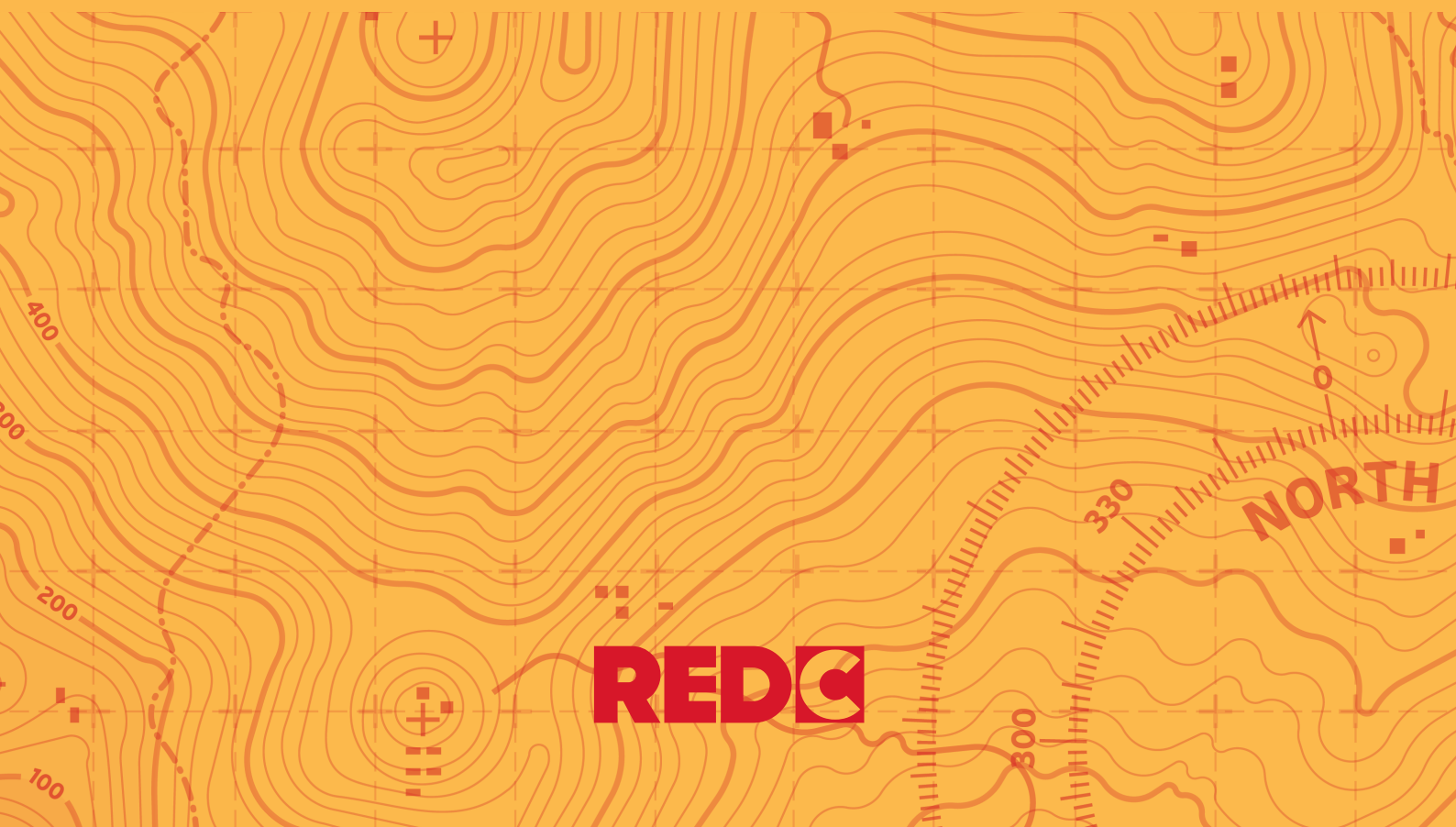




# ADVENTURES IN TRAVEL MARKETING



**REDC**

Travel marketing  
is a doddle. It's all  
about sending people  
on adventures, indulging  
in luxurious experiences,  
creating unforgettable  
memories... it practically  
sells itself, right?

