



# BARK

M A G A Z I N E

ISSUE

3







Welcome to

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# THE EXPERIENCE ISSUE

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For the 3rd issue of BARK Magazine we decided to focus on 'experience', and what that word means to the digital world. For us, experience is incredibly important and we always strive to create the best possible experience for our clients and their users, whether that be online or offline.

With this in mind, there have been lots of exciting changes at Spindogs HQ in the last 6 months. We've redecorated our office so that the 'Spindogs experience' remains innovative and exciting and we are launching our new website this month! To find out more about the Spindogs' makeover check out page 45 as we explain how we have developed as a business in recent

years and how this has influenced the overall look and feel of our new website.

In other exciting news, we have launched a new content generation service that will help you produce engaging content for your users! Consequently we begin this issue with our Top Tips for Social Media on page 7 as this links in nicely with our new service. If you have engaging content you will want to share it- and we will show you how!

This issue is also bigger than ever, as we have produced even more content that focuses on digital and technology. We have exclusive interviews with big names in the digital world, including

Dave Coplin from Microsoft and The Telegraph's Head of UX, Jane Austin. We also spoke to three of our clients about the projects we have worked on together.

Our regular features include a debate about fitness apps vs personal trainers, Cooking with Spindogs and all the photos from another successful client party. I have also reviewed the Apple Watch on page 24, so don't forget to check that out... if you have time!

I hope you enjoy this issue as much as we have enjoyed creating it!

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**LIAM GILES**

Managing Director

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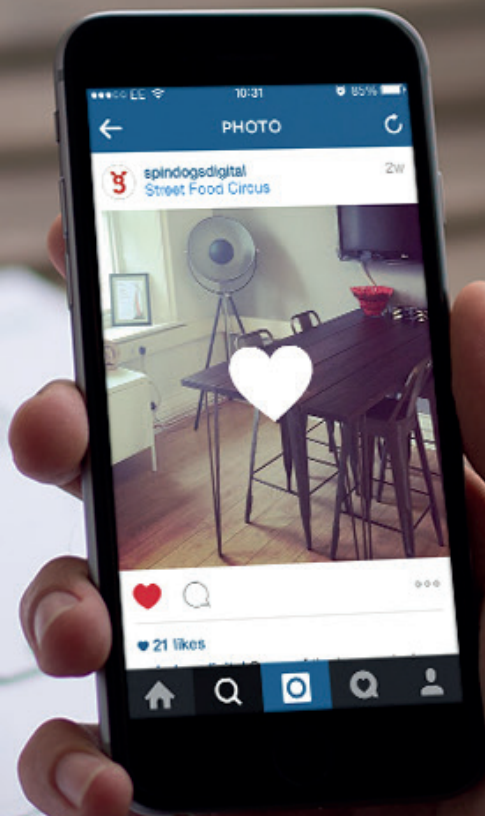
## Get to Know Us

Fun Facts about Team Spindogs



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# our TOP *TIPS* FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

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*Everything you need to know to  
enhance your business' social  
media presence*

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# *Our Online Marketing Manager Jon Walker, reveals how to make the most of your Google+ account...*

## **1 CARE ABOUT YOUR PROFILE**

Google+ allows you to publish a lot of useful information about who you are and what you have to offer, so spend a lot of time ensuring that people who view your profile can get a good understanding of who you are. While you are at it, make sure that you use a well-lit headshot photo as your profile picture. Google+ is a more professional environment than Facebook so you need to ensure that your profile photo doesn't give the wrong impression.

## **2 CREATE LONGER POSTS**

Unlike Facebook and Twitter, Google+ is designed for lengthy posts. You also get to take advantage of creating titles for your posts which can help you grab people's attention. You are also able to incorporate bold, italic and strike through text into your posts to add emphasis.

## **3 TAG PEOPLE**

If you are sharing content that other people have created, tag them in your post as it will trigger a notification (if they haven't switched them off!) to ensure that they see your post and could lead to them interacting with you.

## **4 POST CONTENT ON COMMUNITY PAGES**

Posting as "public" won't necessarily generate a lot of interest unless you already have a lot of followers. Find relevant communities and share your content there as the audience will be interested and will help you reach people that don't already know about you. If you can't find a relevant community, why not start your own?

## **5 USE GOOGLE+ EVENTS**

There is an event feature in Google+ which will automatically e-mail your circles and add your event to their calendars! This makes it perfect for launching products and big announcements.

## **6 CROSS POST AND PROMOTE TO G+**

If you have a post that you want to get in front of as many people as possible, cross post content that you may have shared on Twitter, Facebook & LinkedIn. We'd recommend that you only do this for key posts though as you don't want people to feel as though you are simply syndicating your content. If you have a fairly lengthy message to post, publish it on Google+ and then share the link to the post on Twitter. This allows you to publish lengthier content and will inform your Twitter followers that you also have a presence on Google+.



*Our Account Manager and self-confessed Instagram addict, Olivia Farrell, knows exactly how to make your photos a success.*

## **1 POST YOUR CONTENT AT THE RIGHT TIME**

Don't post your content at 11pm when everyone is asleep, try posting content first thing in the morning. This is when the majority of people check their account as they procrastinate on the way to work!

## **2 CHECK OUT THE COMPETITION**

Check out similar profiles to you and see what type of content is performing well, then use this information to make your content better.

## **3 BE CLEAR AND CONCISE**

Try and keep your captions as short as possible because you want your photos to tell the story. If you include text make sure that it is adding context to the image.

## **4 ENGAGE WITH USERS**

Instagram has lots of options that enable you to engage with other users. For example remember to use relevant hashtags and your geo location so that they can find you!

## **5 EXPERIMENT WITH CONTENT**

It is really important to test your content and record your results so that you can see what is working and what isn't. You will never immediately achieve a successful Instagram account because it takes time and patience, but with a little experimentation you will soon see which call to actions, captions and content types are engaging your users.



# *Want to know how to boost the potential of your business' Facebook page? Jon has the answers.*

## **1 BUILD A HIGH QUALITY PAGE**

Facebook pages have a few key areas which you can't ignore. The first being your profile photo, which will appear in your followers' newsfeeds and next to any replies or comments you make as your page. We recommend that you use your company logo for brand awareness.

The large image above your timeline is known as a 'cover photo', we recommend changing your cover image throughout the year in order to avoid your page looking stale.

Make sure that you take the time to complete your 'about' section with as much information as possible and include a link to your website. You can also create a call to action which will be displayed on top of your cover image.

## **2 INVITE YOUR CONTACTS**

To build your audience start with your clients, friends and family who would be happy to 'like' your page by inviting them to do so. You can refine who you invite by selecting friends that are in a particular city, by friend lists you have created or that are members of groups you have joined.

## **3 PROMOTE YOUR PAGE**

Facebook boasts an incredibly targeted advertising platform which can really help your page be seen by those who will be interested. You can target users by age, gender, location and by their interests. With a well targeted campaign it is possible to build an interested audience without breaking your bank account.

## **4 VARY & SCHEDULE YOUR POSTS**

A Facebook audience will engage more with your page if you vary the type of content that you post, so use a mixture of text, images and video.

If you create a link in your post to your website, Facebook will display a larger image in order to capture your audience's attention. You can also customise the image and text being displayed in the post!

If you have a video, upload it directly to Facebook as you will be able to create a unique call to action that will prompt your viewer to take further action with your business.

You can also schedule your posts in advance, meaning that you don't have to be online the precise moment that you want your post to be published.

## **5 CREATE CUSTOM & LOOKALIKE AUDIENCES**

Custom audiences allows you to reach users who have interacted with your website regardless of if they like your page or not. For example you can upload a CSV or text file of e-mail addresses, or you can target users who have visited your website. You can use these custom audiences for page promotion and post boosting campaigns.

If you have a fairly sizeable e-mail list which you have used to create a custom audience, you can use the 'lookalike audience' feature to build a list of Facebook users with similar interests to them.



# *Do you love Twitter but not sure how to make the most of your 140 characters? Our UX Architect, Lucinda Reid, explains the tips and tricks you can try today.*

## **1 CREATE CONTENT AND SHARE IT**

Never feel restricted by the 140 characters, instead use it to your advantage and write clear concise tweets that not only update people on your business but also directs them to content you have written elsewhere. Twitter is a great tool to share content and get more traffic to the websites you want, so if you write a blog or news article remember to tweet it!

## **2 USE URL SHORTENERS**

If you are tweeting links then make sure to use a URL shortener as this will mean you have more characters to explain what the link is! Google has its own shortener which you can use for free, just visit: [goo.gl](http://goo.gl) or consider having a more bespoke one like [spindo.gs](http://spindo.gs).

## **3 REMEMBER IMAGES**

It is proven that if you include a picture in your tweet it is more likely to achieve higher engagement than without it. So always think before you tweet. Is there a good image that would make your words more memorable or compliment the text?

## **4 UTILISE THE DM FEATURE**

If you are having a conversation with someone on Twitter, sometimes it is more suitable to speak to them away from your main feed, especially in a business capacity. The direct messaging feature (DM) is perfect for these instances as you can have a full conversation without it appearing on your feed. Twitter has also introduced Group DM meaning that you can have a conversation with more than one person.

## **5 KNOW WHEN TO USE @**

If you are replying to someone publically on Twitter the @ symbol and Twitter handle might be at the start of the tweet. If this is the case, that tweet won't appear on all Twitter feeds although it is still public. If you want your tweet to be viewed by everyone then add a full stop before the @twitterhandle.

## **6 LET TWITTER HELP YOU**

If you are still keen to know more about how Twitter can help your business then visit: [business.twitter.com](http://business.twitter.com) as this website tells you everything you need to know.



**JON WALKER**



**OLIVIA FARRELL**



**LUCINDA REID**



# VISIT SWANSEA BAY



**STEVE HOPKINS**  
*Tourism & Marketing  
Manager*

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*Creating an immersive experience  
that translates both online & offline*

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**W**hat is the first thing that comes to mind when someone mentions Swansea? The brilliant beaches, a delicious scoop of Joe's ice cream or maybe the roar of football fans from the Liberty Stadium?

"We are more than just a football ground destination!" enthused Steve Hopkins who is Tourism and Marketing Manager for Visit Swansea Bay, the destination brand name for Swansea Bay, Mumbles and the Gower.



For 10 years, Steve has worked for the City and Council of Swansea and seen how the city has developed in recent years, with it now turning into a destination that can be experienced all year round and not just for the summer months.

“The challenge, not just for Swansea but the whole of Wales, is to bring in and develop facilities that extend the seasons and provide places for people to go in the wet weather, when they don’t want to use the beaches,” said Steve.

There has also been a flurry of new attractions and big name brands arriving in Swansea, so Steve and his team saw the opportunity to raise the destination’s profile online, but there was something getting in their way.

“Our previous website wasn’t fit for purpose and was not helping us to meet the needs and challenges we were faced with,” explained Steve, “We wanted to promote a quality all year round destination and we wanted a website that could do that.”

Placing more importance on Swansea Bay’s presence digitally was a decision that came easily for Steve’s team, as their proactive attitude has helped them to win a Canmol award for two years running. Steve admitted that their website was a big part of that and proves that their decision was correct.

Once they had decided that it was now the time to go digital, they looked for a digital agency that would be able to help them achieve their objectives.







