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Appeal PR

## **Lead generation services drive 20% year on year growth at Harrogate agencies**



The move to digital lead generation and online profile by B2B firms is driving a rebound at Harrogate agencies Appeal and GBM which have appointed Emma Kennett to manage the Harrogate office, their second hire during lockdown.

The agencies have seen Q1 2021 sales rise to £120,000, up more than 20% compared with the same quarter of 2020 before the economic impact of the pandemic.

The sister agencies have clients across the UK and US and, over the last two years, have diversified into services aimed at attracting direct sales enquiries from online content, as well as traditional and digital media profile, a move that started to pay dividends during lockdown.

Recent client wins include PR, profile and lead generation projects for organisations and businesses in Rhode Island, Boston, Leeds and Belfast, and across sectors as varied as financial services, manufacturing, government services and hospitality.

Appeal was founded by director Paul Snape in 1998 and specialises in PR and digital media profile. GBM followed in 2014 to cater for the US market, where the firm also has a Boston office, and focuses on lead generation, digital and sales projects.

“Over the past year, the shift towards digital has obviously accelerated and, fortunately, as we already offered a number of unique online services, we have been able to help businesses adapt to some of the challenges of lockdown,” explains Paul Snape. “As well as needing to replace in-person and trade show marketing, we’ve also seen clients wanting more than PR and profile, and that’s where our two offerings work well together, generating inbound, named leads from the media coverage we deliver.”



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“Clients want to see the value of all marketing spend these days and we’re able to draw a clear line between the investment they make and the sales return, and that’s particularly compelling at the moment when every penny spent is scrutinised by sales and marketing directors.”

Local, long-standing clients of the award-winning business-to-business marketing specialists include JCT600, law firm Clarion, Begbies Traynor Group, Eddisons and Reed Boardall, as well as new clients such as water mist fire suppressant business iMist in Hull and Brighouse-based welded steel mesh products manufacturer Siddall and Hilton Products.

Further afield, the team represents US-based logistics experts Coast to Coast, software scale-up Covernet from Northern Ireland, and oil and gas platform operator Fraser Wells Management based in Great Yarmouth and Aberdeen.

Appeal director Susan Reid adds: “The reset in global marketing has played to our strengths as sales and marketing directors are now more open to trying innovative new approaches, and our investment in developing these digital services since 2017 has been a real bonus for us during some challenging periods.

“Times are tough for a lot of businesses, and we’re hoping to be able to keep growing and make more hires by providing really measurable marketing services that drive sales to a wider and wider range of clients in the UK and US.”

Harrogate-based PR and digital profile specialist Appeal has enjoyed a record half year with five new contracts boosting sales and driving growth into 2018.

“We’re seeing more and more demand for really targeted campaigns that blend digital and media relations activity to drive leads. Our focus and investment in Google and search skills, coupled with our push to open a US base last year, is leading to new opportunities and growth,” said Paul Snape.



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A raft of contracts worth over £200,000 from clients including Leeds City Council, The Department for International Trade, software firm Solutionpath, medical devices supplier Neo G and Manchester Metropolitan University, have contributed to growth of 35% year on year in the six months to 31st December.

“Our focus remains on Yorkshire B2B firms, with our long-held financial and professional services client base also welcoming the new contacts and skills we’re bringing from the other specialisms, including work in the USA through our Great British Marketing brand and US network. Fortunately, we have built up a loyal portfolio with many of our clients working with us for an average of six years and rising,” he added.

The five-strong team in Harrogate is set to grow with at least two new hires in media relations and digital roles in 2018, and two new US consultants have been recruited as the firm’s transatlantic workload continues to expand with clients including a US law firm, a logistics provider and The State of Rhode Island’s commercial support organisation, Commerce RI.

Originally established in 1998, Appeal is one of the region’s longest established boutique agencies and has diversified into lead and strategic sales content generation to supplement its long track record in online, print and broadcast media relations. Appeal’s established clients include business rescue and recovery specialist Begbies Traynor, JCT600, gritter manufacturer Econ, Leeds law firm Clarion and cold storage and transport operation Reed Boardall.

“We’re lucky to be based in the Leeds City Region, where there has been a new wave of optimism and ambition in businesses, whether that’s for trading in Yorkshire or further afield, and we’re really looking forward to growing with them in 2018,” he concluded.