Actually, no. The reality is that travel  
marketing is fiercely competitive and  
frequently disheartening. The success  
of your activity is forever at the mercy  
of everything from the state of the  
economy, to the weather.

Then there's the path to purchase.  
It wasn't that long ago that more or  
less all travel purchases took place  
either in person at a travel agent,  
or over the phone. These days, the  
process is more fragmented. How do  
you deal with customers who now  
have very different expectations of  
what a travel brand should offer them?

We've encountered more than our  
fair share of these challenges over  
the years. We've helped fill spare  
bed capacity for big hotel groups  
like Principal and Le Meridien, and  
put more holidaymakers on planes  
and trains for operators like Eurostar  
Holidays Direct.

We achieved it all  
using our expertise in  
direct mail, brochures,  
email, search, TV and  
more... now we're  
sharing it with you.

*These pages give you the  
stories behind every success  
and a fair few tips we've  
picked up along the way.*

Cottages4you  
Jet2holidays  
Welcome Cottages  
Hoseasons  
Eurostar  
Shearings  
Great Rail Journeys





# cottages4you

DESTINATION:

## Bring to life the kind of magical memories you can only create on an English cottage holiday



### THE ROUTE:

There's something quite unique about a holiday in England. Hopping from rockpool to rockpool with your fishing net, conquering castles where gallant knights once battled hundreds of years ago, or ducking into a café for scones and jam while the rain lashes down outside.

Every memory you make is a souvenir, something you treasure forever. That was the idea we had for Cottages4you and VisitEngland. Using tiny trinkets and souvenirs collected from tourist destinations up and down the country, we inspired families to create some magical memories of their own.



We developed press advertising, direct mail, email and social media posts to support a TV campaign – all of which resulted in an unprecedented surge in both phone and online bookings.



**POINT OF INTEREST:**  
Most holiday ads look the same – blue sky, sunshine, happy families – so it's vital you create a striking visual that gives your brand stand-out.

Our fridge full of souvenirs and trinkets is a nostalgic nod to childhood holidays – and a striking visual that helped make us memorable.







DESTINATION:

# Make under-performing destinations desirable again

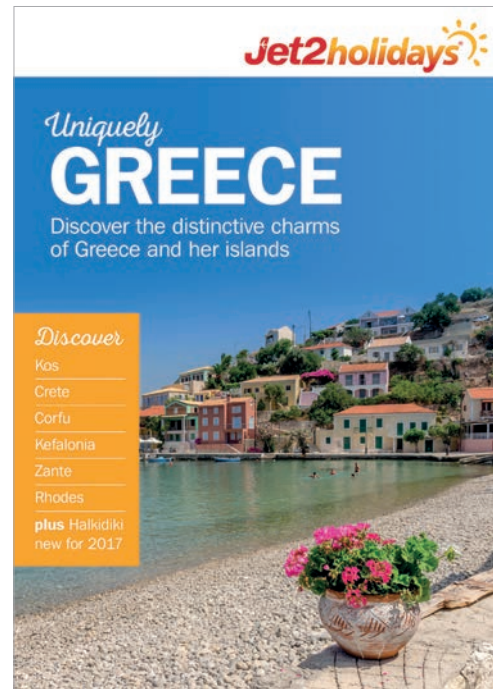
THE ROUTE:

Jet2holidays' customers are creatures of habit. Once they've been somewhere they'll revisit that country year after year. Jet2holidays wanted to know whether we could persuade these set-in-their-ways travellers to try somewhere new... Greece.

Our solution was an inspirational mailing that brought the uniqueness of Greece to life. A common problem among travel brands is they make every destination sound similar – golden sands, blue skies and crystal waters, that kind of thing.

We knew that the Greek Islands offered a much richer story than that. The question was, how to tell it? We decided to write the brochure as if it were a travel guide.

We kept the copy 'snackable', by structuring it around three principles: wander, savour and marvel. Rather than try and sum up an entire island over several paragraphs, we let its sights, secrets and flavours do the work for us.