The result was a function that allowed businesses to upload their own content to the website so that the new site could be constantly updated, and offered businesses the flexibility of updating their content whenever they wished.

"By making the website self-sufficient it was able to free up staff time on our side and we are now seeing more and more businesses utilising this to its full capacity," explained Steve.

"We chose Spindogs because you gave us the confidence that you wanted the contract and we felt comfortable that we could work together on this, even though you were from Cardiff!" joked Steve.

Cardiff and Swansea rivalry aside, Steve and his team started working with Spindogs to create the new Visit Swansea Bay website.

"It didn't go without a query or two," admitted Steve, "But they were always resolved and on the whole it went very well."

The website, which was designed to offer the user a true reflection of Swansea and its surrounding areas, was launched in March 2014 and a year on Steve is still pleased with the image it is portraying.

"I think the website is inviting you in through the screen in terms of the content that is on there. We want you to immerse yourself in the site as it is very much the first step to converting interest into booking," said Steve. "I think it is a very important shop window."

*"We wanted to promote a quality all year round destination and we wanted a website that could do that."*

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Another important aspect of the new site was that it needed to appeal to both tourists and businesses so that the website could be profitable. As part of the process the Visit Swansea Bay team worked with Spindogs to come up with a solution to this challenge.

Although businesses are able to upload content, Spindogs added an approval process to the content management system (CMS) so that Steve and his team could oversee the content. This meant that they could moderate what was uploaded and make sure that it adhered to the brand and the Council's image.





Steve explained that this was one of his favourite features of the new site because of the benefits it had given his team and the businesses they work with.

"The vast majority of businesses are already on their digital journey, so our new website attracted businesses because marketing packages were becoming more digital. They also really liked the fact that they could access the site and add things such as late availability or events," said Steve.

As Visit Swansea Bay welcomes new visitors and businesses to its surroundings, Steve is now keen to make sure that they are doing all they can to provide an excellent experience. They have always been involved in measuring campaigns and recently, with the help of Spindogs, they have been focussing on conversion facilities to see how people are interacting with the site.

"We do get regular feedback on the site and a lot of people like it, with all our peers fairly envious of the work we have done," smiled Steve, "But most importantly our visitors and businesses are happy and working with us on it."

Now, with their sights firmly on winning a Canmol award for the third year running, Steve and his team are focussing even more on digital content. They plan to keep up the momentum they have achieved from recent campaigns and the new website, so that Visit Swansea Bay continues to be a must-see destination.

"The ultimate compliment for us would be for new users, who might not know much about Swansea, to visit our website and then visit Swansea and have a great experience," said Steve, "Then if they recommend and share that experience, well, that is all we can hope for really!"



LUCINDA REID



*One to watch*

# JANE GUTHRIE



UX Consultant at  
Slalom Consulting

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*From working with the biggest brands to sharing her experiences all over the world, Jane Guthrie is a name you should remember.*

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**A**t Spindogs we love learning from others and sharing their story, so when the opportunity arose to talk to Jane Guthrie about her career we couldn't wait to ask her some questions!

Jane works for Slalom Consulting in Atlanta, a multi-million dollar consulting company in the US that has just opened their first London office. Slalom offers a variety of services from Delivery Leadership to User Experience, which is Jane's field. We called her via Skype to find out how her career path led to Slalom and what it's like to work stateside.

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**Hi Jane- Thank you so much for talking to us today! Firstly, could you tell us a bit about your experience before Slalom?**

I started as a Graphic Designer back in the day, and I was working at IBM when I noticed that nobody was doing anything between design and the engineering part. I then started to read about Information Architecture (IA) because no one else was doing it in our process. Truthfully I am a much better Information Architect than a Designer!

**What challenges did you face when you first started to implement IA?**

I guess it was getting people to understand what it is, and why it is important to look at things before they are designed. It was a challenge to get our clients to take a step by step approach and invest in IA and wireframes.



### **How do you feel user experience design has changed during your career?**

There was a lot of design that was done at the beginning that was not really based on data. We didn't know what we know today and there has definitely been an evolution of really understanding our users over the years. Research is a big part of that, as we now have lots of different online tools to find out information about our users.

### **Have you found that people are happy to be involved in your research?**

Definitely! People are getting more used to giving their opinions online and giving their feedback. People just love to give their feedback! That has definitely been a great thing for UX and personally I really love working on things that are consumer focussed.

### **Prior to Slalom what has been one of your favourite projects to work on?**

Years and years ago I worked on a project for Honda that was really fun. It was for 'connected-car' and I guess it was when we were first starting to think about integrating mobile phones in our cars. Back then it was pretty revolutionary and it was really fun to do something new and work with Honda's designers.

### **Can you tell us a bit more about Slalom?**

Slalom is a local market consulting company which means that our consultants don't travel, so everyone that lives in Atlanta works in Atlanta. Our Atlanta office has over 50 UX practitioners and we are cross discipline so we do marketing strategy, visual design and research.

We are probably one of the largest teams in Atlanta for UX but there is a real need for it, as we work with lots of large companies like Coca Cola, Delta Airlines and Home Depot who all see the value in user experience.

### **What makes Slalom different from their competitors?**

We are different because of the way we work. We embed ourselves in the organisations that we work with as we go and live at the client's site, for example I am currently working at Home Depot. This enables us to really get to know the business and

in the same things! Although, I have noticed that the term 'service design', is making its way over to the USA now and that started more in Europe and the UK.

### **Alongside working in UX for 15 years you have been a speaker at various conferences, has this always been an ambition?**

It has, for some reason for me it has been really important to be a speaker. For a long time I was really shy about sharing what I know, but now I really enjoy getting out there and going to conferences and giving talks. It



*We didn't know what we know today and there has definitely been an evolution of really understanding our users over the years.*



have a deeper understanding of their problems. We are very business orientated and solve real business problems and needs.

### **How long have you been working with Home Depot?**

I have only been at Home Depot for three weeks and it's interesting because it's always like the first day at school when I show up at a new business. It's challenging to get started and understand the business and figure out how to use the printer!

### **You have experienced UX in both the UK and the USA, have you noticed any differences?**

Over 10 years ago I was working in London with Sotheby's doing user experience and there wasn't much of a cross cultural difference then. Today when I travel to conferences in the UK I see people struggling with the same stuff and we all seem to be interested

allows me to share what I know in the community and I also learn so much from these conferences. It has been a real personal accomplishment for me.

### **One final question- when you aren't working what do you like to do in your spare time?**

I love to travel! This year I went to Russia for the first time and it was really cool. I went to St Petersburg, which was amazing, so I do like to do a lot of travelling when I can!

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*To keep up to date with Jane's adventures you can follow her on Twitter @janerguthrie.*



**LUCINDA REID**





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# HOW A WEBSITE COULD CHANGE YOUR LIFE



*Cait Myers, Communications Officer at Health and Care Research Wales, explains how their latest project is helping to change the lives of future generations.*

**O**n 14th May 2015, Health and Care Research Wales celebrated the launch of their new website and the pilot website of HealthWise Wales. A month on, I caught up with Cait Myers, Communications Officer at Health and Care Research Wales, to find out more about HealthWise Wales and discover why research is vital.

"It is basically a national population study," said Cait about HealthWise Wales, "We want to study the health of the Welsh population and get an idea of how to improve the health and social care of the future."

To make this a reality, Health and Care Research Wales have been working with Welsh Government and Cardiff University to create a platform that will mean anybody can take part in this research study. The result was the HealthWise Wales' website which Cait and her team co-ordinated, with a little help from Spindogs of course!

"We contacted Spindogs because you already had the tender for the new Health and Care Research Wales website," explained Cait, "There was a lot of continuity between that and the HealthWise Wales website so we thought it would be efficient for one company to work on both. You also always understand what we are talking about and interpret our ideas so that they work for the user."



As we were both on the same page, Cait then worked with Spindogs to ensure that both websites would be live by 14th May. The deadline was undoubtedly a challenge for all parties involved, but a lot of determination and teamwork made it possible.

"It was a really really tight deadline, but you did it!" smiled Cait.

The project's deadline grew closer when Cait received the website's content from Cardiff University and we began to structure the basis of the site. This project had a very content led approach, and Spindogs worked collaboratively with Cait to create sitemaps and wireframes so that the website would meet her objectives.

"Once we had received the content from Cardiff University it was important that the website was able to hit two clear objectives," said Cait about the initial challenges. "We wanted the content to be easy to use for the user but also satisfy the needs of the researchers and the ethics committee."

The content of the project was also important because it needed to educate and convince the user to engage with this research project. Consequently, the pilot of the website already has engaging content, including case studies from people who have been part of other research projects.

“*It was a really really tight deadline, but you did it!*”

"Without research we wouldn't have radiotherapy, we wouldn't have chemotherapy," said Cait, "People should get involved with research because they are then looking after future generations."

Although Cait's words clearly explain the importance of research, this message does not always reach everyone. As part of the project Cait saw first-hand how some people are still unaware of what research really

entails, with the majority assuming that it involves time off work or medical trials.

"With HealthWise Wales, anyone can get involved," said Cait, "You don't have to go to your GP, you just need to sign up and answer some questions. There are just four sets of questions initially and they are not harrowing questions, just very simple and not too revealing."

Positively, the website is attracting more people to become involved in research as Cait has seen that people are already signing up to the website. Although the project is still in its infancy (their official launch will be in 2016), Cait is keen to engage more people and use their feedback to enhance their experience of HealthWise Wales online.

"I think that as this is a pilot, we need to get it out there and then work out what people's needs are," said Cait. Once their needs are established, Cait and her team know that this research can then be used to create a healthier Wales.

If that prospect still isn't enough to convince those cynical about research, I asked Cait the one thing she would say to people that are dubious about signing up.

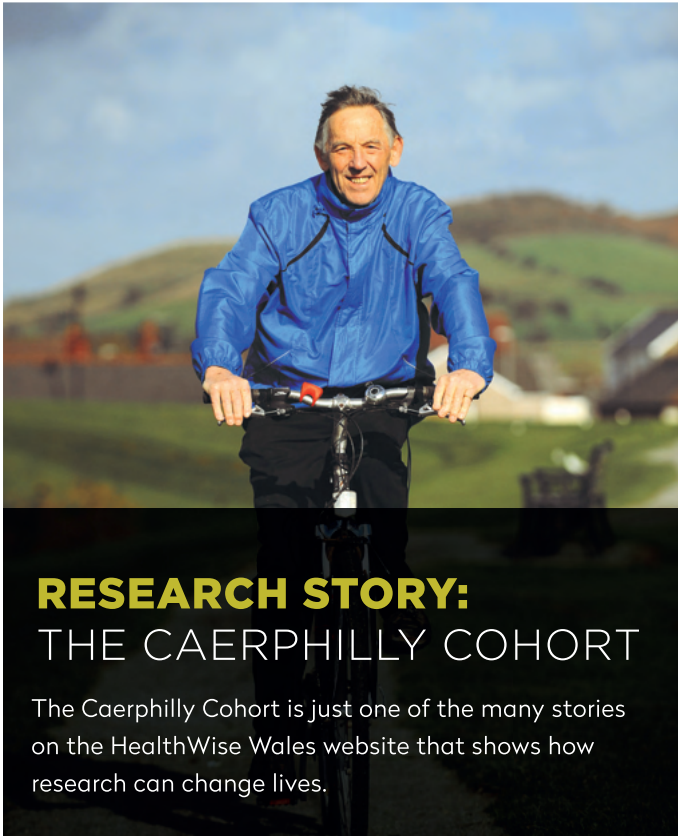
"Well, research saved my life, so if it wasn't for that, I wouldn't be here," replied Cait. "It really does save lives."

