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FOUNDER'S WELCOME

TABITHA STAPELY
FOUNDER

In 2017-18 we launched our first hyper local magazine title.

Globalisation and changes in shopping habits means fewer people are engaging with their local high streets and communities, leading to stagnant economies, lack of opportunity, and increased isolation.

Our mission as a social enterprise is to use local journalism as a vehicle to help increase participation in local neighbourhoods and high streets, for the benefit of the community.

Social Streets enters publishing at a time of crisis. Local news rooms are closing across the country. Printed magazines are in decline - 2018 saw the closure of NME, Shortlist, and Interview. Online, the sheer volume of content means competition for advertising sales is high.

Social Streets is particularly interested in how we can deliver high-quality journalism to communities in disadvantaged or neglected areas, areas that would not normally have the wealth to generate the advertising revenues needed to fund publishing.

We are doing this because we believe local journalism is even more important in communities that are less resilient to the challenges presented by modern day society.

Local journalism holds accountable those in power and provides information that supports the local economy. It gives local residents a voice and a recourse to have their say. It also promotes tolerance by allowing readers to reflect on their shared experience of culture and heritage, improving community cohesion.

Hyper local journalism is a fledging industry and those of us working in it are learning all the time. We have to be willing to disrupt traditional publishing models and test new ideas.

This year Social Streets began its journey of unpacking publishing by re-examining the costs and processes that can be prohibitively expensive to small publishers, namely content creation and premises.

We partnered with key community stakeholders to provide us with considerable procurement savings with office costs. We developed mutually beneficial arrangements with local contributors to reduce the cost of content creation.

Initial response in the first four months has been positive and, looking ahead, we plan to increase our growing audience base and develop a deeper network of local contributors, community groups and campaigners.

15 June 2018

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STRATEGY

OUR STRATEGY PILLARS WILL BE DELIVERED BY STRONG PARTNERSHIPS, NETWORKS AND INHOUSE SKILLS

In 2017 our main aims were to create a strong working partnership with key community stakeholders in the locality and to establish a team with the skills to quickly establish the brand's reputation for excellence in heritage, culture and creativity.

	Strategic pillars	How we will achieve this	How we will measure this
Revenue Drivers	BRANDS	• Launch first hyper local title • Place people at the heart of content • Develop reputation for excellent heritage and culture content • Develop reputation for outstanding photography and visual arts	**BRAND & AUDIENCE** • No of magazine titles • No of subscribers • No of social followers • No of page views • No of unique users • Increase in organic taffic • Position in SERPS **REVENUE** • Growth in advertising • Growth in sponsorship • Growth in donations • Growth in product sales
	AUDIENCE	• Increase newsletter subscribers • Amplify content on social media • Engage destination visitors via Instagram • Lead local conversations on Facebook • Support Twitter • Develop local communications • Gain first page ranking for key place terms • Gain first page ranking in image search • Dominate organic search and outperform London-wide competitors	
	DIGITAL	• Provision of digital training and services • Position ourselves as the go-to media partner for community organisations • Develop publishing technology to white label	
Facilitators	OPERATIONS	• Establish key partnerships to drive procurement savings (premises, equipment, technology) • Develop a network of voluntary contributors • Develop a sustainable revenue model	• Cost savings • Equal pay • No of internships provided • Employer satisfaction • No of voluntary contributors • Value of contributions • No of community projects supported or facilitated
	PEOPLE	• Develop strong relations with community stakeholders • Attract talent in the field of journalism, creative media and technology • Establish office culture with strong social values and community responsibility • Inspire the next generation to be involved in community journalism	

IMPLEMENTATION

BRAND

In February 2018 we re-launched RomanRoadLDN, a high street brand that had been dormant since it was created in 2014.

London Borough of Tower Hamlets agreed to provide the funding to re-launch the Roman Road LND, a local high street brand that had been dormant for three years.

Roman Road Trust became our nominated community partner. This citizen-led regeneration organisation brought a wide network of community contacts providing an existing database of 1,800 subscribers.

With a team of one full time editor and one intern, we created daily content for the website accompanied by a weekly newsletter edition sent to the 1,800 pre-existing subscribers.

AUDIENCE

Reader competitions helped us increase our subscribers from 1,800 to 2,100 in the four-month period from February 2018 to May 2018.

Stories about Roman Road Market archive images from the 1960s provided the strongest engagement on Facebook helping us increase followers by 2% and reach by 93%.

Instagram followers increased by 3% over a four month period with the most popular posts being about scenery, heritage and food. Connecting with Instagram influencers such as Mae + Harvey provided our best performing Insta post.

ONLINE

Publishing daily content as well as inhouse seo training helped us achieve strong performance in website traffic.

During the four month period between February and May 2018 inclusively, unique users increased by 41%, page views increased by 38%, and organic traffic increased 24%.