To Italy and beyond!  
The mailing was so successful that we went on to create brochures promoting Italy, Croatia and The Balearic Islands.



## POINT OF INTEREST:

Good travel writing should whisk the reader away to the destination being described. Don't restrict your writing to what you can see, but what you can hear, taste and smell, too.



# welcome cottages

More from your holiday

## DESTINATION:

# A fresh new look for Welcome Cottages' customers and owners

## THE ROUTE:

After several years working with Wyndham Vacation Rentals, we were tasked with rebranding Welcome Cottages.

We created an overall brand identity that encompassed their unique personality and tone of voice, as well as a proposition that could work for both holidaymakers and property owners alike.

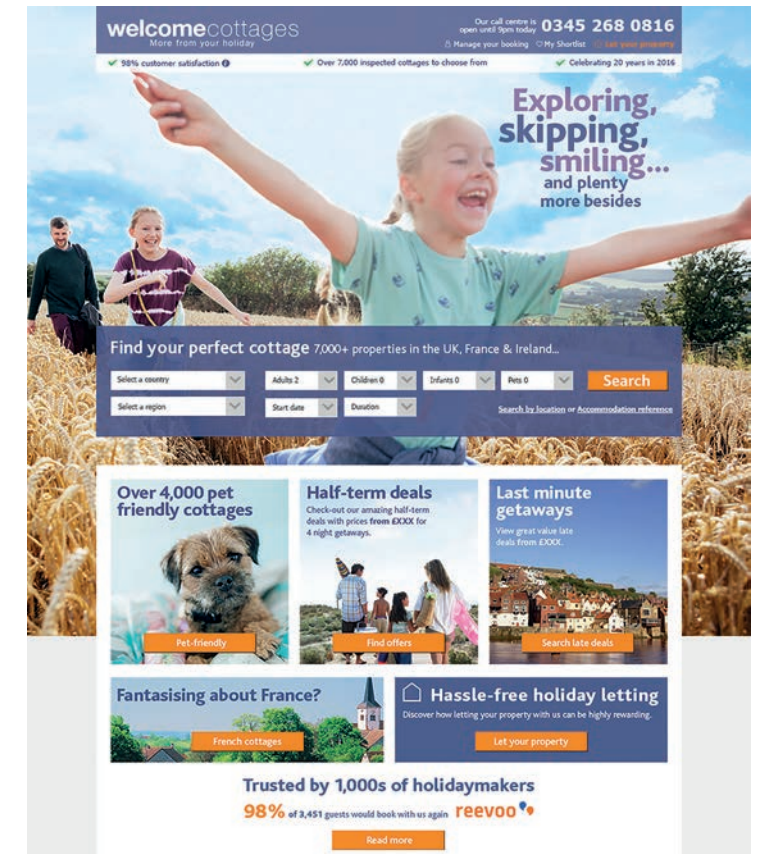


## FOR CONSUMERS

What can you do on a cottage holiday? The answer, it turns out, is just about anything. Our Planning team identified that a cottage acts as the perfect base after a long day out doing... whatever.

So we wrote a list of 'doing' words, words that covered the almost limitless number of things you could do on a cottage break. We then introduced a list of 'positive consequence' words, to describe the restorative effect of taking a break in a cottage.

We rebranded their website, including the homepage, listing pages and more. We also produced brochures, press ads and internal staff emails to communicate the rebrand. The 'doing' words were used as starting points to inspire a new wave of content creation.