You can join today by visiting:  
[www.healthwisewales.gov.wales](http://www.healthwisewales.gov.wales)



**LUCINDA REID**





## RESEARCH STORY: THE CAERPHILLY COHORT

The Caerphilly Cohort is just one of the many stories on the HealthWise Wales website that shows how research can change lives.

### WHO ARE THEY?

In 1979, a group of 2,500 middle aged men from Caerphilly and the surrounding areas signed up to take part in some research. For 35 years their daily habits were then tracked so that researchers could look at the environmental factors on chronic diseases. The men had a diverse range of backgrounds and researchers could see the effects of different lifestyle behaviours.

### WHAT HAPPENED?

The research illustrated that there were many benefits to leading a healthy lifestyle as it would lower your chance of developing illnesses like cancer, heart disease and dementia. They also found that overall there was a 60% reduction in premature death in those that adopted a healthy lifestyle.

### HOW DID THIS HELP?

This research was a great success, as over 400 research papers were written from these findings and these have helped to shape the health and wellbeing of others today. All of the men felt a sense of pride to be involved in this research, and some original members of the Cohort Study are still participating in various studies.



## HOW CAN I BECOME INVOLVED WITH RESEARCH?

You can visit:  
**[healthwisewales.gov.wales](http://healthwisewales.gov.wales)**  
for more information.



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The power  
of the web  
is in its  
universality

- Tim Burners-Lee

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# 10 WAYS TO MAKE YOUR CONTENT MORE **ACCESSIBLE**

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When you are writing for the web it is incredibly important to think of all the people who might read your content. You need to ensure that your words are supporting the needs of all users, including those with disabilities, so that nobody is prevented from hearing your message.

Here are some small ways that could make a big difference to your content's accessibility:

- 1** First, make sure that the font you have chosen is not a condensed text, as narrow letters or line spacing can make it very difficult for people to read.
- 2** Think about the format your content is taking, as some structures are more accessible than others. For example a list format, similar to this feature, is definitely advised.
- 3** Try to avoid complex sentence structures when you are writing content and instead focus on creating one idea per sentence. This will mean your content is both clear and concise for all users.
- 4** Experiment with a technique called front-loading, which is when you start each paragraph with your point and then explain it in the subsequent sentences.
- 5** Use sub-headings as a tool to explain to the user what each paragraph is about. They will also help to break up large chunks of text.
- 6** For those using a screen reader, page titles are very important as they are the first thing the user hears. This means that you should ensure titles are descriptive, front-loaded and unique.
- 7** If you are including links in your content then the link text should always make sense out of context. For example you should not use 'click here' or 'read more' as screen reader users will not understand where the link leads them to.
- 8** It is not good practice to upload images with text embedded as the quality of the text is too poor for users to read. Instead, upload an image and then add the text beneath the image as this is easier to maintain and edit.
- 9** Images are a great tool to make your content more interesting but it is important to ensure that they are accessible. You can do this easily by adding an Alt text to the image (or a description) when you upload it to your CMS.
- 10** Before you publish, do one final check to see whether you have used abbreviations, slang or jargon. Unfortunately these words might not be familiar to users that need to use voice recognition software, so quickly remove them before submitting your accessible content to the world!



**LUCINDA REID**



# IS IT TIME YOU GOT AN APPLE WATCH?

*Liam Giles tests Apple's latest gadget  
to see what all the fuss is about!*

I have to admit from the outset, even up until the point when my new Apple Watch arrived, I had read almost nothing about it. Those that know me will know of my love of watches, so when you combine this with my passion for digital and technology it was a no brainer.

I like and trust Apple products, and sure, it will probably be improved in the not so distant future when they release version 2 (or II), but I wanted to have the first model and was excited to find out what it could do.

The first nice surprise was the packaging. It was in the classic white fitted box that most Apple products come in, but this time it was a long thin box. I don't know why, but I assumed it would arrive like most other watches in a small cube like package! Once I had ripped it out of the box and plugged in the charger I decided to sync it with my iPhone. This process was quick and easy, as you download the 'Apple Watch app' on your phone and then it does it all for you, just start the app and then hold the watch up to your iPhone's camera. After a few minutes and preference choices you are ready to go and can start wearing your watch.





I then quickly removed it again and started playing with the buttons to configure my watch face of choice. There are lots of built in digital and analogue options (including a retro Mickey Mouse face) each of which can be customised for features and colours. I think that this is an area that will certainly expand in the near future as developers are allowed to do more. I think this might also be a cool opportunity for some of the traditional watch brands to design and submit their own faces for the watch, imagine downloading an Omega designed face for your Apple Watch! That said, after a few variations I managed to settle on a face that I was happy with (you can save any that you create and quite easily switch between them if you want).

The majority of time you are wearing the watch the screen is off, but when you tilt it to look at it as you would with a traditional watch, the screen automatically comes on to show you the time.

Once I was distracted and up and around the house doing other things, then the activity really started. The watch pings and you get a gentle vibration on your wrist to notify you that something has happened. From what I can tell this is pretty much the notifications screen

you get on a locked iPhone with notifications from any of your apps. Messages, tweets, Sky Sports notifications and the like sporadically beep and you can choose to view them right there on your wrist or you can check your phone and take a look at them in full.



The neatest thing I have found with it to date is the messaging app. With this you can read a message on your wrist, but you can then choose to reply to it. You do this by speaking into it and the watch does a great job of recognizing what you have said! It certainly seems better than when I first played with Siri on the iPhone.

The watch then gives you the option to send back as a dictated text message or to send as an audio file. I had lots of fun with this for the first few days, but have used it less since.

Later into the first week and back in work I was still enjoying it, but one thing that I do feel is that having something that beeps or vibrates on your wrist is much more intrusive than when your phone does the same in your bag or your pocket. At times when you are in meetings this can be very distracting; you can set the watch to the 'do not disturb' mode using the watch itself, but it is very easy to forget this when rushing into a meeting.

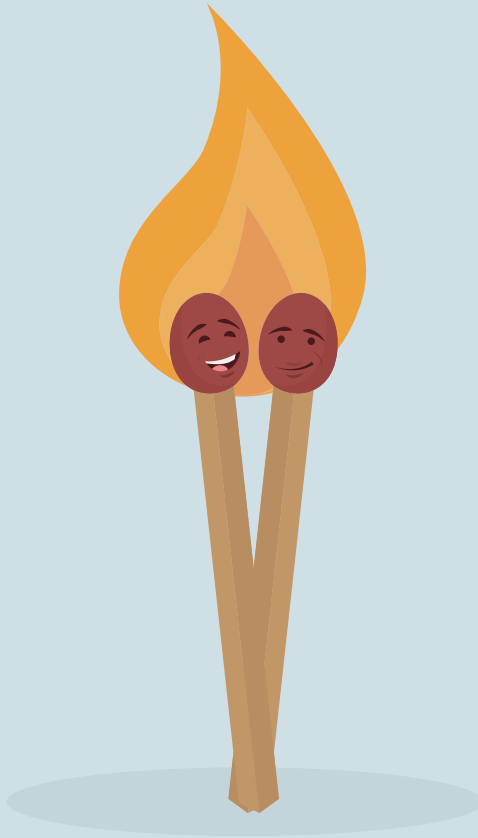
So after a couple of weeks of owning it and playing with it would I recommend it? I think the answer is yes if you have a genuine interest in tech, however it doesn't do anything that is stand out enough for me on it's own to suggest you should buy it. I would say, watch this space!



**LIAM GILES**



You need **content.**  
We love writing **content.**



Sounds like we're  
a **perfect match!**

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Contact us to talk **#fuelthepanda**

02920 480 720

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**spindogs**





— Anna Ryder Richardson —

## WILD AT HEART

*From changing rooms to changing the world,  
Anna Ryder Richardson is on a mission to make a difference*

**O**n the day I call Anna Ryder Richardson for an interview, she is in her home in Pembrokeshire surrounded by horses and hairy dogs whilst trying to quieten her friend who had just arrived with sausages and whisky. I know this because she told me, and then apologised profusely for the

dogs barking and giggles from her friend as we spoke. I imagined her to be dashing around her cottage and unsuccessfully trying to find a quiet space to talk. I didn't mind in the slightest, in fact, although it was a beautiful sunny day at Spindogs HQ, it seemed a lot brighter in Pembrokeshire.



"I am probably the last person to be dragged into the technical world," laughed Anna, "But Spindogs have taken me on such a fabulous ride already, and I am very excited for the future."

This ride concerns her latest project, The Nature Foundation, which is a charity that will focus on the importance of conservation and the need to, not just save the animals, but to save the people that live

alongside them as well. Spindogs are working with Anna and the trustees to create the branding and website for this Foundation so that together we can give Anna's charity the platform it deserves.

Before I delved deeper into Anna's reasons for starting this charity I was keen to know more about the woman behind the wallpaper. As a child growing up in the 90s I spent my Friday nights watching

Changing Rooms just like millions of other people in the UK, but now Anna is more well-known for running Manor House Wildlife Park in Pembrokeshire. So what motivated Anna to move to Wales and buy a zoo?







"We bought the zoo in February 2008 and well, seven years on I still don't really know why!" said Anna, "I know that I had a bit of a mid life crisis. With a man he might get a toupee, a great big medallion or buy a soft top car, and a women might get a younger man or a few hair extensions and I think I saw that was the way I was going."

At the time Anna was living in Glasgow with her husband, Colin MacDougall, and their two daughters but felt an uneasiness about the life in front of her. Anna explained how she could see her future and that it would consist of dinner parties, Botox and Britney Spears-themed birthday parties and she thought it was way too early to be, "seeing the rest of her life".

Anna's life changed when she attended a dinner party with her husband and overheard a conversation he had with a man who asked whether he wanted to invest in a zoo. From that moment on Anna could not get the idea out of her head.







"I imagined myself running barefoot with a lion cub in my arms and my children frolicking with giraffes!" said Anna.

Unfortunately the zoo mentioned at the dinner party was sold to someone else, but Anna did not want to give up on her newly discovered dream.

"I gave Colin a very hard time," said Anna, "We had missed this opportunity to have all these amazing things and give our children the best life! But then he bumped into the same man again and told him that we really wanted to buy a zoo and then Manor House Wildlife Park came up."

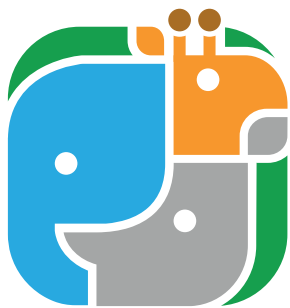
The rest as they say, is history, but as you can probably imagine running a zoo was never going to be easy. Anna admitted that she did Google, "how to run a zoo" on more than one occasion,

but soon found that the zoo world was just like one big family and more than ready to welcome her into the fold.

Seven years on Anna's Welsh Zoo is going from strength to strength but her wildlife adventure is far from over. Now she is looking at the bigger picture and hopes that her new charity, The Nature Foundation, will raise awareness about the difficulties the world is facing.







