Case Study

# Liverpool One and the transformation of a city: Place branding, marketing and the catalytic effects of regeneration and culture on repositioning Liverpool

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**ABSTRACT** **In 2003, Liverpool was named 2008 European Capital of Culture, an event that would deliver £800 million of economic benefit to the city. The following year private investors agreed to invest £1 billion in regenerating 42 acres (17 ha) of the city centre, creating an area called Liverpool One, at the time the largest city centre regeneration scheme in Europe. The combination of these two factors was to set in motion the physical transformation of the city and an emotional change in attitudes and perceptions, suggesting that Liverpool had found its way out of a succession of failed initiatives, underinvestment and economic decline. Liverpool's brand was on the rise, and the catalytic effects of Liverpool One and European Capital of Culture were combining to create what was felt would become an enduring legacy. This case study explores the forces that influence place shaping, and the branding and marketing challenges that lie behind it, by drawing on the author's experience of Liverpool One and the branding and marketing programme that played an integral part in its delivery in 2008.**

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## INTRODUCTION

When Liverpool One opened to the public in 2008, the City Council Leader, who presided over the opening celebrations, proclaimed, 'Liverpool is back! And it's thanks to Grosvenor!' It was quite a statement and quite a moment. The culmination of more than 4 years of effort was the most important development within Liverpool's city centre for more than 60 years and the largest regeneration project of its kind in Europe. In truth, however, the quote underplays other important factors behind the city's renaissance. Liverpool One was and remains a vital constituent, but other factors were and are influential in Liverpool's continuing transformation.

## RENAISSANCE

Liverpool's chequered past is well documented. Prosperity, decline, fame and infamy – Liverpool is no stranger to any of these labels. However, its recent past has been a troubled one. Barely a decade ago, for many Liverpool represented a city of missed opportunity, false dawns, underachievement and underinvestment. Successful cities are places where companies want to invest, people want to live and shop, and tourists want to visit. In the 1980s and through most of the 1990s Liverpool boasted few of these virtues. In short, it was a city in decline. Underinvestment, political infighting and exodus of talent from the city had left a negative perception of its brand. It needed vision and leadership, significant private sector investment and a large amount of good fortune if it were to achieve radical transformation. By 2004 it had obtained all three – visionary leadership, a cultural fillip in being awarded 2008 European Capital of Culture and a private sector developer prepared to invest £1 billion in the regeneration of its city centre.

Contrast the old Liverpool with the Liverpool that exists today – confident, with a sense of purpose, real ambition and a belief that at long last it has turned the corner. In 2008 it was European City of Culture, bringing with it economic benefit estimated at £800 million (*Impacts 08 – a joint research initiative of the University of Liverpool and Liverpool John Moores University*), and an estimated 28 per cent increase in visitor numbers. It now has a new arena and conference centre, a new cruise liner terminal that brings visitors to the city, a regenerated city centre and a further £900 million of development projects either being built or with planning approval and in the pipeline.

Moreover, the change in the city's fortunes is reflected in an improved perception of its image among it local people and in the national media, whose reporting on Liverpool has become more positive.

## THE NEED FOR CHANGE

Liverpool's rich cultural and architectural heritage is unquestioned, and it still ranks as one of the best cities in the United Kingdom for its patronage of the arts and music. It boasts more listed buildings than any other city outside London, it is a World Heritage city and among international tourists is the sixth most visited UK city (www.visitliverpool.com).

However in 2004, Liverpool still had an urgent need for change. In 4 years it would become European Capital of Culture, yet it ranked just thirteenth in the league of national retail destinations, a fall of 10 places from its heyday in 1971 when it was ranked third (see Table 1). If it was to achieve 'world city' status – an often-cited and much-vaunted ambition of its city leaders – it would need a city-centred retail offer that would propel it back up the retail rankings. In Grosvenor, the city's leaders knew that they had a company that had the commitment and skills to deliver it the right product.

## DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES

Set against the city's desire to transform itself was a financial imperative from the private sector investor. Grosvenor's Liverpool One development was very much a commercial venture that would need to deliver a return on investment if not in the short term, then certainly over time. In return for its £1 billion investment, the council granted it a 250-year lease on a 42-acre (17 ha) site, guaranteeing the investor a virtual freehold across a significant section of the city centre.