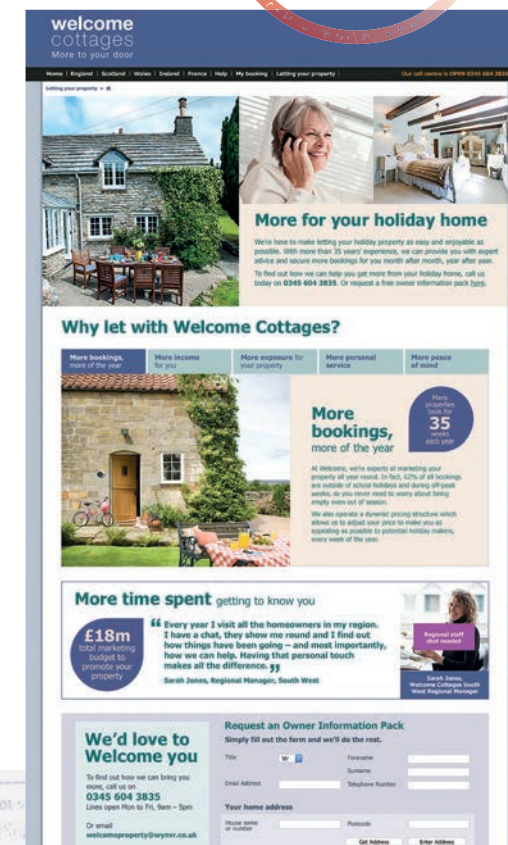


## FOR OWNERS

Welcome Cottages' property owners care about one thing: getting their cottage booked as often as possible. So we created a strapline – 'more to your door' – as a promise to owners.

We wanted to reassure them that Welcome Cottages will take care of their property as if it were their own. Yes, there may be properties more expensive and luxurious, but there are none more important.

We rebranded the landing page and wrote a downloadable guidebook specifically for owners. We also created an acquisition brochure, welcome brochure and newsletter.



# welcome cottages

More to your door





# cottages4you

DESTINATION:

## Make cottage breaks go up, as the economy goes down

THE ROUTE:

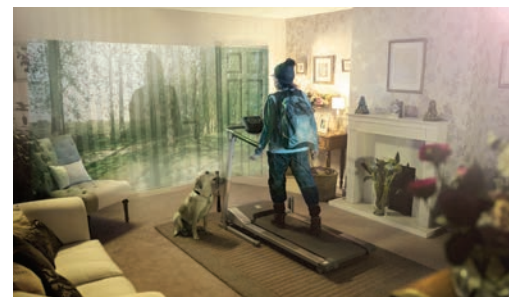
In 2010, with the economic downturn still being felt, more and more UK holidaymakers were planning breaks in the UK. With this in mind, Cottages4you decided to get back on TV.

Red C recognised that there's a unique appeal to going on a cottage break. It's about countryside, fresh air walks, and the homely charm of the cottage itself.

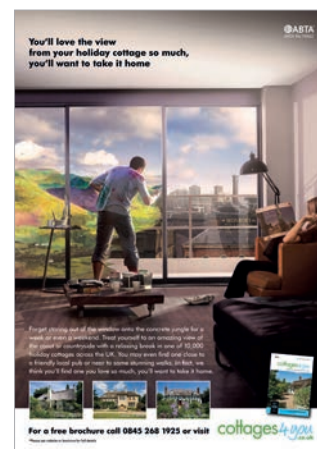
We let a kickstart question spark our thinking: what if you loved your cottage break so much, you brought it home with you? Then we let our imagination run wild. Pretty soon we had a series of striking visuals: beach in the back garden, local pub in the garage, country walks in the front room... all bringing to life the proposition of bring your cottage break home with you.

The ad first aired on Boxing Day and drove a huge surge in bookings. We even picked up an award at the 2011 Travel Marketing Awards.

Our striking visuals not only generated great brand recall with holidaymakers, they caught the eye of the judges at the 2011 Travel Marketing Awards.



**POINT OF INTEREST:**  
Don't be afraid to play with absurdities or consider extreme consequences... it often results in creative that's more memorable.



# Hoseasons

DESTINATION:

## Show the huge variety of Hoseasons holiday experiences... in 30 seconds

THE ROUTE:

It had been several years since Hoseasons had last been on TV, and brand awareness was at an all-time low. So, the brief was two-fold: get us back on TV, but get us noticed, too.

Hoseasons started life as the place to go for boating breaks. But over the years it's diversified, and now offers everything from cottage and lodge breaks, to parks and adventure holidays. So how could we get across the variety of fun on offer... in half a minute?

We found our answer by casting Denise van Outen. The star of stage and screen gave our creative a memorable famous face, one we used to strong effect across posters and direct mail.

The results went way beyond expectations, both in terms of brand awareness and bookings.

