

The management and future of the Industrial Powerhouse brand is of critical importance. It both presents a direct 'pull' for visitors to the city region and Northwest, but just as critically is an important force in shaping our brand, our identity and our international presence.

## Introduction

In March 2010 Creative Concern were appointed by Visit Manchester to evaluate the Industrial Powerhouse brand.

Visit Manchester leads on the Industrial Powerhouse project which is a regional based marketing programme to promote the industrial heritage of the Northwest.

Industrial Powerhouse was the first Manchester slipstream brand developed by the AGMA Tourism Forum and Marketing Manchester in 2004.

The campaign was developed following the production of the Tourism Strategy for England's Northwest, which highlighted industrial heritage as a key product offer for the region which will help to generate increased visitors and underpin the attack brands of Manchester, Chester, Lancashire and Blackpool, The Lake District and Cumbria and Liverpool City Region.

During the course of the campaign it has developed to encompass the whole Northwest with support from the other four tourist boards (Lancashire and Blackpool, The Mersey Partnership, Visit Chester & Cheshire and Cumbria) and the NWDA. *(Although now due to funding restrictions the campaign doesn't incorporate Liverpool)*

Further to a successful bid for European funding (ERDF), the programme now in its 5th year, has considerable scope to increase its marketing to grow and impact the market, driving visitation and generating income.

The evaluation examined the positioning, personality, promotion, management and equity of the existing brand. The investigation included the following:

**Research:** desk research of competitors and comparators nationally and internationally alongside an analysis of current marketing to date and positioning within the regional tourism offer.

**Audit:** An audit of venues with Industrial heritage as part of their offer in the region. These venues are currently included in the industrial powerhouse project.

**Focus groups:** Two focus groups with mixed ages and interests were held in Manchester and Lancashire

**1-2-1's:** Interviews with principle stakeholders in tourism and heritage development and investment alongside

**Questionnaires:** Independent questionnaires were taken with the general public at three venues across the region (MoSI, Quarry Bank Mill and the Harris Museum)

This report will summarise the findings of this activity and make recommendations for the development of the Industrial Powerhouse project to inform the development of a creative response in the next stage.

## **1. Funding and outputs**

These recommendations in this document are made in context of the overall outcomes of the project. The project is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and therefore is obligated to deliver against certain outcomes to fulfil the funding requirements.

The regional thematic marketing programme is a Northwest campaign with the primary objective of increasing visitor spend in the region through the focused and intensive promotion. This incorporates three regional tourism campaigns – Industrial Powerhouse, Cheshire Gardens of Distinction and the Golf Coast.

The role of the Industrial Powerhouse is to promote the region's industrial history and heritage with a focus upon key anchor attractions.

Through increased resource and capacity, the existing campaigns will be in a position to deliver a more effective and efficient range of marketing initiatives.

This should not mean the project should be restricted in its ambition, but it does require clear planning and thinking in how to apply the following recommendations and still achieve the outputs. This means the project will have to think outside its current activity - tactically and creatively to match the needs of the visitor and the potential visitor more effectively in the future.

The outcomes include;

- Rebranding the current thematic campaign
- Increased partnership working with the private sector and other tourism providers
- A series of trade and consumer events
- New visitor packages including the identification of new industrial and heritage trails

- Increased opportunities for e-commerce, including a new online web portal
- Enhanced linkages with other projects and initiatives across the region
- Provision of universal business assistance through annual conferences
- Enhanced advertising and PR activity

## CHAPTER 1 POSITIONING

### 1. Brand family

This chapter gives an overview of the regional tourism brands. These brands fall into the following categories; Regional identity (England's Northwest), Slipstream brands (England's Golf Coast, Natural Northwest), Attack brands (Manchester, Blackpool, Lake District) and brands delivered via local tourist boards.

Industrial Powerhouse is categorised as a slipstream brand within this family

### Regional brand: England's Northwest

The England's Northwest brand is designed for everyone who wants to promote or endorse their own part of England's Northwest, from the world famous brands of the region, to your own local areas, attractions and cultural or business activities. The England's Northwest brand has been created by the Northwest Development Agency (NWDA) and members of the Regional Marketing Forum. The brand is a unique stand-alone mark designed for a region that is working together to promote the best of the Northwest to the rest of the UK and overseas. It is also intended to create a sense of regional identity and pride for the people who live and work here. It is important to remember that the England's Northwest brand does not represent an organisation, it belongs to everyone who has something positive to say about our region. There are different endorsements such as 'working together', 'proud to be in' depending on the particular activity or promotion the brand is supporting.

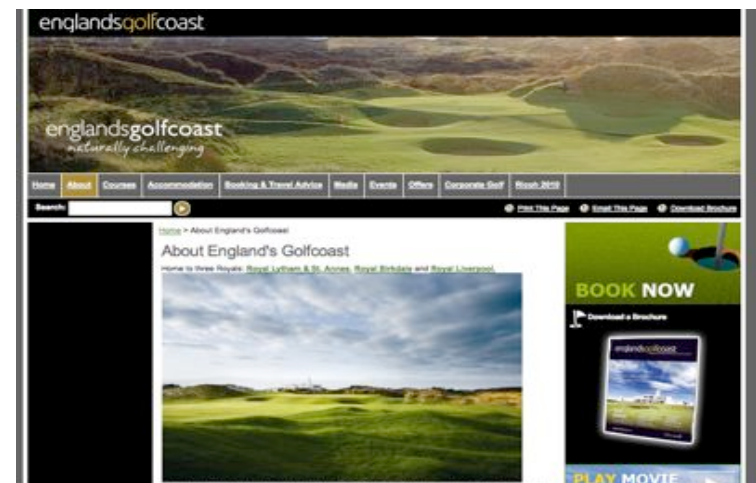
SUPPORTING  
englandsnorthwest

### Slipstream brand: England's Golf Coast

England's golf coast is promoted around the world via the website [www.englandsgolfcoast.com](http://www.englandsgolfcoast.com)

Famous and historic courses - led by the region's three Royals - are at the centre of a worldwide marketing campaign promoting England's Northwest as the country's premier golf destination.

