

HOW THE WEST WAS WON

MARKETING SOCIETY EXCELLENCE AWARDS

CATEGORY C: EFFECTIVE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

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First  **Great Western**

LEITH
MADE IN



ONCE UPON
A TIME IN
THE WEST

CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND, AMBITION AND CLARITY OF OBJECTIVES



First Great Western faced a huge challenge at the start of 2014, for a number of reasons.

The winter of 2013/14 saw the worst weather in the South West of England since records began. The storms resulted in devastation for many communities, with 625,000 residents losing power, thousands of people being forced out of their homes and the complete destruction of many houses and businesses.

Amidst this chaos, First Great Western had to suspend or cancel 80% of its services. Worse still, one crucial

part of the network disappeared into the sea at Dawlish, leaving Cornwall with no direct link to the rest of the country. This resulted in over 500 articles in local and national media reporting on the closure and the subsequent slow running of the lines.

In addition to this, FGW had just announced that they were to embark on the most significant period of investment since Brunel. This would ultimately mean a much improved network but the programme of work would cause a lot of disruption.

The combination of the above resulted in millions of pounds worth of lost revenue and a detrimental impact on positive customer engagement with the brand. This led the marketing department to set four very clear and ambitious objectives:

- **Support revenue growth taking account of the extent of the loss.**
- **Raise awareness of the FGW brand amongst the target audience.**
- **Increase positivity of, and customer engagement with, the brand.**
- **Help local businesses and communities to recover from the devastation.**

Furthermore, these objectives had to be achieved in a very short timescale to ensure a quick recovery.

The challenges were clear and the bar was set high.

THE SEARCHERS



CHAPTER 2 STRATEGIC THINKING AND EFFECTIVE PLANNING

With such a volatile backdrop to this campaign we had to make sure that we got the messaging right. We conducted research in the most affected areas to glean consumer insight and opinion of the potential creative direction. From a campaign point of view, we looked at two areas:

- **Acknowledgement of the terrible weather and the start of a new dawn.**
- **Building on the current campaign to inspire people to travel to the South West.**

We learnt that dwelling on the weather was not the most effective way forward. If anything, it got in the way of what does motivate our customers; the destinations.

Importantly, we identified three key behavioural insights, which would become our communication pillars for the brand:

INSPIRATION

People are habitual. We were unlikely to get everyone travelling again without **INSPIRING** them.

LIBERATION

Taking the train engenders a sense of **LIBERATION**, throwing off the shackles.