Indeed, it wasn't long before Hoseasons approached Red C once again to deliver another sales-boosting campaign.

**POINT OF INTEREST:**  
Casting a famous face to front your campaign makes it more likely that your message gets noticed and remembered.







#### DESTINATION:

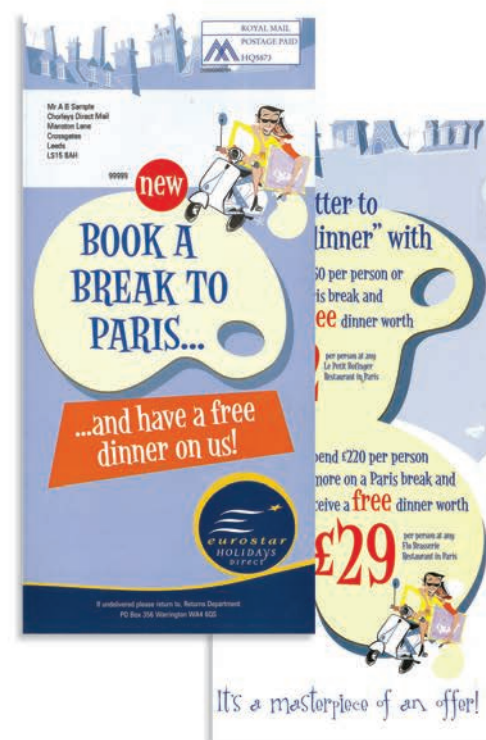
## £1million sales in just one week

#### THE ROUTE:

Eurostar had realised that by only providing travel, they were missing out on a huge profit opportunity. Why? Because other tour operators were successfully offering holidays that included travel on Eurostar.

So, in partnership with Cresta Holidays, Red C provided a complete business plan and launch strategy including estimated passenger figures, profitability forecasting, suggested brand identities, creative executions, customer recruitment opportunities and strategies.

From creative advertorials to direct mail packs, we used strong imagery and hard-hitting copy to highlight unique selling points. The results? Over £1million of sales in the first week alone.



Eurostar Holidays also won the Royal Mail's 'Best Business Start Up' award due to the success of the campaign.

#### POINT OF INTEREST:

Most travel brands rely on clichéd stock photography. Illustrations cost more to produce but they more than repay the investment, not just in terms of stand-out, but with better results, too.

