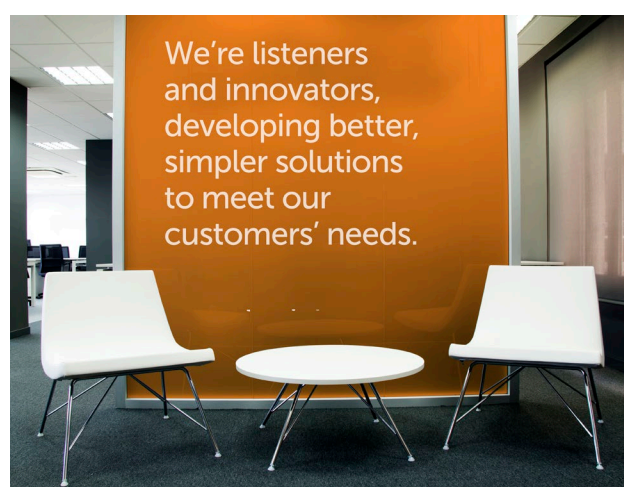
6. Other influencing factors

In addition to the influence on the materials and applications outlined in this submission, the strategic positioning and brand development work undertaken by 400 was used effectively throughout a multi-channel marketing campaign in Easter 2014 encompassing TV, Radio and online.

While other influencing factors came into play during the campaign, 400's work gave Collect+ the tools to help engineer success and growth. In fact, every aspect of the campaign was underpinned and enabled by 400's brand strategy and positioning. Additionally, due to the nature of a small but growing business, the TV advertising was relatively low-spend due to channel and time selection. The original TV ad ran for only five weeks from April 2014, primarily during daytime slots on 'second-tier' channels with limited reach.

As the business grows, all marketing, store communications and client development activities continue to build on the foundations laid by 400's strategic brand direction, testimony to the long-term effectiveness of their recommendations.

Of course, favourable market conditions and the increase in online shopping contributed to some extent to Collect+'s growth trajectory, but it was the first-class execution built on 400's work that really brought the brand to life and made the difference.



"The approach 400 took when working with us has been highly collaborative, taking senior stakeholders with them at all times. The resulting brand idea has been very naturally able to manifest itself across all touch points of our business without the need for constant 'shoe-horning' – something which in my experience is very rare. Over the past year the idea has proven able to grow with us, and for our customers and clients, our new brand identity gives a clear and consistent picture as to who we are and who they are working with by strongly representing what we believe in and stand for."

Catherine Woolfe, Marketing Director, Collect+

7. Research resources

Store number, opening hours and population distance to store, all from PayPoint network data and mapping project based on Map Info data.

Brand awareness, NPS and use of 3 services all come from YouGov polling throughout the year.

TrustPilot scores are all from impartial reviews at <https://uk.trustpilot.com/review/collectplus.co.uk>

Parcel volumes all come from Collect+ own reporting.

Account holders, store numbers, annual growth and growth by service all from Collect+ data.

Stores earnings: Collect+ store survey, November 2014

Proud to work for Collect+ source: Internal Collect+ staff satisfaction survey Feb 2014