TRANSFORMATION

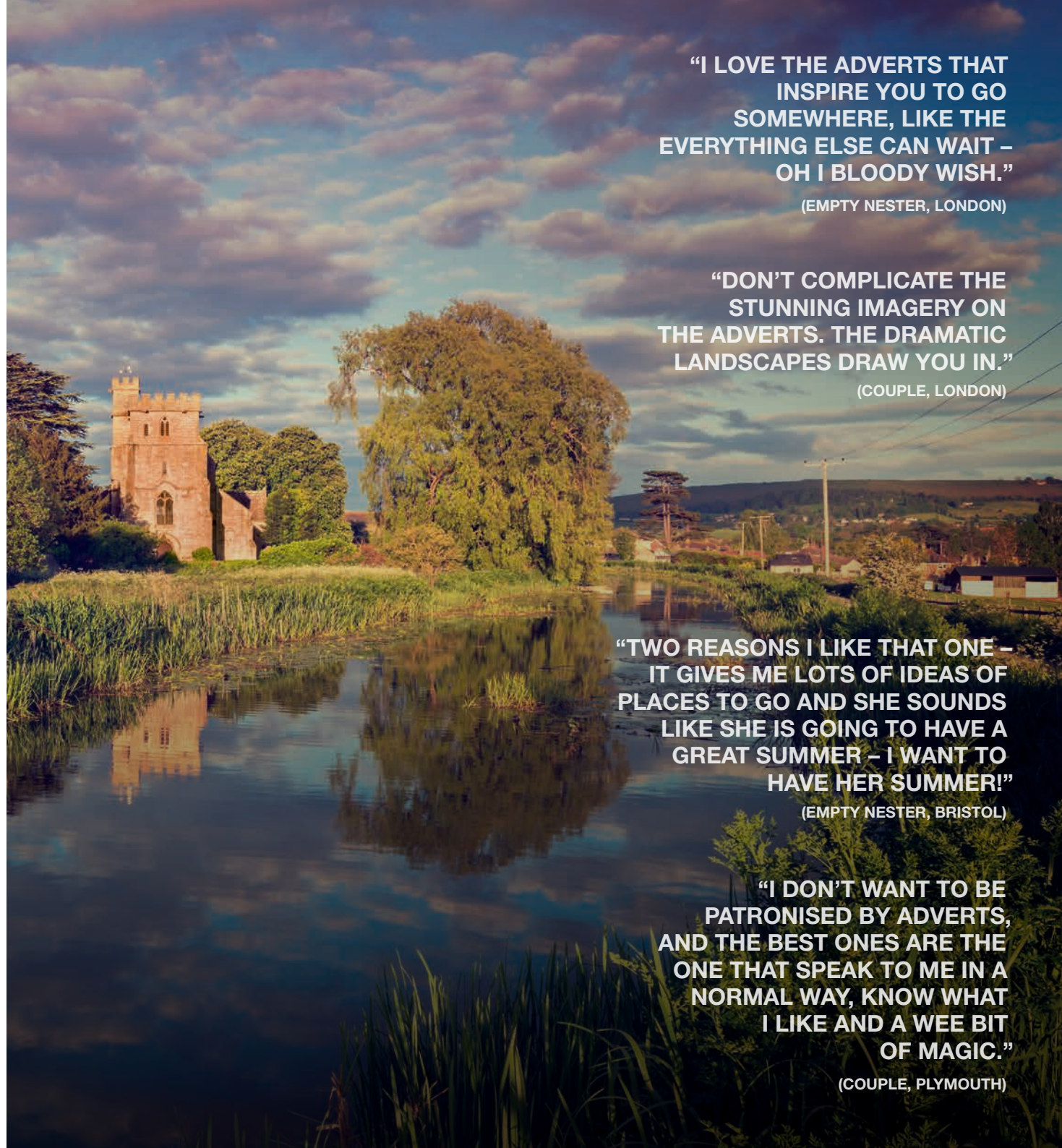
De-stressing and relaxing from one destination to another.

The most important of these aspects is **INSPIRATION**. Consumers clearly told us that they would be inspired by a train company who told them about all the wonderful places that they could go to by train and what they could do when they got there.

In order to inspire and create a feeling of liberation we had to be emotive, knowing and a little bit magical in the way we talked to our consumers.

We also learned that the impact of the imagery is extremely important to the target audience and is at its best when dramatic and human.

These insights formed the foundation of the campaign.



“I LOVE THE ADVERTS THAT INSPIRE YOU TO GO SOMEWHERE, LIKE THE EVERYTHING ELSE CAN WAIT – OH I BLOODY WISH.”

(EMPTY NESTER, LONDON)

“DON’T COMPLICATE THE STUNNING IMAGERY ON THE ADVERTS. THE DRAMATIC LANDSCAPES DRAW YOU IN.”

(COUPLE, LONDON)

“TWO REASONS I LIKE THAT ONE – IT GIVES ME LOTS OF IDEAS OF PLACES TO GO AND SHE SOUNDS LIKE SHE IS GOING TO HAVE A GREAT SUMMER – I WANT TO HAVE HER SUMMER!”

(EMPTY NESTER, BRISTOL)

“I DON’T WANT TO BE PATRONISED BY ADVERTS, AND THE BEST ONES ARE THE ONE THAT SPEAK TO ME IN A NORMAL WAY, KNOW WHAT I LIKE AND A WEE BIT OF MAGIC.”

