

Urica: Business on Better Terms for UK SMEs

Challenge

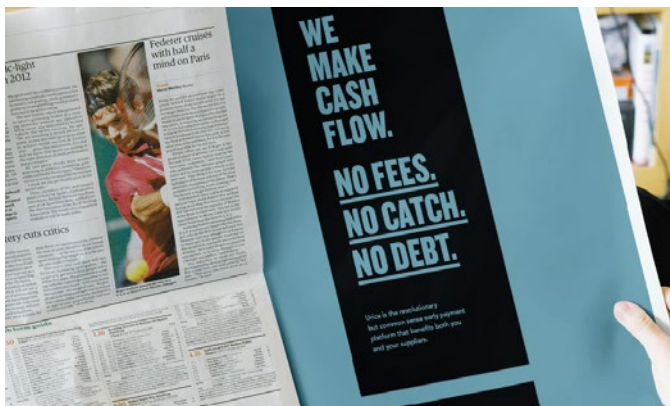
Starting any business from scratch takes a lot of blood, sweat & tears. The focus required to keep things on track, can often impose 'tramline-thinking': making it difficult for the company and those driving it to step to one side and re-consider the position of the business from a more objective, consumerist and sometimes imaginative perspective.

The big challenge is to see the company's true potential and be more confident in turning it into a more heroic brand proposition for colleagues & customers alike.

URICA is an early payments platform based on an idea from Lindsay Whitelaw, Scottish businessman and co-founder of the hugely successful fund management company Artemis (The Profit Hunter-a business whose own branding strategy was created by Mark Taylor whilst strategic partner at a Top 25 communications agency).

URICA represents the smartest way for supplier SMEs to solve the problem of not being paid on time by their larger customers. Increasingly small suppliers are being asked to fund lengthening payment terms, sometimes up to 60 days. This often destroys small companies who are often forced to take on punitive debt and credit to survive, acting like a drag on the efforts of this engine room of the UK economy, souring relationships between customer and supplier.

And whilst this is a strong product story, URICA had not found the true, confident voice of the brand, to tell it well.



Thinking

Initially reviewing the web presence, MR TAYLOR'S BRAND EMPORIUM were then asked to assess the company, culture & communications, to provide insight on the brand's potential.

A series of provocative and challenging face-to-face interviews were conducted with everyone in the URICA team, alongside a detailed review of the SME market and their social, political, cultural and economic challenges.

Stimulus was created and taken to an intensive 24 hour WORKSHOPPING session, designed & facilitated by the Emporium, using proven, proprietary tools.

Critically, the issue of brand confidence was identified as the key issue and opportunity.

The team had a great idea for SMEs in Britain, but were not embracing the full potential of that idea. URICA was not just an early payments platform, it should in fact be a placarding movement for change...to buy-into and sign up for.

The core idea we developed for this brand was both emotional & heroic to fully engage SME interest:

URICA is Business On Better Terms

The full brand strategy was created around this revolutionary role for more business liquidity, less debt and stronger, fairer supply chain relationships.



Impact

The effect was dramatic, facilitating a new, more confident presentation of the entire company to the business community.

Every facet of the brand's presentation was reviewed and re-designed, following a painstaking re-examination of the customer experience and decision-making process for SMEs.

The tone, look & feel and market statements were made clearer, more cohesive & consistent. The thinking was translated into a new vibrant & dynamic design identity by Someone In London, hired following a creative pitch designed & directed by the Emporium.

URICA was re-launched in the summer last year at Somerset House, attended by many leading business organizations and personalities. With Lord Digby Jones supporting the new URICA as a campaigning movement for good in British business.

Most importantly the number of suppliers and customers enjoying Business On Better Terms, via the URICA platform has taken off.

“Mark proved highly skilled at bringing focus and clarity to our brand positioning strategy, all set against a tight timetable, allowing us to really move forward with renewed confidence.”

Lindsay Whitelaw, founder Artemis and CEO URICA

“Mark really helped us hone our message and be brave with our communication when the temptation was to be conservative. He made a big difference.”

Ian Fitz-Harris, Global Strategic Development Director

Key services delivered

Cultural analysis, context research, brand definition, creative partner search, creative development, tone of voice, end-to-end brand experience planning, communications planning.