The developer would face difficult challenges if it was to achieve its and the city council's shared objective of completing the development in time to benefit from the city being named

**Table 1:** Retail destinations national ranking trends

| | *1971* | *1989* | *2002* | *2004* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | London West End | London West End | London West End | London West End |
| 2 | Glasgow | Glasgow | Glasgow | Glasgow |
| 3 | Liverpool | Birmingham | Leeds | Birmingham |
| 4 | Birmingham | Manchester | Nottingham | Leeds |
| 5 | Edinburgh | Edinburgh | Chester | Nottingham |
| 6 | Manchester | Leeds | Cardiff | Manchester |
| 7 | Newcastle-upon-Tyne | Nottingham | Southampton | Southampton |
| 8 | Leeds | Cardiff | Norwich | Cardiff |
| 9 | Croydon | Newcastle-upon-Tyne | Reading | Norwich |
| 10 | Sheffield | Chester | Manchester | Bluewater |
| 11 | Nottingham | Croydon | Bluewater | Chester |
| 12 | Cardiff | Cambridge | Edinburgh | Reading |
| 13 | Leicester | Liverpool | Kingston-upon-Thames | Liverpool |
| 14 | Bristol | Southampton | Merry Hill | Newcastle-upon-Tyne |
| 15 | Southampton | Brighton | Birmingham | Leicester |
| 16 | Wolverhampton | Sheffield | Guildford | Edinburgh |
| 17 | Kingston-upon-Thames | Bath | Liverpool | Kingston-upon-Thames |
| 18 | Kingston-upon-Hull | Bristol | Leicester | Brighton |
| 19 | Reading | Plymouth | Newcastle-upon-Tyne | Merry Hill |
| 20 | Plymouth | Southend on Sea | Bristol | Meadowhall |

*Source*: CB Richard Ellis, Experian.

**Table 2:** Liverpool One key facts

*About Liverpool One*

Covering 42 acres at the heart of the city, Liverpool One is a unique £1 billion development including over 30 individually designed buildings in several distinct districts. Built around the existing streets of Liverpool each district has a different character, offer and design.

*Liverpool One comprises*:

*Total space*
2.5 million square feet (234 000 square metres)

*Retail*
1.4 million square feet (130 000 square metres)
175 retail units

*Leisure*
230 000 square feet (21 500 square metres) of restaurants, cafés and bars
A 14-screen Odeon multiplex cinema

*Offices*
35 000 square feet (3250 square metres)

*Residential*
Over 500 new apartments

*Car parking*
3000 spaces

*Open space (park)*
5.5 acres (2.2 ha)

*Other*
Two hotels (270 rooms and 107 rooms)
A new public transport interchange



2008 European Capital of Culture. It had little more than 4 years to build, let and persuade shoppers to come back to Liverpool to shop and spend their leisure time.

Not only was Liverpool One the most complex retail-centred, mixed-use regeneration to be undertaken in the United Kingdom in modern times (Table 2), but the developer also had challenging financial targets to achieve, none more so than letting upwards of 90 per cent of the development by completion. To do this, it needed to convince retailers that Liverpool was the place to locate, and consumers (who had given up on Liverpool's retail offer many years ago in favour of places like Manchester City Centre, the Trafford Centre and Chester) that Liverpool One would have something unique to offer.

Success would only in part be measured by delivering new buildings and retailers in time for Liverpool's Capital of Culture year. Arguably, a more important measure would be Liverpool One's ability to successfully persuade millions to come to shop and spend their leisure time in Liverpool.

## PLACE BRANDING AND MARKETING

### Borrowing from the corporate world

Place branding and marketing can draw on many parallels from the corporate world of business to business (B2B) and consumer marketing. For example, the service marketing mix, which identifies 7Ps within the service marketing mix by adding *people, processes and physical evidence* to the 4Ps of *product, price, place and promotion*, was found to be an important model for managing the design, development and implementation of the marketing to B2B and consumer audiences. Throughout the programme, proven tools and techniques were borrowed from corporate marketing principles and were found to be as relevant to the subject of place branding and marketing as they are to conventional branding and marketing programmes.