#### DESTINATION:

## Across Europe on business and pleasure with multi-language emails



#### THE ROUTE:

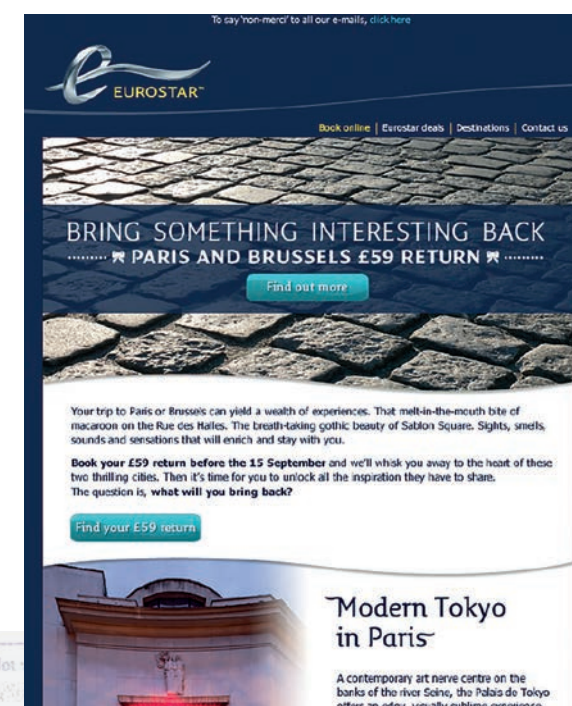
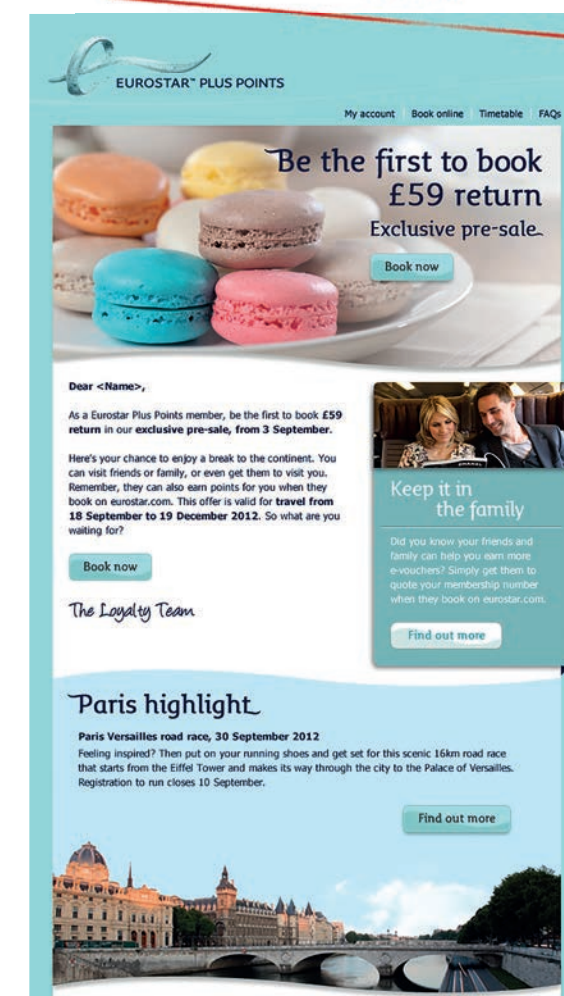
In October 2011, Red C was appointed to handle the email marketing for Eurostar. Eurostar needed to have a whole new email marketing strategy created, one that targeted everyone from their Leisure customers to their Business clients.

Our first task was to redesign the email templates, to make them both content-rich and visually engaging. We then supplied toolkits for each channel to agencies across Europe. It meant that no matter where it was sent from, each email followed a consistent style and layout. We continued to tweak and refine the template design throughout our partnership with Eurostar.

Our strategic email expertise has resulted in Eurostar having a complete eCRM makeover. A makeover that has helped them engage customers with timely and relevant emails, resulting in an increase in bookings and customer loyalty.

#### POINT OF INTEREST:

If you share interesting, informative content that your customers can't get anywhere else, they will read it and click on it... even in an email.



A 40% increase in click-through rates proved that the database is more than happy to engage with good, well-written content.



# This is SHEARINGS

DESTINATION:

## Reactivate long-dormant customers with direct mail

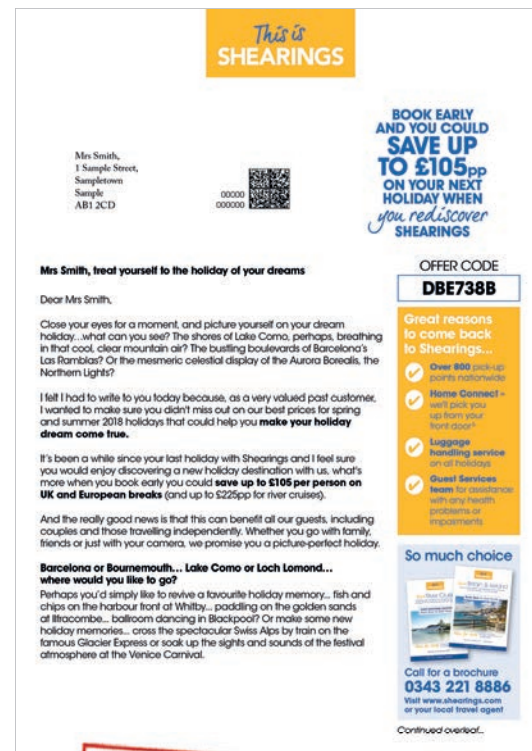
THE ROUTE:

Shearings Holidays had a problem familiar to many tour operators: a large list of customers who booked once, then never again.

So, they called on Red C's strategic and creative expertise to challenge their Lapsed and Dormant direct mail packs – and make them work harder.