(COUPLE, PLYMOUTH)



OPEN RANGE

CHAPTER 3

ORIGINALITY, CREATIVITY AND EXECUTION

We had to capture the beauty of the region after the storms. Traditionally we had sourced images of the South West and London from stock libraries. This time, in order to inspire and evoke a feeling of liberation, we briefed two local photographers to shoot the whole region and show people how the South West looks 'right now', after the storms. The resultant images

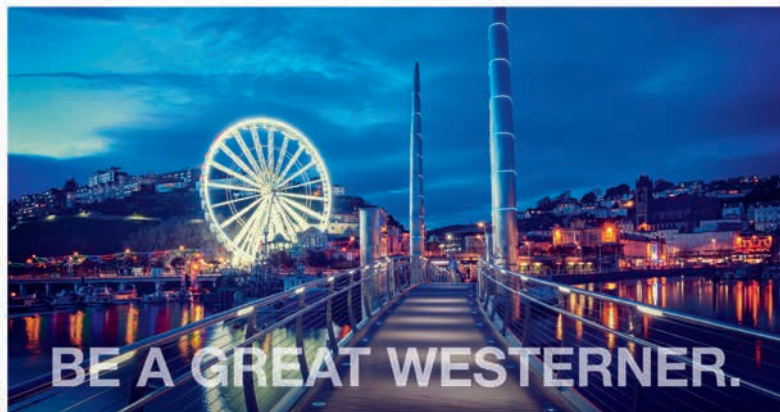
were breath-taking and we owned them outright. Now we had to simplify the messaging.

Previous campaigns had used a badge with the line 'I am a Great Westerner', which had been successful in engendering loyalty. Now was the time to simplify it further and make it work even harder.

So we turned the line into a direct call-to-action:

'BE A GREAT WESTERNER'

This combination of stunning imagery and inspiring call-to-action led to impactful and single-minded print adverts which ran across diverse media - from online ads to a wrap of the Imax Cinema in Waterloo.



First Great Western

Explore Devon by train this summer. Book now at firstgreatwestern.co.uk



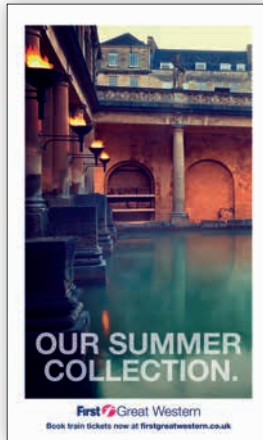
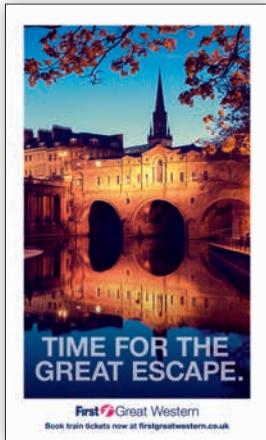
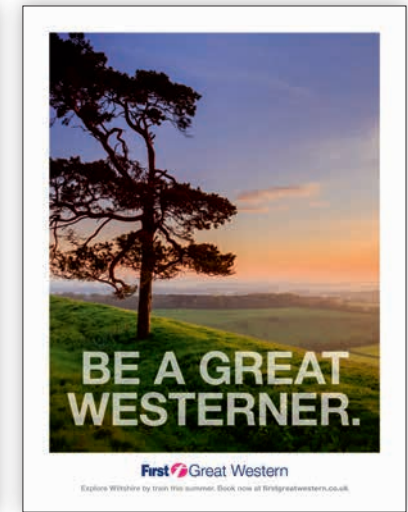
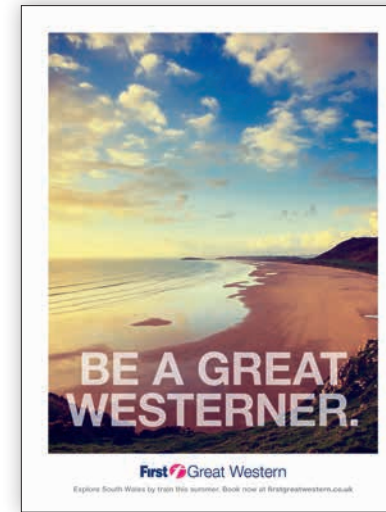
Book train tickets now at firstgreatwestern.co.uk **First** Great Western



Book train tickets now at firstgreatwestern.co.uk **First** Great Western

Our integrated campaign featured all of the following channels and activity:

- Advertising – TV, large scale outdoor, press, radio, online.
- PR/Experiential – Always On strategy to support the campaign. Devised #summertracks; a series of pop up gigs on services running to festivals.
- Direct communications – To inspire more people to travel by train with a 10% off offer. Sent out both digitally and traditionally using the creative visuals.
- Digital and Social – Created INSIDE TRACK a Facebook App acting as a central hub providing hints to hidden gems in the West Country.
- Partnerships and Promotions – To aid regional recovery we set up Great Western Offers which featured over 200 offers from regional businesses.



