

National Student Money Week – 2013

Context

This year Edge Hill Students' Union were Showcase Partners for National Student Money Week 2013 and as such, carried out a number of activities during the week. This short report aims to summarise these actions, evaluate their effectiveness and make recommendations for other institutions

When we found out we would be Showcase Partners, we got a working group together which included colleagues from our Advice Centre, Marketing team and our Sabbatical Officer executive. We decided our main focus for the week would be around financial capability and students being better with their money. We wanted to avoid doing anything too dry or bland and so got to work on thinking of innovative, fun and engaging activities we could undertake.

After initial discussions we settled on the idea of having a 'game show' themed week, where we tweaked popular game shows past and present, to fit in with our focus for NSMW. These shows were carried out in the central building on campus 'The Student Hub', where the main catering facilities are based, during the peak hours of 11am-2pm. The events are summarised in the timeline below.

In addition to the activities we put on, we also managed to secure discounts for students during the week, working with both the Catering team and our Arts Centre. These discounts were made available on a sheet of vouchers (pictured) which also contained information on regular deals which are available year-round and tips on how to save money when purchasing food and drink on campus. This obviously saved students money but also promoted the concept of looking for offers first rather than paying full price for things.



THIS WEEK ONLY

MON

SHEPHERDS PIE
SERVED WITH TWO
VEGETABLE
OPTIONS
£1.99

TUES

TRADITIONAL SCOUSE
SERVED WITH PICKLED
CABBAGE AND CRUSTY
BREAD
£1.99

WED

MOROCCAN LAMB
SERVED WITH RICE
OR CHIPS
£1.99

THUR

THAI CHICKEN
CURRY
SERVED WITH
RICE OR CHIPS
£1.99

FRI

SCAMPI IN A BASKET
SERVED WITH CHIPS
& TARTAR SAUCE
£1.99

CURRENT DEALS

SANDWICH,
CRISPS AND A BOTTLE
£2.95

BUY ANY SANDWICH AND
GET A CUP OF HOT SOUP
FOR 75P

ARTS CENTRE

UNTIL THE END OF TERM.
MEAL DEAL FOR TWO - 2
FRESHLY MADE PIZZAS,
SERVED WITH A DRINK
£12.95

WATERS EDGE

BAKED POTATO
AND HOT
FILLING
£1.99

PRIZE DRAW

£50

OF ARGOS VOUCHERS.

WRITE YOUR NAME AND
NUMBER ON THE BACK
OF VOUCHER TO ENTER
THE PRIZE DRAW.

UPAY

SAVE UP TO 7.5% BY
PRE LOADING YOUR
UNI CARD WITH
MONEY VIA UPAY
WWW.UPAY.CO.UK

ARTS CENTRE

£3 ENTRY TO TOTALLY TOM

IN PARTNERSHIP



VOUCHERS ONLY REDEEMABLE FOR DAY SHOWN, AND FOR WEEK COMMENCING 11/02/2013.
UNLESS STATED FOOD ONLY AVAILABLE IN THE STUDENT HUB AND IS SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY.

Timeline of the week

The following poster outlines exactly what we did during the week. This was the main poster we used to promote the week before and during NSMW.

NATIONAL STUDENT MONEY WEEK

Your
TIME TABLE

COME DOWN TO THE STUDENT HUB EACH DAY FROM 11AM - 2PM TO BE IN WITH A CHANCE TO WIN GREAT MONEY SAVING PRIZES.