The campaign aims to build on the existing £10m a year economic impact golf has on the region's economy. Merseyside, Lancashire, Cheshire and Cumbria courses are all featured on the website operated by The Mersey Partnership (TMP) on behalf of partners led by the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA), which funds the campaign. The website assists visitors to the region to plan every aspect of their golfing break.



### Slipstream brand: Natural Northwest

Natural Northwest is segmented into Inland Water, Coast, Mountains, hills and views, Forests and Woodlands, Geological Wonders and Open Spaces.

It aims to promote stunning scenery and hidden natural gems in the Northwest.



### Attack brand: The Lake District / Cumbria Tourism

The consumer Destination brand has been developed to represent the county. This guide is intended to help designers and suppliers, partners and members with the usage and adoption of the Destination brand.

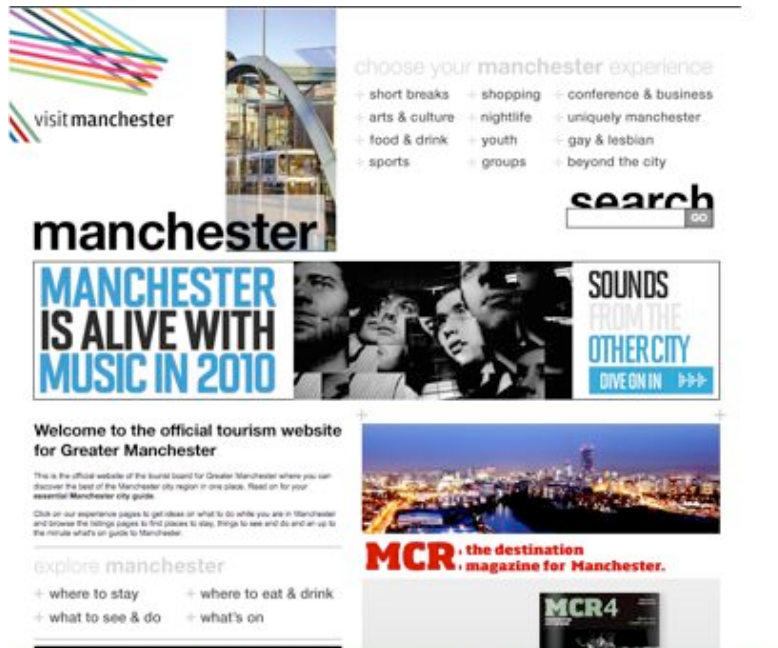
Thematic campaigns are used by Cumbria Tourism to promote and develop specific sectors of the destination to segmented audiences and include: Culture Cumbria, Taste District and Adventure Capital.

Online activities are themed including; Culture, Family Fun, Indulge, Outdoors, Natural, Art and Shopping



### Attack brand: Manchester

Manchester is one of the Northwest Attack brands. Manchester markets short breaks, arts and culture, food and drink, sports, shopping, nightlife, youth, groups, conference and business, gay and lesbian, uniquely Manchester, beyond the city.



### Attack brand: Blackpool

Blackpool is one of the Northwest attack brands. The strapline is 'visit Blackpool morning, noon and night'. The nation's most popular beach resort – which attracts more than 10 million visitors a year – is

encouraging visitors to expect more with a spectacular calendar of events (many of them free!) throughout the year including eye-popping firework displays, exciting street theatre and festivals, nostalgic and eye-opening heritage tours show stopping air shows, world class sporting events and stunning public art exhibitions. And the evolution of the resort continues to gather momentum – with something new to discover every time you visit.

The visitor offer is presented as events, food and drink, illuminations, accomodation, maps and guides and business tourism.

Your Blackpool offers ideas and inspiration for trips by 'Excellent Eights' and defines visitor markets as family, gay, green, groups, senior, student, young, active, indulgence, shopping, arts and heritage.



### Tourist boards: Cheshire Tourism

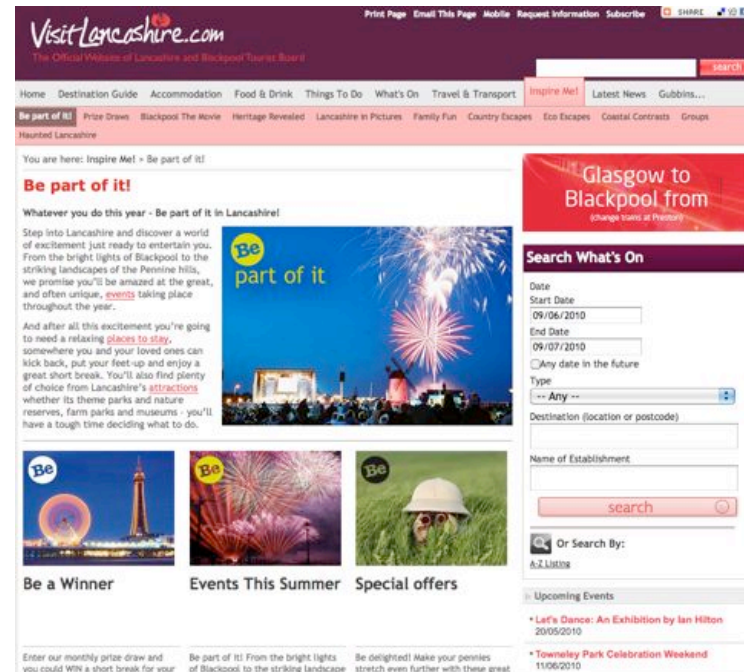
Cheshire Tourist board delivers Cheshire's Gardens of Distinction programme which is the continuation from Cheshire's Year of Gardens 08. The programme includes a numbers of projects - the RHS Show at Tatton Park, Marketing & Gateways, Business Development

Chester Festivals is funded by the Chester City Council, Cheshire County Council, Arts Council England North West and the private sector. Chester Festivals focuses on four main areas. These are: artistic development of the cultural sector in Chester, raising the reputation of Chester and encouraging buy in from domestic and global markets, the development of the communities through education and regeneration, and economic development



