

## **Colin Beesting, Freelance Consultant**

### ***Creating campaigns with your audience/visitors***

Colin Beesting is a marketing, communications and diversity consultant. Previously, as the Assistant Director of Communications at the British Film Institute he led the redevelopment of the BFI brand attracting several award nominations and a listing in the top ten 'Cool Brands' on the cultural scene. Prior to this, Colin worked at Arts Council England as the marketing and communications lead for two flagship programmes: Creative Partnerships and Decibel, establishing the South Bank Show Award for Cultural Diversity and diversity traineeships. Colin has worked on a range of projects including Brighton Festival and Dome, Croydon Clocktower, Croydon Summer Festival, Watermans Arts Centre and the Warehouse Theatre Croydon. Current projects include an advocacy programme for the outdoor arts sector for Arts Council England and stakeholder management and communications programmes in the National Health Service.

In this practical hands-on workshop Colin provided delegates with a toolkit for devising, creating, delivering and managing integrated marketing campaigns in order to develop awareness, interest and engagement from different audiences.

#### **Tell Show Involve**

The point of this session is to explore the way we can move from talking to or talking at the audience to building relationships with them. It's about looking at how we can involve them in the process and having two-way dialogue.

As communicators we don't have all the answers, in fact we have about 10%, and the people we want to reach are crucial to successful campaigns. We will look at the theory, a couple of examples and then do some group work to try it out ourselves.

As the Chinese proverb goes:

*"Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I may remember; involve me and I'll understand."*

We are trying to take people from one way communication to involving them in what we are doing. There's a progression which means moving from *tell* to *show* to *involve*.

Tell includes	Newspaper listings
	Simple print adverts
	Posters
	Radio ads
	Online banners

These are simple flat modes of communication which are not very deep: snapshot awareness raising things. People who do it well start converting these into 'show' – using striking images, well chosen words. Show includes

- Brochures
- Reviews
- Direct mail letters
- Interviews
- Displays and exhibitions

This is where we have more detail, it starts to be about opinion, telling a story and giving insight. The best campaigns take them all and mix them up.

Involve includes

- Blogs
- Friends schemes
- Focus groups
- Discussions
- Advocacy activities

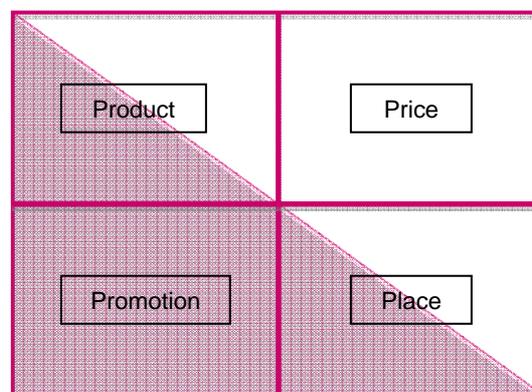
New technology allows us to involve people much more easily. Often, we don't have the time or resources to engage with people one-to-one but through these processes we can start to set up a dialogue. So we have a development of the proverb:

*'Tell me and I'll forget; show me and I might come; involve me and I'll get all enthusiastic and tell lots of other people too!'*

These techniques make our messages go further. It's no surprise to any of us that the most effective means of getting people involved is word-of-mouth and personal recommendation and that's one of the hardest things to stimulate. 'Trip Advisor' is successful because it'll let you know the unbiased opinions of people who've actually stayed at the hotels.

This helps us to take people further up the loyalty ladder. Ultimately what we're trying to do is take people up the ladder and turn them into advocates.

When I became freelance, someone told me that you can't do a single presentation or consultancy without using a four box matrix so here is one:



I was thinking about how this might fit in to conventional marketing models and looking at the marketing mix, involvement seems to sit in the shaded zone.

### Case Studies

The British Film Institute (BFI) had no real history of engaging with 15-21 year olds. The BFI has quite an odd image. It's seen as quite cool but also exclusive – for people in the know about film. The organisation wanted to change this for a number of reasons, not least because new members of staff had a desire to change things.

The BFI Future Film Festival was an opportunity to work with these audiences in a different way. It was a collaboration of programming and marketing, the idea being to give away control. The first festival was programmed by young people with facilitation by programmers.