<h3>MON</h3> <p>THE PRICE IS RIGHT?</p> <p>HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE PRICES OF FOOD? WHAT TYPE OF MONEY PERSONALITY ARE YOU? WE'LL FIND OUT TODAY AND RECEIVE A FREE 'MEAL IN A BAG' AS WELL AS SOME GREAT MONEY SAVING VOUCHERS.</p>	<h3>TUES</h3> <p>WHAT TYPE OF HOUSEMATE ARE YOU?</p> <p>FIND OUT HOW TO SAVE MONEY OFF CAMPUS WITH ENDSLEIGH AND THE SU ADVICE CENTRE TEAM.</p>	<h3>WED</h3> <p>FAMILY FORTUNES</p> <p>COME TO THE BIG SCREEN UPSTAIRS IN THE STUDENT HUB AND SEE WHO TRULY KNOWS THE MOST! TO ENTER YOUR TEAM CONTACT SUPRESIDENT@EDGEHILL.AC.UK</p>
<h3>THURS</h3> <p>MR & MRS</p> <p>FIND OUT IN OUR MR AND MRS SHOW WHICH PUTS YOUR FRIENDSHIP TO THE TEST.</p>	<h3>SHARKEY</h3> <p>LOOK OUT FOR SHARKEY AROUND CAMPUS ON MONDAY. GET YOUR PHOTO WITH HIM AND TAG US ONLINE FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN iTUNES PRIZES.</p>	

NSMW SHOWCASE PARTNER 2013

EHSU

Monday

On Monday we had two stalls going on side by side. The first was giving away a 'Meal in a Bag' to any student who filled in our Money Personality quiz, which analysed what type of a spender they were based on their answers. As well as the sabbatical officers we also had members of our Advice Centre present at this stall who were able to give guidance based on students' answers as well as promoting the financial support available within the Centre. In their bags students received ingredients as well as a recipe card (pictured) detailing how to make various dishes using their ingredients, how much they cost and top tips about shopping. This activity was very generously sponsored by our local Morrisons supermarket and the aim was to show students how cheap it can be to cook for yourself rather than purchasing takeaways or eating out.

Top Tips

Never shop on an empty stomach, you will buy things that you don't need and can't afford.

Shop at the end of the day, supermarkets reduce the price of fresh items, often buy more than half, saving you money.

Usually pre packaged fruit and veg are more expensive than weighing the goods out yourself. Also saves money as you only buy what you need.

Make sure you shop at discount stores for non perishable goods toiletries and cleaning products can be half the price of large supermarkets. Shop around.



RECIPE CARD

EAT FOR UNDER

£1

The cost of the ingredients
in this bag = 95p

Pasta 20p
Passata 37p
Garlic 30p
Onion 8p

The ingredients above will cover more than one meal. Compare this to buying takeaways each night and you could save £££'s over the academic year.

Tomato Pasta with onion and garlic

1. Finely dice the onion and garlic.
2. Cook enough pasta for one, following instructions on packet.
3. Whilst the pasta is cooking gently fry the onion until soft.
4. Add the diced garlic and fry for 30 seconds.
5. Add half of the carton of passata and warm through.
6. When the pasta is cooked drain.
7. Add the pasta to the tomato onion and garlic and serve, enjoy!!

Variations on the above dish

Add either a dash of chili or a pinch of chili powder to add spice to the dish.

Instead of tomato add a dollop of mayo this gives you a creamy pasta dish.

For carbonara, dice a slice of bacon or ham and fry with the onion and garlic and add a dash of milk and some Philadelphia cheese. Once the cheese has melted over the heat add to the pasta. Leave out the bacon for a simple cream cheese pasta dish.

For a healthier option add tinned sweetcorn, broccoli and or peas to the tomato dish this would then serve as four of your five a day!



The second activity going on next to it was entitled 'Play Your Cards Right, 'cos The Price is Right', an amalgamation of the two classic game shows. There were three boards each containing a run of six food and drink items with prices attached to each. Students (or contestants as they were on the day), had to decide whether the price of the item was higher or lower at the supermarket specified by the host, than the one labelled on the product. If they were correct, they would move on to the next item. Contestants who made it to the end of the run of six were entered into a prize draw for one of three 'hampers'. The idea behind this activity was to not only give students a better understanding of how much certain food and drink costs, but also to act as a price-comparison service, detailing how much cheaper certain items can be if you shop around. All the prices listed and supermarkets used were based on Ormskirk, the local town where many of our students are situated, in order to make it more relevant and the information more useable.