THE 3 AMIGOS

CHAPTER 4

INNOVATION, INTEGRATION AND IMPLEMENTATION

We needed to be inspirational and unmissable. Achieving this would take innovative thinking and true collaboration between all communication agencies. The media company (MEC) developed a strategy which exceeded expectations. The campaign launched by matching FGW's most iconic destinations to the South West's most iconic sites. Wrapping the Imax, taking over Cromwell Road and owning landmark digital sites in Cardiff and Bristol. FGW could not be missed.

Using TGI consumption data they were, for the first time, able to book activity with national news brands that strayed outside the distinct FGW footprint, greatly adding to the audience base.

We then turned to one of London's most iconic brands, The Evening Standard. With them we created 'The Great Escape' which encouraged Londoners to leave the city for a break - this worked hand-in-hand with the press coverage, radio and live events.

The power of TV was a driving force to create awareness, and we made 60" and 30" adverts which were aired across ITV, AdSmart and VOD activity.

We dominated travel hubs such as the Paddington concourse and the London Underground, with large format posters, digital screens, tube cards and commuter press full cover wraps.

In an industry first, we used an innovative digital technique to show the imagery of London and the South West in Parallax 2.5D, an evocative answer to the consumer desire to "let the scenery speak for itself".

Everything was underpinned with the most extensive paid search activity. A key objective was ticket sales and, as such, it was imperative that we captured all of the awareness and demand generated and directed it online to firstgreatwestern.co.uk.



On TV and radio we took a different approach, creating inspiring mini-journeys for each medium. These journeys reflected the variety and excitement of the South West by capturing the wonder of the region.

Radio:

Lolly licking.

Frisbee flicking.

Spokes clicking.

Big Ben ticking.

Bar hopping.

Boutique shopping.

Flip flopping.

With extra topping.

Cream clotting.

Sight spotting.

Hooves trotting.

Journal jotting.

Dingy inflating.

Line baiting.

First dating.

Train waiting.

**Be a great Westerner
this summer.**

**For tickets and train times to
the best of the South West
go to firstgreatwestern.co.uk**

Television:



Surf talking,
Cream clotting,
Star spotting,
River walking,
Sunset watching,
Breeze blowing,
Eye catching.
Ball throwing,
Peaceful sleeping,
Ice cream whipping,
Book browsing,
Long lying,
Lobster cracking,
Roman bathing,
Moonlight strolling,
Breath taking,

Train waiting.
BE A GREAT WESTERNER.

WATCH THE AD HERE



Paddington Station



Westfield Shopping Centre

All-encompassing promotional and experiential activity.

To aid regional recovery, we developed the First Great Western Offers initiative in partnership with over 200 regional businesses, offering the consumer unique promotions and inspiring destination ideas across the region.