One of the great things about the BFI is the way it can use its contacts. So the first festival had the British premier of 'Son of Rambo' because that was one of the films the young people wanted to see. The rest of the festival was made up films, workshops about the film industry, opportunities to have a go, q&a sessions with people from tv programmes like Skins.

When it came to marketing, they said they weren't interested in leaflets. We couldn't mail them because we didn't have addresses. They were texting, using the internet, YouTube etc. We decided to let the young people develop their own promotional materials and let the message spread virally instead of going down traditional routes of using agencies and doing posh pieces of print.

[The videos were shown; parodies of The Empire Strikes Back, The Matrix and Kill Bill]

More details of this film festival are available at

[www.bfi.org.uk/whatson/bfi\\_southbank/events/future\\_film/the\\_future\\_film\\_festival](http://www.bfi.org.uk/whatson/bfi_southbank/events/future_film/the_future_film_festival)

It worked for this audience – for others it wouldn't work at all. Although it wasn't expensive, it took a long time and required expert facilitators who were used to working with young people and making films.

### User Involvement in the NHS

In the NHS, user involvement is a requirement of the Department of Health. There are five priorities for the NHS this year and user involvement is one of them. It's not easy consulting with people on the Health Service they want, but it's a condition of funding. Imagine if user involvement was a requirement of Arts Council funding.

A key challenge in the NHS is to obtain referrals, whereby people are sent on to health departments and service providers (usually by GPs) for them to deal with particular conditions.

This project took place in Bromley around the launch of new services for the condition of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD). It's debilitating and quite severe, but by offering a good service it's possible for them to take control of their lives. The object of this project was to get GPs enthusiastic about new services and empower the teams that deliver them. The output of this was the film and incidentally, the making of the film made the participants feel good about being involved.

[The video made as a result was shown]

The messages are powerful and resonated with people and the goals were achieved.

A final example comes from a project in Lambeth where there is a high problem with drug misuse. Conventional methods of drugs education weren't working, so the drugs team decided to use new techniques of working alongside people in a project called 'Fear and

Loathing' produced with an independent organisation called Mainliners. The users came up with the messages that were used.

They used 'Arnstein's Ladder' as a guiding model of participation. It's similar to the loyalty ladder as it frames how people can be taken to a higher level of involvement in society, moving from 'manipulation' at the bottom to 'citizen control' at the top. The top is about handing over control to people.

### Group Work

Delegates were divided into groups and given the opportunity to provide their own ideas of ways that audiences/visitors could be involved in creating campaigns. There were six assignments and two sessions [There were more delegates in Session 1 than Session 2 + some assignments had more than one group working on it]. Some of the results provided [on flipcharts] are outlined below.

CB asked delegates to challenge each other about whether their ideas are really about involvement.

### **Group One**

*You are a small contemporary art gallery staging a new exhibition of work by young Black artists. You have no real history of bringing in a Black audience, even though the census states that at least 15% of the potential audience in your catchment area is of African Caribbean origin.*

*Identify three or four ways that you would use your local community in building a marketing and PR campaign to help you reach your target audience.*

#### Session 1:

- Use community centres/hotspots to sell tickets, lead discussions, direct programming
- Are the artists local? Sourcing work from within the community an advantage, we should be asking community what and who they would want to see exhibited
- Focus groups: employ volunteers/ambassadors to drive marketing strategy and set up events. This should be sustained throughout exhibition, with a programme of 'sub' events to support exhibition and maintain audience involvement.
- Local artists
- Get people's attention OUTSIDE of the building – schools, street art, local radio + media, community groups
- Contact multi-cultural support networks
- Multi-venue exhibition - take the art to the people
- Data profiling methods to identify target areas
- Launch the exhibition in largely African Caribbean areas – residents create art that will be displayed, local bands, workshops, celebratory feel.

