

Case Study



Success happens
when people
learn to change

agility.im

Aligning strategies and goals led this organisation to becoming Britain's most read newspaper and website.

National Newspaper Case Study

The Challenge

Falling print circulation, increased competition, digital disruption, declining ad-revenue, diffused readership, there has never been a harder time to make money out of news.

Recovering from a couple of bad hires and facing huge pressure to simply stop being loss-making, this was a challenge like no other we had faced. When Agility in Mind was invited to come and help get things back on track, we knew a different approach was needed.

Crucial to success was better internal relationships, re-establishing and aligning to a new vision and, on a more technical note, increasing page impressions, page speed and reach.

Our Approach

People, people, people. That's where change has to begin. We started by listening, with a pattern of problems rapidly becoming clear. We then set to tackle them. This was our approach:

- Vision. We needed to align everyone behind some key goals. Previously everyone was doing what they thought was the right thing, we needed to align them to something meaningful. We needed to increase digital ad revenue just to survive. So we chose that as an outcome, along with average page views per day as a measure.
- Stakeholder management. Editorial, business, technology, marketing, sales – they all wanted their say and all had targets of their own. We set about explaining how they all couldn't get what they wanted right now. The transparency and honesty we brought was tough love, but well received on a business level for just being straight and on a personal level for being decent enough to explain reasons personally.
- Product roles: We brought structure. A team for web, a team for mobile and a platform team, all with the ability to craft their own day to day destiny within a wider vision. Colleagues began to feel respected and empowered. A positive change was now underway.
- A simple operating rhythm was established with regular planning against the goal. This tied up in to the fiscal quarterly and annual planning, allowing for seamless reporting to the board. This built confidence and allowed for a change in scrutiny from accusative to collaborative.

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- A roadmap for the future was developed. This engaged people right across the business and had an effect of shifting the culture to one of a more product-led, value-driven, experimentation-centred, outcome-focussed team.
- On a technical level, increasing page speed led to more page impressions and therefore more ad impressions, increasing revenue. This required huge amounts of cross department collaboration, especially with commercial and marketing, who were incentivised quite differently to the rest of the business.

Outcomes

- Within 6 months we'd increased average page views per day from a low of 9.2m to 16.69m, smashing our Q1 13m, then Q2 15m targets.
- We decreased article first interactive from 36.52s to 27.71s and article first paint from 5.1s to 3.82s.
- PAMCo, the 'industry's data bible' commented that print and digital led to this becoming Britain's most read newspaper and website with 33.9m readers per day, acknowledging that news brands such as this were still comfortably ahead of the likes of Facebook and Google in the UK.
- Numbers aside, we left a new culture and way of working. Relationships had been rebuilt and a shared vision for the future was set. There was a new spirit of collaboration and, as we all know, a happier team is a more productive team.



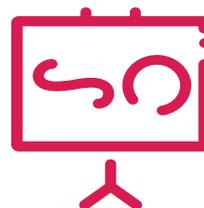
Aligned teams with key goals for the company



Built trust and transparency



Brought structure within the teams



Developed a roadmap for the future

Agility in Mind is a business agility transformation consultancy.

We use agile principles and practices as enablers for change to help our clients respond better in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

Our services include business agility consulting, coaching and training, combined into a high impact agile transformation model that achieves rapid results.

We work with people throughout an organisation: we help leadership teams better understand the challenges they need to face in a changing world; we show individuals and teams how to better organise their work to fulfil strategic objectives; and we instil a sense of belief that change is possible and action is needed.

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