



STRATEGY, BRAND & MARKETING



# Changing course

One of Europe’s largest ferry and holiday providers explains how it is reshaping its branding and marketing

With the aim of becoming more agile and pre-emptive, Brittany Ferries is undertaking an epic organisational shift.

Prompted by changes in travel habits, the company – which last year transported 2.6 million passengers across 11 routes – is on a journey to redefine its relationship with customers.

Central to its reorientation is the internal move away from working in silos to a global view of its market operations, through the creation of a new ‘destination and customer experience division’.

Externally, the company wants to be clear that it is more than a ferry provider and aims to increase awareness of its holiday and tour products. Much work has taken place already, including the unveiling and roll-out of new branding.

“The idea is to deploy the complete range of marketing touch points, and put the focus on channel expertise,” head of

global marketing, Caroline David, says.

“We are reorganising our marketing teams and orienting activities towards inspiration and engagement, customer marketing and campaigns management.

“The travel industry is evolving quickly. New players, travel sources and marketing capabilities have changed the rules of the game in the last few years.

“Customer behaviour is evolving. On one hand that means more customer control over personal experience; on the other, a strong demand for inspiration and support from brands they engage with.”

Key to this shift is turning data into

“New players, travel sources and marketing capabilities have changed the rules in travel.”

**Caroline David**

intelligence to deliver marketing campaigns that ensure bottom line results.

She says: “We now employ tools to retrieve real-time information about activity in progress, so we can be more relevant and more targeted when interacting with a customer.

“We are also entering a phase where we want to interact even more with customers when it comes to product and experience design. And we want to make sure we draw insight from customers on future marketing trends.”

Assisting with this move is Bristol-based Bray Leino CX, which Brittany Ferries has worked with since 2013.

David says the customer experience and marketing agency has become an extension of its team.

“We benefit from their expertise and ability to map the market and suggest propositions tailor-made for us,” she adds.

“They are savvy and understand our challenges – they are able to connect the dots between the media industry and a company like ours.”

For David, the future of the company’s marketing offer lies in highly personalised services, which rely on storytelling and experiences rather than simply product and price.

She says: “It is about providing the best service in a highly tailored way, and making sure we address every step of the customer journey with the right options, content, and messages.

“This is a game changer because price may no longer be the unique criteria to become relevant in terms of display, especially online.

“The idea is to bring a much richer environment to support the customer’s decision making process.” ■



Caroline David

## People power

Brittany Ferries officially started its commercial transformation last year, but says it has no end-date for its completion. Instead, the company’s switch to agile working means it aims to evolve continuously and shape its products, based on market demand.

“Organisations are not meant to be fixed, they are supposed to evolve and I am sure there are going to be new business opportunities that come our way over the

next few months and years,” David says.

“Of course, structure and leadership is important, but we also need to be in a position where our direction can be challenged on a regular basis.

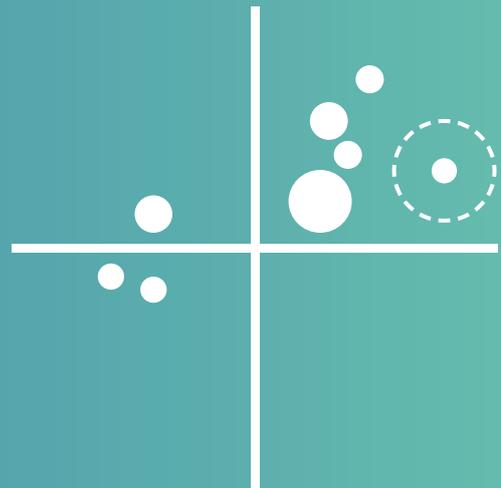
“Agility does not mean being rudderless or unable to take decisions, rather it is a way to prove you are adapting to your environment and keeping pace with what is going on outside.”

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