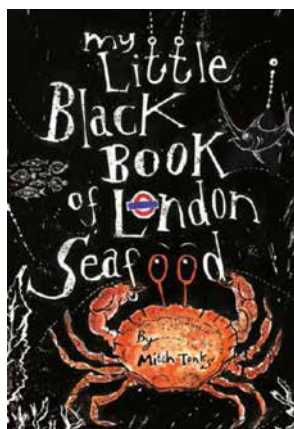
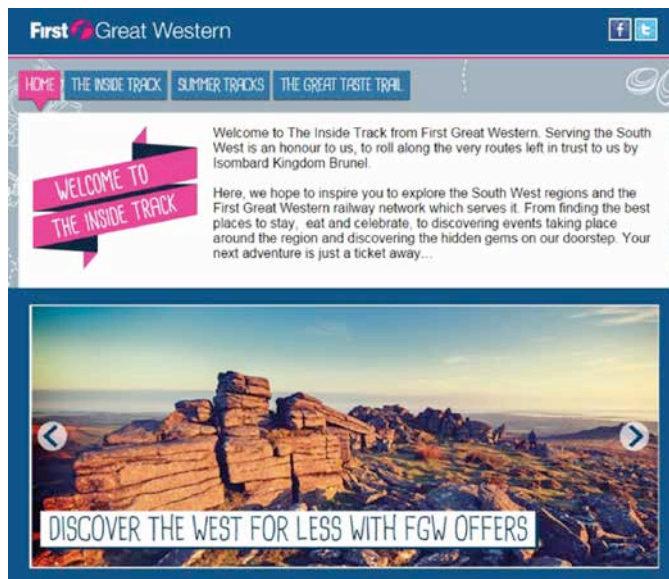
We also published 'My Little Black Book of London Seafood' by leading South-West chef Mitch Tonks, timed to coincide with the launch of the campaign. This added-value guide was available to purchase on board FGW trains to encourage passengers to enjoy the seafood sourced in the South West at some of London's finest restaurants.

In another leading-edge piece of activity, FIRST GREAT WESTERN created an interactive map, called the Great Taste Trail. Featuring local food and provenance businesses and showcasing local produce all sourced within 15 miles from the route.

The #summertracks initiative featured a series of pop up gigs to travellers on their way to festivals across the Great Western network, showcasing ease of travel to these events. Passengers were treated to live performances from Gabrielle Aplin, Lily & Meg, Jack Savoretti and Don Broco.

This led to positive coverage in high-profile media that hadn't previously covered the brand and helped spread a positive message about the region to a new audience too. MTV, Digital spy, Heart Radio, Evening Standard and the Daily Telegraph, to name but a few.

Plus on social channels, a Facebook app called 'The Inside Track' was developed, acting as a central hub for hidden gems in the West Country. We worked with local celebrities including Pearl and Daisy Lowe, Gemma Cairney, Rick and Jack Stein, Caroline Quentin and Alex James to create videos with their own recommendations for each region. The app is also open to First Great Western's community to contribute.



BONANZA

CHAPTER 5

SCALE AND EVIDENCE OF RESULTS



The campaign more than met each of the key four objectives.

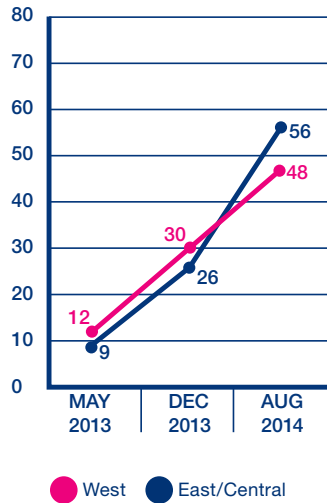
Objective 1

Support revenue growth taking account of revenue loss.

The Campaign Results:

- **Generated a revenue of £13.06million, which more than compensated for any losses.ⁱ⁾**
- **Return on investment of £3.60 to every £1.00 spent.ⁱⁱ⁾**
- **Transactional conversion rate of 21% (8% higher than industry average) for the direct communications promotion.ⁱⁱⁱ⁾**

SPONTANEOUS AWARENESS OF FGW COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGN



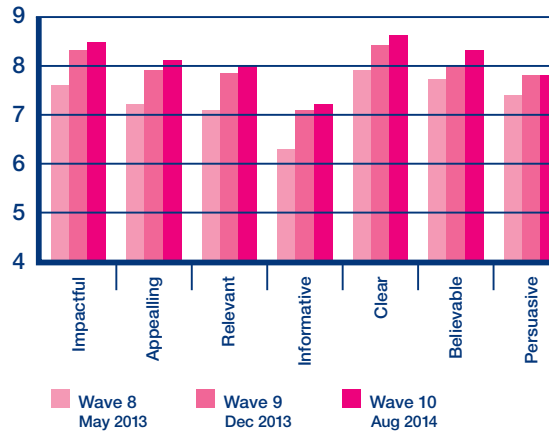
Objective 2

Significantly raise awareness of the FGW brand.