### Tourist boards: Lancashire Tourism

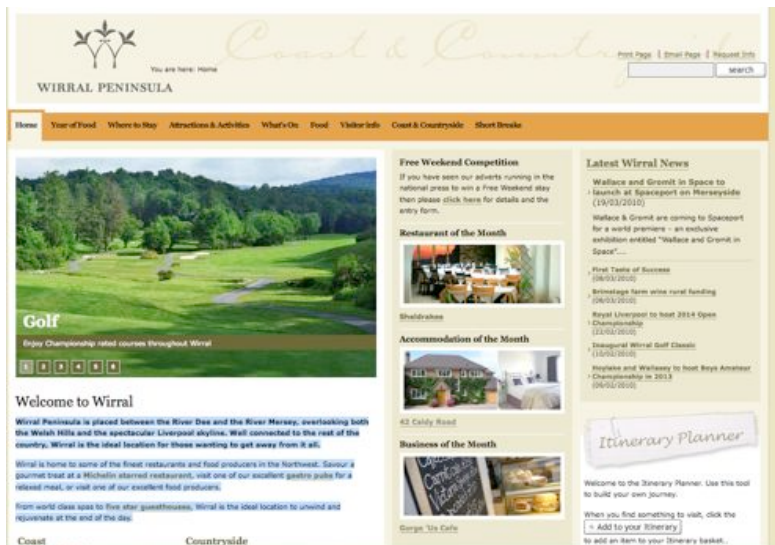
Visit Lancashire theme the tourism offer is as follows, Family Fun, Eco Escapes, Country Escapes, Coastal Contrasts, Heritage Revealed and Groups



## Wirral Peninsula

Wirral Peninsula is placed between the River Dee and the River Mersey, overlooking both the Welsh Hills and the spectacular Liverpool skyline. Well connected to the rest of the country, Wirral is the ideal location for those wanting to get away from it all.

There proposition is as follows – “Wirral is home to some of the finest restaurants and food producers in the Northwest. Savour a gourmet treat at a Michelin starred restaurant, visit one of our excellent gastro pubs for a relaxed meal, or visit one of our excellent food producers. From world class spas to five star guesthouses, Wirral is the ideal location to unwind and rejuvenate at the end of the day.”

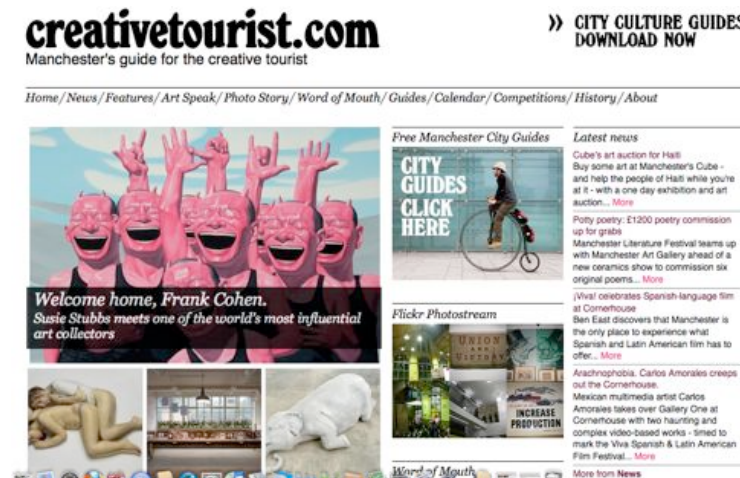


## Creative Tourist

[www.creativetourist.com](http://www.creativetourist.com)

Manchester Museums Consortium, a group of nine museums and galleries in Manchester, separate venues that have a single vision: the desire to stage intelligent, thought-provoking exhibitions and events. Oh, and to celebrate the city in which we live, work and play. We are rightly proud and passionate about this city of ours; we hope that, by reading about some of the things happening here, and finding out more about our outstanding historic collections, you'll start to feel the same.

We publish monthly features and interviews by some of the UK's best writers and bloggers; produce exclusive vodcasts with curators and artists; and reflect national and international arts news. And three times a year, we publish insider guides to the city. We actively encourage feedback, response and debate. Creative Tourist has presence on [Twitter](#), [Flickr](#), [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#) or [Friendfeed](#).



## CHAPTER 2 PERSONALITY

### 1. Guidelines

The existing industrial powerhouse brand does not have any formal guidelines on identity, tone of voice, messaging, imagery, etc. The brand is formally managed by the Industrial powerhouse marketing manager but implementation is impaired by the lack of any formal guidelines.

### 2. Audiences

The contact list of email addresses is circa 6,000. Engaged audiences joined the website via an online acquisition campaign on facebook which helped build the contacts database however, this was competition led so it contacts can not necessarily interested in industrial heritage or the industrial powerhouse project directly. Further sign up has mainly been through website and consumer shows

### 3. Website [www.industrialpowerhouse.com](http://www.industrialpowerhouse.com)

The website is currently the most developed communications tool for the industrial powerhouse project.

#### Does it provide an understandable visitor experience?

When you arrive on the Industrial Powerhouse site the brand themes take priority as the focus for the page. The themes are Power, Fashion, Transporting the World, The Revolutionaries, The Workers and Building a New Britain.

It assumes the visitor arrives on the site thinking in themes and that they are already interested in or have a level of understanding around industrial heritage rather than simply looking for something to do or somewhere to visit.

If they were visiting to find out more about industrial heritage it does not give an overview of the Industrial Revolution so visitors would have to look by theme to piece together the region's role in this period.

The current website makes the assumption people are looking for information relating to industrial history not a day out – although some revisions have recently been made to this site to help guide people to days out it is still primarily focused upon a thematic approach segmenting the history of the industrial revolution.



Image: website homepage

### **Maps**

Unlike many of its 'competitors' (Saltire, North East, etc) the site does not guide the visitor to a map of the region. Instead it allows the visitor to select an area from boxes in the places to stay and what's on sections. This assumes the visitor has local knowledge and that they already know where they want to go and what they want to do.

Without a map the brand cannot effectively communicate locations and proximity of venues and places of interest to visitors, it is likely that even if visitors are local they may not be aware of venues and places in close proximity.

### **Venues and things to do**

There are 98 venues profiled on the website, the size, quality and connection to industrial history varies. A full audit of the venues has been completed as part of the brand review, see page 15-16 for a snapshot.

There are 22 trails available to download from the site. Some of the trails are branded as Industrial Powerhouse others use localised or sub-regional branding. The result is a mix of branding that may be confusing for the user, funding and practicalities may make this difficult to resolve in the future.

