

One of the greatest environmental threats to our way of life is the threat of flood. Over the last 100 years sea levels have risen by around 10cms. By the end of this century a further rise of 100cms is predicted. This could be described as a watershed moment in the history of flood and coastal risk management. It is against this background that the Environment Agency undertook its annual recruitment of 29 Civil Engineering graduates to specifically support its role of limiting flood and coastal risk damage in England and Wales.

The challenge the Environment Agency faces is that they were not recognised as an employer of civil engineers. Students recognise it only as an environmental body. That said the fact that the Environment Agency is involved in such worthwhile work, greatly benefits its profile among students. So, the main objective for this campaign was to make students aware that the Environment Agency is a recruiter of Civil Engineers who will work on profoundly important projects. The creative platform needed to make this absolutely apparent.

There was also a secondary challenge. Many Civil Engineering students are technically oriented and the Environment Agency found that many of those coming through the recruitment process were task focused. This is a challenge because the engineers who work for the Environment Agency need to have a much more rounded skill set – because of this a career with the organisation won't suit everyone. They need to have strong people skills, as they will frequently find themselves working with the public as well as with internal teams. Thus the Environment Agency was looking to attract graduates with vision, good leadership skills and potential for the future.



# ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



work



## The Message and Attraction

To address these different challenges, Work Communications had to harness the clear and positive attributes of working for the Environment Agency (both professionally and for the good of communities in England and Wales) into an underlying proposition that would resonate with our target audience.

The target audience message was "Be our first line of defence" (see attached creative).

The innovation lay in targeting graduates with a message that stimulated an emotional resonance

(how we wanted them to feel) along with clear evidence that they would be able to practise and develop as a civil engineer with hard hitting copy and factual information.

## Attraction Plan

Given the competition in recruiting this type of graduate, we knew we had to go direct to undergraduates and key influencers to deliver our message. This involved a heavy use of 'on campus marketing', emails to students and lecturers, direct mail flyers to student pigeon holes and lecturer packs detailing the opportunities. Having analysed where the vacancies were located

we identified the top 17 universities to target, based on their number of final year students and their geographical spread. The lecturer emails would support printed materials sent to the school, promoting the programmes to lecturers in the autumn term (before the students received their email) and a follow up email in January to ask them to remind their students of the approaching deadline. All communication pointed to a campaign microsite ([www.environmentagencycivilengineers.co.uk](http://www.environmentagencycivilengineers.co.uk)), which contained further information on the role, working for the organisation and comprehensive details on how to apply.

## On Campus Marketing

### Lecturer Packs

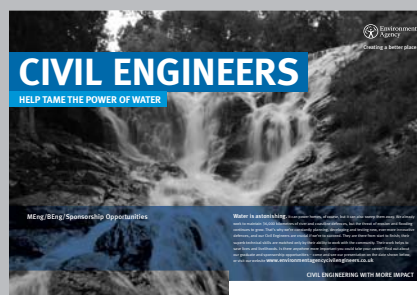
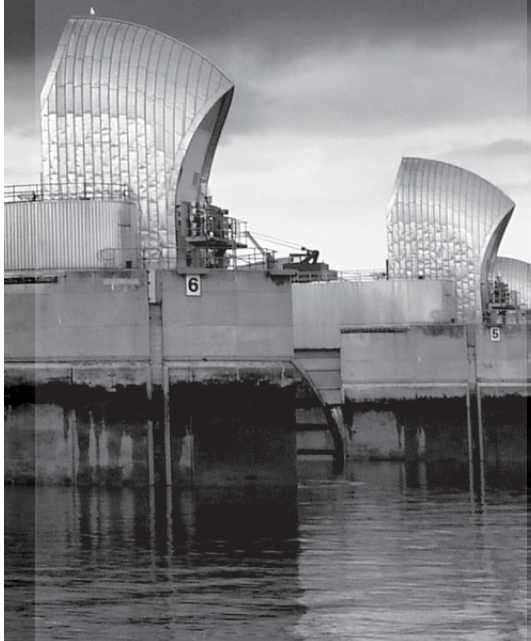
Information packs were sent to the civil engineering lecturers at targeted universities to promote the opportunities. Each pack contained: Brochures, Flyers for distribution to students, Posters and Giveaways.

