

OVERVIEW

Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly county borough councils serve more than 250k citizens in Wales.

They work in partnership to deliver vital social care services for local people.

The joint Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Workforce Development Service was the first cross-boundary workforce development provider in Wales, supporting social services across the two local authorities and Greater Gwent.

Pioneering social care workforce development service saves up to £2,500 with every email

THE CHALLENGE

A diverse audience needed easier access to professional development

Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Workforce Development Service aims to support the professional development of more than 6k people and the growth of the social care sector. The service is integral to both councils' commitment to providing training opportunities, qualifications, support and advice to the sector - to help improve service delivery and outcomes.

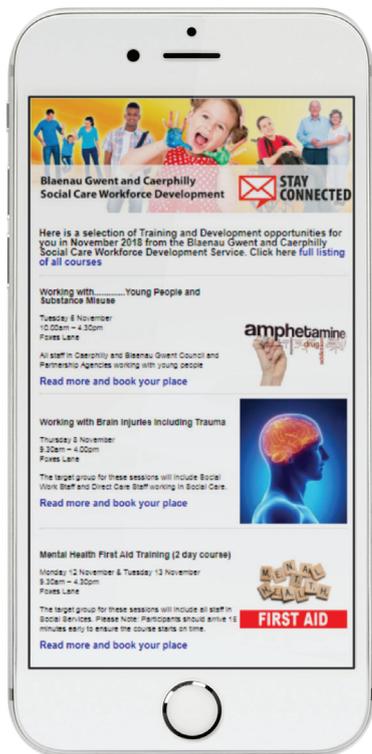
The councils needed a way to meet the needs of this diverse workforce which comprises different professions and training needs. They required a dependable line of communication, to provide easier access to professional development opportunities.

Email already an effective way to engage the people of Caerphilly

Caerphilly Council had been sending targeted email bulletins to the public for some time. People subscribe to the topics of their choice, including local news, events, bins and recycling, housing, sport and more.

Powered by govDelivery ([a digital engagement platform by Granicus](#)), this email subscription service had already proved to be an effective way of engaging the people of Caerphilly in the services and programmes that matter to them. For example, on average 75% of Caerphilly's email subscriber base regularly engage with the emails they receive - a far higher email marketing engagement rate than [industry benchmarks](#).

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Example email bulletins

A SOLUTION

An opportunity to meet the needs of social care professionals

The workforce development service saw an opportunity to use email marketing to promote training courses and learning outcomes, and drive customers to book online. It would be the first service of its kind to use email marketing in this way.

Email offers a one-stop-shop for professional development

In November 2017 the workforce development service began using govDelivery to deliver regular email bulletins to improve access to professional development opportunities.

A seamless online customer experience

When the target audience is so time-poor, accessing training/learning opportunities has to be quick and easy. The monthly email update promotes courses and outlines the purpose/outcome of each. The recipient can follow the calls-to-action (CTAs) of interest and book online immediately.

Reporting data improves messaging strategy and increases bookings

The email performance analytics dashboard in govDelivery enables the team to track and report on customer interactions and bookings. The user-friendly reports provide greater visibility of the overall customer experience, what interests people most, and which messaging tactics are effective at keeping the audience engaged.

Flexible and mobile-responsive email designs

Using the flexible mobile-responsive email marketing templates within the platform, the workforce development service has branded its messages and experimented with creative imagery, video, audio, different email layouts and language to continually refine the comms and increase audience engagement rates.

RESULTS

Each email bulletin saves up to £2,500

The email bulletins have increased participation in courses and minimised the cost of non-attendance/empty spaces, which had been a challenge previously. Each email effectively saves up to £2,500.

The service now runs efficiently, and is more cost-effective due to the significant reduction in time/resources going to waste on preparing training that doesn't get used.

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METRICS

The workforce development service's regular email bulletins are engaging more customers than ever in professional development opportunities:

- ✓ Only three clicks to book a place
- ✓ High click-through rate from email to website (10%+)
- ✓ Nearly all courses fully booked within 48 hours
- ✓ Non-attendance costs minimised: each email effectively saves up to £2,500
- ✓ Email bulletins account for 25% of all web traffic to pages promoting courses
- ✓ Customers can book online instantly
- ✓ More people subscribe to email bulletins every day
- ✓ Managers share the updates with offline staff
- ✓ Email analytics give quick picture of what's most important to customers, allowing the service to focus on their needs

RESULTS (continued)

A transformed customer experience gaining national recognition

This creative and data-led approach to internal communications has delivered a positive booking experience which is reflected in customers' feedback:

- "One click and I'm booked"
- "Emails are much more eye-catching and it's easy to book"
- "I look forward to the update once a month"
- "I now understand what's on offer and how it can benefit my working practices"

The service was recently commended by a national professional body for supporting a campaign to help social care workers develop their Welsh language skills (to better serve Welsh-speakers).

Within the first hour of sending the email they received ten enquiries, demonstrating the power of email to lead the right people to take action quickly.



"Our joint workforce development service continues to grow and is the best it's ever been. It embraces the opportunity to adapt in the digital age to support the hard-working staff, volunteers and carers of the social care sector. This instant online booking system helps them gain the right skills, knowledge and learning required to do their jobs even better. It's helping to improve the lives of our citizens."

Dave Street (Director of Social Services, Caerphilly Council) and Damien McCann (Director of Social Services, Blaenau Gwent Council)

IMPROVE THE OUTCOME OF YOUR COMMS

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