### **Functionality**

The England net system is used to feed into Industrial Powerhouse website and is used by the sub regional tourist boards to populate the IP site with relevant information. There are limitations with this process – there is a product record to be filled in e.g. hotel / attraction, can't include food and drink currently but this is being developed. Information supplied by tourist boards is generally completed on an ad-hoc basis and

works better in some regions than in others there is no standard across the board.

The search can't go past boundaries so if you look in Lancashire but you are on the boarder it doesn't offer places in Manchester or Cumbria for example.

The industrial powerhouse project is looking at itinerary planning facility in the near future.

## **4. Other online communications**

### **Facebook and twitter**

Industrial Powerhouse has a facebook with 10 fans. The last message on the site was July 2009. This page and further development will need to be examined as part of the creative process based on context of the direction of the project, viability of the page and ability to update regularly. There currently an Industrial Powerhouse twitter feed. However this is underutilised and development will need to be considered if appropriate in the context of the direction of the project, viability of the page and ability of the project to update regularly with relevant and interesting information.

### **Partner sites**

Each Tourist Board has an Industrial powerhouse 'section' except Visit Chester and Cheshire mainly this is just a small amount of copy and a link to industrial powerhouse site.

## 5. Advertising and Marketing

So far the production of marketing materials has been relatively limited. Materials have been produced for specific events and activities to promote IP. This development overall has meant the brand has evolved without consistency or without clear direction of the journey of the brand.

### Exhibition pull up banners

The exhibition banners are used at awareness raising events such as who do you think you are. From a practical, quality and consistency point of view the banner images do not line up together, making the stand look unprofessional and haphazard.

For the exhibitor the themed banners provide little draw for the public and they find themselves having to explain from scratch what Industrial Powerhouse actually means to passers by, once it is explained they understand it but they are often baffled by the imagery.

Conferences and large-scale events are a key part of the Industrial Powerhouse brand awareness activity a suitable stand is key to selling the offer in an interesting and understandable way.

Any brand development will need to consider the needs of the exhibitor and visitor and provide an interactive and creative solution that can be easily transported and used at multiple events.



Image: Stand taken at 'Who do you think you are?' event

## 6. Adverts

A selection of adverts have been used in print media including the Guardian and the Big Issue as well as at street level in JC Dacaux advertising spaces.

The branding development of adverts began using the images of modern and industrial images split in two, this then moved into buildings and modes of transport being split. This evolution was not part of a planned roll out but developed on an informal basis as the adverts were required.



## 7. Enewsletters

e-newsletters are sent to the contact database on a bi-monthly basis, the branding for the newsletter uses the IP logo. The information is supplied by partners and sourced by the IP communications manager. There is a desire to increase the number of newsletters but lack of a feed of live stories is problematic.

## 8. Printed materials

There have been three items printed to help communicate the Industrial Powerhouse brand. These leaflets were developed on a requirement rather than a planned basis so consistency and development of the brand in print varies.

### Leaflet with itinerary and anchor attractions

This leaflet aims to highlight the 'anchor attractions' of Industrial Powerhouse. These are those attractions and venues that are the biggest / most popular / most unusual attractions in the region. This leaflet was developed to hand out to visitors at the great days out show to enable the exhibitors to explain the IP offer and for visitors to take away.

**Discover the Northwest**  
Here is a suggested itinerary to discover our rich industrial heritage.

**Day 1: Manchester**  
AM - City centre guided tour  
Experience Manchester's historical past with guides who love their city and who love to show you why!  
[www.visitmanchester.com](http://www.visitmanchester.com)

...and it also houses a wide range of memorabilia relating to working, sea travel and the birth of Liverpool.  
[www.visitliverpool.org.uk/maritime](http://www.visitliverpool.org.uk/maritime)  
Stay overnight in the 4 star [www.visitliverpool.org.uk](http://www.visitliverpool.org.uk)

**2019 Highlights**  
There's always something new and exciting happening in the Northwest to celebrate our industrial heritage. Here are some of the 2019 highlights.

**Elizabeth Gaskell**  
Knutsford and Manchester.

**Manchester Ship Canal Cruises**

**Industrial Powerhouse**  
INSPIRED BY INNOVATION

**Discover the industrial heritage of England's Northwest**

Visit the Northwest and hear the fascinating story of the Industrial Revolution told in museums, mills, waterways, railways, steam sheds, walking trails and events.

**People's History Museum Manchester**  
This is the dramatic story of the late 19th century class struggle for democracy and social justice in Manchester, the redoubt city where it began.

**MOSI Manchester**  
Follow the history, science and industry of Manchester and its people through the Museum's galleries, which tell the story of the world's first industrial city.

**Helmshore Mills Textile Museum**  
Helmshore  
Explore the true story of the Lancashire textile industry from the 18th Century to the present day.

**Harris Museum & Art Gallery Preston**  
Go beyond the grand exterior of the Harris Museum in Preston's city centre and you'll be rewarded by a delightful mixture of contemporary and traditional art that's completely free to visit.

**Quarry Bank Mill Styal**  
One of Britain's greatest industrial heritage sites, showing how a complete industrial community lived.

**Anderton Boat Lift**  
Northwich  
Enjoy a 30 minute boat trip on the glass top Ebbitt Clark as the magnificent Anderton Boat Lift tows you above you.

**World of Glass**  
St Helens  
At the World of Glass you can discover the amazing history of glass and how our lives wouldn't be the same without it. Watch the glass blowing demonstrations, experience the stunning special effects, film areas and visit the interactive galleries.

**Merseyside Maritime Museum**  
Liverpool  
Set sail and ship anchor for a fun day out at Merseyside Maritime Museum.

**Honister Slate Mine**  
Kielder  
Explore the last working slate mine in England where you can arrange a guided mine tour deep underground.

**Blackwell, The Arts and Craft House**  
Windermere  
The Arts & Crafts movement was a great response to the industrial revolution and championed the skills and vision of craftsmen and women. Experience The House and enjoy the same views of this hot venue.

For more information visit [www.industrialpowerhouse.co.uk](http://www.industrialpowerhouse.co.uk)

## Who do you think you are leaflet

This leaflet was developed for the who do you think you are exhibition, for the exhibitors to distribute to visitors to the stand. The leaflet aimed to put Industrial Powerhouse in the context of family history and tap into the genealogy market which is a potentially growing market for the Industrial Powerhouse offer in the Northwest region.

