

Success story BP Shipping: Riding the waves



BP Shipping needed to deliver an outstanding event to celebrate its people, heritage and achievements over the last 100 years.



Attendees ranging from between 16 year old Cadets to 90+ year old 'Castaways'.



Gold at the C&IT Awards for Best Energy & Utilities Event of the Year.

Celebrating a centenary

Having ridden the waves of world events, including two world wars, the Great Depression, closures of the Suez Canal and the impact of oil nationalisations on the world economy, 'Riding the Waves' was the theme chosen to reflect BP's growth and success. This was reflected across all collateral and experiences.

In 2015, the business celebrated a century of achievement, service and dedication at five different venues across four countries by sharing the rich experiences of the people who have served the company over the last 100 years.

Sparking genuine emotion...

It was important that the event reflected the company's journey to becoming a world-class business, as well as unearthing the right venue in each location to be as inspiring as the occasion itself. A vital part of engaging BP Shipping's people was sparking genuine emotion to create lasting impressions and inspiring future generations to drive the business forward.

With potential delegates ranging from between 16 year old Cadets to 90+ year old 'Castaways', the team had to cater for a wide range of needs, such as dietary requirements, accessibility and appropriate entertainment considerations.

A personal approach

The team made contact with retirees through the BP Shipping's retirees club, known as the 'Castaways'. Traditional paper invitations and delegate packs were sent to the entire alumni network.

Using specialist technology, a tailored registration website for each event was created and email invitations shared through internal communications channels. Requirements for elderly guests were also managed (eg. medical requirements) via a hotline number.

Innovative problem solving

Venues and logistics

Venues were chosen on their own merit, and the team completed numerous site visits to each location to identify any challenges.

Not all venues had large enough rooms to cater for the entertainment as well as dinner and film screening, so timings and movement around venues were adjusted in planning stages to ensure the emotive impact of the event would not be lost.

People

At the final event in London, the plan was adjusted to allow extra time for networking and to view an exhibition after a six-course dinner. The team also worked with the venue to create a specific menu and train agency staff, where necessary, in silver service.

Being reactive

A book, which illustrated the history of BP, was made especially for the event. The book was supposed to be left in each guest's bedroom on arrival so that it could be referenced during the dinners.

One of the London hotels used for the event's accommodation misplaced one of the book deliveries, but the team quickly recovered the books, organised room drops and adjusted the BP Shipping's CEO speech accordingly.

It was also arranged for all collateral to be sent to 48 ships at sea, 12 weeks before the anniversary date to ensure a simultaneous roll-out as many of BP Shipping's people were working off-shore during the events.

A seamless delivery of every aspect of the experience was delivered including:

- Transport and logistics
- Collateral
- Venues and operations
- Entertainment
- Film
- Memorabilia exhibitions
- Bespoke 100-year time wall (the largest being 44 meters end-to-end).

Smooth sailing

Testimonials have been the biggest measure of the event success. Both the event and collateral excited employees, and BP Shipping Head of Communications said, "there will not be a more important event at BP (Group)." The event and its experiences continue to be shared through the BP Shipping website and social media in the UK, US and across Europe.

Using creativity to transform the customer's vision into reality is what makes events successful. BP Shipping's Centenary experience will echo across its history for years to come.

"On behalf of all the Castaways, congratulations to you and the Capita team for organising such a truly memorable Centenary celebration, thoroughly enjoyed by all."

Head of Castaways

If you'd like to know more, get in touch with a member of the team:

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