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999

DBA Design Effectiveness Awards 2013

NATIONAL TRUST MEMBERSHIP POS

Category 5

Point of Sale

Client: NATIONAL TRUST

999 Design Group Ltd

20th July 2012

One

membership...



ACHIEVING THE GREATEST NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN THE
ORGANISATION'S HISTORY

“ Our point of sale must cut through all other messages and generate interest in membership; 999 worked tirelessly to deliver a suite that has achieved this, beyond doubt. 999 were particularly adept at understanding the visitor journey and exploring alternative methods for grabbing attention and highlighting our offer – all embracing our visual identity. ”

Craig Robson
Design and Corporate ID Manager
National Trust

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Making the choice for membership a simple one

In 2010 the National Trust approached 999 to improve, refresh and rationalise their face-to-face membership POS materials used at their properties and attractions. Their business objectives were simple:

- Increase the number of members
- Increase revenue for the organisation

We reviewed the entire route to purchase sampling visitor journeys including how they arrived at National Trust attractions and what touch points they encountered on site. We then audited the current membership communications and evaluated how they fitted with these journeys. We also analysed the barriers to purchase. In summary, we pinpointed the issue to clarity of message and the perceived value of membership. The different membership options were confusing and it was unclear what value was attached to membership breeding a 'why bother' attitude. The various types of Trust property also presented another challenge; communications were often lost in a sea of noise in diverse, individual and, sometimes, sprawling spaces.

We delivered a solution that rationalised the membership offer and made it easier to understand and gave membership POS materials a bold and distinctive identity to stand out in busy environments. We addressed the value-for-money issue by exposing the range of local Trust locations and properties types in any given spot. We increased staff engagement in the sales process by making the offer simpler for them to talk about and provided them with new visual tools to aid and drive both conversation and sales.

Results highlights:

- To date: Greatest number of members in the organisation's history
- Overall membership up 4.3% (compared with 1% growth in 2009)
- Best ever Visitor-to-Member conversion rates, up 8.2%
- Face-to-face sales between 2010-2012 increased 17.2% (reversing trend of previous three years when 2006-09 experienced a decline of 7.4%)

Word count: 290

£2.3m
INCREASE IN SALES

FACE-TO-FACE SALES
INCREASED 17.2%
BETWEEN 2010 - 2012

4.3%
INCREASE IN
MEMBERSHIP
ACQUISITION

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Outline of project brief

In an increasingly competitive sector, the Trust wanted to review and strengthen their face-to-face point of sale material to ensure it was working as effectively as possible. Within the framework of the National Trust identity, the aims of the materials were:

- provide a recognisable identity
- generate interest in membership at point of sale
- prompt a discussion at properties and support the sales process
- Ultimately, convert non-members to members to address business objectives.

From a design requirement, this meant reviewing what customer facing POS was currently being used, how it was being used and its effectiveness, understanding the barriers to purchasing membership and creating a new suite of stand out materials that communicated the benefits and the different types of National Trust memberships available in a clear, compelling and consistent way.



POS dispenser

Description

The National Trust, a registered charity, had over 15 million visits to their 300 'pay-for-entry' properties and an estimated 100 million visits to their open countryside and coastal properties in 2009.

They have a wide variety of properties, ranging from large mansions with gardens, extensive grounds, treasured collections and good visitor facilities, through to small town houses with no visitor facilities. Some properties are fairly isolated and away from urban settlement and the Trust is responsible for a vast range of vernacular buildings and eclectic properties including a gold mine, lighthouses and castles. Additionally, the Trust owns more than 600,000 acres of beautiful countryside - including the largest farmed estate in the country - and 700 miles of outstanding coastline.

Members of the National Trust provide the largest single source of income. Members are also very important both as potential legators and as donors to the organisation.

One
membership...

gives you **FREE**
entry to over 300
stunning houses
and gardens

National Trust

Join here today

Simply ask one of our team

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One
membership...

gets you out to
discover stunning
coastline and
countryside

National Trust

Join here today

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Overview of market (January 2010)

Tourism, like retail, is one of the major industries to first feel the affects of an economic downturn. In 2010, the 'staycation' was still in effect and domestic travel numbers were well up on pre-recession levels (although lower than the peak in 2009).

In research carried out by Visit England on domestic travel and 2011 projections, results showed: *pessimism about the economy and about people's own financial situations had increased sharply by 2010 and consumer fears inevitably impacted on leisure spending patterns. The experience of holidaying at home was a very positive one which has increased the desire to take more domestic breaks in the future.*

While 2011 holiday behavior was expected to be much the same as in 2010, consumers' expectations were that in the longer term, as the economy recovers, they would return to overseas holidays.