The most popular content was content about Roman Road Market.

SERVICES

Social Streets was commissioned by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets to deliver digital training to local businesses and market traders in Whitechapel. This four month programme included one-to-one training sessions delivered on shop premises, mentoring, workshops and a networking event.

OPERATIONS

The newly opened Mulberry UTC agreed to provide office space at peppercorn rent in exchange for providing opportunities for their students. The space was serviced and fully equipped with furniture and IT equipment. This reduced our overheads by £15,000 per annum, the cost of a serviced office for four people.
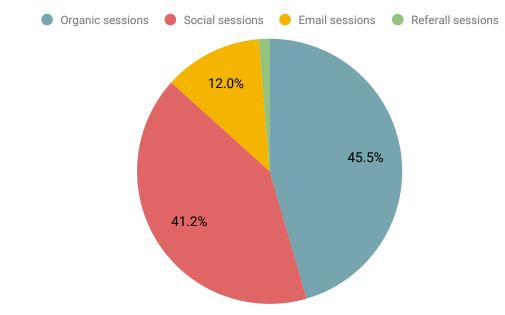
PEOPLE

COMMUNITY PARTNERS
In May we partnered with Idea Store Bow and Tower Hamlets Archive Library to run a photography competition that would culminate in a photography exhibition at Idea Store Bow.
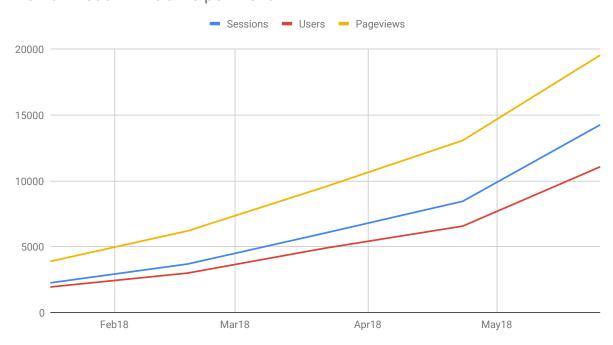
EDUCATION PARTNERS
Students of City University Journalism MA are assigned Tower Hamlets as part of their news reporting course. Building on this existing relationship the borough, we have developed links with the head of department to develop a learning partnership between Social Streets and City University.

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PERFORMANCE

Roman Road LDN acquisition 2018

● Organic sessions   ● Social sessions   ● Email sessions   ● Referall sessions

45.5%

41.2%

12.0%

Roman Road LDN traffic per month

— Sessions   — Users   — Pageviews

20000

15000

10000

5000

0

Feb18   Mar18   Apr18   May18

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IMPACT

Local journalism provides an essential service for communities. It provides important information about local services, news and campaigns. We also develop the communication infrastructure that allows local people to have a say about issues in their neighbourhood, and to connect with each other. Our focus on heritage and culture gives local people a sense of identity and belonging, and unites a community with shared experience.

Good quality, independent local journalism that places community at its heart empowers communities and makes them feel more invested in the area, encouraging increased participation in community and the high street.

Additionally we offer training to local businesses and provide opportunities for young people to gain work experience in the creative industries.

LEARNING & SKILLS

SUPPORTING INDEPENDENT SHOP OWNERS
In June 2017 Social Streets delivered social media training to 42 independent shop owners and market traders in Whitechapel.

DIGITAL MENTORING OPPORTUNITIES
As part of POW Digital Camp, the digital mentoring, Social Streets trained 11 local digital and marketing professional to provide six hours of voluntary mentoring to each businesses.

EDITORIAL INTERNSHIP
We provided a three-month internship to a recent Journalism MA graduate from City University.

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

In June 2017 we recruited two Youth Ambassadors from Swanley Secondary School to support our POW Digital Camp in Whitechapel. They gained experirence in hostpitaliy and event management.

In May 2018 we provided a work shadowing placement to Mulberry UTC student who shadowed our team for a week-long placment.

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IMPACT IN NUMBERS

Number of businesses receiving digital training	35
Number of hours of digital training provided	86
Number of mentors providing training to businesses	11
Number of hours of mentoring provided	40
Value of digital training and mentoring provided free-of-cost to local businesses	£6,100
Number of local school children receiving unpaid work shadowing	1
Number of local voluntary editorial contributors	12
Number of editorial features contributed by local volunteers	5
Value of voluntary editorial contributions	£4,000

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FINANCES

COMPANY ACCOUNTS

Turnover	£30, 275
Staff cost	£15, 315
Depreciation and other amounts written off assets	(£469)
Other charges	(£5,935)
Profit/(loss)	£8,556

PROCUREMENT SAVINGS

Office savings via partnership with Mulberry UTC (rent, equipment, technology)	£20,000
Value of editorial content provided by voluntary contributors	£4,000