



AWARDS FOR
EXCELLENCE IN
**PUBLIC
RELATIONS
2023**



Young Communications Professional Of The Year



Sophie Boucher with her Award at the 2023 Awards for Excellence in Public Relations.

Winner

Sophie Boucher

Company

Legacy Communications

Title

Senior Account Manager

Biography

I've always had a passion for storytelling, and I have dedicated my career to date to just that! I joined the Jameson International Marketing and Sales Graduate programme in 2017 and was tasked with developing the iconic Irish whiskey brand in France. Thereafter, I took up the role of Communications Executive with Irish Distillers, in a cross-functional role supporting Internal, Brand, and Corporate Communications.

I was promoted to Brand and Corporate Communications Executive in 2019, and during this time I drove PR programmes to profile and raise awareness of Irish Distillers and its portfolio of bestselling Irish whiskeys for both global and Irish audiences. In this role, I created and hosted immersive brand experiences, worked to amplify various CSR and HR initiatives, and developed a keen interest in thought leadership and spokesperson profiling. At the same time, I took the lead on digital storytelling to propel the corporate narrative forward, managing the business's multi-channel digital presence and approach, launching its Instagram page, and working on the creation of a podcast, A Story of Irish Whiskey.

Next, I took on the role of Internal Communications Manager, leading employee communications strategies for a diverse employee base of both "wired" and "non-wired" employees across six sites. During this time, we faced COVID-19 restrictions, the Great Resignation, and I was appointed Communications Lead for the creation, and roll-out of the hybrid working model and for the company's Digital Transformation project task force.

I joined Legacy Communications in March 2022 as Senior Account Manager to work primarily on the ALDI Ireland account. Upon joining the team, I took the lead role in managing one of Ireland's busiest Consumer Press Offices and became team lead and client liaison on all Food and Drink campaigns. My other current clients include Mater Private Network and Tony's Chocolonely.

Citation

"Sophie demonstrated her passion for the public relations profession and for developing the next generation of communications professionals with whom she proactively, and generously, shares her skills and knowledge.

She displayed extraordinary 'people skills' and is a true communicator who listens and applies new learnings to constantly improve. She demonstrated strong commercial and strategic awareness and placed high value on developing and fostering trust and relationships.

The Judges also said that she displayed strong self-awareness and very sound judgement."

Sophie's Approach

I approach my work with passion, a fundamental belief in the power of communication, and a sense of responsibility to communicate trustworthy messages on behalf of my clients.

In terms of my own personal working style, I love to work collaboratively to achieve desired outcomes. Ultimately, this led me to undertake my current role as Senior Account Manager at Legacy Communications, where I have a dynamic team environment and the opportunity to work with a range of clients and media partners.

As I celebrated my one-year anniversary in March 2023, the PRCA Awards entries came at a great time to reflect on what I've brought to the business to date. As a Senior Consultant, I have demonstrated professionalism, sound judgment, and agility when carrying out my role. Personally, I have shown the confidence to know when to step up and lead but also when to pause, reflect, and pivot, which builds trust among colleagues and clients.

As a creative problem solver, my attention to detail and strategic analysis are the keys to my best work. I strive to build a symbiotic relationship with my clients so that our advisory services become an integral part of their communications approach.

My experience in-house has influenced how I approach my consulting work. I know the value of building trust, while retaining that all-important external point of view, to allow us to have frank and sometimes difficult conversations to drive the best reputational outcomes in the face of adversity.

Currently, I lead on Food and Drink PR for our client, ALDI Ireland. In early 2022, I took over the management of ALDI's consumer press office, and in that year, we delivered 255 million in PR reach and a 17% YOY increase in proactive consumer coverage.

There are two campaigns from last year that I am particularly proud of. The first is my work promoting ALDI's wine and spirits portfolio. I was tasked with highlighting the quality and variety of the range while demonstrating the great value price points. Over the course of 2022, I delivered a PR reach of 75 million for this category, securing in-depth features, expert reviews, and product placements with Ireland's top-tier national publications (including Irish Times, Independent, Irish Examiner, The Sun, The Sunday Times, and many more).

I designed, event managed, and hosted three intimate seasonal wine-tasting events on behalf of ALDI in 2022, driving all-important sampling opportunities with Ireland's leading wine writers at crucial seasonal moments (Spring/Summer, Autumn/Winter, Christmas). Over the year, we invested time in grassroots media relations to secure a continuous stream of product placements and earned media coverage, gaining invaluable share of voice for ALDI's range, delivering over 300 clippings and 60% Year-on-year growth.

The second is my management of the Grow with ALDI campaign in 2022. With a KPI of 8 million set from the outset,

we smashed through the KPI, achieving a PR Reach of 13,277,500 and driving a PR Value of €1,109,152 in 2022. My role involved creating all PR materials (national press releases plus regional alternate versions), the creation of photography assets, product sampling to media and influencers, spokesperson pitching, and management of the media partnership.

The scheme champions Irish suppliers and gives producers the chance to have their products stocked at ALDI. We devised a phased communications approach, breaking the plan out across the launch, finalist announcement, and the all-important winner announcement.

From alumni success stories, to interviews and placements with hopeful applicants and winners, I positioned Grow suppliers as the backbone of our media relations strategy. I worked closely with ALDI to identify supplier stories, briefed and media trained spokespeople and crafted PR materials to share those stories.

We amplified each phase of the campaign with a strategic radio partnership with Newstalk Radio's Pat Kenny Show spreading the messages across broadcast, social, and digital media. Presenter Pat Kenny and reporter Henry McKean both became public-facing advocates of the programme.

No food campaign would be complete without sampling, which I strategically aligned with product on-sale dates in the second phase of activity. Twenty leading Irish food writers were gifted samples of all finalist products.

Eye-catching photocal photography of the winners was captured at the National Ploughing Championships on the day of the winner announcement to support all PR activity in the final phase and the campaign culminated live at the ALDI Marquee, with winners appearing on Ireland AM alongside a representative from Bord Bia.

Overall, we are thrilled with this campaign, which delivered 126 pieces of coverage and exceeded KPIs by over 5 million!

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