

Category 20: Best Event

Title of Entry: Eagles Meadow Soars

Client : Eagles Meadow, Wrexham

Submitting Agency: The Bright Consultancy

Background

Eagles Meadow is a new £100m shopping and leisure destination in Wrexham, North Wales. The development was a joint initiative between Wrexham Council and development company, Wilson Bowden. The target date for opening to the public was set for 30 October 2008. Bright was appointed to handle the lead up to and the opening of Eagles Meadow.

The aim

- Arrange an opening event that would be a day to remember for the people of Wrexham
- Co-ordinate the VIP opening ceremony
- Communicate to the people of Wrexham and the surrounding area all that Eagles Meadow was bringing to the region
- Handle any potential negativity towards the development, particularly in relation to disruption caused by the construction work
- Co-ordinate activity with and assist the retailers
- Highlight the link between Wrexham's old town centre with the new shopping centre

How the work meets the needs of the target audiences

- Bright organised briefings and previews for the press and media. These included walk-throughs of the development during construction and raising the profile of the centre manager via interviews. This way the public was kept informed of progress and what was going to be available to them via the press, TV, radio and the internet
- Bright planned the format and activity for the opening event. On launch day a Caribbean style carnival procession started the event from the old town square and made its way to Eagles Meadow, this strongly represented the conjoining of the old and new town.
- The opening ceremony involved a ribbon cutting carried out by the town's Mayor, who was joined on the local radio station's stage which was set up within the centre. He was joined by other local dignitaries and VIPs and as the ribbon was cut 500 balloons were launched which had special vouchers attached them for the person finding a balloon to spend within the centre
- Activity was geared around the local people and included:
 - a competition with the Wrexham Mail to win the chance to be the first person to enter the centre, £500 to spend and to attend the VIP reception, the newspaper received more than 1,000 entries
 - retailers' press competitions in the Wrexham Leader in the lead up to launch day
 - shoppers goody bags were prepared, filled with a wide range of items from the centre's retailers
 - local radio station team with thunder crews were brought in to add atmosphere and to entertain shoppers
 - art competition for Wrexham Schools to win cash prizes and have pupils artwork displayed in the centre on opening day

- fashion workshops with GMTV's Mark Heyes were run throughout the day giving shoppers hints and tips on how to achieve this season's look from fashion retailers within Eagles Meadow

Design and creativity

- Planning and managing the carnival procession and in centre entertainment
- Retailer liaison re goody bags and competitions
- Bringing in a well known celebrity fashion guru to attract more visitors and promote the retail offer
- Writing of all speeches for the opening party including representatives from Wilson Bowden, Eagles Meadow centre manager, the Worshipful Mayor of Wrexham as well as the host presenter from Marcher Sound
- Onsite press office co-ordinating all interviews and activity on the day

Evaluation and measurement

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| Equivalent advertising value | £153,192.41 |
| PR value | £462,377.26 |
| Opportunities to see | 3,823,605 |

Other information

- More than **50,000** people attended the opening day event
- High level of pre and post event press coverage was achieved communicating a very positive message regarding Eagles Meadow. Publications included Wrexham Leader, Wrexham Mail, Daily Post (Wales), Wales Business Insider
- Extensive TV coverage on both BBC Wales and ITV Wales on regional news programmes throughout opening day. Lead story on main BBC1 Wales evening show, including live links and interviews with the centre manager and leader of Wrexham Council
- Wide reaching radio coverage on all regional stations, BBC Wales, BBC Radio Cymru, Marcher Sound, Calon FM
- Online coverage with BBC and Wrexham Leader
- Coverage on Welsh speaking TV and radio
- Retailers reported they far exceeded their opening day sales targets, with many being passed by lunchtime
- Promo teams gave out 1,000 goody bags within half an hour of opening