### Aspects controlled by others

However, unlike conventional corporate marketing programmes, not all aspects of the service marketing mix were fully within the developer's control. Communication (or 'promotion') was one example. Whether city leaders and other key stakeholders bought into the developer's vision for Liverpool One, and how they embraced it as part of their wider vision for the city, was outside the developer's control, but would have a significant impact on the effectiveness of the promotion and communication strategy at a regional, national and international level.

Similarly, research showed that cleanliness, ease of access and safety (factors relating to 'physical evidence') were critical in winning back shoppers and visitors to Liverpool. Liverpool One would deliver on these vital service elements, but the ability to change consumer perception also depended on a city-wide commitment to improving the visit experience.

## BRANDING AND MARKETING CHALLENGES

### Retailers and opinion-formers

From a B2B perspective, the key challenge was to create a marketing and communications programme targeted at retailers, agents and retail industry opinion-formers that would convince them that Liverpool had the ability to recapture its position as a major retail destination. False starts and a recent history of underperformance as a premier UK city left many retailers unconvinced of Liverpool's potential.

### Catchment consumers

The consumer marketing challenge was similar, in that it centred on changing negative consumer perceptions of Liverpool's retail and leisure offer. Research had shown that penetration within the core catchment (typically shoppers living less than 15 min drive time from Liverpool City Centre) was low. Shoppers in the core catchment, many of whom lived in Liverpool city centre, would need to be dissuaded from going to places such as Manchester City Centre or the Trafford Centre (close to Manchester), which at the time boasted a significantly better shopping offer than in Liverpool.

Within the secondary catchment area (typically shoppers living 30 min drive time from Liverpool) the challenge was to persuade shoppers in the wealthy areas, including Chester, the Wirral and Southport, many of whom had not visited the city for a decade or more, to return to Liverpool to shop and spend their leisure time. Liverpool One and the long-term success of the development depended on convincing these consumers to come back not once or twice, but on a regular basis.

Benefiting Liverpool One would be European Capital of Culture and the city's focus on 2008, a year in which it expected to play host to an extra 1.7 million visitors. The Liverpool Culture Company (the body responsible for delivering a successful Capital of Culture experience) were also focusing their efforts on winning people back to the city and boosting visitor numbers. Their work in engaging the local community and a wider cross-section of audiences outside of the city was of significant help, and Grosvenor frequently collaborated with them on a variety of mutually beneficial marketing initiatives, often sharing research and other materials and supporting events in which city leaders were involved in telling the transformation story.

## BRANDING AND MARKETING OBJECTIVES

### Retail marketing objectives

Liverpool One had 175 retail and leisure units to let, and to achieve this the developer would need to focus its sales and marketing effort on securing a large number of retailers, many of whom would be investing in Liverpool for the first time. The overriding retailer marketing objectives were to

1. create a brand proposition for Liverpool One that is highly valued by retailers, consumers and stakeholders;
2. create marketing collateral that generates interest and confidence among the retail community, translating into signings in line with the targets and time frames set by the leasing team; and
3. build upon the support and endorsement of the development by the local stakeholder community.

### Consumer marketing objectives

On the consumer side, shoppers would not only need to be persuaded to come back to the city and shop in Liverpool One (in very large numbers), but would also need to become loyal shoppers, placing Liverpool and Liverpool One ahead of other competing centres as their preferred place to shop and spend their leisure time. The overriding consumer marketing objectives for Liverpool One's year of opening were to

1. create loyalty among outer catchment consumers so that Liverpool One does not become a once only visit, but the shopping and leisure destination of choice;
2. attract footfall upward of 100 000 on first day of opening;
3. achieve over 80 000 visitors for second phase launch;
4. achieve footfall upward of 10 million visitors, contributing to an increase in visits to the wider city; and
5. achieve 70 per cent brand recognition among target segments in catchment.

## BRAND DEVELOPMENT

Developing the right brand for Grosvenor's 42-acre development would be a critical exercise in defining the character and nature of the entire marketing programme that was to follow. Whatever evolved needed to be true to the development, but also true to Liverpool. Work on defining the brand started in late 2004.