**Who do you think you are?**  
**Were your ancestors part of the revolution?**

As you look back into the past at your family history you may find your ancestors were part of the amazing story of the Industrial Revolution.

Whether they were pioneers or ordinary working families, you can learn about their story across the Northwest in museums, mills, waterways, railways, steam sheds, walking trails and events.

The true stories of real people are not all about magnificent progress and achievement, but of struggle, hardship and exploitation. The sweat of our ancestors - mill workers, soldiers, tradesmen, dockers and even slaves, were at the front line of the Industrial Revolution.

Their lives shaped all of ours, so ask yourself, **who do you think you are?**

**Industrial Powerhouse**  
INSPIRED BY INNOVATION

[www.industrialpowerhouse.co.uk](http://www.industrialpowerhouse.co.uk)

## 9. Partnership publications

The brand has been used in partnership publications including Pennine Lancashire Food festival and Elizabeth Gaskell Bi-Centenary celebrations. Partnership activity is a useful way of the Industrial Powerhouse project reaching out to audiences already engaged with the subject matter or to tie into events and activities that broaden the industrial heritage offer.



### 10. Venue Audit

The industrial powerhouse project currently incorporates 98 venues. These vary from the large scale venues such as MoSI, Styal Mill and the People’s History Museum through to smaller venues of specialist interest.

The audit examined the size and scale of these venues and the varying facilities available to the visitor.

#### Which sub region is the venue located in?

The sub-regional split of venues was fairly even, this is useful to know as some of the sub-regions feel they have little to offer in relations to this project – however, the size, accessibility and scale of these venues is obviously varied.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Cheshire	20.4%	20
Cumbria	18.4%	18
Greater Manchester	20.4%	20
Lancashire	19.4%	19
Merseyside	21.4%	21
answered question		98
skipped question		0

### What type of venue?

Museums and heritage centres dominated the venues currently profiled. It’s important to note that there are more venues not currently included that are not museums or heritage centres that could and should potentially be part of the wider heritage offer.

	Response Percent	Response Count
museum	70.9%	61
art and craft centre	4.7%	4
gardens / garden centre	10.5%	9
theatre	1.2%	1
library	1.2%	1
quarry	2.3%	2
model village	2.3%	2
railway	7.0%	6
forge	2.3%	2
art gallery	11.6%	10
heritage centre	72.1%	62
dock	4.7%	4
mine	9.3%	8
Other (please specify)		53
answered question		86
skipped question		12

### Venue size

To understand capacity of these venues as part of the development is useful 50% are small venues and only 15% describe themselves as large.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Small 	51.0%	50
Medium 	33.7%	33
Large 	15.3%	15
<i>answered question</i>		<b>98</b>
<i>skipped question</i>		<b>0</b>

## CHAPTER 3 EQUITY

### 1. What do audiences really think of the brand?

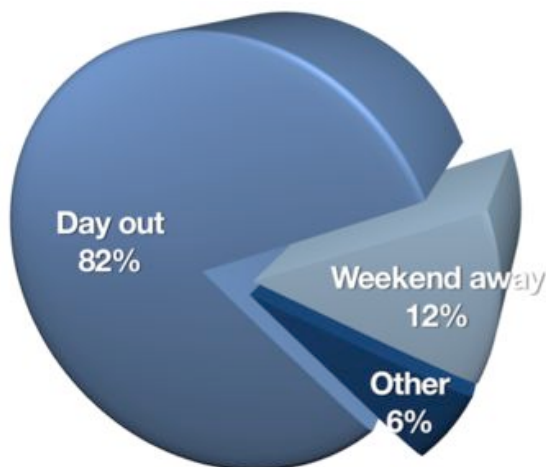
#### Questionnaires

During one weekend 169 people were interviewed on location at Quarry Bank Mill, MoSI and the Harris Museum. The people interviewed formed a broad cross section of visitors from 24 and under through to 65 and over.

The questions focused on motives and expectations, sources of information, awareness and associations of industrial powerhouse venues and brand. The following information has been extracted from these interviews and gives us a snapshot of the behaviours of visitors and potential visitors.

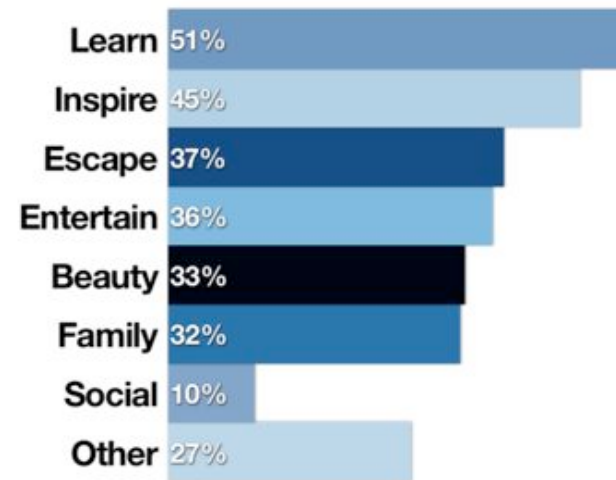
#### What are you doing here?

It was clear from the feedback that most visitors to the sample venues were on a day out, from the other section only 1% were overseas visitors.



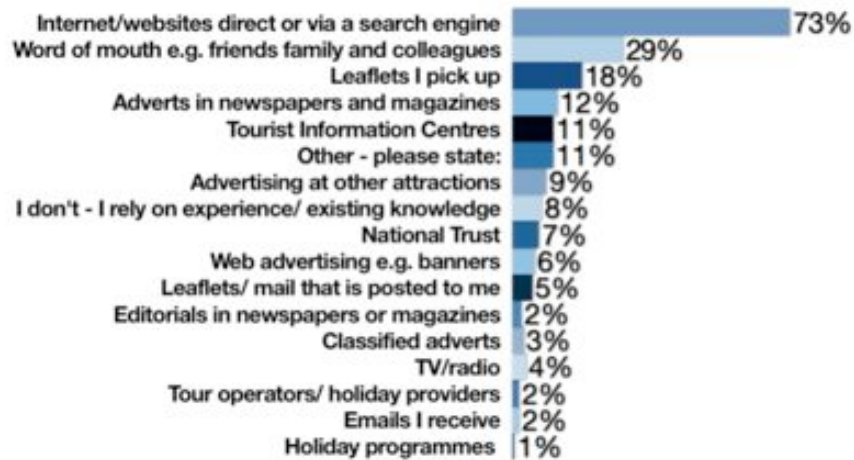
#### What are you looking for?

