FINALIST 2013

B2B AWARDS

BIRDDOG®

CATEGORY NUMBER: 9

CATEGORY NAME: BEST WEBSITE

PROGRAMME/INITIATIVE NAME: THE UPRISING

AGENCY: BIRDDOG

BRAND OR CLIENT: BIRDDOG

URL OR MICROSITE: WWW.BIRDDOG.CO.UK

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SUMMARY

Thinking...

To evoke change in a staid B2B market we thought we should say what people didn't want to hear. We needed somewhere to say it.

Central to Birddog's rebrand / re-launch of its core service offering was a new website and social channels that would change Birddog's marketing model from 'wait for the phone to ring' to a carefully executed in-bound marketing strategy.

In positioning Birddog as first call for brand, digital, content and social strategy in a competitive environment the website needed to:

- be an interactive communications channel for its audiences through social integration
- clearly demonstrate and reference ability to think with capability to do
- embrace Birddog's brand values
- have a fresh, feature rich, look and feel
- stimulate thought leadership

Doing...

This strategy was executed through a hub and spokes model connecting presentations, video content, social communications, imagery and forum discussions in one central hub. A modular, bespoke CMS allows flexibility and easily scalable future development.

Changing...

Measures included meeting launch deadline, traffic and customer engagement thereafter. Thought leadership was rewarded with growing audiences:

- 38% website visit increase
- 1,400 Twitter followers
- 40,000+ viewed Slideshares
- 1,700+ viewed hours of YouTube video
- 240% brief / CV placement increase

WORD COUNT 198

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ABOUT

Birddog is the brand and digital agency that achieves creative change. Established in 1994, as a traditional direct marketing agency, locations have included a broom cupboard, stud farm, carpet warehouse and, in 2012, a bold move to Covent Garden. Remaining 100% true to our original B2B calling, we now deliver strategic Brand, Digital, Social and Content marketing services.

Our main marketing communications used to be a printed newsletter and, as the digital world evolved, ten (at last count) websites of varying degrees of maturity and cutting edge (in their day).

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Birddog needed to rebrand / re-launch its core service offering for a today's market. The weak economy meant change was a necessity. Consequences of not could have been terminal. Re-launching in a recession would have been difficult enough but, as an independent agency, broader business issues were faced:

- A more conservative market
- (for Birddog) a traditionally niche audience within B2B
- A hugely competitive environment
- Trust and reputation required to convert leads
- A short lead-time to brand re-launch



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OBJECTIVES

The website needed to raise market awareness within a defined audience and geography. Fast. It had to:

- Promote / position Birddog as a more exciting alternative to its competitors.
- Be 'seen' to be creating waves in the market.
- Demonstrate commitment to a specialist audience.
- Create internal engagement/excitement prior to launch.
- Be a centrally managed, up to date, recognised repository of information on Birddog services for target audiences.
- Be an interactive communications channel for audiences through social integration, live chat and additional functionality.
- Act as a lead generation tool to support the sales and marketing plan.
- Rank highly across search engines for Birddog's desired keywords.
- Break the mould of the industry with a fresh, modern, feature rich look and feel.
- Tell a story, introducing the Birddog brand and its personality, placing some emphasis on heritage, but more on 20 years of B2B experience.
- Allow its audience to gauge 'chemistry'.
- Allow the marketing model to change to a carefully executed in-bound marketing strategy.
- Stimulate thought leadership.

Success of the site (and measurement against these objectives) would be determined by meeting the launch deadline, brand awareness and sentiment analysis, and users interfacing.



1997 AS GOOD AS IT GOT



2013 RIGHT HERE RIGHT NOW

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TARGET AUDIENCE

The website had to appeal to those with an appetite for change:

- SMEs looking to take fledgling steps in a social world
- Larger international businesses looking to do things differently
- Senior marketeers looking for thought leadership content
- Prospects / C-level audience / pitch agencies looking for our expertise / service offering / ways to meet us
- Job seekers, graduates and freelance looking for the right opportunity
- Existing clients, to understand the extent of our offering and be able to interact with the brand personality

Historically, Birddog's audience had been small, its best clients generated by, and from, word of mouth.

Target audiences typically are / have been slow to adopt new processes and technologies. Movement between companies makes senior decision makers hard to pin down. Appealing to them wasn't going to be easy.

From a standing start.



BLOG



CASE STUDY

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TECHNIQUES

The website strategy was outlined in a 90 page functional specification and detailed what could and would be gained from the methodology adopted:

General

- A hub and spokes model would connect presentations, video content, social communications and imagery in one central hub.
- It would be made up of a number of key social channels that would continue to increase as Birddog displayed its active participation in, and with, the B2B community i.e. Twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, Slideshare, Facebook and YouTube.
- Simplicity of design was key, the whole site needing to be maintainable by Birddog, allowing ease of add, edit, and delete including pages, modules, copy, images, files and social content.