# THE NATURE FOUNDATION

"The world is in a terrible mess and there is not a lot more we can do from Manor House Wildlife Park," explained Anna, "But as a charity and with some amazing trustees on board we might be able to raise funds and help on a much bigger scale. That is why we have started The Nature Foundation."

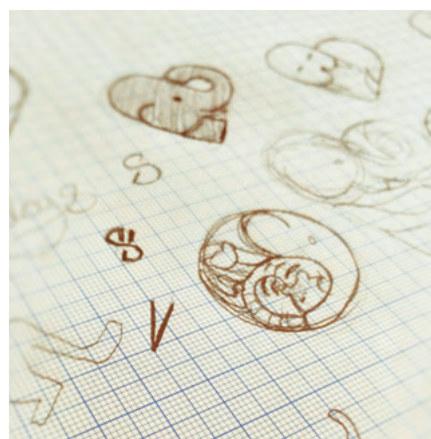
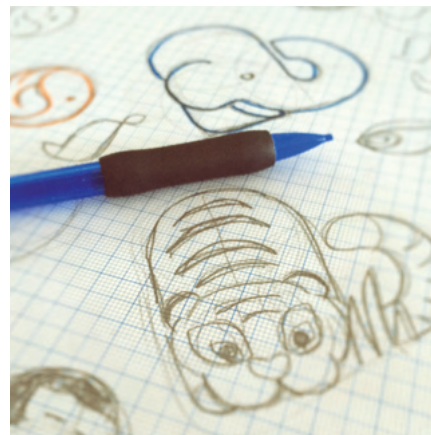
"I just love it!" said Anna, "The branding encompasses everything that we want the charity to be about and it is such a clever design that people keep seeing different things each time. I think it is very contemporary compared to other charities, whilst being fun and quite childlike."



With the charity in place Anna is now keen to appeal to children, as she believes that if she can make one child understand the world's problems and the importance of conservation they will have achieved a lot. As this is an important element to The Nature Foundation, Spindogs were keen to ensure that the branding appealed to adults and children.

As the branding brings the charity to life, Anna is now looking forward to the website, which she hopes will allow users to immerse themselves in a world that can take them to many places.

"I really want to inspire people," expressed Anna, "I would love them to join in and help, and not just be a friend, but be a part of the family."



Anna has never been afraid to dream big and this charity will undoubtedly be another exciting part of her adventure, but what has she felt has been the biggest accomplishment of her journey so far?

"As far as the zoo is concerned I think it is the fact that we are still here and for the Foundation I think it is meeting you guys," said Anna, "It is completely a game changer really, it has changed everything and given us all such enthusiasm and hope!"

With that our chat is over and I leave Anna to enjoy the rest of her day. I secretly hope it will include her running barefoot with a lion cub in her arms.



**LUCINDA REID**



# 3 MONEY IN A DIGITAL WORLD MONEY

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*Our senior developer  
Oli Salisbury, explains  
how you can make  
your website's  
payment process quick  
and easy for users*

---

**S**o you've got a great new product idea or you've

starting taking orders on your website, the question now is how do you take payments from your customers?

The short answer is you need a payment processing integration. This involves choosing a processing company and then integrating their product into your website. Sounds complicated, but luckily there is a fair bit of competition in the online payments industry meaning that each provider is vying to make their offering as user friendly as possible.

Back in the early days of ecommerce, most high street shops already had some kind of physical card processing product in their stores. All they needed was a secure way of capturing a customer's card details online and manually plugging the numbers through their card reader. Sounds simple, and it was, until you started having to do it manually for more than a handful of payments. Also, the issue of security is far from straightforward – to ensure your web server (the place where your website lives) is sufficiently robust in order

to store live credit card details is a pretty gigantic and costly task only worthwhile for a handful of blue-chip retailers.

This is where the online payment providers stepped in. The idea made sense – they invested their money into making their web servers super secure, so once a customer had done all the fluffy sales stuff on your website they are then passed over to the beefed up payment gateway where they actually enter the critical card payment details and make a payment.

Once the order is complete they are then redirected straight back to your website for more fluffy stuff of your choice. The payment is then transferred from the payment provider into your bank account (minus a handling fee).

Sounds great, but which payment provider should you choose to integrate into your website?

Remember each provider has different methods, so if you change your mind you will have to go through the integration process all over again.



## Here is an overview of some of the most popular providers:



Unless you've been hiding under an analogue stone, you most probably have heard of PayPal, as they have been dominant in this market for over 15 years. The reality is almost everyone has an account and it is quick and easy to use. When you checkout from your online shop to the PayPal server the branding will switch suddenly from your website to the standard PayPal payments page branding, and they make no disguise of the fact that you are leaving one website and entering another.



Accounting software giants Sage wanted to get in on the online payments action and acquired the company Protix in 2006. Renowned for good customer support and good testing options for developers, Sage Pay soon became a market leader. Like with PayPal, when a customer orders from your website they are passed over to the Sage Pay servers. However, Sage Pay introduced the ability of "skinning" their payment pages meaning that savvy designers can style them to appear as if the user has remained on the original website all along – instead all that changes is the URL in the address bar.



More recently we've seen the explosion of Stripe into the online payments arena. Focussing primarily on website developers, Stripe deduced that these people were intrinsic to the success of a user's online shopping experience. Using modern technologies, Stripe allows business owners to accept credit card details directly into forms on their website. However, the card details are submitted directly from the browser to the secure Stripe servers and never touch the online shop's server at any point. This means that you get best of both worlds – fully integrated payment pages with the security of an industry giant.

### REMEMBER TO GET YOUR MERCHANT ACCOUNT!

Every business who wants to accept card payments is required to get a special type of bank account called a merchant account (also called a merchant ID). Funds from your merchant account are transferred to your normal business bank account on a regular basis (eg. weekly). However, most modern online payment providers now use their own central merchant account to receive funds, meaning you no longer have to go through the hassle of setting up your own.

### INSTANT PAYMENTS VS SUBSCRIPTIONS

Most shopping basket style payment integrations relate to a single one-off card payment. However, there may be instances where your business model needs to process subscriptions or reoccurring card payments. Luckily, many modern providers offer this as part of their product. However, bear in mind that this method will often take a developer longer to integrate to your website.



**OLI SALISBURY**



# DAVE COPLIN

**BOLDLY GOING WHERE NO MAN HAS GONE BEFORE**

*The first thing you should know about Dave Coplin is that he doesn't take himself too seriously.*

**M**y job title started out as a joke but the danger is, five years in I am starting to think it is real," admitted Dave Coplin when he took to the stage at Digital 2015.

The job title in question is Chief Envisioning Officer, a position he holds at Microsoft and one that he still finds amusing. As soon as Dave begins his talk, this year on why we need to re-invent productivity to empower the future of work, it soon becomes clear that this title sums up his work perfectly.

"My job is basically to think thoughtfully about the future and understand how human beings are going to think, work and play," explained Dave.

For Dave, technology is an exciting opportunity and he regularly references Star Trek as teaching us an important lesson. The TV show was ultimately showing us how technology is a force for good and enables us to achieve more than we could on our own.

Although this is an optimistic viewpoint of technology, Dave is well aware that currently we are a long way off living in a Star Trek universe.

"The real issue today is not technology, although I would say that wouldn't I," said Dave, "The real issue is the way we use technology. The fact that most of our working practices are based on a world before technology existed means that we are just doing the same old stuff but a bit quicker than before."

Dave believes that our society is too focussed on the past to really achieve the potential of the future, and he is now working hard to change our opinion of technology so that we can break habits of a lifetime. This is no mean feat, and after he concluded his talk at Digital 2015 I caught up with him to find out more.





"I just think we need people to think differently and get them engaged with change," explained Dave, "To be honest the reception is much better to my ideas now than when I was saying these things 10 years ago. We now seem to have people who want more and to experience what a great place the world can be."

Although there is a desire to want more from technology, Dave sees a pattern in how users are finding technology liberating at home but not transferring this feeling to the workplace.

This links with the work he is currently doing on productivity, as he described the current effect of technology in business as more like a prison, controlling our days and disengaging us in the process.

*The only way forward is thinking of the user and their needs*

The UK's productivity growth is at its lowest in 60 years and there appears to be no signs of this changing unless we change our attitude towards technology.

"Productivity might be the most boring topic in the world but everything in our lives depends on us doing it right," said Dave, "Engagement

is also an issue facing the global workplace as 83% of the workplace in the UK are disengaged and we need to fix that if we want technology to do what we want it to."

Dave's solution is to make sure that everyone in an organisation knows why the company they work for exists and then be empowered by that purpose. As soon as the engagement is improved, the productivity will follow.



As someone who values the potential of human beings, Dave also stressed the importance of creating ideas that will benefit the user and not just creating technology for technology sake.

"The only way forward is thinking of the user and their needs," said Dave, "Too much in the past we have talked about user requirements and specifications but haven't really had the user in mind. Now you really need to think about how technology can change the user's experience and then build your idea around that, then you can do really amazing things."

Dave is already seeing this being put into practice and is comforted to see that the UK government is already taking steps to put the user first.

"They are really taking this to heart and thinking what the user will need. They are transforming government and really leading the way in this new way of thinking," explained Dave.

**Credit: Digital 2015**

Although Dave openly admits that he is, "naively optimistic" about the future of technology, his positive attitude is infectious and soon it is impossible not to be inspired by his ideas.

Changing the way we view technology is not only achievable but an exciting prospect. It might just take a leap of faith, and the odd episode of Star Trek.