Half the people interviewed were looking to learn something on their day out. It's important to note that whilst learning is high up the agenda this is balanced by other elements such as family and being inspired.



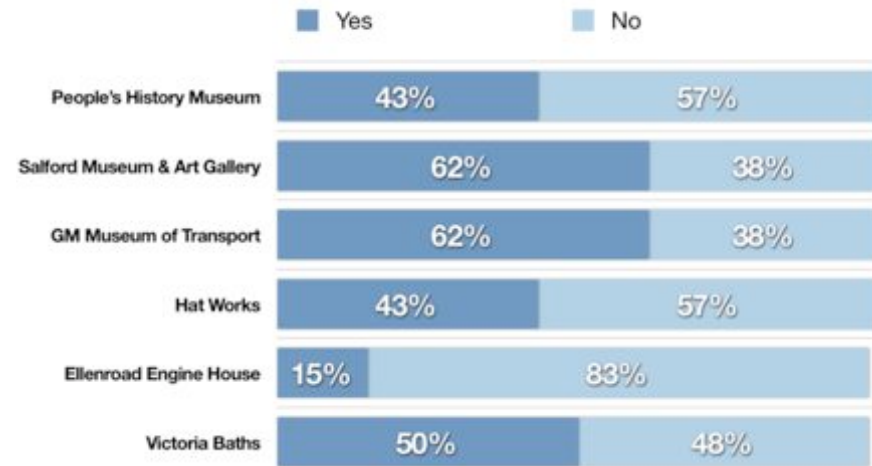
### Where do you source your information?

The source of information was something that was touched upon in the questionnaire stage and interrogated in further detail (qualitatively) in the focus groups. It is clear to see that websites were a key tool for people to find out about things to see and do, however this information we found in the focus groups is intrinsically linked with word of mouth



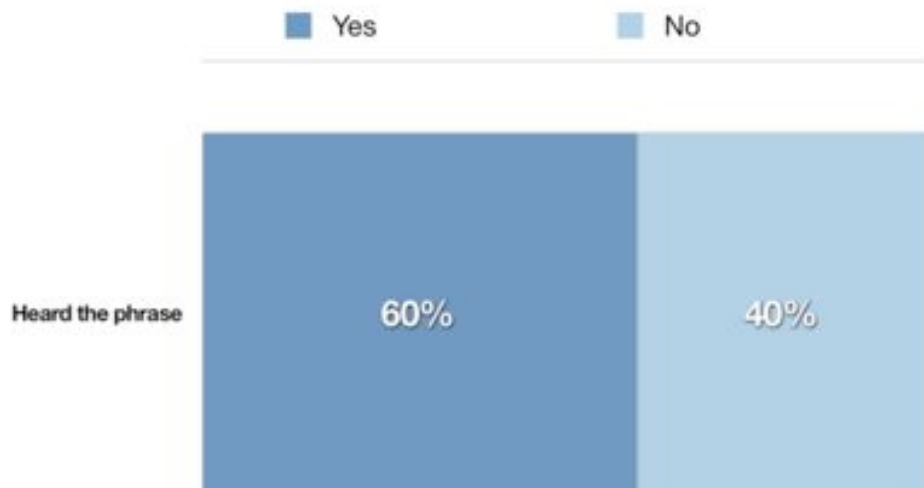
### Have you heard of the following venues?

Taking a snapshot of awareness about some other venues that come under the industrial powerhouse umbrella helped us see the level of connective awareness of venues. This is not intended to be an indication of wider awareness of these venues.



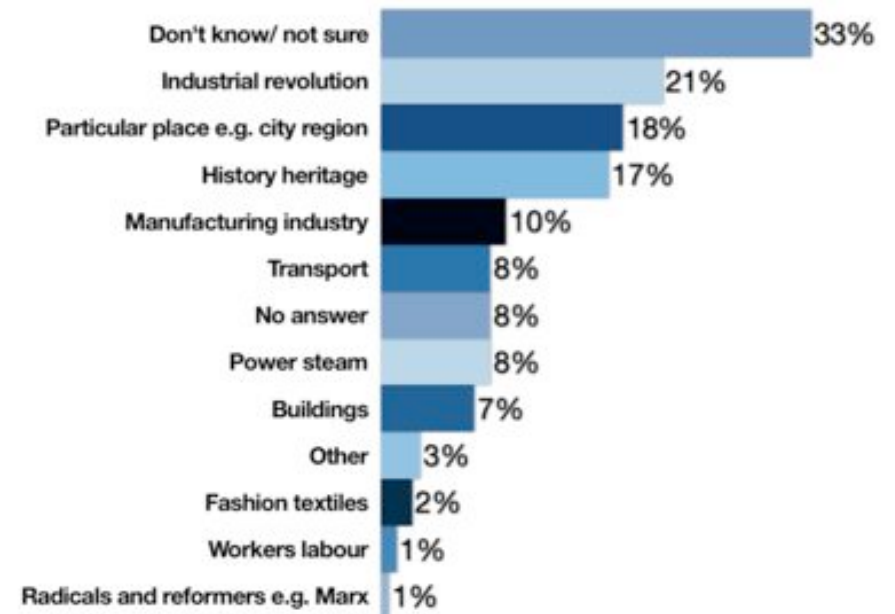
### Have you heard the phrase industrial powerhouse?