This presented an interesting challenge. As the National Trust visitors numbers had increased in 2010, 2011 looked less promising in terms of visitor numbers as more people were projected to return to overseas travel. However, there was good opportunity to take advantage of renewed interest and pride in experiencing English attractions and cultural sites so there was a real need to expose the diversity of the National Trust offer and benefits of becoming a member.



Project launch date: January 2011

Design budget: £25k

POS leaflet

Become a member of the National Trust and you'll be free to enjoy all the beautiful places in our care. Discover stunning coastline, walk through unspoilt countryside, explore magnificent country houses and be inspired by fantastic gardens. And you can return as many times as you like to the places that you love.

FREE entry for members

Visit and enjoy over 300 beautiful houses and gardens and the most stunning coastline and countryside

Benefit from free car parking at over 100 National Trust car parks

Get a Welcome Pack including a Handbook to help plan your days out

We'll also keep you up to date with events in your area so you can really make the most of your membership



Outline of the design solution

It was clear from our research that the offer of membership was lost under a lot of noise. Not only in terms of how the offer was exposed in content but also how it was displayed at properties. There were also too many messages about the various types of membership which were then subsequently divided in to separate communications tailored to the four different target audience segments (identified by the Trust). This resulted in a variety of POS items and a diluted message.

Our approach was to go back to the beginning of the sales process and address the very basic principle of why people want to become a member in the first place: to have the Trust at their disposal for a one off payment. We ascertained that the decision upon which type of membership option is best for them doesn't need to be addressed until the decision to purchase has been made and the purchase process is in progress. To expose this 'single' offer of buying membership we developed the solution of 'One Membership' and defined it in a simple visual to the Trust:



One membership...

gives you every beautiful and historic place
within the National Trust for one price.
Beautifully simple.

Outline of the design solution (continued)

We developed 'One Membership' to become the identity for the POS membership offer to be used across all materials to create a consistent and clear proposition.

Another core element of our design solution was the introduction of bold use of red. As part of our research, we visited many different types of properties and discovered a vast array of communications. Each property is managed locally so has the autonomy to decide what they choose to display and how to display it. And every retail space, reception or restaurant is different to the next. In essence, the landscape is very confused, colourful and noisy. We were not only certain that the use of red would give us the stand out we needed, we felt it vital.

Rationalising and refining the core proposition was also key to ensuring the offer was clear. We constructed a hierarchy of information and followed it through all touch points (proposition, benefits, options, price). We scripted this and provided it along with tools for staff to help them in the sales process.

We created photographic montages to expose the many facets of the Trust, not only to widen the offer but also to dispel the myth that the Trust is a only collection of historic houses.

In summary

- Property visits and audit of materials gave an inconsistent picture of the membership offer, benefits and value.
- Addressed customer journey and touch points for maximum exposure.
- Define and capture membership offer in single essence: One Membership gives you...
- Bold use of red across communications in a world of green and browns
- Rationalised amount of POS items and Introduced items that be used as sales aids:
 - lanyard for staff for easy reference.
 - gift card holder to give something tangible when buying membership as a gift
 - a 'Zone Catcher' which members of staff can use to show how many locations the Trust has within a certain radius of any given property.



The 'Zone Catcher' was created as a practical sales tool to help staff show potential members just how many National Trust places are available to explore in their surrounding area

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Increase in sales.

- **Face-to-face sales between 2010 and 2012 increased 17.2% (reversing trend of previous three years where between 2006 and 2009 experienced a decline of -7.4%).**

- Overall membership is up 4.3% since we were involved for the period end 2010-12, compared to 1% growth between 2008-09
- Best ever conversion of visitors-to-members - up 8.2%. Between 2009-12 this means an increase in the conversion rate of 1.2% compared to an increase of only 0.1% between 2007-09
- Increase in memberships sold face-to-face up to 9% from 7.7% in previous years
- There has been a continued growth in face-to-face sales since implementation (after period of decline between 2004-09)
- In commercial terms the revenue from face-to-face sales has increased:

2011-12 = £10.7m New memberships sold face to face

2010-11 = £9.7m New memberships sold face to face

2009-10 = £8.4m New memberships sold face to face

- This stat demonstrates that face-to-face sales accounted for 32% of growth in membership sales
- Increase in repeat visits made by existing members goes to show that they are making better use of membership and getting better value for money. Between 2007-09 Member visits made up 68% of all visits to National Trust locations. Between 2009-2012, this figure had increased to 72%. In real terms this equates to an increase from approx. 10m to almost 14m visits per year.
- Best membership figures ever recorded, up to 3,864,224, an increase of 2% on the previous year





SUMMARY OF RESULTS

Staff feedback

We conducted a survey using the Trust's own stakeholder group made up of staff from a variety of properties around the UK. This helped us gain insight as to how on-the-ground staff felt that the new POS was performing. Our findings showed that:

- 67% of staff felt that the POS campaign has been successful in helping to promote the full benefits of memberships.

