



Further & Higher Education

Dating back to 1892, Blackpool & The Fylde College is recognised as one of the top colleges in the country, with a total enrolment of 25,000 students and offering 60 full-time degrees and FE courses. It is designated as a National Beacon of Excellence and has been awarded a Charter Mark for the quality of service it offers students.

“Since 1999, our full-time, university-level applications through UCAS had been in steady decline, since we were facing fierce competition in the HE sector, particularly from post-‘92 universities. A two-year TV campaign reversed this decline to a point where we have experienced significant growth in recruitment, with applications growing by over a third.”

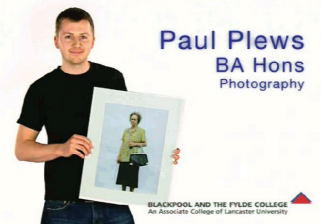
Andy Iredale, Director of Marketing

TV advertising is often regarded as mainly for big brands and major retailers, with expansive marketing budgets. Yet the regionalised structure of the terrestrial networks, ITV1, Channel 4 and 5, provides an excellent fit with the catchment areas of many FE/HE institutions; while local airtime rates make TV marketing an extremely viable proposition, especially when budgeting for an intensive burst of activity around key enrolment periods. In fact, measured in cost-per-thousand, TV delivers better value and reaches far more people than any comparative medium, including online if you factor in website development and internet-only click-throughs.



product value. We shot the ad against an infinity backdrop in a commercial studio and, working with the college, pulled off the considerable coup of securing ex-student John Simm as the voice-over artist. In a simple, yet arresting style, the commercial featured current and former students parading their academic and vocational achievements, with our ‘Life on Mars’ TV star providing the proverbial icing on the cake.

The campaign was a success in response terms and, after due analysis by the college marketing and financial departments, it was repeated the next year, with a fresh crop of alumni and a freshly recorded v/o from John Simm. At just £60k, the annual TV budget is a matter of public record and, when considering the results, looks like great value for money.



When we talked to Blackpool & The Fylde’s marketing team, they were weighing up the solutions to a fall-off in HE applications and we convinced them that a punchy, regional campaign on Granada ITV1 was the perfect answer. With a precisely-targeted airtime schedule that took in top-rating soaps and youth-oriented programming, we could reach the college’s primary audience and, as a bonus, their parents too, who play an important secondary role in the decision making.

When it came to the commercial, we knew the creative budget would be limited to less than £6k, so we needed to be clever creatively and use an affordable regional studio to extract maximum

“This recruitment growth, hitting our externally-set targets, has been a major contributor to Blackpool & The Fylde College’s successful £4 million bid to turn our central site into a bespoke university campus. This is now seen as a major factor in the regeneration of Blackpool and even featured in Prime Minister’s Question Time, regarding the importance of higher education in the town’s survival.”

View the Blackpool & The Fylde College commercial at www.davidgent.com/television

