



NJUG CASE STUDY

CASE STUDY 61: Jack's Lucky Escape

Winner of the NJUG 2012 Communication Award

The National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) is the UK industry association representing utilities on street works issues. The 38 utility companies and 17 contractors¹ we represent work to deliver gas, electricity, water and telecommunications to both individual consumers and UK plc.

NJUG members need to continue to drive forward further improvements. We have therefore developed the NJUG Vision for Street Works, which revolves around six main principles:

1. Safety is the number one priority
2. Utilities deliver consistent high quality
3. Utilities work together and in partnership with local authorities and contractors to minimise disruption
4. Utilities keep the public informed on all aspects of works
5. Utilities maximise the use of sustainable methods and materials
6. Damage to the underground assets is avoided

This case study is an example of NJUG and its members / associate members delivering on these principles and turning the vision into reality.

Overview

Recognising an opportunity to engage with local communities and to communicate the importance of safe play to a key, high-risk target audience – primary school children, **Morrison Utility Services (MUS)** devised an innovative approach to provide teachers with discussion points for classroom discussion around street works sites.

Case Study

Jack's Lucky Escape – Communicating Safe Play to Schools

Earlier this year, as part of a company-wide approach to community relations and stakeholder engagement around its street works activities, the MUS Safety, Health, Environment, Quality and Training team (SHEQT) produced *Jack's Lucky Escape*, an engaging, four-minute DVD animation designed to communicate the dangers of street works sites to a key, 'high-risk' audience - primary school-aged children.

Using key messages to enhance site safety, the *Jack's Lucky Escape* communications campaign has provided MUS Customer Liaison Teams with the springboard to generate understanding and awareness of why street works take place and the benefits to local communities of essential utilities investment.

The initiative has proved hugely successful and is viewed as the first phase of a longer term commitment to engagement with local schools and a blueprint for further innovation in low-cost, high-impact stakeholder communications around street works operations.

For teachers, the tool represents a free, highly-effective standalone teaching resource designed to inform children of the dangers of playing in or around ongoing, nearby street works sites in a relevant, visually stimulating format. To support classroom discussion, teachers were provided with free '*Jack's Safety Learning Packs*' including Quiz Sheets, 'Spot the Hazard' worksheets and Safety Superstar certificates.

 Spot the Difference



MORRISON Utility Services in the community



¹ NJUG's current members are Energy Networks Association (representing electricity and gas), Water UK (representing all water and wastewater companies), National Grid, BT Openreach, and Virgin Media. Our associate members are Clancy Docwra, Skanska, Balfour Beatty, Carillion, First Intervention, Laing O'Rourke, Compass, AMEC, Enterprise, Morrison Utility Services, Fastflow Pipeline Services, May Gurney, CLC Ltd, PJ Keary and Murphy Ltd. Including members through trade associations, NJUG represents thirty-eight utility companies, seventeen utility contractors.



High Impact Engagement for a 'High-Risk' Stakeholder Audience

MUS undertakes more than 2 million street works excavations per year – enough excavation to fill the O2 Arena one and a half times! Health and safety performance represents the number one priority, utilities' 'licence to operate'.

Of the 1,500 copies of the DVD produced to date, approximately half have been distributed by MUS Customer Liaison Teams, as part of its own, and client-led, stakeholder engagement and customer satisfaction initiatives around specific street works projects.

To date, over 500 schools have benefited. A recent example took place during a recent street works project involving the replacement of 400 metres of water main in Harrogate. MUS representatives visited nearby Crimple Valley Primary School to present on the dangers of street works sites and children were provided with appropriate PPE and taken on supervised visits to the nearby site

with all appropriate risk assessment and health and safety measures carried out beforehand.

Assessment

The DVD's effectiveness as an information tool has been monitored and measured via an anonymous online quantitative and qualitative survey, which teachers can access via a smart phone QR code or a hyperlink contained within the information pack.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with responses demonstrating an overall 100% rating on the initiative's effectiveness and ability to inform and raise awareness of the importance of utilities and the dangers of street works sites.

All respondents confirmed they would be happy to participate in future MUS initiatives. Given the 'viral' potential of the format, it is also conceivable that the DVD and supporting material is used by more than one teacher per school, enabling key safety message to permeate yet further.

Designing the DVD as a standalone tool also reduces the requirement for MUS representatives to present in schools. The work in the community is effectively 'neutral', piggy-backing on the essential customer contact time required for the smooth running of our street works in communities.

Summary

Jack's Lucky Escape has also provided an opportunity for MUS clients to enhance their own customer stakeholder engagement, creating a positive environment in which customer satisfaction is enhanced in support of regulatory targets.

Piloted and implemented with National Grid Gas, several other MUS clients including Yorkshire Water, Northern Power Grid, Scottish Power Energy Networks and Southern Water have now adopted "Jack" in their own strategies.

Further production runs are planned for the future and MUS is working in collaboration with other clients, including Southern Gas Networks, Thames Water, UK Power Networks, Western Power Distribution and Wales & West Utilities, to broaden distribution of the DVD and its associated material.

The DVD has also enabled MUS to raise awareness of its role as a utilities contractor and the challenging nature of utility infrastructure development, a strategy that could potentially pay dividends when this young, school-age audience reaches the age of employment and become consumers.

'This communication initiative complements the vital role of effective stakeholder communications. This innovative approach has achieved proactive, positive customer engagement and is designed to change attitudes and responses to street works activities.

From humble beginnings, it has exceeded all expectations and presents the company with numerous, excellent opportunities to fly the flag for the utilities sector. This is a perfect vehicle to underline the importance of street works and the need for essential investment in order to provide communities with safe and reliable utility services.'

James Hatt, Customer Experience Manager, Morrison Utility Services