**LUCINDA REID**



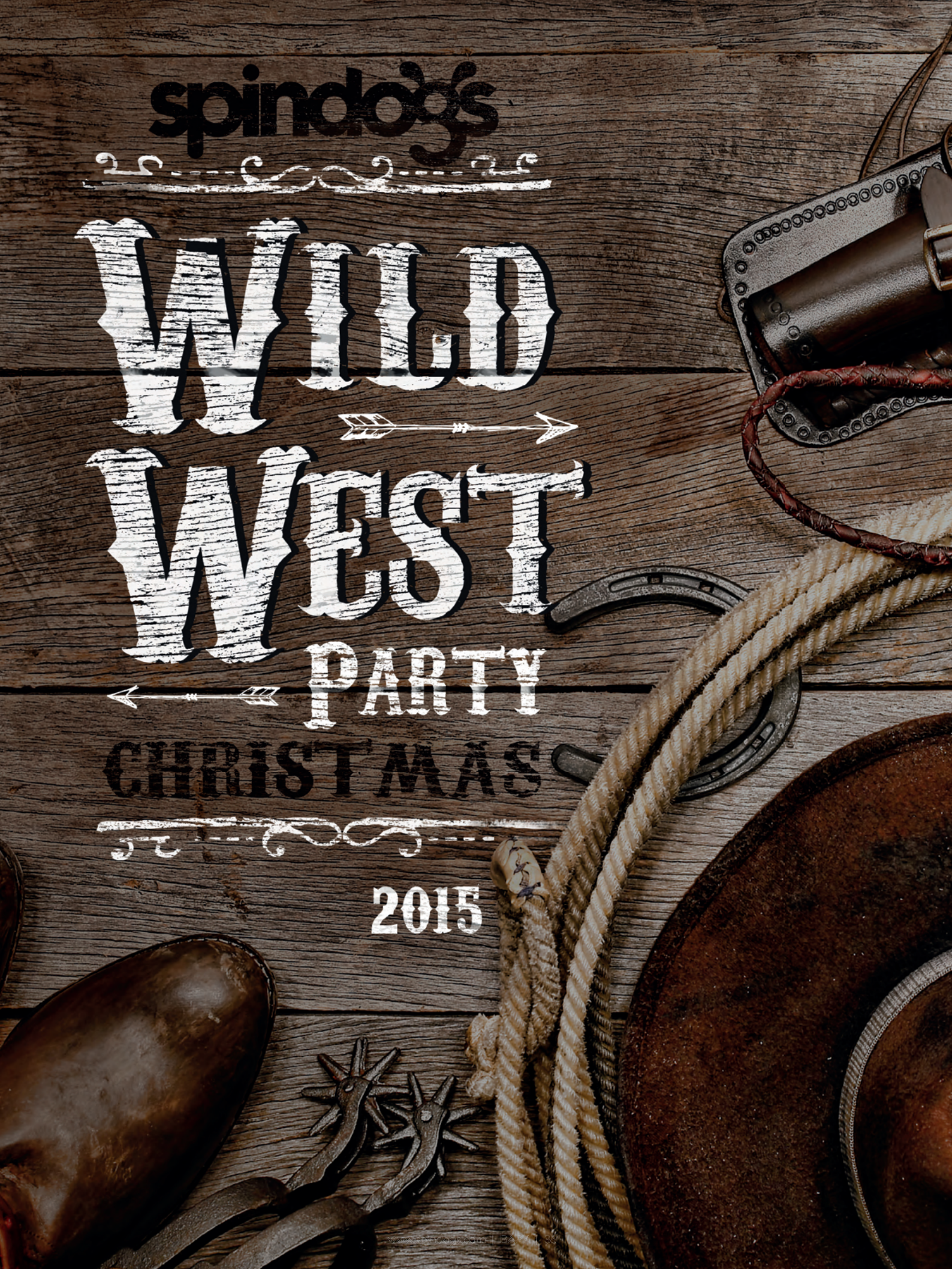
spindogs

WILD

WEST  
PARTY

CHRISTMAS

2015





# \* IS YOUR WEBSITE WORKING AS HARD AS YOU ARE?

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*Increasing the number of visitors to a website is a known dilemma, but we have a solution. Focus on the customers you currently have, instead of trying to find new ones, says our Online Marketing Manager Jon Walker.*

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**F**or many website owners the Holy Grail is driving more targeted visitors to their website, with the belief that the more visitors the website has the more their business will benefit. However, in many cases a website will have issues that are hindering or even preventing their visitors

from performing the action that they want. So why worry about getting twice as many people to your website when it could actually be far easier to double the number of sales or enquiries from the visitors that you already have? The process for this is known as Conversion Rate Optimisation (CRO).



# INTRO.

## **HOW TO GET MORE FROM YOUR EXISTING VISITORS**

You need to decide what you actually want your visitors to do when they are on your website. You may want them to buy one of your products, send you an enquiry, request a brochure or sample, or sign up for your newsletter.

Once you have decided this and are measuring it you can then begin the process of CRO. If you are unaware of how to measure your conversions, Google Analytics has an option known as “goals” which will keep track of the number of times that your visitors perform your desired action.



# 1



## IDENTIFY BARRIERS

The first step to improving your Conversion Rate is to put yourself in your visitor's shoes and look closely at your website identifying any confusing or difficult points which could be preventing conversions. Some key areas you should look at include:

- **Relevance**  
Does your website content match what your visitors will expect to see?
- **Distractions**  
Does your website's layout or content distract your visitors from the main CTA?
- **Re-Assurance**  
Are there any elements that help to reassure your visitors that you are indeed the company that they should be purchasing from or working with? If you have a returns policy is it easy to find?
- **Call To Actions**  
Are they clear and easy to find? Does your website make it clear what action you want your visitors to perform?
- **Urgency**  
Why should your visitors perform your desired action? Think about the tone and presentation of your content, as well as any incentives and offers you could incorporate.
- **Mobile Friendly?**  
If your website is not fully responsive, it's safe to assume that your website won't be generating the results that you wish from visitors using a mobile device.



# 2



## GET FEEDBACK

While in many cases it's possible to identify potential barriers between your visitors and your conversions, getting feedback and insight can be priceless. While focus groups are many people's preferred option, you can also use online tools that will help you to find out similar information. Here are some tools that you can use:

### **UserTesting.com**

This website allows you to get feedback from your target audience in the form of a recorded video of their time spent on your website, where they narrate their thought process. You are able to devise tasks that you wish them to perform and ask questions.

### **MouseFlow.com**

MouseFlow allows you to record website visitors to see how they interact with your website. This data is also collated into heat maps allowing you to see where users click, scroll and focus their attention.

### **SurveyMonkey.com**

Survey Monkey allows you to create different types of surveys (ranging from the very simple to the more sophisticated) which you can use to gain key feedback from your target audience via e-mail and social media.

## WHAT IS A CONVERSION RATE?

The measure of the number of visitors that will perform your intended action (i.e buy something or send an enquiry). If your website had 100 visitors and 3 purchased a product, your conversion rate would be 3%.

So why is this important? To put it simply, the higher your conversion rate: the better your ROI (return on investment)!



# 3



## **PRIORITISE & CONSTRUCT A PROPOSAL**

Once you have sought feedback it's time to prioritise the issues which may keep cropping up. This could be adding testimonials that you may have had but not published on your website, or including information such as postage costs or making your returns policy clearer.

We'd recommend that you construct a proposal for each area you are going to address in order to measure your success.

For example if your website only displays postage costs at the final stage of your checkout process, it could be that "displaying postage costs in the shopping basket page" will improve the number of customers who make a purchase. This will then form the basis of your experiment instead of making many changes at once meaning you won't know which (if any) were the reason for an increase (or decrease!) in conversion rate.



# 4



## TEST

There is a tool within Google Analytics called “Content Experiments” that allows you to perform A/B (split) tests on your website, meaning that half of your visitors will see the live version of a page and the other half will see the experimental version. The two pages then compete in order to see which performs better.

Whilst any page or element can be tested, here are some examples of pages and items that you may wish to redesign and split test:

### Your Checkout Page

- Removing non-mandatory form fields
- Adding “address lookup” functionality
- Reducing the process from two pages to one page

### Product Pages

- The size and position of the “add to basket” button
- The amount of content available above the fold
- Add user reviews

### Service Pages

- The volume and style of copy used to describe your service
- Adding client testimonials
- Including a contact form

### Your Contact page

- Removing unnecessary fields from your contact form
- Including or repositioning testimonials
- Adding or adjusting your hero statement to prompt a visitor to complete your contact form

It's important that you allow your experiment to run for a reasonable amount of time and that any further experiments run for the same duration. For example if your website tends to make more sales on a weekend, then not allowing the experimental pages to benefit from weekend traffic wouldn't result in a fair experiment.

Once you have the results, if your experimental version of the page performed better than the live version of the page then you can replace it. You can then look to refine it further in order to further increase your conversion rate.

### Remember!

- CRO should always be considered to be an ongoing process – there will always be areas that you can improve!
- Run a series of small tests with only incremental changes, if your changes are too drastic you won't be able to identify the successful (or not so) elements
- Follow what the data is telling you, even if it goes against your initial thoughts or instincts



**JON WALKER**



**J**ane Austin, has over 10 years' experience in UX and will go to any lengths to find out what the user really wants and needs. We caught up with her after her keynote speech at UX Scotland, to talk personas, user research and cat gifs.

“

We want to make people excited by what's coming next and give them something valuable

”

# 11 QUESTIONS WITH JANE AUSTIN

## HEAD OF UX AT THE TELEGRAPH

- 1 When did you first start working in UX?**

Once I had finished my Masters in Philosophy, I started teaching English abroad and then came back to teach English as a foreign language at a college. I noticed that the CDs they were using there were awful, so I learnt basic Director and re-did some of the CDs by asking the students what would make them better. At the time I didn't realise that I was actually doing UX!
- 2 How have you seen people's attitudes to UX change over the years?**

When I first started there wasn't really UX as such and no one really understood what UX was. Now UX has become an accepted skill and businesses are really seeing its value. They understand that it's like a business capability which can make lots of money and produce happy customers.
- 3 Why is UX so important?**

You wouldn't design a kettle that you couldn't pick up as it would burn people so in the same way you shouldn't design a website that people can't use. You are spending all this money on a new website or app so why wouldn't you make sure that it is actually something that people want and will use?



#### **4 What is it like being Head of User Experience at The Telegraph?**

I joined 18 months ago and it has been a very interesting challenge working at a newspaper during this time. There are also a few things that are very different from my previous experiences. The first thing is that in my previous roles the task was to get people in, get them to do what they were supposed to and then get them out. At The Telegraph you want people to come and then stay whilst being engaged. The other difference is that as a media owner its revenue is driven by advertising, something that I hadn't had to consider before, so designing for that was an interesting challenge.

#### **5 How many people are in The Telegraph's UX team?**

There are 24 of us in total, covering user experience and design. My whole team is amazing and I am incredibly lucky to work beside a wonderful Research Manager, Polly Shelton, who I am learning so much from!

#### **6 What was your first challenge at The Telegraph?**

This year it has all been about re-platforming so that we can get the right content, in front of the right person at the right time. This means a lot of personalisation so it is definitely a challenge! We also needed to start somewhere, so we decided to re-do the news app as we wanted to show what happens when you just

build, launch and ship quickly. In essence we just put a shiny new face on the app and it turned out to be a bit of a marmite product, some people loved it and some people hated it! We did get some bad reviews, but they were very specific and it showed us that people understood the problems surrounding browsing and information density. We read the reviews, the good and the bad, and then went back and did some user research. Once we had built a bit of trust from this project we then knew it was time to move onto the next challenge.

#### **7 When you are tackling user research at The Telegraph how do you incorporate personas?**

As there are over 100 million unique visitors to the site this makes it very hard to create global personas. Instead we have personas for different sections of the site and then start to look at behavioural segmentation. For example, we started to notice that people were finding our site via search engines and part of our audience were reading one thing and then leaving. Some didn't even realise that they were on The Telegraph site!

#### **8 How do you feel technology has affected the experience of modern day society?**

I was doing some user research on why people use technology when one chap said to me that using technology was like a "digital cigarette break." I then had an "OH" moment and this

got me reading and thinking. I then found a quote from Ian Bogost who said that mobile phones were the cigarette of this century, as 50 years ago people were smoking around the dinner table and now people are on their phones!

#### **9 What does the future hold for The Telegraph in terms of design and user experience?**

We want to make people excited by what's coming next and give them something valuable, interesting and hopefully personalised. In terms of design we want to make it a very immersive experience.

#### **10 What has been the highlight of your career so far?**

Probably talking at UX Scotland! Coming back home to Scotland and doing the keynote is the most incredible honour! Being Head of UX at The Telegraph is also a huge highlight because it is an incredible newspaper with an amazing history and I also love working with my team.

#### **11 Finally we heard that you love cat gifs..?**

Yes! I have decided that 'Austin's Law', is when people are gathered at a conference to discuss the internet there must always be a cat GIF! Also, I know that it is pronounced JIF but I can never bring myself to call it that! For me, that has always been a toilet cleaner...