Following strategic analysis, we came up with four copy platforms that we felt would help overcome objections and motivate customers to rediscover Shearings once again.

One route focused on the breadth of destinations and experiences available to travellers seeking adventure. A second offered reassurance to travellers with mobility issues – a key demographic. A third communicated Solo Travel to customers who may have lost a loved one. The fourth focused on Shearings' unbeatable value for money. Testing is ongoing to prove the winning route, with each variation being rotated to determine its success amongst customers.



**POINT OF INTEREST:**  
When writing to an older audience, it's always worth testing longer copy. If the reader is interested in your offer, they will read more – especially if the ticket price is high.

DESTINATION:

## Engage VIP customers with an exclusive loyalty programme

THE ROUTE:

Shearings has built a loyal customer base over the years. Some customers travel with them multiple times a year. Shearings wanted to take the opportunity to thank and reward these very important people with an exclusive offer.

But they also had a secondary motive: to engage and encourage a dialogue.

So Red C created a 3D-mailpack that not only gave Shearings' loyal customers the priority treatment (and a special pin-badge), but invited them to join an exclusive customer panel.

The pack was sent to 25k households, and feedback from customers has been overwhelmingly positive... with friends of recipients even contacting Shearings to request a pin badge!



**POINT OF INTEREST:**  
A simple pin badge is surprisingly effective. Customers who have one can advertise your loyalty scheme for you, whilst encouraging customers who don't have one, to try and earn one.





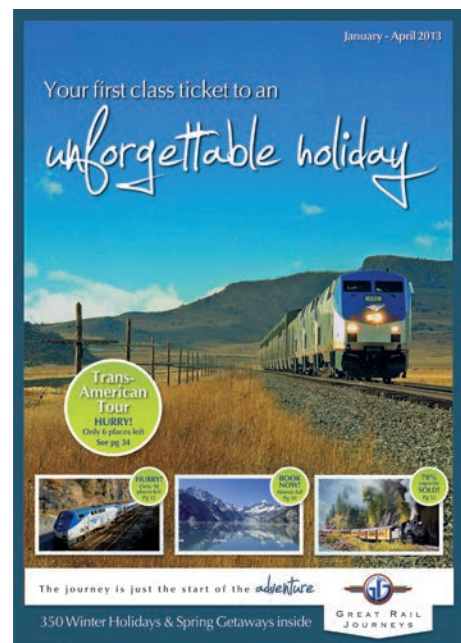
**DESTINATION:**

# Making off-the-page more effective... by making it more efficient

**THE ROUTE:**

GRJ's brochures and off-the-page ads were starting to look tired, and results were flagging too. So Red C pitched for the opportunity to revitalise them.

We won the account based on a mantra of 'think small to achieve big'. Making direct marketing creative more effective often involves small changes which have a cumulative effect.



We reworked the brochure covers by using a single striking image, offset by punchy promotional messages.

We restructured the press ads to cater for scan readers and included imagery making eye contact to capture attention.

We applied a similar principle to the introductory pages, too, creating spreads that were more engaging, but also more promotional at the same time.

**POINT OF INTEREST:**

Very often, making a brochure or press ad more effective is a matter of paring things back, deciding on a hierarchy of messages, and making things easier for the reader.

Our approach was so successful that it wasn't long before we were overseeing the production of all GRJ's brochures and direct mail.

**DESTINATION:**

# Take GRJ customers on an engaging journey... in an email

**THE ROUTE:**

GRJ tasked Red C with rescuing their emails, a series of repetitive promotional postcards which were massively under-performing.

Over 12 months, we transformed the entire eCRM programme. By injecting some personality, introducing editorial content and making the emails more inspirational, we almost doubled response rates and conversion.