The response level for this question was very high, this has to be tempered by the fact that the words 'industrial' and 'powerhouse' are not unique to the project so recognition may be just on the basis that the words are familiar, the context questions to follow demonstrate more clearly that the audience are not clear on what this phrase is intended to mean



### What does it mean to you

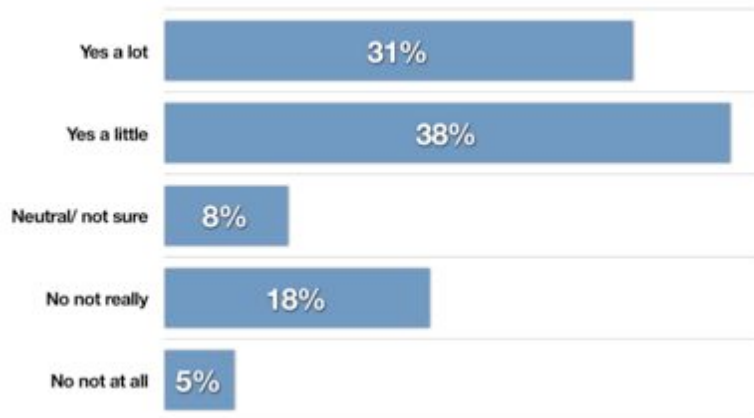
Over 30% didn't know what industrial powerhouse meant to them. Significant numbers made the connection with the industrial revolution, history or heritage. Importantly very few made the connection with industrial powerhouse and the 'themes' used in current messaging – e.g. fashion / textiles, workers / labour, radicals / reformists.



## How does it make you feel?

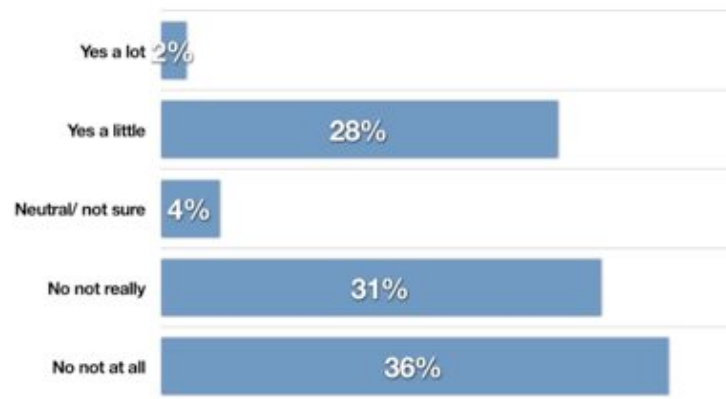
### Interested?

It was good news that the majority of respondents felt a lot or a little interested by the term industrial powerhouse but 31% ranged from not sure to not at all.



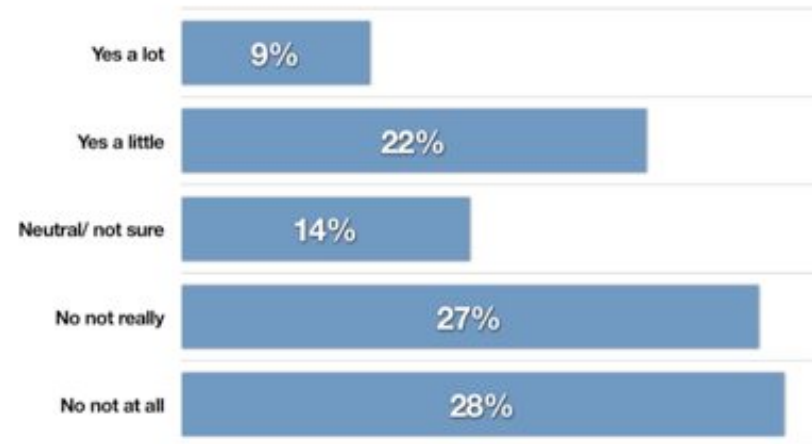
### Confused?

Baring the responses in mind it comes as little surprise that the 30% of respondents feel a lot or a little confused.



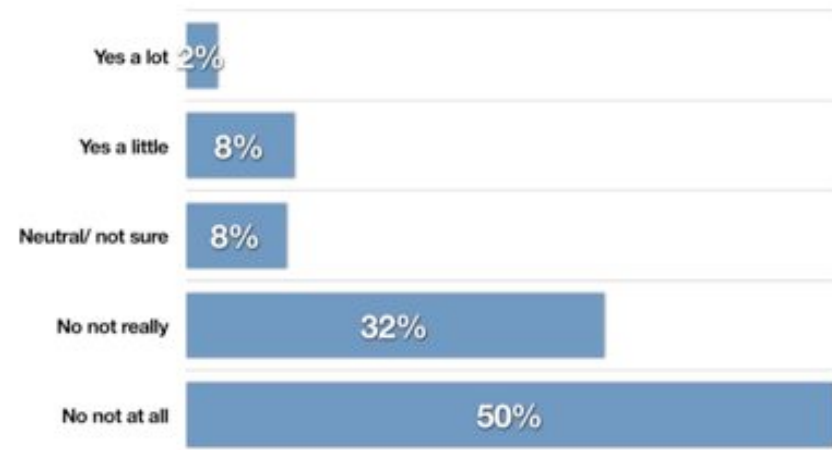
### Excited?

Few respondents were excited by the words industrial powerhouse. 69% said they were not sure, not really excited or not excited at all.



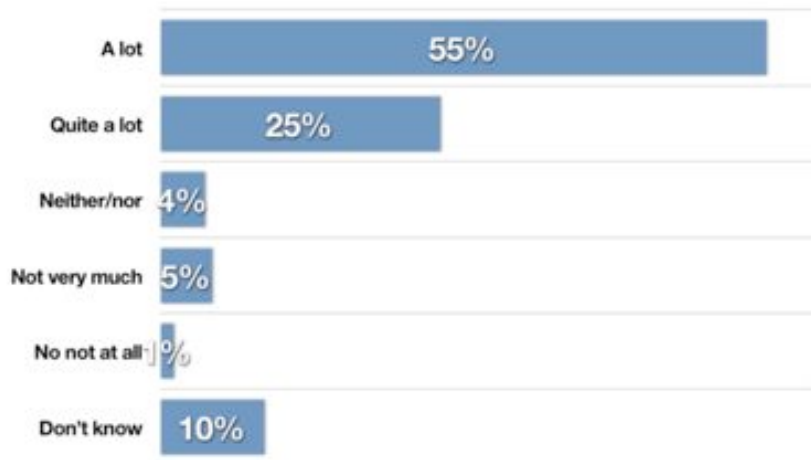
### Bored

Despite the confusion and uncertainty the respondents felt they were not bored by the proposition 82% of the respondents said they weren't bored.