**LUCINDA REID**



# NOT JUST A PRETTY FACE

INTRODUCING THE NEW  
SPINDOGS WEBSITE

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TEAM







**W**e've had a busy few months at Spindogs HQ.

As a company that has never shied away from a challenge, we set ourselves three deadlines that all needed to be completed by the 3rd August 2015.

This date marks our 11th birthday, so it seemed the ideal opportunity to showcase some of the projects we have been working on. On this date we will have proudly released a new magazine, redesigned our office and launched a brand spanking new website – don't say we never treat you!

One of the things I have learnt working at a digital agency is that it can be difficult to make your own projects the priority. We always put our clients first, so it is easy to keep pushing the idea for a new Spindogs website under a pile of wireframes.

However, after the last bottle of champagne had been popped on our 10th birthday, we decided that it was time to give our website a refresh. As I write this feature, the website we have put our heart and soul into for the past year is waiting patiently to go live, and the team is incredibly excited to hear your feedback.

“

**We pushed the boundaries and let our creativity and ambition be the force behind the website**

”

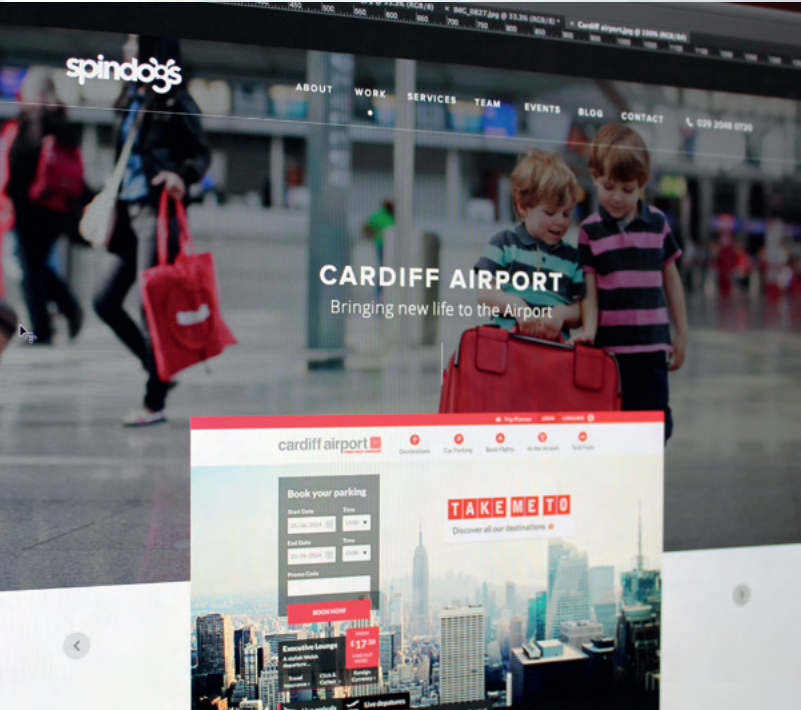




## BUT FIRST, WHAT WAS THE THEORY BEHIND OUR NEW DESIGN?

Spindogs are constantly evolving and adapting to the latest digital trends, so we pushed the boundaries and let our creativity and ambition be the force behind the website. We were fond of our previous site, and everyone seemed to like it, but it wasn't telling the whole story. Spindogs offer a unique set of skills in-house, which means that we can cater for all your digital needs. We needed a website that would illustrate this clearly, but also make the user excited and inspired to work with us.

This was no mean feat, but like I said, we love a challenge!



Before we could start sketching out new designs and making our ideas a reality, we took some time to research our competitors. We never forget this step when starting a project, as it is a good idea to understand the current landscape, and analyse what is working and what isn't.

Once we had a good idea of the current web trends and what would work for our brand, we then wanted to make sure our clients had their say. Spindogs always involve user research, as users ensure that the project moves in the right direction. I have lost count of the amount of times a user has pointed out ways of improving a website, so their guidance is always invaluable. For our website we wanted to hear how we could improve our 'Team' page, as this is one of the highest-ranking pages according to Google Analytics. I spoke to a variety of clients about their views on how we were currently representing our team and it was interesting to hear their thoughts. This research helped us to adapt the content on each individual's page and influenced the styling of our new photographs, so our clients' views really have made an impact!







With our extensive research analysed, it was time to put pen to paper (or is that hand to mouse?), and start designing. Our designers began by working on wireframes so they could decipher what content we needed and where it would be best placed. They prefer to do this work away from their Macs, as by sketching them on a pad of paper they are free to experiment and produce more layouts efficiently. The designers focused on designs that would be easy to upgrade, so created minimalist modular layouts that satisfied our objectives.

The big step for this website was our decision to have a video header on the homepage. This massively influenced the design process as the designers had to research ways to style this video and explore how this interactive element could be implemented throughout the site. We wanted to take the Spindogs website to the next level, and animations were a big part of this ambition.

As with all our projects, this new website was a collaborative effort and the designers liaised with the developers to ensure that their ideas could be technically achieved. Animations needed to be added to blog posts so that we had the opportunity to use abstract imagery and we needed to add slideshows to showcase case studies effectively. The developers took all these ideas on board and used the animations to make the Spindogs experience both exciting and innovative. The level of detail behind every design is a credit to those that work on them, as they always make sure it isn't just a pretty face!

Alongside the design and development process, it was important for us to focus on content. One of our objectives for the new website was to have the space to create exceptional content that our clients will want to read and share. An audit and content strategy was put in place and as a team we are already looking forward to inviting you to our new conversations online and offline.





“

**THE WEBSITE'S  
REDESIGN WAS  
ILLUSTRATING A  
NEW SPINDOGS,  
EMBRACING COOL  
GREYS INSTEAD  
OF THE PREVIOUS  
BRIGHT RED.**

”

Speaking of offline, things were also changing in our Spindogs office. The website's redesign was illustrating a new Spindogs, embracing cool greys instead of the previous bright red. So our office needed to mirror this new experience and we gave it a lick of paint, some quirky artwork and even bought some plants to breathe new life into our workspace.

All of these changes have accumulated in an exciting new phase for Spindogs and we can't wait to see where this leads. Hopefully you understand why and how we have made these changes, as in turn we love finding out about our clients and their ambitions. We strive to be an extension of your team and are always keen to understand your business' motivations, a USP that will now be even clearer on our website, through not just its design but development and content too.



**Lucinda Reid**



# IS A **FITNESS APP** MORE EFFECTIVE THAN A **PERSONAL TRAINER**?

*Marie Davies & Ceri Bower sweat out the positives and negatives of taking their phone to the gym*

## NO

A few too many of my weekday mornings start at 6.30am at my local gym. I arrive with my hood-up and avoid eye contact with anything that moves. Then my personal trainer arrives and I'm forced into a warm-up routine that wakes me up far too quickly.

Everyone has different levels of motivation but using a personal trainer ensures I not only get beyond the gym car park but I achieve more than I thought possible.

Who needs motivation when you can pay someone to look disappointed when you slow down on the treadmill? You'll never get to leave early but you will hit every (realistic) goal that you set for yourself.

The help of a personal trainer not only gives routine and structure to a workout but can also help with useful health and nutrition tips. Find out why you should probably swap that box of Jaffa Cakes a day for a delicious wheatgrass shot (or perhaps compromise and have both?).

A friend recommended I try a fitness app and while they have some benefits (such as ignoring the pretend lady telling you how slow you're running) my main concern is health and safety. While trying to swipe your sweaty fingers over your touchscreen phone you could trip over on the treadmill, drop that 20kg weight or lose your balance on the rowing machine. You will never be able to face your gym buddies again and the sign-up fees for your new membership will be astronomical. Better safe than sorry!

If you're still unconvinced, it's worth noting that you can't accidentally click 'Share to Facebook' with your personal trainer to show off your embarrassingly short run (or lose friends by over-sharing that 10km you did last night). Get off your phone and get on that cross trainer.



**CERI BOWER**



# YES

I like to work out alone. The only time I have had help with exercise was when I first started running but as soon as I was able to do a 5K on my own that was it, I was running solo. To have someone telling me to go push myself more makes me want to do the complete opposite so a personal trainer is something that has never interested me.

I have, however, become increasingly aware of fitness apps and how they can help you get the most out of your training. Popular fitness app examples include GAINfitness, Fitness Buddy, Fitstar and Nike Training Club. The main benefits to these apps is that they cost a lot less than a personal trainer, they are flexible to suit you and when you want to train (you do not need to commit to a pre-booked session) and the programmes will adjust according to your feedback, the goals you want to set and your personal capabilities.

An App can also be much more than just a gym, there are no restrictions to your training and you can take a holistic approach to your physical wellbeing, such as integrating your training app with My Fitness Pal to monitor your diet and calorie intake.

For those that aren't regular gym goers an app allows you to keep check on any physical activity; a simple walk round the shops can be more than enough. A fitness app can offer insight into just how active (or not) you are, even though you may not think yourself as taking regular exercise.

When stepping inside a gym some feel immediately intimidated, especially when first starting out. Many of us do not feel like we are fit enough to walk through the doors of a local gym - or simply feel that we don't 'fit' there. With an app you manage your exercise to suit you. You can run, walk, exercise in the privacy of your own home, or with a friend to ease the pain and make it a more enjoyable experience.

However, if you need a good shove and like to have some gym-obsessed maniac shout down your throat then I'd recommend a Personal Trainer, personally I prefer a quieter life!



**MARIE DAVIES**





# SUPPORT IN THE SPOTLIGHT

*'In the Spotlight' is a new feature for BARK and is an exclusive look at our different teams and what their work involves. First up, our Support Team...*

# 16

**Average number of tickets logged per working day**

**A**t Spindogs, we recognise that the online world is fast-moving, filled with new trends and innovations that can transform your site and in turn your organisation. As such, a website is not static and it is only natural for it to require further development as it grows and adapts to meet the needs of your organisation. So just because your new website has launched, we hope this doesn't signal the end of your journey with us. Your next stop is actually us, Angharad and Ben, who are the two halves that make up the Spindogs Support Team! As your first port of call, we are available to help answer your queries by phone or email and to make sure you have a point of contact after your new website has gone live.

After the launch of your new site, your project manager will choose a suitable time to introduce us and we will have the opportunity to discuss your website over a cup of tea. We also offer website training sessions for all websites that we have built so if you think you need to brush up on your skills or you have a new member of staff, let us know and we will book you in! Alongside training and advice, we can also facilitate any proposed changes that you would like to make to your existing website.





# 2,405

## Number of requests logged so far in 2015

We achieve this by using an internal system that logs your request and also keeps track of all previous changes made to your website. As an ambitious team who are always striving to meet and exceed our own targets, this system allows us to turn around your requests as promptly as possible. Website development is often quite technical and sometimes our clients are concerned that they will be overwhelmed by unnecessary jargon- but don't fret! We know that this isn't the most helpful approach to take and instead, by combining our technical skills with customer service prowess, we are able to deliver a professional and efficient service in a personable, uncomplicated and - most importantly - friendly manner.

Updating DNS records, integrating Twitter feeds, creating new functionality, are just a small sample of the type of requests that we can help you with and on a day-to-day basis we deal with a whole range of enquiries varying in size and complexity. Perhaps your company has recently expanded and you would

like to show off your new recruits with a dedicated Team page? Or maybe you have started to run an AdWords campaign and would like the tracking code to be added? Whether it is a small or large change, we will ensure that your request is understood and allocated to the best equipped member of the team to be completed, which in some cases may even be us.