Liverpool is a brand in its own right, and although in need of reinvention, had existing core values and virtues. Liverpool One, the brand and name that eventually came into being, would need to compliment the city brand and not fight against it. This was the branding challenge. From the outset, it was agreed that for a development project of the scale and significance of Liverpool One, the brand would need to work across different audiences, and would need to be relevant to everyone (the city, retailers, shoppers, visitors), simple in concept and articulation, and uniquely different from other shopping centres or any other place.

Much consideration was given to understanding what is unique about Liverpool, its DNA and point of difference. Successful places have clear unique selling points, and Liverpool boasts many – music, football and the creative industries being among some of its most well-known attributes. However worthy these attributes though, they were what people already knew about Liverpool, and offered little to place Liverpool One within the context of the ambitious and exciting new Liverpool that was emerging.

Instead, the focus turned to the character of its people, fiercely proud of their city and its culture, irreverent at times, willing to do things differently and never afraid to break new ground. Hence, the organising thought behind

**Table 3:** Six core rules

| *No.* | *Rule* | *Subtext* |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | 'Make New Rules' | Liverpool One will rewrite the rules for city centre regeneration. 'New Rules' expresses the way Grosvenor and its partners are approaching the development and management of Liverpool One |
| 2 | 'Involve Everyone' | Liverpool One sets a new standard for stakeholder participation |
| 3 | 'Love the City' | Liverpool One will be everything that characterises this great city |
| 4 | 'Think Big' | Liverpool One is ambitious |
| 5 | 'Create More' | Liverpool One will offer diversity, richness and choice |
| 6 | 'Be Best' | Liverpool One aims to be the best |

the brand became 'Make New Rules'. This worked on two levels. Not only did it reflect what Liverpool as a transforming city was about, but it was also completely in tune with the ambitions the developer had for Liverpool One. The development was itself breaking new ground and making new rules involving large, complex mixed-use, city-centre development, as nothing quite on this scale, set against such tight deadlines, had been attempted before.

The name Liverpool One followed: 'Liverpool' for reasons that were already known all over the world and 'One' to reflect the thinking behind the new rules – which was to be the best or the number one. Many names were considered for Liverpool One, but each would have meant building a brand from the position of zero awareness.

The logo, a simple numeral '1', was designed to be simple, memorable and adaptable.

Six core rules were created that underpinned the way Grosvenor approached all its marketing communications. These core rules are shown in Table 3.

The core rules later formed part of a broader set of key messages created for those involved in promoting and selling Liverpool One.

The brand name, its core rules and logo were tested within focus groups and presented to the city council's members and officers. Although not everyone bought into it early on, there was overwhelming consensus that each of the components of the brand was strong, and if backed by an effective marketing programme would build strong identity, recall and value over time.

## MINING FOR INSIGHTS

A considerable amount of effort was given over to establishing a foundation of research that was used to mine for insights and plan the content of the marketing and communications campaigns to retailer and consumer audiences that would come later. Research was an ongoing activity, and throughout the 4-year programme research studies continued to be commissioned.

### Catchment area analysis

Underpinning it all was a thorough understanding of the catchment area. In 2004, a 'Research Compendium' was produced, providing a thorough analysis of the size of the market, market penetration, market segmentation and the potential opportunities within the catchment area.

There are over three million people living within Liverpool's primary and secondary catchment area, 60 per cent of them within 30 min drive of the city centre. However, Liverpool was losing shoppers to the surrounding competing centres. Shopper penetration of the core was just 56 per cent, whereas other successful locations boasted a figure closer to 80 per cent. Similarly, penetration of the secondary catchment was low at 7.6 per cent (12 per cent penetration of the secondary catchment would be considered reasonable). Overall, the research showed that in terms of market penetration, in both the *core and secondary catchment area*, Liverpool was underperforming and Liverpool One would offer retailers real opportunity.

