



Strategy and Business Case

Overview

In the last week of September people who live, work in or visit Leeds had the opportunity to see how they could get more out of life in 2011 - by going online. In Leeds alone there are 136,951 people who have never accessed computers or the internet (ONS 2010). The Go ON Leeds campaign aimed at inspiring citizens to make using computers and the internet an essential part of their daily life.

Supported by Leeds City Council, O2, Race online 2012 and UK online centres the campaign involved promotional activities in the run up to the campaign, enabling partners to facilitate Go ON Leeds.

As well as activities taking place in local UK online centres, libraries and community groups from Monday 26 September, special Go ON taster sessions took place on 29 and 30 September across the city. Visitors popped in to find out how the internet could help them in everyday life – from getting on at work to keeping in touch with family and friends, exploring interests to saving time and money.

Go ON Leeds 2011 aims

- Helping more people in LEEDS to use the internet for the first time
- Bringing partners in LEEDS together with a single purpose during the campaign
- Clearly articulate the economic and social benefits that increased digital inclusion will deliver, including for example the contribution that social networking can make to inclusion, communication and employability
- Promote the social value of digital inclusion, particularly in areas concerning the role of the internet in education and helping with engagement for older people and combating loneliness.
- Helping people to get basic digital skills and improve digital literacy.
- Signposting people to low cost offers for computer equipment, broadband offers and mobile internet services. Supporting UK online centres across LEEDS to increase footfall into centres and improving community engagement.
- Recruiting local Digital Champions to support the momentum of Go ON Leeds after the event.
- Bring together the Digital Community within Leeds in an attempt to build new networks to create value for Leeds.
- Support the O2 Think Big initiative for young people running funded projects around digital inclusion.
- Learning lessons to pass onto partners running future Go ON Leeds campaigns. For example about: partner engagement; holding events in different venues and outreach locations; increasing the diversity of target groups engaged; how many volunteers are required to successfully deliver; the levels of marketing required prior to holding events.



The overall ambition

- To reduce the number of off liners by 25% in Leeds by the end of June 2012
- To create 4,000 digital champions to provide sustained support for the remaining offline community beyond June 2012.
- To implement effective cross sector partnerships via local partnerships programme, Leeds City Council and national partnerships: - BT, Citizens Online, UK online centres, Asda, CCB, Post Office, DWP, Atkins Global, Mecca and Jobcentre Plus.

Customer and place based insight

What we did:

For any Places initiative, success centres on identifying the needs of the end user within the region.

We know that Places based initiatives are not run on a one size fits all model
Be creative with sourcing venues which off liners frequent, work, and live.

Provide a Calendar of events which offliners can book onto, make sure the space is well equipped and there is a willing and engaged digital champion running the session.

When planning a Go ON Places project it is important to look at the key priorities of the council and find ways in which this digital participation project can support and lend itself to needs of the council and its citizens.

We used data from the council as well as accompanying data from the English Local Authorities Digital & Social Exclusion Dashboard English statistics. This established which wards were the most digitally deprived, or experienced low broadband penetration, long term unemployment or lower than average adult learning and literacy rates.

Consider if you would like to take a stage by stage approach focusing on a particular ward or region within the district or approach the challenge in a uniformed fashion.

Priorities and variables will vary from rural to urban conurbations. E.g. In the case of Leeds we realised that it was imperative to open up and promote free, safe and familiar Wi-Fi outlets within the city so that digital champions could take action and help off liners get online for free and learners had free access points to carry on their journey.

We offered free training sessions and events which was helpful to voluntary organisations and digital champions as it helps them to understand and test [free tools and resources available](#).



We know that family and friends play a key role in helping new users, and a third of internet users are willing to pass skills on to others (BBC research, 2009). With this in mind Volunteers in a formal and informal capacity are crucial to the success of an initiative of this shape and scope.

We explored volunteering through local organisations such as Voluntary Action Leeds, Learning Pool and Leeds council library and community channels. These opportunities will vary between different towns/cities.

In some 'Go ON + Places' the library networks will be able to offer volunteers the opportunity to train offliners via their network. In Leeds this option was not offered as the library network already has voluntary training built into jobs descriptions. If this is the case in your region it is crucial to be able to offer alternative volunteering channels and publicise accordingly.

Where possible work with your local Community Capacity Builders from the planning stage of the project as they have established routes to market, are well informed and engaged with the community.

Explore the links between Colleges and Schools and see where you can create a work placement/digital champion volunteering module. E.g. Intergenerational work with Care homes, and Social Housing Groups.

We knew that the main barriers for non-users are lack of understanding of the benefits (64%) and cost (23%). (BBC research, 2009) Therefore removing cost as a barrier within any given region is a driving factor behind engagement. We entered into a partnership on a local level with a commercial retailer to help publicise consistent low cost hardware and connectivity offers, there is nothing wrong with asking them to create a low cost bespoke offer for your offline citizens within your region encouraging off liners to engage with technology in all its guises: - Tablets, Smartphone's, Laptops or PC's and TV internet boxes, and connectivity.

What we learnt

Trusted faces in trusted places are key to awareness raising however take up of free training within these venues can be slow. The main factors behind this are: - Space within the venue, time of day, and staff engagement within each venue.

In the case of Leeds we found that customers are more willing to participate in free training sessions if the venue is larger, refreshment is offered and the staffs are engaged.

Customers or patrons are far more willing to explore the training sessions available if a local relationship is established and consistently maintained on a local level throughout the year rather than as a one hit wonder of spiked activity.