Rounding off our busiest day, we had a visit from Sharky – the mascot for the Office of Trading Standards' 'Stop Loan Sharks' campaign. He patrolled campus between 2-3pm having photos taken with lots of different students and in lots of different campus landmarks and locations. We uploaded all these photos to our Facebook page and got students to tag themselves in it. We ensured each photo had some information on the campaign and what Sharky represented and then ran a competition where the four students who got the most Facebook 'likes' received iTunes vouchers. This helped to spread the message beyond those specific students who encountered him on the day and meant students were advertising it and sharing it rather than ourselves.



Overall Monday was without doubt our busiest day. We had over 200 students fill in Money Personality Quizzes and walk away with their 'Meal in a Bag'. At one stage students were having to queue in order to access the activity. It caused a real buzz around the building. It was also an excellent opportunity for our financial advisors to talk to students in need about our relatively new Advice Centre and the kind of support that's available to them. Students didn't feel this was hostile or cold-calling as they had approached us for their Meal in a Bag. As a result of some of their answers in the quiz, our advisors were able to engage them in discussion and in some cases it became apparent that the student would really welcome further information. Consequently we had several students book appointments in our Advice Centre.

In addition the 'Play Your Cards Right' event was probably our most successful game show of the week. We had around 30 students take part and although they were only playing for hampers, those getting near to the end were incredibly nervous, treating it like a matter of life and death and getting their friends involved. It was a really fun activity and one which was enjoyed by all involved, including our sabbatical officers who hosted it. Finally having Sharky on campus helped give a mobile presence to NSMW. Obviously it was quite a visual outfit and got people's attention. He had his picture taken with almost 50 students and the photos subsequently got around another 50 'likes' and were seen by countless others who were friends of those in the pictures. Sharky wasn't on campus until 2pm which meant it was a little quieter than we would have liked and it wasn't exactly easy to understand what he was representing or why he was there, although we did put messages out via social networks during and after his visit. In our debrief, we discussed the idea of having a placard to go alongside Sharky next time, with a slogan making clear what he represents. 'Beware of the loan shark' for example.

What we'd recommend:

- ✓ Give away freebies. Students love freebies!
- ✓ Try and get sponsorship. It meant we were able to do much more and offer extra things which we couldn't without.
- ✓ If you have advisors, try and get them involved in the activities where students will be discussing finances. Students who wouldn't have thought twice about

getting financial advice found themselves getting help and support they weren't aware was available or didn't think they needed.

What we'd change

- Ensure appropriate staffing for your activities. We underestimated the demand for our Meal in a Bag event and as a result there were times when our advisors were busy helping students and others were left to wait with their results or queue.
- Ensure the message behind each activity is clear. Students only really began to understand why Sharky was present after we engaged them in dialogue or when they saw information on social networks.

Tuesday

The University had their 'Accommodation Fair' on this day, so rather than trying to compete, we had discussions beforehand about where we could fit in. On the day we had two stalls as part of NSMW. The first contained some brief guides on financial areas or issues and the other was manned by Endsleigh and looked at what type of student and housemate you were. As a result of information and dialogue which came out of both these stalls, our advisors and sabbatical officers were able to provide tips and advice to students on ways they can be more financially capable and 'clean up their finances'.

The Endsleigh stall had a floor map which contained a flow diagram and a series of questions and answers. The answer the student felt was more appropriate to them determined where they went on the map next. Each route led to a 'type of student' including 'Bossy' and 'Party Animal'. This was very popular and several students 'had a go' at this activity. The financial advice stall was a little less popular, as was expected. It wasn't the most enticing of stalls, but fitted in with the makeup of the day which had already been planned.

What we'd recommend:

- ✓ Visual activities which are short and easy to understand. The floor map was a prime example of this.

What we'd change:

- Engage students in advice indirectly. i.e. hook them in with something first, and then give out advice where appropriate. In the main students aren't seeking advice in events like NSMW, or at least they don't think they are. Advice and information should be the second tier, not the selling point.