## Retailer research

A year before opening, a series of face-to-face interviews with retailers was commissioned in order to fine-tune the communications to the retail sector. Good levels of awareness of Liverpool One existed, and the development, which was yet to open, was held in high regard. However, work still needed to be carried out regarding detailed knowledge of the scheme. A sense of urgency also needed to be injected, as many retailers were still not ready to commit with less than a year until opening. From the marketing side, both issues were tackled through a focused advertising campaign targeted at the retail and property trade press, and e-mail marketing campaigns to key retailers, agents and the media.

## Consumer research

### *Defining the way consumers shop*

Qualitative consumer research was undertaken in 2007 in preparation for the consumer marketing campaign that would be introduced the following year. Sixteen focus group meetings, each lasting 3 hours, were conducted. These groups comprised lapsed, occasional and frequent shoppers to Liverpool. Respondents were drawn from the Wirral, Southport, Warrington and Chester and were typically female and between 25 and 55 years of age. The *way* consumers shop was segmented into three main categories:

*Mission Shoppers* – are time-pressured but familiar with the location, likely to be from within the core catchment, and shop frequently at the location for convenience and non-specialised items.

*Special Occasion Shoppers* – are not time-pressured and look for choice. They shop for special purchases, are willing to travel further afield to find what they want and will spend all day shopping.

*Social Shoppers* – consider shopping to be a pastime and way to relax, and will spend all day shopping, eating and perhaps taking in other leisure activities such as the cinema, theatre or meeting friends for related day- or nighttime leisure activities.

Liverpool One's competitive advantage was that it was not being created as a monolithic shopping centre or a covered arcade like so many modern shopping developments. Liverpool One would be an 'open scheme' that followed existing street patterns. It would be divided into five discrete zones, each with a unique character and retail offer. There would be something in Liverpool One that catered for every type of consumer, be they 'mission', 'special occasion' or 'social' shoppers.



### *Media cluster groups*

In order to build a media plan capable of reaching the target market, a further piece of research was undertaken to segment consumers into key *socio-economic* groups or 'clusters'. The results of this work would go on to influence the media buying strategy and media channels that would be used to communicate with these shoppers.

Three 'cluster' groups were selected for discrete targeting and were based on the *National Readership Survey* (NRS) demographic classification of consumers falling into social classes AB, ABC1, C1 and C2. Together, these cluster groups accounted for just over 50 per cent of the available market but significantly, 82 per cent of the spend. The groups were defined as 'older wiser, cooler', 'trend spotters' and 'urban aspirants':

*'Older, Wiser, Cooler'* – 24 per cent of total available market, ABC1s, age 55+ (typically), male and female between 25 and 75 years of age;

*'Trend Spotters'* – 12 per cent of the total available market, ABs but also C1s, 25–54 of age, mostly female with children;

*'Urban Aspirants'* – 14 per cent of the total available market, with a slight bias towards C2, and younger female shoppers.

Each cluster group was asked for its attitudes towards Liverpool and Liverpool One, which was yet to open. It found that:

- the first phase of the consumer marketing campaign would need to focus on raising awareness of what Liverpool One had to offer;
- shopping behaviour would be influenced by the combination a quality retail and leisure offer;
- matters involving access, safety and cleanliness were important to get right if attitudes and shopping behaviours were to change; and
- maintaining links to Liverpool's existing shops was important to potential shoppers.

In respect of this last point, issues surrounding linkage to existing shops would be resolved through the master plan design, which would see Liverpool One not only extend the existing city retail offer, but also create vital links to the Albert Dock, reconnecting this important part of the city.

Other important insights from this research were incorporated into the communication strategy that underpinned the local and regional public relations (PR) strategy and the consumer marketing campaign.

## SERVICE MARKETING MIX

Product, price and place were the hardest characteristics of the 7Ps for the branding and marketing programme to influence. The physical asset (that is, 'product') was being designed by talented master planners, project managed by experienced managers and built by skilled construction companies; location (or 'place') was already defined as the 42 acres of the city centre. Price considerations were defined ahead of the branding and marketing programme, and were central in evaluating the viability of the development. Retailer negotiations and leasing contracts were managed by agents and specialists within their respective fields.

However, branding and marketing would play an important role in shaping the remaining four service characteristics *(promotion, people, processes and physical evidence)*.