Design

- A flexible, modular structure was chosen for ease of build (given time constraints) and ease of future scalability.
- Service related communications were housed in the main body with the brand personality side of the business being shown through the Blog and a number of right-hand modules that represented other levels of navigation throughout the site.
- Built using Symphony, a widely used PHP framework, with a bespoke CMS, gave version control, asset management and SEO. The CMS further allowed support for page and component caching for faster load times and, as a result, was less database intensive.



404 ERROR PAGE

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Content

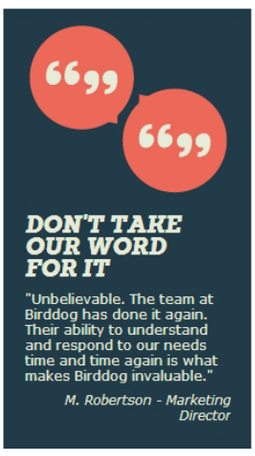
- The tone had to be direct, but able to demonstrate sufficient personality to allow ready engagement with the messaging.
- The top level was clean and limited on the number of words, focusing on design and user-engagement.
- Levels 2 and below were more copy intensive and geared to SEO around specific offerings.
- Content on the site was derived from / driven by collateral projects underway at the time.
- A community management approach was taken to seed the website content and engage audiences across identified social channels.

Features

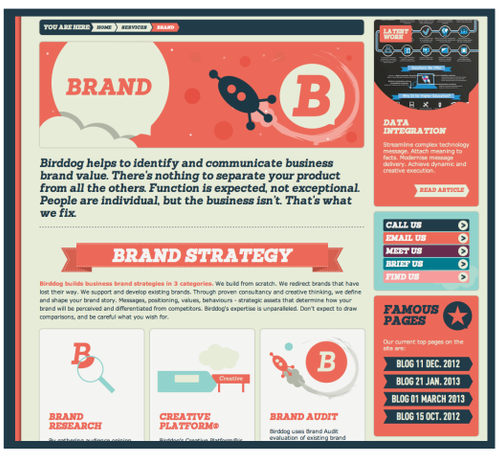
- JavaScript was used to add interactivity to pages through libraries, allowing the creation of effects (such as carousels) and pop up information (such as lightboxes).
- Using CSS3 and jQuery on the front end put the emphasis on a rich user experience particularly on the video and animation material to make the site more interactive and engaging.

The website responded to the challenge of communicating with the target audience(s) by:

- allowing engagement at multiple levels, depending on relative need and requirement.
- stimulating thought and debate through blogs.
- social sharing and integration.
- search.
- contact us/call to action.
- downloads and streaming.



TESTIMONIALS



SERVICES

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TIMESCALES / RESULTS

Thinking:

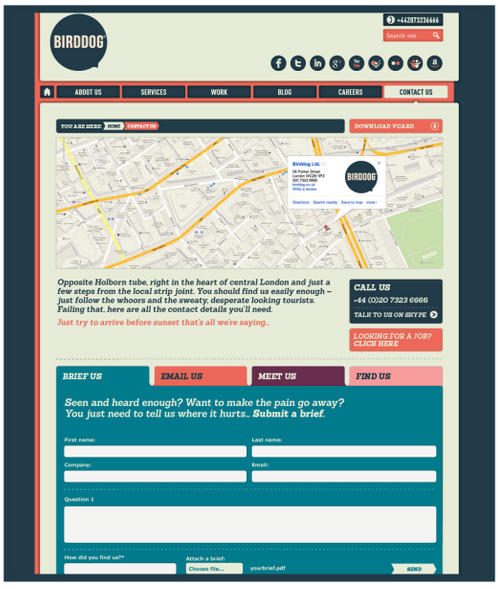
- **Research and planning** 20 years
- **Information architecture / user needs** 1 month – March 2012
- **Functional specification** 1 week

Doing:

- **Design** 1 month – May 2012
- **Development** 1 month – June 2012
- **Content** 1 week
- **Testing** 1 day

Changing:

- **38% website visit increase**
- **1,400 Twitter followers**
- **40,000+ viewed Slideshares**
- **1,700+ viewed YouTube video hours**
- **240% increase in uploaded briefs / cvs**
- **99% positive online sentiment**



CONTACT US



FREEBIES

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TESTIMONIAL

"You did say you wanted the mother of all websites. Signed, sealed, delivered. All yours."

S. Barrett - Project Director

WORD COUNT 980



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