The Campaign Results:

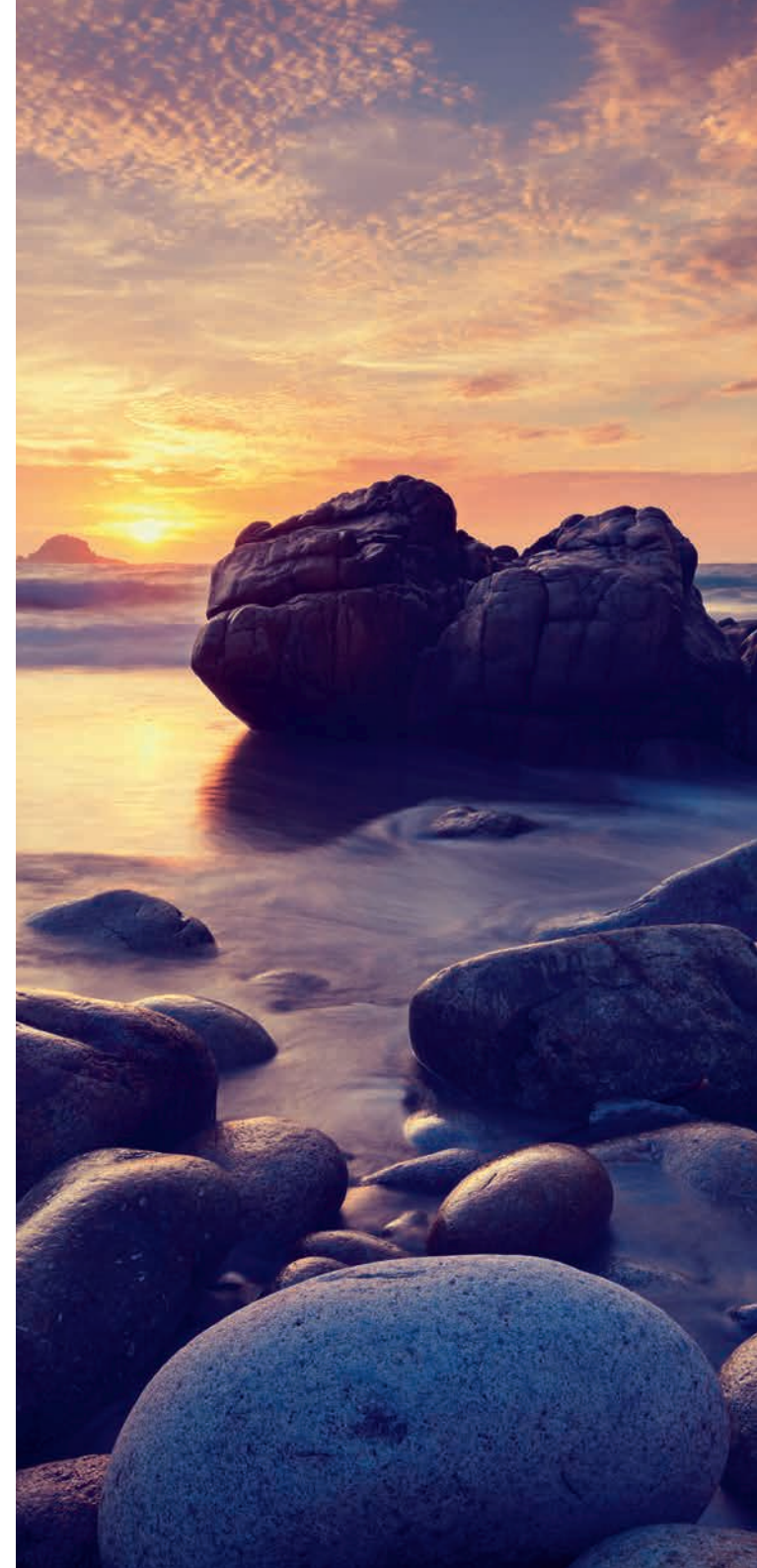
- **Spontaneous advertising awareness rose by 24%; the biggest increase being +30% in the East region.^{iv)}**
- **10% increase in customers opting into the FGW database.^{v)}**
- **Over 120 pieces of press and radio coverage.^{vi)}**
- **1 week into the campaign, highest ever online transactions results with £2million being generated from our website in 1 week.^{vii)}**
- **94% correlation rate between downloading Great Western Offers forms and booking tickets.^{v)}**

