

**CIPR PRIDE AWARDS 2009**  
**MID09 17/04 summary**

**Name of region:** Midlands

**Category number:** 17: Best Publication

**Name:** Heart of London Business Alliance  
**Annual Report 07/08**  
**Taking Centre Stage**

**Name of Entrant:** Seal (Julie Price, Claire Brown, Seetle Dool)

**Client Name:** Heart of London Business Alliance

**Introduction**

Seal launched the concept of Business Improvement Districts (BiDs) in the UK on behalf of The Association of Town Centre Managers. Subsequently in 2003 it was appointed by one of London's inaugural BiDs, the Heart of London Business Alliance, to manage and implement its communications strategy.

The Heart of London Business Alliance was formed to promote and protect the bustling area from Piccadilly Circus to Leicester Square and brings together property owners, retailers and businesses, united in a shared mission to improve the trading environment.

Crucial to the success of the Alliance is communication. Reporting is at the heart of all activity and Seal is integral to this, producing the Annual Report, Interim Bulletins and email updates.

**The aim of the publication**

Since its inception, the Alliance has created a force for positive change and champions the power of cumulative action. The Annual Report offers a clear representation of issues encountered and progress made towards reaching these shared goals; it is pivotal to informing and engaging the businesses.

## **Planning and implementation**

The greatest challenge for the Seal PR team is collating the influx of information received from various sources. The initial planning stage is crucial to the success of the final document. Reading all the reports, evaluating and recommending the content is all part of our remit.

The publication is divided into sections for clarity of reporting and understanding.

**Making Things Happen** - encompasses progress of initiatives and major projects from the multi-million pound investment to improve Leicester Square to Al Fresco dining licences.

**Promoting Our Area** - focuses on marketing initiatives and events. From the free summer event in Leicester Square 'West End Live' to the festive campaign 'Christmas like nowhere else.'

**Measuring the Mood** - gauges opinion and endorsements from key businesses and organisations.

**Talking to You** - concentrates on how the Alliance communicates with businesses, looking at the frequency, content and method of the contact.

**Our Voice** - focuses on of how achievements are reported in the media and includes awards submissions and successes.

**Improving our Streets** - is a detailed reporting section on the Clean Street Team and partnership projects. Services include the removal of graffiti, CCTV updates and the pub and civic watch projects.

**Dedicated Enforcement** – is again a detailed report focusing on the work of the City Guardians. This section measures their performance and highlights how the BiD helps with a wide variety of issues from helping the homeless to tackling street crime.

## **How the report meets the needs of the target audience**

Objectives were clearly defined in the 2007 Heart of London Business Alliance Proposals. The Annual Report evaluates progress against these objectives and highlights new agreed initiatives.

There is a defined target audience and as Seal regularly meets with all members, there is a heightened awareness of these requirements.

By sectioning the report clearly, having a defined introduction and highlighting the achievements/outcomes, readers can easily select information appropriate to them and their business.

### **Essentially the document reports outcomes of:**

- Marketing campaigns
- Year on year footflow
- Street Team activity
- Street trends and issues
- Crime initiatives
- Year on year crime comparisons
- Crime and anti-social behaviour issues
- City Guardian activity
- Multi-agency operations

## **Design and creativity**

Seal conceived the creative concept - 'Taking Centre Stage.'

This theme reflects the area's credentials as the home of the UK's theatre industry and also the ambitions of the Alliance. Working closely with designers, Seal sourced the front cover image to visually represent this theme.

Our introduction from the Chief Executive, 'Vision and Delivery in Challenging Times' reflects the tough economic trading conditions but references the report theme in a positive context.

***"Our united approach in creating a new brand identity for the West End will ensure our landmark area remains in the spotlight, Taking Centre Stage."***

Seal has been involved in every element of the Annual Report from the content and copywriting to selecting the stock and the overall design look and feel of the report.

## **Photography**

Seal evaluated the photographic requirement, audited existing imagery and prepared a photographic brief. A day was spent with the selected photographer to ensure the required images were captured.

These images, together with artist's impressions and graphs were included to augment the content and are a visual representation of the text. They are devised to retain the reader's interest and improve the overall clarity of the document.

## **Evaluation**

The Alliance produced a detailed proposal in 2007 and it was on the strength of this proposal they gained the vote to operate for a second term. Each Annual Report refers to this document and evaluates year on year progress.

The report is sent to every member and feedback on the style and content is encouraged. The report has evolved in line with the responses received.

There was limited budget for the project but Seal wanted to achieve maximum impact by creating a stylish quality document which reflects the aims and ambitions of the Business Alliance.

## **Budget**

A budget of £7,000 was allocated for the project to include copywriting, photography, design and print production of 500 copies.

Funds were invested in quality stock and production to ensure the Annual Report was a valued quality document to be retained and referenced throughout the year. The 40 page report was finished with a metallic cover and a spotlight highlighting the 'The Centre Stage' front cover image. The total project was delivered on time and under budget at £6,730.

## **Feedback**

*Thanks for a very elegant 07 / 08 Annual Report. Its presentation and the extensive achievements contained therein makes one proud to be involved, though of course I fully recognise where all the hard work is done.*

*Well done to you and your team.*

**Barry Sayer**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Clear Channel UK**

And the final word from our client:

*I am delighted with the Annual Report. It really does look the business! Please thank everyone your end for their hard work and patience with me!*

**Sarah Porter**  
**Chief Executive**  
**The Heart of Business Alliance**

**Ends:**