



# Further and Faster than the Competition

(For Publication)

Client Company: *White Logistics*  
Industry Sector: *Industrial Transportation*  
Design Company: *The Allotment*  
Date: *26th June 2015*



# Executive Summary

The Allotment was commissioned by White Logistics and The Design Council to undertake a strategic rebrand to reinvigorate and turnaround the fortunes of the business. This submission depicts the process and results of this transformation.

“Not so long ago I thought design was simply about how something looked, now I see how it can have an effect on every aspect of a business.”

Judith Stracey, Chairman, White Logistics

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Profit increase since  
start of project:

403%

Based on 2015 results.  
(4 years after rebrand)

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We produced an inspiring sales tool to  
replace previous collateral. This resulted  
in an increase in new business wins within  
the first 12 months of:

8% to 43%

Cost of rebrand

£50,000

Return on initial  
investment

1:61

in four years, based on sales increase.

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Word Count: 220

# Project Overview

## Outline of the project brief

In 2011 The Design Council worked with White Logistics to identify a number of design projects that would leverage renewed growth and help change the fortunes of the business. Following consultations, a strategic rebrand was favored and commissioned by White's to help return the business to profit. 'The Allotment', a brand and communication agency were selected from a number of agencies to help White's in bringing a new direction and vision to the business.

The brief to 'The Allotment' was to retain the current name of the business but develop a brand proposition and identity that would communicate their drive, passion and levels of service that would put them on the map in the minds of potential customers.

## Objectives

- Bring the business into 'above market' profitability and turnaround the revenues of the company to achieve a turnover figure of £10m within 5 years.
- Establish the business as one of the most respected in the region.
- Attract and retain the best staff.
- Improve the service levels to their customers.

## Project launch date

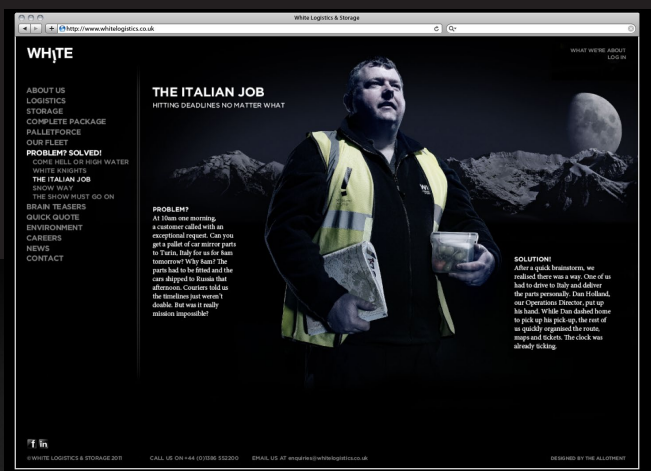
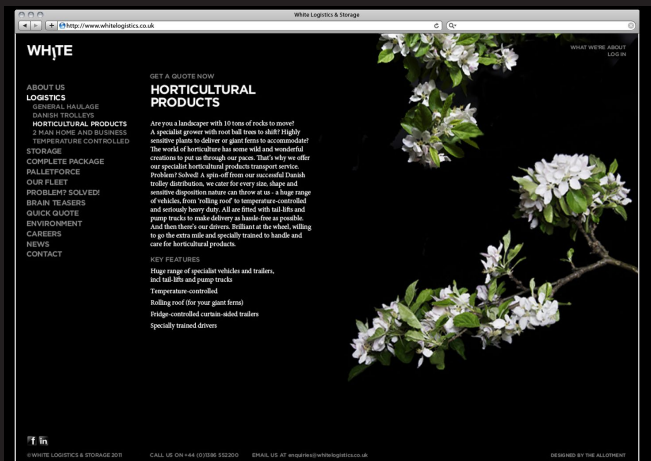
The project was commissioned in October 2010 and the identity and delivery was completed on 1st March 2011 to coincide with an internal launch.



Haulage Heroes  
Whether it's literally saving a business from going under in floods or improvising a sledge from a pallet to deliver a sofa in driving snow, we bring White's problem solving stories to life at [whitelogistics.co.uk](http://whitelogistics.co.uk)

# The Story so Far

Rick White established the business in 1972 (formerly called Rick White Ltd) and it grew organically. Judith Stracey worked for Rick White as the company's Finance Director. In 2002, Judith Stracey, bought the company from Rick White and embarked on growing the business. Under Judith's ownership and leadership, the business grew organically and buildings and land adjacent their original site were acquired to help improve the company's balance sheet.