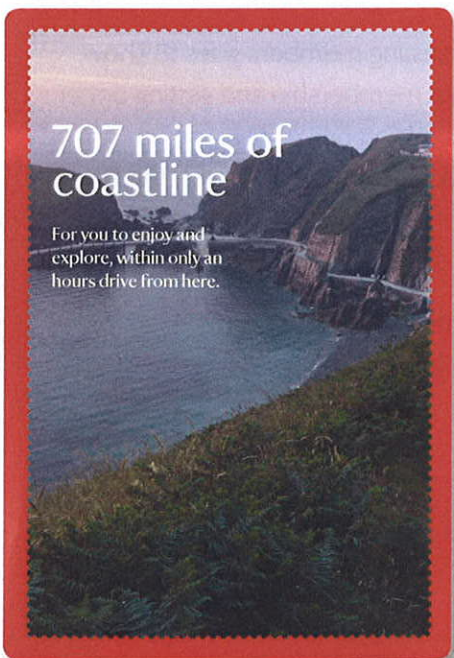
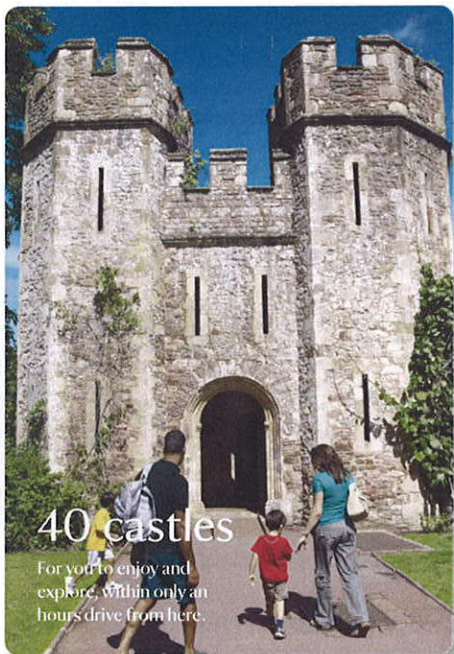
"No matter how experienced or confident you are, this POS, with its distinct identity and clarity of message, can both enhance and stand alone in our membership promotion. It communicates membership to our visitors with a modern, professional and fresh outlook which ultimately adds to its appeal and gives us confidence in promoting a long running product in a modern day world."

- 83% of staff agreed that the benefits of the membership are clearly communicated and highlighted, making them easy for National Trust recruitment teams to refer to.

"The key benefits of membership are clearly and concisely communicated. The key message of just 'One' membership with many benefits not only communicates the quality of the product but enables our recruitment team to pick and choose from them as to which is most likely to suit each individual visitor, giving them flexibility as well as visual support in their recruitment arsenal."

- 67% of staff felt the POS helped them to become more confident and motivated when promoting new membership to visitors
- 99% of staff agreed the POS has a distinct identity and stands out amongst other campaigns or promotional materials on site
- 80% of staff feel the POS has more visual stand out than previous years POS campaigns
- 92% of staff feel the suite of materials meet the needs of the individual sites / space

"Every piece of POS has a different purpose and location, whether at the car park, till point or on exit. The guidelines help clarify the optimum position of the POS to aid membership recruitment."



OTHER INFLUENCING FACTORS

- There was an annual increase in the cost of membership
- Reduction in the amount of POS items produced than in previous years bringing production and cost efficiencies
- No change in membership offer
- No supporting membership advertising campaign
- No improvements made to retail spaces or environments
- No new special offers introduced

RESEARCH RESOURCES

National Trust visitor statistics

Visit Britain reports:

- The UK Tourist 2010.
- UK Tourism Trends.
- Understanding the Staycation summary 2009 and 2010.



"We've worked with 999 on our suite of point of sale material used at National Trust places since October 2010, with the 'One Membership' material first deployed in March 2011. From the outset we've been extremely impressed by their approach, their creativity, their service provision and the way in which they have worked with us. We were ready for a fresh approach in 2010 and, with their experience of working in 'physical spaces', they challenged our brief from the off. Following their selection, through the last months of 2010 and they worked really closely with us, adding value and challenging our thinking. We quickly developed and have since maintained an excellent rapport with them, and they are very much seen as creative partners working alongside us for the most effective solution, rather than as an external supplier."

Ian Oxley, Head of Membership Promotion & Sales, National Trust

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