#### Session 2:

- Use the artist to promote
- Connect to universities/schools who offer cultural studies, to ask if they want to be involved (could go towards credits)
- Social networking
- Use office of national stats / mosaic to identify where these groups live + doordrop
- Text polls to get feedback
- Get young black artists to develop marketing material

- Invite a catering company to get involved as an opportunity to promote them [artists] - create a social occasion
- Spokesperson/people – talk to people in Mosques. Ask them to meet artist/see artwork beforehand.
- Invite specialist press to a pre-cursor event
- Promote in local mags

## Group Two

*Boys aged 16-21 and contemporary dance aren't a natural match!*

*You have to sell tickets for a tour of a new dance piece and you have received some extra funding from a local charitable foundation to help you encourage this particular audience to attend.*

*How would you involve them in developing your marketing programme so that they become advocates?*

Session 1:

- Engaging with existing dance groups
  - Sports/physical activities
  - Show them that dance can help these sports
- Make it relevant to them
- Teaching about the body - benefits
- Support acts from that age group
- Mini-awards – best back flip etc comps
- Music
- Angles – fitness/sport, girls, flash mobs
- Workshops in alternative spaces
- Working with dancer to develop a piece/showcase
- Document the rehearsal and process – virally/video logs

Session 2:

- Approach colleges and universities, community groups
  - Offer a shot at fame
  - Choose their own music and work with producers and choreographers to devise own performance
  - Video and use as promo – local music shops and YouTube etc
  - Live street performances – both young persons' piece and excerpt from actual show
- Nightclub queues
- Shopping precincts
- Young folk involved talk about it and highlight on own social networks

## Group Three

*You've received sponsorship from a local company and as part of the sponsorship agreement you've committed to offering 10% of the seats to employees. Your product is a brand-new play by a new writer.*

*The theatre has 1000 seats.*

*The company is a manufacturer of machine parts and most of the workforce is white, working class men who have no history of attending theatre. Simply offering free tickets won't be sufficient to bring them in – you need to market the show to them to make it attractive.*

*How will you work with a group of employees to solve your problem and hit the 10% target?*

Session 1:

- Writer visits the company
- Community cast/audience participation
- Involve the workers/families/friends in developing the play
- Workshops for workers
- Involve the union
- Backstage visit to the theatre
- Take the work into the community
- Use existing internal communications
- Allow a preview film to be made
- Drama workshops for kids and/or family

Session 2:

- Work with company to add value to the performance to make it a unique opportunity
- Involve the manufacturers in the set design
- Incentivise participation with 2for1 tickets
- Rehearse at the company premises
- Q&A with the audience re their role
- 2for1 tickets - could be invited by participants i.e. a method of engaging the sponsor's stakeholders
- Seek out other local businesses to host the pv – ask the manufacturers what food, drink, music etc they want for the launch

## **Group Four**

*You're re-opening your independent cinema following a major refurbishment. You received quite a large sum of additional funding in order to make your venue fully accessible, which includes 15 spaces for wheelchairs in each of the two screens.*

*When you consider that you show three films a day in each screen, six days a week, that's quite a lot of potential wheelchair users you could accommodate.*

*The cinema's staff aren't really used to dealing with large numbers, and wheelchair users have no history of visiting the venue.*

*How will you involve front of house staff in developing your marketing so they feel empowered to help your new customer group?*

Session 1:

- (Assumes that wheelchair spaces brings in wheelchair users ...)
- To involve FOH in targeting new customer group:
  - Discussions with FOH team (don't assume level of ignorance)
  - Aim to recruit at least one FOH wheelchair user
  - Field trip to venue with wheelchair users already prevalent
  - Bring in wheelchair users to test facilities (though should have been done prior to refurbishment and FOH should have been involved)
  - Also put FOH staff in wheelchairs so that they can feel what it's like
  - Social events/welcoming activities to engage potential audience of wheelchair users
- Wheelchair users to act as advocates for other wheelchair users
- Getting FOH training in accessibility awareness
- Visits to daycare centres/schools to engage with wheelchair users

- PR coverage of this
- Use existing wheelchair users as advocates
- Nominated FOH person as contact for wheelchair access and well-briefed box office
- Video!