The company offers the following services ;

- Full-loads (mainly to UK mainland destinations)
- Groupage (the consolidation and delivery of part-loads to multiple destinations)
- Pallet distribution (the company is a founder-member of 'Palletforce')
- Storage (including a pick, pack and dispatch service for customers)
- Danish trolley distribution (the company is a hub for inventory and delivery to customers' sites)
- Two-man home delivery (for consumers' purchases)



# Market Overview

The logistics sector is an incredibly commoditised and competitive industry, worth an estimated £55bn to the UK economy and contributing 5% to UK GDP. (source: PWC)

Viscerally exposed to national economic conditions, logistics is one of the industries that suffered most during the economic downturn. Falling consumption in many sectors resulted in a severe downturn in the movement and storage of goods. Two indicators tell the story for the period: GDP (Q4 annual % change) in the UK was at its lowest in 2009 at (1.5)%, improving to just 3% in 2014, whilst average, online weekly purchases fell to £340.76 but have recovered in 2014 to £716.77.

Profit margins are wafer thin, even the Top 100 Road Hauliers post pre-tax profits of, at best, 3-4%.

Throughout the period, insolvency and liquidation have been commonplace. In 2014, 20% of logistic-sector businesses went out of business (source: Moore Stephens Accountants). The number of HGV Operators' licenses declined from 91,200 in 2009 to 77,732 in 2013, a drop of 15% in just 4 years.

The average price of bulk diesel peaked in 2011 at 112.05 pence per litre but, in 2014, still remained 5% higher at 94.18 pence per litre than the 2009 price of 89.99 pence per litre.

Wages account for 35-40% of a haulier's total operating costs. Compulsory driving-training (CPC) resulted in an attrition of older, experienced drivers from the sector. The industry has seen a contraction of the labour-pool of 16% at its peak and has now settled again at 8% lower than 2009 levels.

As a direct result of driver-attrition, wage-inflation has driven an increase of 2.4% rise in annual pay, well ahead of the national average of 1.7% reported for the three months to December 2014. (source: FTA Logistics Report 2015).

Legislation has added operating cost in several areas:

- **Vehicle emissions:** older vehicles are now penalised and/or banned from entering major conurbations.
- **Vehicle safety:** widely publicised accidents have led to the introduction of additional mirrors, cameras and guards on HGVs.
- **Driver training:** compulsory CPC driver-training has prompted older, experienced drivers to retire rather than retrain and has fuelled wage-increases.

The challenge of helping a comparatively small, family-run business in this sector to use branding and communications design, not only return to profit but also grow was a tough one for both 'The Allotment' and The Design Council.

Word Count: 779





# Outline of Design Solutions

The starting-point was to define the point of clarity for the business. What made them 'stand-out' from their competitors? What value do they give that has real meaning to their customers?

To do this a 'big dig' was undertaken (extensive programme of research) with one-to-one interviews with key staff and their existing customers. In addition, a quantitative study was completed that looked at staff attitudes and opinions.

The findings gave us some resounding and powerful answers. White Logistics were absolutely genuine in their desire to 'solve' customers' problems - to go that extra mile. This observation and insight informed the design brief and gave The Allotment the perfect platform to develop an authentic and compelling approach.

The scope of the project required the new brand identity to engage internally with White Logistics 'frontline staff' (the drivers) and the back-office team who ensure their vehicles run efficiently and deliver a fast and responsive service. It would also be used to influence external customers with a compelling message via the truck livery, a sales brochure and the website.

## After



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The rebrand paid for itself

# 10x

over in the first 9 months  
with over £500,000 worth of  
new business opportunities

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## Before



## The Solution

There is no grey about the haulage industry. Expectations are high and performance is easily measured on whether companies deliver ‘on-time, in-full and in good order’. It is ‘black and white’. This was a gift to our creative approach.

## The ‘Big Idea’

‘The Allotment’ took this thought and the proposition of ‘Problem, Solved’ and developed a design solution that bought a sense of directness and intelligence to the haulage business. The brand identity reflected this directness with a simple icon that was used to show a business on the move. The ‘i’ in White was a top down view of a truck and an exclamation mark.

As part of the ‘Problem, Solved’ idea disruptive black and white patterns with cleverly hidden messages were used on truck sides and ‘brain teasing’ puzzles were used on the back of the trucks to entertain drivers stuck in traffic jams and was a clever way to drive traffic to the website. The tone-of-voice adopted was simple and very direct...

‘Logistics is just logistics, right. Wrong!’

‘30,000 ball points. Dundee. 7am. Tomorrow? Done.’

Storytelling was a fundamental part of the solution. The Allotment recognised the importance of engaging with the drivers (the frontline) and developed a brand implementation plan that made them the hero’s - haulage hero’s. Stories were told of how White’s drivers go the extra mile to solve problems and support their customers. These stories communicated the authenticity of the new brand message and made the project real and engaging to all in the business.