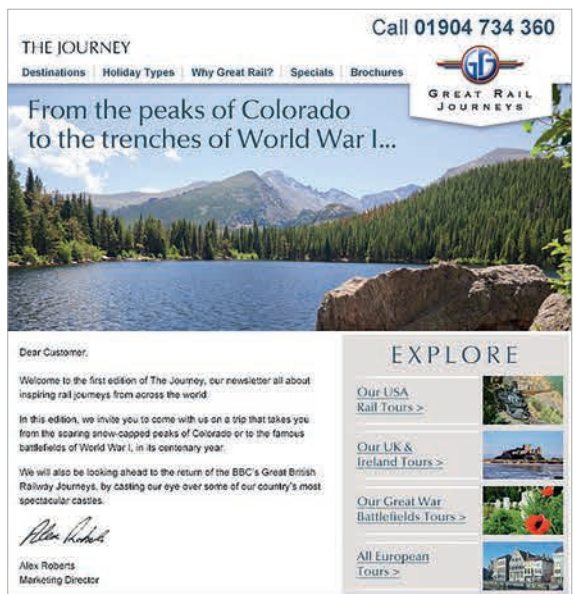


One notable success story was The Journey Newsletter. GRJ customers are keen travellers, so the brand had decided to publish its own magazine, The Journey, as a way of whetting readers' appetites for their next adventure.

But could it work as an email? The client was sceptical, but we felt we could combine well-written content and email marketing nous to not only engage readers but drive them online to explore tours in more detail.

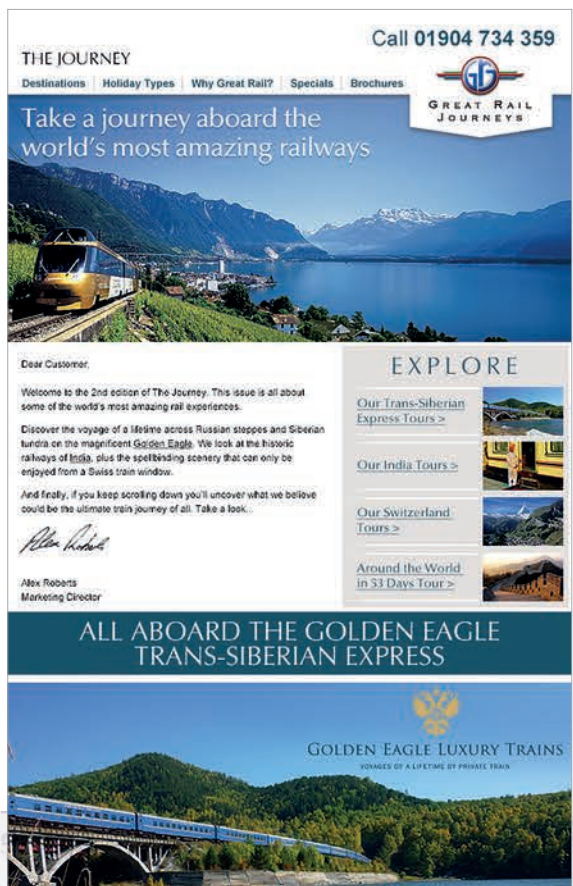
So, we created a new template that allowed our great travel writing and GRJ's glorious imagery to breathe, offering both a great reading experience and a compelling reason to buy.

Interest in GRJ tours sky-rocketed, and customer appetite for content proved so strong that The Journey went online as a blog... supported by a new, dedicated team of travel writers.



**POINT OF INTEREST:**

Good writing is a sound investment for travel brands, helping you stand out in a marketplace where everyone sells the same tours, and describes them in very similar ways.





# We are Red C

Red C creates marketing solutions that move people. To click, to call, to read, to buy. When you need to make things happen, we make direct and digital deliver the numbers you need.

As an integrated agency, we help you engage with your customers, cross channel. We take big brand ideas and transform them into personal, one-to-one communications that captivate and compel.



## Email

Whether you're looking to get an eCRM programme off the ground, or supercharge one that's floundering, we can help – with strategy, creative, distribution and analysis.



## Direct Mail

Our direct mail expertise has been proven over decades. Whether it's door drops, inserts, catalogues or mailpacks... we regularly outperform the control in tests.



## Search

Making paid and organic search work requires active and intelligent campaign planning, not automated bid routines and keyword stuffing. If you need more ROI, give our hands-on approach a try.

Great journeys  
always start with  
a **conversation**

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