### Student Pigeon Hole Flyers

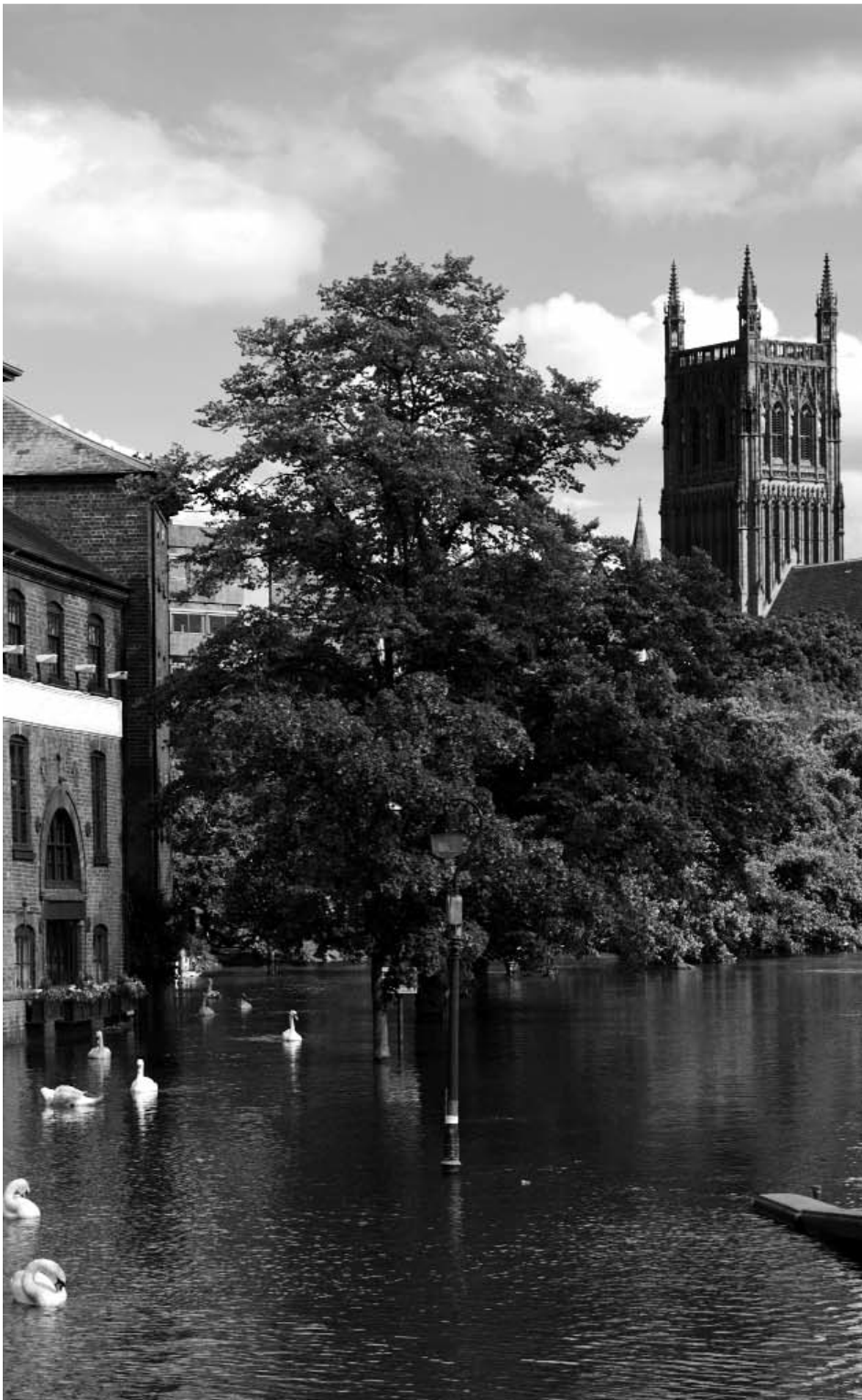
A5 flyers were distributed to students' pigeon holes in the targeted universities. The leaflet drop was timed to coincide with the student email and distributed by the departmental administrators.

Above the line attraction included:

- Attraction materials
- Exhibition and application collateral
- Campaign Microsite - to act as the hub of the campaign, as well as to handle online applications and screening quickly and efficiently.



Posters, brochure inserts and pull-up stands



## The Results

Throughout the course of the campaign the following results have been achieved:

- running total of 677 responses (assessment centres ongoing)
- 300 completed application forms received
- 153 candidates invited to assessment centres
- 19 offers made all of which have been accepted
- 1 in 8 conversion ratio (in line with organisational expectations and above other graduate recruiters)
- The Environment Agency entered the Times 100 Graduate Employer's list.

However, it must be emphasised that a number of assessment centres are still to run and that the Environment Agency are wholly confident of recruiting the full complement.

The responses are an increase on the year prior and are considered to be a success.

## Candidate feedback

In conjunction with the excellent response and hire numbers generated above there have been numerous positive comments from candidates, a selection of which appear below:

On the recruitment materials, brochure and website:

1. "The materials were very useful. They provided a lot of information."
2. "Really good. Well advertised. Really easy to use and there was lots of assistance when I needed it."

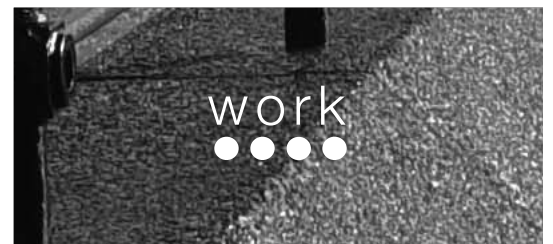
3. "The materials covered everything and prepared me well."

On the graduate programme at the Environment Agency:

"I did a project at university where I had to research the Environment Agency and that's how I found out about the scheme. I've always been interested in the environmental side of engineering and this scheme offered a really good range of benefits."

On the Assessment Centre:

"I was very impressed with the assessment day, and felt it brought the best out in me."



In a crowded market, where the Environment Agency competes with the biggest names in engineering, success has been achieved by producing visually stimulating attraction with strong messages which promotes an outstanding graduate programme to a specifically targeted audience by university. The foundations are firmly in place for future success.