Word Count: 454



Puzzles to solve on every truck. Potential customers and the public alike are driven to White's website looking for those illusive answers to the brain teasers.



# Summary of results

## Sales

White Logistics commissioned work from branding and communications agency 'The Allotment' totalling £50k.

The total increase would suggest a ROI of 1:30 in additional sales revenue.

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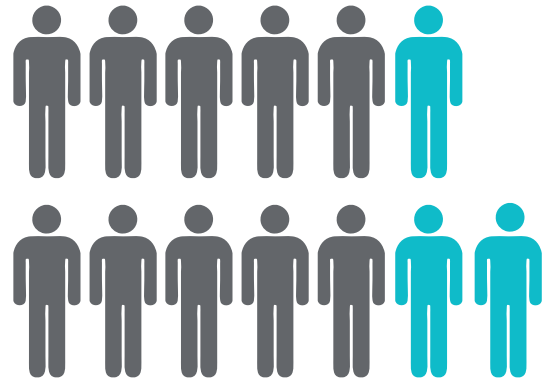
Total sales increase of

60%



50% More Vehicles

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30% More Employees

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Profit increase since start of project:

403%

Based on 2015 results.  
(4 years after rebrand)

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## Profitability

White Logistics' overall profitability has seen a 403% rise. Against their expenditure on design, this suggests an ROI of 1:13.

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# Summary of results

## Problem:

Before the rebrand, White's used uninspiring digital PDF's as tender and new business documents.

## Solved:

We developed a brochure that captured the black and white 'can do' attitude customers can always expect from White Logistics. This single piece of marketing material has converted new business activity from 8% to an exceptional 43% in the first 12 months.

Conversion rate on new business:

8% to 43%

This was achieved with no additional spend on:  
Marketing  
Advertising  
PR



## Account Wins

White's Directors report that they have won significant new business during the period September 2012 to May 2015 and describe it as 'all good, profitable work'.



Confirmed new business wins suggest a return on investment of:

1:49

# Summary of results

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## Problem:

Bring the business into 'above market' profitability and turnaround the revenues of the company to achieve an ambitious turnover figure within five years.

## Solved:

As of 2015 they have achieved 80% of this target. Projections show that the target will be surpassed in 2015/16, 1 year ahead of schedule.

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## Problem:

Establish the business as one of the most respected in the region.

## Solved:

Recognised as an exceptional business and brand globally from a number of industries, having won numerous international brand and design awards.

Cost of rebrand  
**£50,000**

Sales increase since the rebrand

**£3.06M**

Added value since the rebrand

**£3.01 Million**

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## Awards

**Design Week-** Grand Prix Winner (beating Apple and the BBC)

**Design Week-** Best Identity

**D&AD-** In-Book Award

**European Transform Awards-** Best Corporate Rebrand

**Marketing Design Awards-** Best Rebrand



# Other influencing factors

## **Judith Stracey's semi-retirement**

Judith's open-mindedness and curiosity had been the opportunity to get the Design Council's agenda underway at White Logistics. Judith had been the champion of the design project but her near-permanent retirement shows signs that (the implementation and further exploitation of) the design agenda has stalled a little, in her absence.

## **Tom Stracey becomes MD**

Tom Stracey, Judith's eldest son, had been earmarked for the MD's role shortly before Judith's decision to retire. He was MD designate during the design project and has been 'making his mark' across the business since Judith's retirement.

## **Recruit a new FD**

Judith Stracey was both MD and FD during her tenure and, approaching semi-retirement, she set about replacing her FD function with a new appointment. Scott Brown was recruited, initially part-time, and then full-time. Scott's recruitment happened towards the end of their design project.

## **Changes to the management-team**

For a variety of reasons, the entire management-team has changed since we worked with White's. Tom Stracey told us that recruitment in a small market town has always been problematic, particularly as they compete with other local employers for the best talent. He told us that they get fewer applicants now but applicants' quality/calibre has gone-up noticeably.

## **Sales and marketing activity**

Towards the end of our work, the company recruited a dedicated sales role, the first time they had done so. Up until that time, sales had been largely reactive and handled by the company's directors. A saleswoman was recruited and sales activity began in earnest, using the new branding and communications materials to help support sales and marketing activity. This renewed sales activity didn't last long and the lady was dismissed for misconduct. She left to work for one of White's direct competitors, to whom she tried hard to take some of White's customers with her. White's directors, however, were confident that their service levels and brand-recognition would prevail. Sales activity has returned to be part of the directors' role.

## Research resources

PWC  
Moore Stephens,  
Financial Times  
FTA Logistics Report 2015  
White Logistics