### Retailer promotion

It was important to give those selling the development a story to tell. Key facts – good news stories – were devised around employment prospects, catchment prosperity and independent studies on future retail performance, all of which reinforced the message that Liverpool was the place to be. The developer talked about the 'Liverpool One Effect' and its catalytic affect on the city.

The campaign to sell the majority of retail space was officially launched to the retail sector at an event in London in May 2006.

Key materials delivered for the B2B sales programme included:

- leasing materials – including documents detailing the research, the vision for Liverpool One, maps, tenant mix plans and computer-generated images;
- B2B advertising aimed at retailers and agents run within the trade press;
- Marketing Suites – in Liverpool and London;
- launch of a leasing website;
- production of a promotional video;
- exhibition stands at major retail and property events;
- regular e-mail marketing campaigns targeted at key retailers and agents; and
- regular press releases to national, trade and retail press.

Arguably the most important piece of marketing collateral produced was a 'three-dimensional interactive flythrough' of the proposed development. This digitally generated model was a groundbreaking piece of work built by a company specialising in three-dimensional animation. Work began in 2005, and the model continued to evolve as designs and buildings evolved. In all, the completed model took over 3 years to build. But its value was indisputable, as the developer could take retailers on a virtual tour of the development without them leaving the comfort of their own offices.

## Consumer promotion

With the retailer marketing programme firmly established and Liverpool One just over a year away from opening, attention turned to launching the consumer marketing programme.

Fresh creative concepts and a new strapline accompanied the campaign: 'Everything You Love in Liverpool One'. It was a simpler message than the one created for the B2B audience, but embodied the spirit of the organising thought behind 'Make New Rules'.

A consumer website was developed along with consumer-centric direct marketing materials.

A hoardings strategy was devised and implemented, taking in strategic sites across the city and wider Merseyside region and at key locations within Liverpool One.

Retailers were encouraged to use the Liverpool One brand within their own promotions. A set of brand guidelines was given to each retailer due to open in Liverpool One, and many adopted the brand guidelines using the brand identity alongside their own.

Strategic buying of media would be essential if target consumers from the key cluster groupings in the important secondary catchment areas, identified by earlier research, were to understand the new retail offer and be moved to visit Liverpool One. A national media buying agency was hired to devise a comprehensive media plan involving outdoor media, taxi liveries, street TV, radio and regional press. The promotional mix was later enhanced with a regional TV campaign.

## Public relations

Developing good relationships with local, regional and national media was an important part of the PR strategy. Buy-in from the local media was essential if key messages that educated, sparked interest and excitement, and eventually moved consumers to visit Liverpool One were to be reported accurately. Local newspapers such as the *Liverpool Echo* and *Daily Post* were often given stories ahead of trade and national titles to ensure that those most important to the success of Liverpool One, namely, consumers in the core and secondary catchment, felt fully involved. Local PR agencies were appointed to manage local PR issues. Corporate and trade PR and the developer's corporate brand positioning with national titles was managed through the appointment of a separate PR agency.

## People

'Involve everyone' was the second of the core rules that defined the Liverpool One brand, and this was applied with unstinting focus by the developer. Its approach to local consultation and communication was comprehensive and enduring from the outset. Throughout the development process, it held public 'stakeholder' meetings every 12 weeks. People with an interest in the development were invited. Between 200 and 300 people regularly turned up to these events and became important advocates for Liverpool One.

In addition:

- an Information Centre was opened to the public on November 2004. At its peak 200 people a day were visiting. By the end of the project some 50 000 people had passed through its doors;
- a 1:200 scale model of the development was built and housed in the information centre – as designs evolved so did the model; and
- the centre later became the focal point for the city's 'Shop for Jobs' initiative, with the primary objective of filling many of the permanent new jobs that Liverpool One had created.

The developer also focused on opinion-formers. These people, such as the city's political leaders, were taking to platforms to promote Liverpool and its forthcoming year as European Capital of Culture 2008, as well as the city's longer-term ambitions (in which Liverpool One was playing a central role). Its leaders had access to influential communication channels internationally as well as in the

United Kingdom. The task was to arm these 'ambassadors' with key messages about the development. Constant dialogue with key stakeholders through special working groups, public meetings and liaison with senior figures within the city council and the Culture Company ensured that the lines of communication were always open.

