

Innovation Update & Narrative to statistical reports for Innovate Lancashire website

The Innovate Lancashire website is now live! It is important to point out that no website is perfect and this is very much one which we expected would need tweaking and improving along the way. Given the nature of the content on this website, it is constantly evolving and as such requires the flexibility to be able to edit content as we go. Therefore, there will never be a perfectly polished and finalised version of this. Timescales for the Innovation Challenge meant we had to move fairly swiftly towards the end and soft launched the website alongside the Innovation Challenge on the 26th April. The logic was that with a live 'project' embedded in the site, in this case, The Innovation Challenge it would facilitate driving new users to the site.

The initial statistics have exceeded expectation and are a healthy set of results. I have attached a couple of reports to demonstrate and below is a brief narrative to just highlight the main points of interest at this stage.

The reports cover the period of 26th April- 16th May

Data Overview Report (see attached doc for detailed stats)

- 1000 visits to the site on the first day of launch.
- 7,981 people have visited the website to date.
- Bounce rate is excellent at 15%. The average bounce rate is 35%. The lower this number the better we are doing. This is how long people have stayed on the website and it's great for Google ranking. Really low bounce rates help to bump us up the Google chain.
- We are already starting to appear on 1st page of google for some searches such as, 'innovate Lancashire', 'things to do in Lancashire today' and 'Lancashire events'. Position 2,2 and 3 respectively.

Acquisition report (see attached doc for detailed stats)

This details how people have found the website. The most interesting fact here is the 29% Organic, i.e. a random search. This is an excellent result for such a new website. Drop offs from socials seems quite high but it is perfectly normal. People linking in from social platforms very often just have a quick nose, they may bookmark for a later date but the main thing is the traction we are generating for SEO purposes.

Social Media for Innovation

We are using 5 of the main social media platforms and all are feeding into the website. Engagement and following is steadily increasing, numbers are good.

Instagram- This is a placeholder for us. We have 130 followers and numbers are steadily increasing.

Facebook- Another placeholder for us but as it's the 3rd largest search engine after Google and Youtube, we need a presence on there.

YouTube- We have 2 channels- Innovate Lancashire which we will be adding content to soon from the docuseries of Innovation challenge and the Innovation Festival channel featuring footage from the past events.

Linked In & Twitter- Regular posts go out across these two platforms and a steady increase in both followers and engagement is emerging.

'Made in Lancashire' Podcast- This started in February and is broadcast across Spotify, iTunes, Google and various other channels. We have 2 per month, focussing on a particular theme and consisting of an interview with a relevant business and features an introduction to various programmes on offer across the County. We have 600 listeners to date!

Themes Featured:

Feb-Digital

Mar- Manufacturing

Apr- Phoenix Rising- Post covid success story

May- Medical with Connect Care

June- Green/Clean Tech- Macaw & Crowberry

Innovation Challenge

The Innovation Challenge opened for entries with the launch of the Innovation website on the 26th April. The closing date for entries was Friday 13th May. We have had such a range of projects, ranging from apps/manufacturing/education/software/research and 52 entries to plough through!

16 of these will be taken through to the next round and have been selected based on, level of Innovation/representation of Lancashire/scale-ability/potential success or viability. The successful candidates will now be asked to submit a 5 minute video pitch, no power-points/slideshows, something innovative, different and which captures the attention. Closing date for this round is 30th May. The 'Dragon's Den' style live final has been brought forward from Wednesday 29th June to Wednesday 15th June and offers 3 cash prizes, 6 hours of mentoring and a trophy.

The winners will participate in a docuseries to show their journey and they will be invited back to present an update at this year's Innovation Festival. This will provide much needed PR for the successful project but also provides us with obvious marketing materials, case studies and inward investment pieces.

There was a clear by-product that emerged from the unsuccessful candidates which was interesting. A large proportion were in fact Digital transformation projects rather than innovation pieces of work. We are looking at addressing this further down the line by offering some Digital Transformation and IP- Protect your Ideas masterclasses (on a practical level not just informative).

If you have any further queries on any of the above, please feel free to email me.

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