RATING OF THE CAMPAIGN (SCORES OUT OF 10)



Sources:

- i. First Great Western ii. First Great Western iii. Havas Analytics iv. Illuma Research, First Great Western Tracking, August 2014 v. ORM Agency vi. 3 Monkeys Agency vii. First Great Western viii. Leith Links Agency ix. Google Analytics



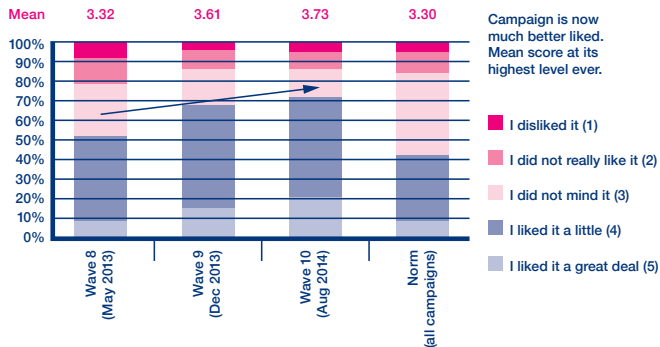
Objective 3

Increase positivity and customer engagement with the brand (based on tracking amongst 500 consumers).

The Campaign Results:

- Highest ever agreement with the statements: “They are an important part of my community.” & “They are one of the better train companies.”^{ix)}
- Most positive reaction to the campaign since 2010 with the mean score of 3.73 out of 5.^{ix)}
- Increase in all positive customer engagement scores and a decrease in all negative ones.^{ix)}
- 4,513 unique visitors to Inside Track app.^{x)}
- Over 105,000 YouTube views of Summer Track films.^{xi)}
- Highest active engagement score since 2011.^{ix)}
- Overall net promoter score shows growth in loyalty from 16% to 20% in the South and 2% to 8% in the East.^{ix)}

LIKING OF CAMPAIGN vs. NORM



Source: Illuma Research, First Great Western Campaign track – August 2014

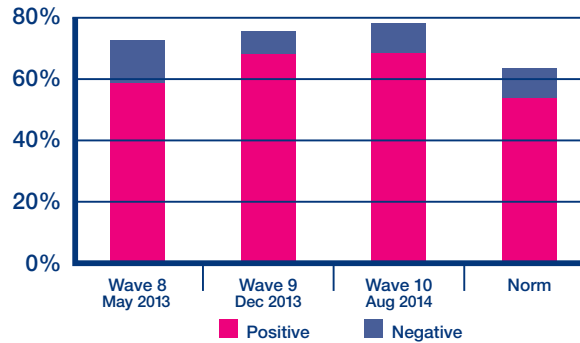
Objective 4

Help local businesses and communities recover.

The Campaign Results:

- Highest ever agreement with the statements: “They are an important part of my community.” & “They are one of the better train companies.”^{ix)}
- Carried an increase of 1.3% in volume of passengers to the affected regions (equivalent to 850,000 journeys).^{xii)}

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT



Finally, we are proud to report that we gained a very high profile and influential supporter. HRH Prince Charles travelled on the Castle Cary line from Somerset to lend his support to the campaign and expressed his gratitude to FGW for their tireless work and inspiring advertising campaign.

Sources:

ix) Illuma Research, First Great Western Tracking, August 2014

x) 3 Monkeys Agency xi) Youtube xii) First Great Western



HOW THE WEST WAS WON

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

Despite a backdrop of unprecedented disruption, this campaign taught us that by listening and reacting to customers' desires, it is possible to successfully INSPIRE people to get up and travel again.

This fully integrated communications strategy successfully straddled commercial objectives and the brand's corporate responsibilities towards the regions it serves and thus succeeded in growing awareness and positivity towards the brand. It also helped support local communities by inspiring more people to visit the South West after the worst storms in history. Finally, the campaign helped FGW recover strongly from a precarious negative financial position.