Leeds City Market proved a huge success for engaging with off liners in central Leeds. However similar venues and support were not as easily found within the disadvantaged wards. Engage with Merchants and builders yards, faith organisations, museums, sports venues, and bus networks.

From the Community Group meetings held via the CCB we learnt that volunteer organisations are unclear of what the offer may look like post campaign week/month for a digital champion? I.e. where can digital champions go locally to take action or how do they find out where further opportunities exist. The answer nationally is to visit (www.do-it.org)

Where possible work with the CCB on a local level to create and maintain an established shared database which highlights venue, kit and volunteering opportunities. This can be housed on a forum, database, or social media platform.

25 official volunteering organisations attended our community group session in Leeds. Concerns were raised around vetting or CRB checking volunteers. For your campaign there needs to be a clear definition around the scope, scale and role of the formal **vs.** informal digital champions.

In the planning stages of the project you could approach a key volunteering organisation and ask them to mock up job description or Volunteering model for other organisations to adopt. With Leeds we mocked up Informal digital champion's job descriptions though this was primarily for events lead activity.

Funding

What we did

An initial investment in kind of 112k of staff and resources was allocated to the projects by the key stakeholders.

We worked closely with the Community Capacity Builders to help improve and secure our relationships at ground level with community engagement this relationship proved crucial to carrying out the campaign.

During the course of this initiative Citizen Online & BT partnered with Leeds City Council to create a funded role based over 3 years role within Jobs & Skills strand of the council to help regenerate digital participation with adult learners and long term unemployed.

What we learnt

To support a Places based project long term look into ways in which you can create an internal and external facing Digital Champion for the citizens, the Council and their staff.



Dependent on council resource this can be adopted as a new role, or as an add on to an existing job, but not in a voluntary capacity. Look to DWP as an example of digital champion adoption.

Where possible look into a match funding proposition with a prominent local employer or local commercial partner as well as a delivery arm provider like UK online centres/ Community Capacity Builders.

Look to develop partnerships with Grant giving digital participation organisations such as Citizens Online & BT, or BDUK. This will support more granular, sustainable work within your locale.

Partnerships, products and services

What we did

Allocate Partner network and Council resources, including buildings.

Allocate skilled people to run events, hold meetings and organise daily management of communications.

Create a [Facebook page for local partners and champions to share learnings, stories and rich content such as videos and pictures.](#)

What we learnt

Embed a senior level employee to project manage and take ownership of the delivery of the strategy from the offset. We would recommend that this role sits within the council.

As each model is different it is important to identify which approach works best for you. In the case of Leeds the Council did not want to dominate proceedings, and looked to community partners and the Community Capacity Builder to lead on the process.

Implement within the planning stage a clear memorandum of understanding (MOU) between key stakeholders and partners. Whichever partners you have around the table make sure they are on board for the right reasons. There is no point having a large partner/brand on board if their reasons are not aligned with the overall ambition of the campaign.

Delivery and communication roles between your partners and the project team needs to be identified early on in the planning stage. This will prevent the project organization and communication becoming siloed.



Determine if partners expect to be account managed. This will lend itself to more streamlined reporting and a simpler communications mechanism taking place. E.g. Record weekly meetings via an online log (Google docs)

Implement weekly communications and PR calls.

Internal and external publicity is a driver for partners. This is accompanied by the fact people of all ages engage with familiar faces, sporting legends or local celebrities in their community. It is important to secure a 'face' of the campaign to draw out empathy and engagement within the community.

Securing an endorsement will invariably help secure more local media coverage. We have also learnt that people are motivated and compelled to engage with projects if there is a reward.

Consider securing incentives and rewards to encourage, motivate and enthuse both online and offline audiences. For offliners incentives would help deepen and support engagement their online journey E.g. Provision of dongles, low cost connectivity offer, and online vouchers to spend on online shopping.

Locally, the benefits to community groups getting involved will be that they are raising their profile, getting new learners or new volunteers access to the laptops which the CCB plan to lend, and the training which the CCB offer. However, consider incentivising these groups further by offering free broadband to help facilitate their commitment whilst adding value to the long term sustainability.

Evaluation and outcomes

This not as simple as measuring 'bums on seats.' The journey for an offliner may occur over a number of interactions via various market channels E.g. a leaflet at the post office, to an interaction with a floor walker at Asda and then onto a free training session in a Mecca.

By defining Go ON Leeds as a catalyst for action this means that quantities of new digital champions and new learners will in turn experience a lag until pick up can be quantified. UK online will use survey monkey as a means to measure both on and offline participation and the CCB can measure new registrations quarterly.

In the longer term we believe the CCB can most efficiently monitor and measure take up via their relationships with voluntary organizations, the libraries, council and UK online centres.

We learnt that it is important to implement a measuring tool to quantify the number of people that floor walkers engage with and a simple way to communicate with them afterwards so we can establish if they have taken action.

We can measure Digital Champions sign ups via online registrations and 'liking' of the Go ON Leeds based page, but how do we know if they've taken action and helped someone.



For an offliner it's hard to get any qualitative life-changing info from someone who's just experienced their first 15 minutes online. We expect the CCB to come up with a lot more qualitative evaluations next year.

Evaluating outcomes will become clearer by the infrastructure built within a region. The following examples are not exhaustive of the types of measurements which will be considered: - Measuring broadband adoption, adoption of digital participation work placements, Jobcentre Plus digital champion training model, and completion of formal library and UK online training sessions within Leeds.