## Processes

Lying at the heart of sustainable attitude and behaviour change would be Liverpool One's ability to live up to its brand promise. Delivering a differentiated customer experience would be vital if it was to satisfy and retain consumers.

To ensure that these important matters received outstanding attention, the developer joined forces with a highly regarded property management company, forming a joint venture company whose focus would be on service delivery. This innovative partnership approach was a departure from traditional approaches to property management, which usually involve either outsourcing or in-house management. The joint venture arrangement ensured that the best of both approaches would be employed.

The strategy led to the recruitment of a bespoke property management team of 117 people who are charged with the maintenance of the public realm across the 42-acre site, and provision of property management services including consumer marketing and delivery of the highest standards of customer care to visitors and occupiers.

## Physical evidence

Research had shown that cleanliness, security and access were important issues that would influence customer perceptions and judgements of Liverpool One. Management of each of these attributes is the responsibility of the property management team, whose approach is aligned the city's facilities management strategy. All areas are scrubbed and washed down, and residual litter and chewing gum is removed each evening and day.

Litter picking, bin emptying and waste management are carried out during the core shift hours up to retail closing. Cleaning or polishing of brassware, stainless steel and other decorative finishes is carried out throughout the day. Liverpool One continually invests in raising the public's awareness of the need to dispose of their waste correctly via good communications from its people on the ground.

The privately managed site is open 24/7 and has no doors barring access, which, from a security point of view, presents unique challenges. Visible Security on the ground is provided by frontline staff and a 24/7 Control Room monitors security matters via an extensive network of closed-circuit television cameras.



## EARLY RESULTS

The developer met its objective and delivered on its promise to the city that Liverpool One would be open for business in 2008. Liverpool One's performance and impact on Liverpool will, no doubt, continue to be monitored for many years to come. However, the early signs are encouraging:

- Liverpool has moved from thirteenth to sixth place in the rankings of prime shopping locations.
- Over 40 per cent of Liverpool One's retailers are new to Liverpool.
- Eighty-three per cent of those surveyed in recent consumer research thought the city centre had improved over the last 5 years.
- Ninety-one per cent of those who have visited the city centre were likely to return.
- Total footfall within Liverpool One by the end of 2008 was more than 13 million visitors.
- One hundred and twenty thousand visitors were recorded on Liverpool One's first day of opening and 95 000 visitors came on the second phase opening. Both figures exceeded expectations.
- Since Liverpool One opened on 29 May, the Albert Dock (also now linked to the city centre via Liverpool One) has seen an extra 100 000 visitors per week – up 46 per cent overall.

## CONCLUSIONS

In discussing the reinvention of Liverpool, it is apparent that no single factor could have brought about the transformation and brand repositioning that has been witnessed. Visionary leadership, private sector investment and good fortune have all played their part.

However, Liverpool needed a catalyst to coalesce and focus people's attention and accelerate change. Within a year it had the good fortune to receive not one but two major boosts that would lead the city's transformation: a culture-led boost in winning European Capital of Culture, and a regeneration-led boost in Grosvenor's £1 billion commitment to the redevelopment of its city centre. Would either on their own have been sufficient to bring about the rapid change in attitude, perception and vitality we see in Liverpool today? The relationship among public sector, private sector, the arts and culture when combined in a symbiotic way, can have a transformational effect on place shaping. It is a powerful mix which, as proven in Liverpool, is capable of accelerating and delivering remarkable change.

Tried and tested marketing tools and techniques have an important role to play in defining and implementing branding and marketing programmes that lie behind place shaping initiatives. However, external influences need to be recognised, as the effective delivery of the service marketing mix may be influenced by such factors. The interests of key stakeholders and opinion-formers must be aligned to achieve maximum impact, and this requires collaboration and a single-minded focus on communication.

The story of Liverpool One continues to evolve, and only with the benefit of hindsight will we be able to define its true role in rebuilding 'brand Liverpool'. Thus far the portents look promising.



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