Wednesday

On Wednesday we held our second game show of the week – ‘Student Family Fortunes’. In the week running up to NSMW, we had carried out a survey amongst the students asking them various questions about student life and their finances. Questions included things like – ‘Why did you choose your current student bank account’ and ‘How much do you spend on a partner for their birthday’. The idea was to get 50 replies which would make up the answers for the ‘our survey said’ questions in the game show. In the end we had 51 responses (one sneaked in before we had chance to close it). We collated these responses into categories and then inputted them into our Family Fortunes database. As with the original game show students had to work in a team to work out the top five most popular answers to given question amongst the student body. We were relatively late receiving the promotional material for this (pictured) and as a result it wasn’t as well attended as some of our previous events. That being said, those who did get involved really enjoyed it and gave us some excellent feedback. Over the two hour period we had 6 teams play incorporating around 14 students. This meant that overall, we had 65 students engage with this activity in some way. In addition we are able to use the data collected from the survey to inform our input in meetings and committees.

What we’d recommend:

- ✓ Don’t be afraid to piggyback on well-known concepts. We didn’t need to explain the game to the students, they already knew exactly how to play
- ✓ Try collecting data as a part of your other activities during the week rather than an isolated activity

What we’d change:

- Make sure promotional material is planned and ready well in advance so you’re in control of who you’re targeting, how and when.
- Go to students; don’t expect them to come to you. This activity required students to gather at the screen and meet us at a designated location. This wasn’t as effective as pitching ourselves in the middle of busy spaces.



Thursday

As Friday's are generally quite quiet around campus at Edge Hill, we decided to make Thursday our final day of events for NSMW. As it was Valentine's Day we hosted a Mr & Mrs game show which tested how well students knew their friends or partners. We had two sections to the game, the first a quick-fire round where students are separated by a divider and asked which of them is the more appropriate answer to the question asked i.e. who uses more of their overdraft? If the students' answers match (they use colour card), then they get a point. The second round entailed one student being asked to put on headphones, while the other was asked multiple choice questions about them. They had to note down which they felt was most appropriate

to the other person. The other student was then asked the same questions and had to give their answers. Again if the answers matched they would receive a point for each question. The majority of questions in this game had links with money in some way and again, offered an informal way of discussing financial capability with students and getting them to think about their finances. Despite a relatively low turnout for the event (between 10 and 15), this was a hugely enjoyable and very easy to set up activity. All the students involved found themselves laughing and questioning one another. We would definitely recommend this a possible activity for other institutions looking to do something similar.

What we'd recommend:

- ✓ The Mr & Mrs concept. Thoroughly enjoyable and easy to set up.
- ✓ Often prizes aren't necessarily needed. In the end we didn't have a prize for this show, but the idea of putting their relationship/friendship to the test was appealing enough for students. Don't always rely on the prize as your main enticement.

What we'd change:

- Have someone enthusiastic and charismatic going to people to get them involved. In this activity and many throughout the week, students were reluctant to get involved, but once they did, they really enjoyed it. Students will enjoy this if you can get them to play.

Conclusion

It is felt that our first attempt at undertaking National Student Money Week within the SU was a real success. It really helped promote the SU, especially our new Advice Centre and gave useful tips and tricks for students which will hopefully help some of them improve their finances and financial capability. Over 350 students got involved in some way and we've had some very positive feedback since. As highlighted our working group has already met to evaluate the week and discuss improvements we can make next time round. It was unanimously decided that we would do it again next year and is already being incorporated into our 2013/14 calendar.

We hope that some of our recommendations are of use to others who are reading this, but it is obviously worth noting that every organisation and every student body is different. What works for us may not work for you and vice versa. In our initial discussions on next year's we have decided we will concentrate on one or two large events and marketing and delivering those effectively rather than several different ones throughout the week. We are also considering creating a booklet of vouchers similar to those created by McDonald's and Subway, which we can release a couple of weeks before NSMW to hype up the events and increase engagement.