We thrive on the requests that are sent through to us and it gives us great satisfaction to see your website become the very best it can be!

# 5 DAYS

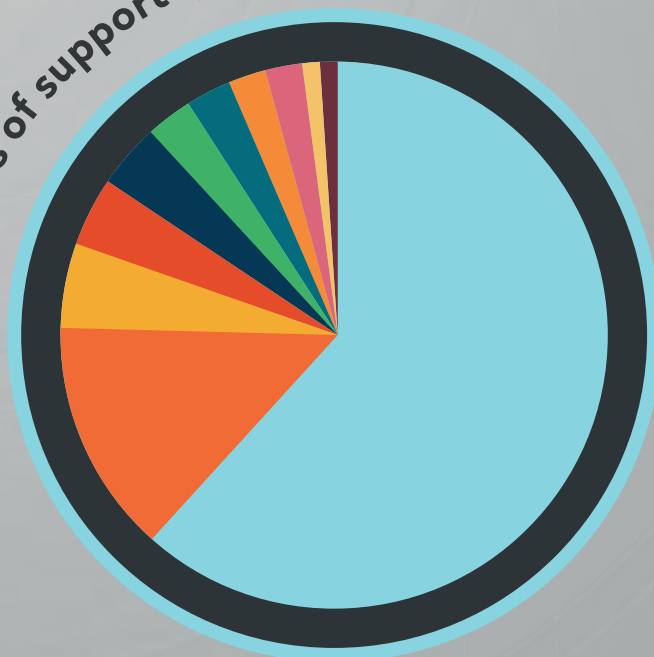
## Average close time of support tickets



**ANGHARAD & BEN**

*Your support team*

Types of support queries



- Web Development
- Customer Service
- Servers
- Domains
- Email
- Forms
- Online Marketing
- Print
- Web Design
- App Development
- Database



# spindogs™

## TREASURE ISLAND

Ahoy  
THERE  
— MATEYS! —

*You are invited to set sail with us on*

*Wednesday 8th July*

*At Spindogs HQ*

*To enjoy a 'Yo Ho Ho and a Bottle of Rum'. So draw your swords and cast your flags for an evening of music, dancing and the odd parrot thrown in too!*

*Please RSVP to Charlotte Cook at [CCook@spindogs.com](mailto:CCook@spindogs.com) by Friday 1st May.*

*The Design Process:*

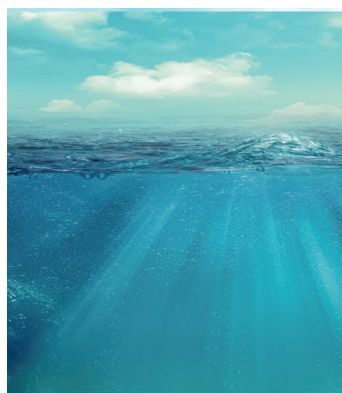
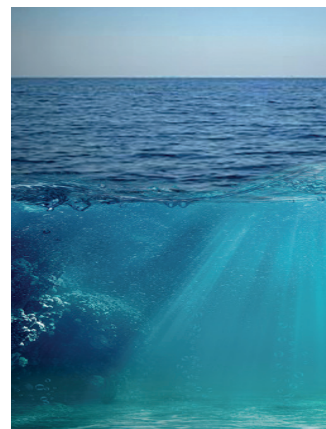
## PIRATE PARTY MAILER

*This was the email invitation that was sent out for our Spindogs 'Treasure Island' party. Our designer Jon Bauer talks us through how he created it in Photoshop CC.*

### START HERE



**1.** I began with an underwater scene from Shutterstock and then added in the ocean above using layers and masking brushes.



**2.** Fading the ocean into the distance, I then brought in images of the sky to create a new composition.



**3.** I added a dark green gradient map and increased contrast levels to give the image more depth.





**4.** Merging together images of sky and cloud, I used soft masking brushes to create an area for the title and text.



**5.** I then added another sandy sea bed to sink Cardiff into.



**6.** Next I found an image of Cardiff Bay and masked out areas of water and skyline to leave just the buildings.



**7.** Painting in areas of dark green hue, I then made the city appear submerged. Then I increased the brightness and contrast so it appears to be lit by the sun.



**8.** I then cut out an image of a shark laying beneath a gradient map so that the shark's colour matched the sea. I did this by adjusting the layers of the shadow underneath the shark.



**9.** The pirate ship was then added and given a Spindogs' pirate flag. Then I brought the ship to life using images of cannons and smoke. A blue reflection was then added to help the ship blend in.



**10.** The typography was then created in Adobe Illustrator. The original typeface was Baskerville and I manipulated the letters to add in a skull crossbones, which I then brought into Photoshop and roughened using masking brushes.

**11.** The final step was to add the logo and the invitation party information!



**JON BAUER**





We *love* creating  
**brilliant content**

*and Google *Loves* content!*

---

It is now more important than ever that you create regular, unique and relevant content for your online channels.

---

To find out how you can **#fuelthepanda** get in touch:



@spindogs



info@spindogs.com



02920 480 720





# TREASURE ISLAND



*Our clients came aboard for an evening on a desert island, enjoying punch, parrots and plenty of fun.*

This Summer we turned Spindogs HQ into Treasure Island, filling it with sand, palm trees and of course pirates! We even had our very own Peter Pan and Tinkerbell!

As usual the vibe was relaxed and entertaining, with all guests greeted with a rum punch on arrival served in a trendy Mason Jar. We felt that this was a great way to set the scene as they ventured through palm trees and sand, as well as our own pirate circus!

Our circus included Pete Gamble, a whip cracking, sword juggling entertainer who managed to wow our clients with a masterclass in circus tricks and balloon modelling. He even put on a small show for us that involved some very brave members of the Spindogs team! (Well done Rhys and Olivia!)

A huge round of applause goes to all of you in fancy dress, you definitely took it to another level this year and the best dressed competition gets harder to judge at every party.

With great feedback from those who attended I think it's safe to say that everyone enjoyed their trip to Spindogs Treasure Island, and we hope you will be just as excited to see what we have up our sleeves for Christmas!



*Captain Cook*





Georgina Jones (Turn Lights On) Ruth Steggles (Fresh Air Coach) Paula Morris (Brand 68)



Alex Roberts (National Museum Wales) Olivia Richardson (NoFit State)



Cassie Houghton, Rhiannon Jenkins (Cardiff Airport)



Jayne McGill-Harris, Rachel Haines, Helen Martin, Vicki Union, Helen Hallam, Kate Phillips (ACT)



Rhys Ashman (Spindogs) Gwion Ap Rhisiart (Taff Housing) Matt Gadd (Spindogs)



Gail Griffiths, Jemma Hughes (Bobath)





Jon Walker (Spindogs)  
Sarah Kersley (Rockadove)



Emma Waddingham (Emma Waddingham Consulting)  
Charlotte Cook (Spindogs) Robert Thomas (NewLaw)



Charlotte Cook (Spindogs) Rachel Pewsey (Traveline Cymru)



Gail Griffiths (Bobath)



Emma Waddingham  
(Emma Waddingham Consulting)  
Olivia Farrell (Spindogs)



Dave Morgan (Spindogs) Paula Morris (Brand 68)  
Cassie Houghton (Cardiff Airport)





Jemma Hughes (Bobath)  
Lloyd Morgan (Rockadove)



Peter Gamble (Pick'n'Mix Circus)



Andrew Livesey (clubr)



Ed Barnett (Copier Mate)



Richard Godfrey (A Space In The City)





# OUR YEAR OF CHARITY CHALLENGES





It's really important to me that Spindogs plays an active role in engaging with local and national charities that depend on the generosity of others to make essential changes or improvements to the lives of those who need it.

When we turned 10 last August we agreed that a £10,000 goal was fitting, to donate to the charities of our choice. We work with a lot of charities at Spindogs and they were all in the mix, but we also encouraged the team to suggest other charities that they felt a connection with, so that the benefits could be spread as far and wide as possible.

What I am most proud of is that over the last 12 months the team have committed to getting involved and everyone has had the opportunity to contribute in their own way, whether that was buying a cake at our Bobath Bake sale or running in the Ty Hafan Colour Run in Porthcawl.

The year has seen us zipline, run, bake cakes, golf, play poker, run some more and even walk on hot coals!

A few of the charities that have received donations are Ty Hafan, Tomorrow's Generation, Bobath, Alzheimers Society and Velindre, as well as a host of other charities, and we are pleased to have been able to help them all in some small way this year.

I can now confirm that we raised a grand total of £11,038!

This is a tremendous result for our brilliant team and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the team, and YOU, the super people who donated!

If you would like to see photos of the team in action during our charity pledge you can check out our Facebook page. Another huge thanks to those of you who helped keep us motivated for our challenges via social media.

We have a few new ideas as to how we will be working with more brilliant causes next year so keep your eyes peeled for updates on all our social media channels!



**CLAIRE SWINDELL**







SPINDOOGS

7 - 6  
60:00

AMBER ENERGY



FOOTBALL

£120

Cardiff Dog's Home



# COLOUR RUN

5K COLOUR RUN

£440

Ty Hafan

Eight of the gang trekked down to Cony Beach to take part in Ty Hafan's Charity Colour Run. We had all been individually training in the weeks running up to the event, but it was definitely a team effort for the final run! We were also especially proud of our designer Jon, because he came second out of the 1000 people that entered.





ST DAVID'S DAY RUN

£250

Motivation & Learning Trust



BAKE FOR BOBATH

£67

Bobath



ALVIN



ZACH & CODY

DOGGY DAY

£113

Cardiff Dog's Home



LOLA & MONTY



Penny  
and  
Sasha



OZZIE



What better way to raise money than by holding a day dedicated to our favourite animal... Dogs! We held a picnic filled with games, treats and a competition or two to raise money for Cardiff Dogs Home.

Pierre





# *Ladies that* **GOLF**

*Claire Swindell explains why learning to play golf turned into the perfect networking activity.*

**A**t the start of the year we put our thinking caps on to come up with an activity that would involve the outdoors and bring our clients together. The result was 'Ladies that Golf'!

In January 2015 we set up an opportunity for ten adventurous ladies to meet at Cottrell Park Golf Club and learn to play golf, with a little help from the brilliant golf pro instructor Gareth Bennett. We were introduced to Gareth by Caroline Holmes from Working Word PR and he was wonderful from the outset, especially as he had endless patience! As you can imagine there was a fair amount of frustration in the first session, with the golf balls going in all directions, but Gareth was always there to help us improve.

*“The outcomes have really been brilliant.”*

During each lesson we were taught how to make improvements to our swing and soon we could see that our shots were going further and becoming more accurate. We also saw marked improvements in our driving, putting and chipping as Gareth showed us how to refine our technique.





From the start we decided to sign up for eight lessons and this was a really good idea as it meant that we could all see a progression in our game, and our clients had time to really get to know each other. When we were finally allowed on the course, after about five lessons, we were all really excited and this provided the perfect opportunity to get into groups and show off our skills.