#### Session 2:

- Disability training
- Buddy system
- FOH vox pop disabled visitors for training video
- Disabled volunteer scheme working with FOH
- FOH working with marketing to make access guide
- Access group: wheelchair users (possible customers) and FOH team
- FOH disability awareness training
- Open day for community groups and disabled people
- FOH staff starring in YouTube video showing lift, view from seats etc
- Encourage feedback through FOH

### Group Five

*A local Housing Association is building a new development in a small village and wants to make public art central to the scheme.*

*You have been asked to get the local community involved in developing a brief for the artist.*

*What engagement techniques would you use and how would you ensure that the community feels involved and proud of the final pieces?*

#### Session 1:

- Go to community (pub, post office, W.I.)
- Use village newsletter/newspaper
- Talking history research
- Bus trips to art they relate to
- Suggestion box
- Target schools / mother and toddler groups
- Involve community in making the art
- They create artist's brief
- Unveiling event
- Door to door canvassing and invitation to consult event (including wider community)
- @event - transparent approach
  - work with artists
  - free tea and coffee
  - local media involved
  - diary room/comments board
  - examples: textures/colours
  - ask genuine questions about their community
- Conclusion: public vote or display of results and party!

#### Session 2:

- Go and talk to the community
- Recruit an advocate (community knowledge)
- Schools, churches, community centres, key shopping areas, crèches and other venues
- Social networks for younger audience
- Preview/theme night
- Postcode based offer (half price tickets / comps)

- Artists talks/interviews/workshops – scope to be developed – local students could film + upload onto video sharing sites
- Local radio + interviews
- Data collection on attendance
- Focus groups
- What is public art? Meeting, local art classes, art events/happenings – ownership
- Ambassadors – each sector of the community – school, church, youth clubs
- Art event – meet artist, discover/explore skills, terminology – consensus – ownership
- Face 2 Face
- Arts skills
- Zone interests

## Group Six

*You've been engaged as a marketing consultant to deliver the opening campaign for a Chinese Arts Centre. The local Chinese community has been involved in developing the centre and the management of the project are confident that this audience are guaranteed to attend.*

*Their concern is with the local non-Chinese communities – especially those living in some of the local loft conversion properties in the immediate vicinity.*

*The centre plans to present work in their outdoor courtyard and needs the agreement of locals to do this.*

*How would you involve these people in the marketing for the opening of the venue?*

### Session 1:

- Event focused on Chinese food to those locals in loft-cons. Informal focus groups.
- Tasks sessions into Chinese culture and vice versa (non-Chinese culture for Chinese residents)
- Sharing the history and development of the local area for both parties
- Bi-lingualism across communications
- Involve both communities in day to day running of the centre
- Joint projects (both short and long term)
- Local residents to have direct input into the development of the centre
- There is ONE community. Visit two communities in the one area
- Important events in Chinese and non-Chinese calendars to be inclusive to everyone
- Street party idea – everyone involved, both Chinese and non-Chinese activities
- Ideas of requirements – eg activities for kids
- Initial activity to draw attention and engage
- Involve a launch activity
- Resident committee becoming advocates and driving communication of what is happening
- Pre-opening relationships formed
- Awareness activities
- Attention grabbing events in the courtyard – provoke reaction from residents so they feel they are volunteering their time and involvement
- Involve in planning and logistics of event – best time, type of event etc.
- Short film in the street free to all to watch – engage outsiders or art piece explaining a bit about the cultural differences etc.

### Session 2:

- Bringing the two groups together
  - Talk to them about how they want to be involved

- help with programming
- want to visit
- spread the word
- Explore forms of Chinese culture, get together with food and information about the arts centre and get ideas from everyone about opening the centre
- Show whole journey using blogs, newspapers etc.
- Finish with an opening that involves everyone in different ways
- Talk to residency committee (face to face)
- Non-Chinese and local Chinese community
- An event participants can participate in – art classes etc
- Open on Chinese New Year
- What does China mean to you day?
- Community space
- Local social network sites
- Input/voting – saying what it was they wanted

Groups fed back their ideas to the wider group and CB ended by outlining the key qualities that people should have if they are involved in running/facilitating these sorts of projects:

- Energy – you need to commit, use your energy and bring out the energy of others
- Belief in the common good – that it's good to involve people
- Solution and results focused
- Personal responsibility – need to become part of the project

And the key themes:

- Trust
- Legitimacy
- Genuine insight
- Openness & learning