

The Co-operative Group is the UK's fifth largest retailer. From Funeralcare to Pharmacy, Farms to Legal Services, and Travel to Food, the breadth of the business is unmatched. What's more, this is an organisation that prides itself on combining a sharp commercial focus and strong ethical platform. In short, it's unique. And it's growing.

Activating the Employer Brand

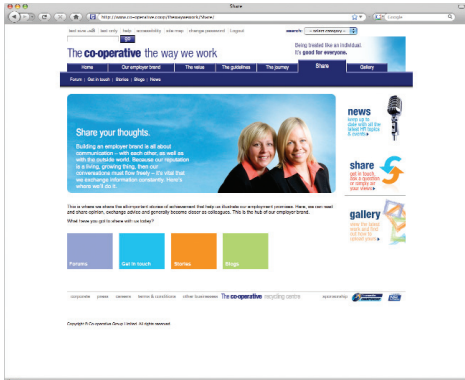
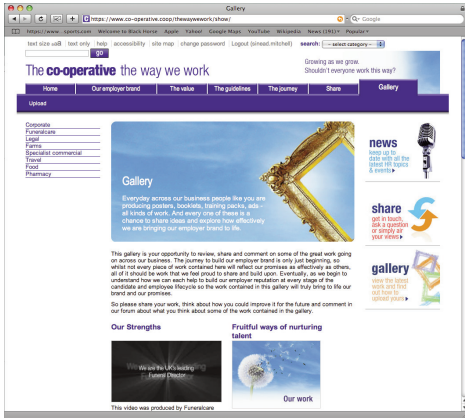
Following a brand renaissance and a series of mergers and acquisitions, the business was going from strength to strength. To ensure that success continued, we had to bring the employer brand to life. This was more than an exercise in attracting new talent into The Co-operative: it would engage people internally and motivate them to be the best that they could be. And with everything striving to do that, the business would enjoy unprecedented success.

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The Co-operative



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Our starting point was the HR community. After all, if the employer brand was to live, we had to engage the people who would be central to delivering it. We wanted them to appreciate what a powerful tool it could be for recruitment and retention. Easier said than done. The 600-strong HR community simply weren’t connected. Which meant that we had to do more than communicate: we had to engage them and get them actively thinking about the employer brand. Our idea was to launch a professional networking extranet where the employer brand would land, and start to live.

The extensive research that we had carried out in forming the EVP informed the makeup of the site. That research was wide and deep, including leadership interviews, star performer interviews, an online colleague survey, analysis of relevant talkback findings,

competitor research, and research into external career motivators and external perceptions of The Co-operative as an employer. We also created a stakeholder group consisting of people from across the business – from HR to People Services, and Marketing and Brand to Digital. And we carried out the entire project with the endorsement of Peter Marks, Chief Executive.

It was clear that the space we created would have to do more than contain information. Using animation we’re able to bring to life the employee journey, explaining the touch-points on the candidate and employee lifecycle. But we wanted to get people talking. So we designed a professional networking tool with various ‘live’ elements, including blogs and functions to ask questions, share news and celebrate achievements. This keeps the site fresh. More importantly, it makes the site self-evolving so that people don’t just visit – they come back.

The Co-operative have committed to developing a ‘phase two’ site that can be used by each and every Co-operative employee. That’s a testament to the work that we’ve done. But even more importantly we’re constantly receiving feedback on the site, which is proof in itself that we’ve engaged our audience.

The co-operative the way we work