*To anybody who has been considering having a go I would highly recommend it!*

Looking back after our eight lessons the outcomes have been really brilliant. We were able to learn a new skill whilst talking shop and do ourselves some good by getting lots of exercise in the fresh air. There are also many hilarious photos and videos charting our progress on social media, but the majority are now under lock and key!

After this experience I can now really see the appeal of playing golf and after watching the Spindogs lads support countless golf days over the years, I thought that now was the time to put myself forward for my first golf competition. Gareth had told us about the competition in our first lesson and it definitely acted as a goal for me to work towards. The competition was for women who had only recently started playing golf so it felt like the right fit for me! When the competition finally dawned on a bank holiday the weather was fantastic and we did manage to get round the 5 holes.



I'll be honest, I wasn't brilliant, but I have had a few more lessons since then and have already entered another competition – this time 18 holes.

To anybody who has been considering having a go I would highly recommend it! Rest assured everyone is pretty rubbish when they first start, but there is nothing quite like the sound when you know you have hit it right – and it definitely spurs you on to keep going!



**CLAIRE SWINDELL**





# BOOK CLUB

DAVE TROTT  
**ONE PLUS ONE  
EQUALS THREE:**

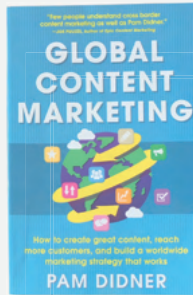
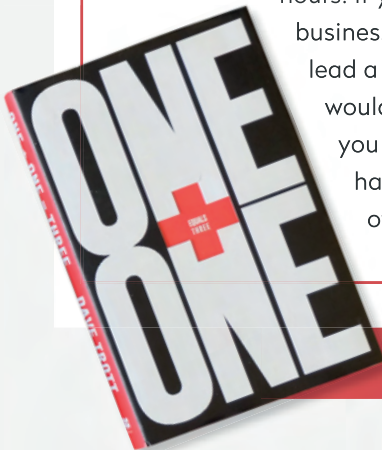
*A Masterclass in Creative Thinking*



You may not have heard of Dave Trott but if you were watching TV in the 80's you would certainly remember some of the ads that he was responsible for, including brands such as Toshiba. That's what I remembered him from, until I read his new book. The book is made up of a series of short stories and tales categorised within sections related to creative thinking. Each story is short, sharp and to the point, with the goal of leaving you with a simple and practical takeaway. It provides insights into people management, winning new work and business in general. Being a digital type of guy and dyslexic, I struggle to read books at the pace of the average bear, but in this case I had flown through three quarters of the book within about 3

hours! If you are in marketing, business development or lead a team of people I would strongly suggest you pick this one up. I have ordered his two other books already!.

by **LIAM GILES**



PAM DIDNER

## **GLOBAL CONTENT MARKETING**



Pam Didner's book tells you how to create great content, reach more customers and build a worldwide marketing strategy. With people all over the world having access to the internet, technology is changing the way that we market to our perspective clients. Didner's book offers guidance and ideas, as well as case studies to help you get your creative juices flowing and create great content of your own!

by **CHARLOTTE COOK**



CENNYDD BOWLES & JAMES BOX

## **UNDERCOVER USER EXPERIENCE DESIGN**



This book is perfect for those that understand the importance of User Experience (UX) but now want to spread its value into their business. It's easy to read, beautifully illustrated and clearly highlights the struggles and solutions of creating a good user experience. It also explains brilliantly how to make people excited about UX without them even realizing it, (clue: it doesn't involve hiding in dark corners dressed as a detective.)

by **LUCINDA REID**



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# *Perfect* PROFITEROLES

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*Our Developer Sean Giles dishes up a delightful dessert*

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**F**or the third issue of BARK magazine we have decided to go for something sweet. Unless we are having a dinner party I don't usually cook that many desserts, as otherwise a whole dessert for two people inevitably ends in you eating it all yourself! (Although, this is not always a bad thing).

I thought about what to make for this feature for quite a while and settled on profiteroles. To me this is the perfect recipe as you would think it is quite hard and technical, but actually it is very easy! The thing that would put most people off cooking these little light balls of deliciousness is two words... Choux Pastry.

Remembering a time back before I had children, I would watch every cooking programme on the television. All of them. Whenever any of the chefs decided to make Choux pastry they would always mention how 'tricky' it is and what 'the secret' to making it was while turning out perfect little trays of eclairs or profiteroles.

Then one day I found a recipe that was so easy to follow that I now use it as my default!

If you follow this recipe then I guarantee\* that you will turn out some great profiteroles! You can also do this if you have all of the combined kitchen equipment of Jamie Oliver and Gordon Ramsay or just a pan, bowl, baking tray and a spoon!

\* I cannot guarantee anything.

---





## METHOD

- 1 Add the butter to a saucepan with the water and heat until the butter has melted. Bring to the boil.
- 2 Remove the pan from the heat and add the flour. Stir like nobody's watching until the mixture forms a soft ball.
- 3 Let the mixture cool slightly, then gradually whisk in the 2 beaten eggs, beating well between each addition. This will form a smooth shiny paste.
- 4 Butter a baking tray or cover with parchment paper and sprinkle with water. This is where you can get fancy or not. Either fill a piping bag with the mixture and pipe 12 small balls onto the baking tray. If you do not have a piping bag then you can just use a spoon. Brush the balls with the beaten egg.
- 5 Bake in a preheated oven at 220°C fan or gas 7, for 10 minutes and then bake at 190°C fan or gas 5 for 20 minutes.
- 6 Once ready, you can either use a knife to make a hole in the bottom of each profiterole and let it cool or split it in half. If you make the hole in the bottom you can then pipe in the whipped cream with your piping bag. If you do not have one then just spoon the cream onto one half and sandwich together.
- 7 To make the chocolate sauce simply melt the chocolate with the double cream in a bowl over a pan of simmering water, stirring until smooth and shiny.
- 8 You then just need to put the rolls in a bowl and pour the sauce all over them and enjoy!



SEAN GILES

## INGREDIENTS

### For the Choux pastry:

56g butter, cut into cubes  
150ml water  
75g plain flour  
2 eggs, beaten  
butter for greasing  
1 egg, beaten  
300ml whipping cream, whipped

### For the chocolate sauce:

150g plain/dark chocolate  
150ml double cream



So there you have it- perfect profiteroles that you can make easily in your home!

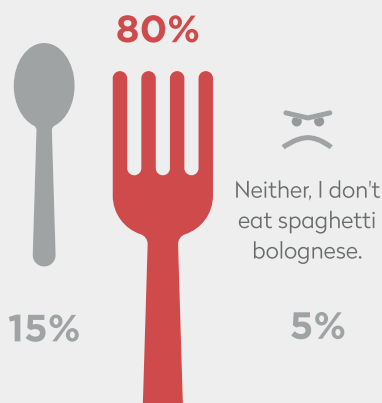


# GET TO KNOW US

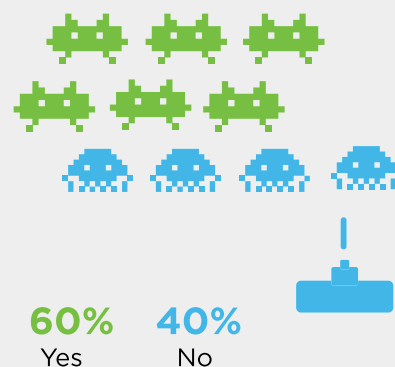
Sometimes the only way to find out what the Spindogs team really think is to create a questionnaire filled with some very random questions.

As some of the results made us smile we thought it was only fair to share them with you...

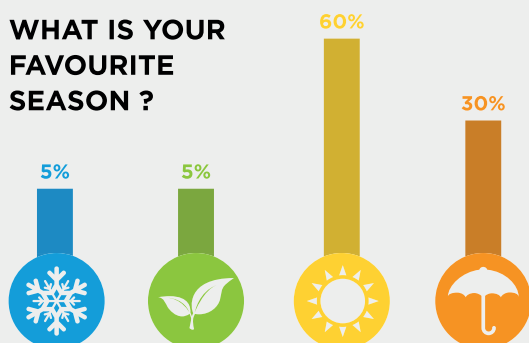
## DO YOU EAT SPAGHETTI BOLOGNESE WITH A SPOON OR FORK?



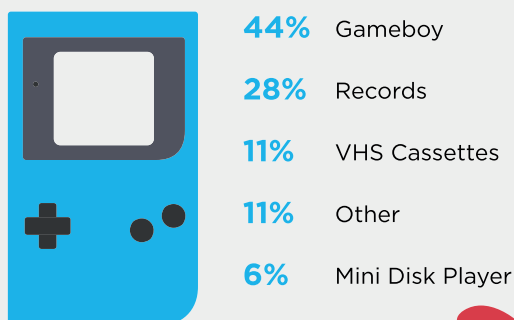
## WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF AS A GAMER?



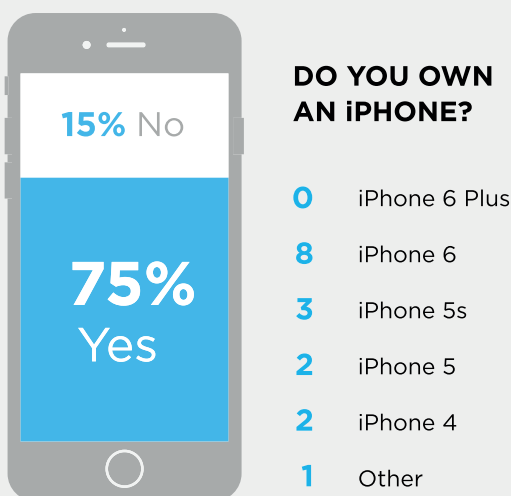
## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE SEASON?



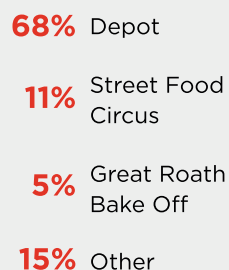
## WHAT PIECE OF TECH WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME POPULAR AGAIN?



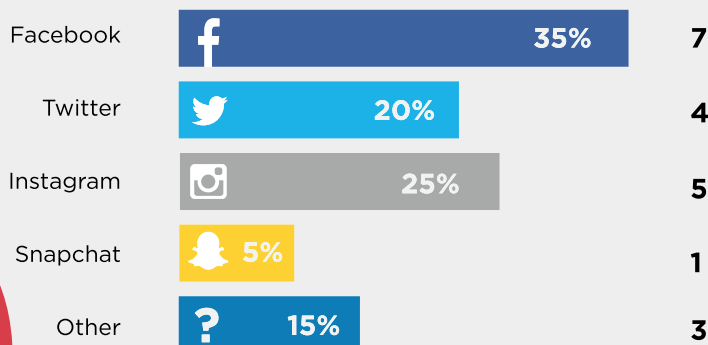
## DO YOU OWN AN iPhone?



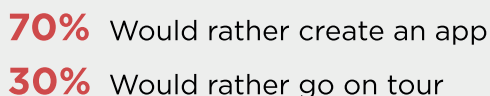
## FAVOURITE PLACE FOR STREET FOOD?



## WHAT IS YOUR FAVOURITE SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNEL?



## WOULD YOU RATHER CREATE A SUCCESSFUL APP OR GO ON TOUR WITH YOUR FAVOURITE BAND?



## COULD YOU LIVE WITHOUT CHECKING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR A WEEK?