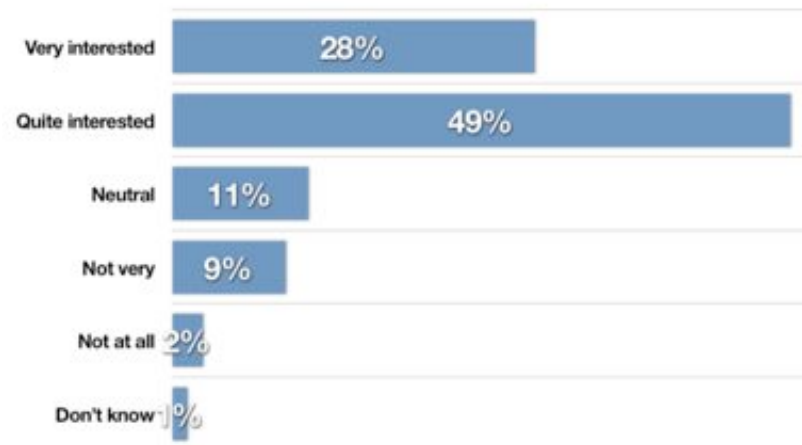
### How strongly do you associate this with the Northwest?

The association of Industrial heritage with the Northwest was very strong for 80% of respondents. This is good in terms of the project and the context of the other responses. The question does not consider the relationship that people have with their own area, for example would a respondent based in the North East or West Midlands think the same for their local area? This question cannot interrogate this but it can how a snapshot of awareness within the particular individuals questioned.



### Industrial revolution and industrial heritage – how interested are you in these areas?

Again the response showed the potential in the industrial powerhouse project. Just 9% were not very interested. This has to be taken in context of the venues the questions were asked at but it does show appetite and interest is there for the right package of information and experiences.



## CHAPTER 3 EQUITY

### One to one meetings

A series of meetings with key influencers both face to face and by telephone were conducted as part of the industrial powerhouse brand review. For the purposes of this report the responses are not attributed.

In summary it was clear that Industrial Powerhouse is not working as hard or as effectively as it has the potential to do.

#### 1. Words ‘connecting back with a ‘grimy, industrial’ past

Looking at the words ‘Industrial Powerhouse’ the interviewees felt overwhelmingly that the name didn’t work on a number of levels.

Manchester, Liverpool and Pennine Lancashire in particular have invested a great deal of effort into changing perceptions of the industrial legacy of the region and some of the respondents felt that Industrial Powerhouse was at odds or detracted with this work connecting back with a ‘grimy, industrial’ past. ‘Original, Modern’ the brand for Manchester was cited as a more successful and flexible contemporary take on ‘first industrial’

It was also felt on a more general point the words ‘Industrial’ and ‘Powerhouse’ was simply a turnoff to potential audiences.

Fundamentally and across the board of interviewees it was felt that ‘Industrial Powerhouse’ the words and the current approach was not an appropriate consumer facing brand and that somehow the current approach seemed to be tackling it ‘upside down’.

#### 2. Themes – ‘Is there a more subtle way of telling this powerful story?’

The thematic approach to promoting Industrial Powerhouse was viewed as an unsubtle and confusing way to tell a powerful story.

The thematic approach was intended to simplify the process has actually resulted in an ‘oversimplified’ offer for many the approach was ‘muddled up and disconnected set of places, venues, collections, storylines’

Some felt that the approach was too generic and in need of a complete overhaul. For some ‘powerhouse’ was interpreted as being focused on engineering and therefore not for them or their visitors

The respondents felt overwhelmingly that authenticity and experience were key, and that the current themes were unhelpful and not compelling enough. As one respondent put it, ‘should we take a step back and tell a bigger story, beyond the current themes and sites?’

The themes were also felt to be too backward looking at first glance a number of interviewees asked ‘is there a more subtle way of telling this powerful story?’

Rather than themes it was very strongly felt that storytelling and personal experiences should come to the fore. This was a way of getting over the ‘niche’ of industrial heritage enthusiasts.

It was felt the thematic approach needed to be more forward looking as it ran this risk of sounding like it’s atrophied, a respondent said ‘we need to reverse the polarity of these collections, get them out the door, connected with the contemporary world’

### **3. Implementation - 'what's in it for me?'**

Implementation was a key focus for discussion; the issues were multilayered. Whilst the brand for some is seen as useful at a partnership level; a way of getting people together to share knowledge and insights - ownership is presenting a major barrier to successful implementation, this was experienced at both the tourist board and destination level.

Some viewed the implementation so far as opportunistic to date – that applications and use had not been part of a coherent plan that partners could get on board with as part of their activity.

The themes appear to add to this confusion as the venues and organisations across the region have differing themes and priorities and therefore struggle to take a coherent message for their own marketing campaigns.

As one interviewee explained, the question is and always has been 'what's in it for me?' At the moment this benefit is not obvious to all partners, some perceive the benefit as purely financial now the programme has confirmed funding rather than seeing the bigger picture of bringing an experience together for the visitor.

A big challenge will be to 'widen ownership and buy in' by enabling participants need to see a benefit in being part of it.

Practically speaking some venues and destinations have had difficulties with the brand they see strategically it may be a useful activity, but when they have attempted to use it tactically for their own programmes it is problematic and awkward.

For this reason the Industrial Powerhouse project has often been perceived as 'activity over there' this has caused disconnect in the use and ownership of the brand by partners.

The development of a 'trail' was seen as a hindrance by some although perhaps misinterpreted in its expected use the trail was trying to link up experiences that a visitor would do in one day when in fact it was intended to provide an understandable view of the region's industrial heritage offer.

There was also a view that Industrial Powerhouse was too focused on Manchester we need to connect and implement more strongly to the rest of the region to really make an impact. This is in part due to the perception of the brand and what it is for and some partners focus not overtly focused on industrial heritage.

Implementation was naturally seen as being intrinsically linked with the product itself – what were visitors actually being driven to?

### **4. Product - the promise of an 'experience' may not be realised'**

The industrial powerhouse brand does not exist in isolation, there is work to do with the tourism industry itself, to develop the product – the visitor experience.

As one respondent put it 'the reality is there are fundamental issues on the ground with the quality of the product so the promise of an 'experience' may not be realised'. It was also felt that within this some destinations are 'not ready'

That said for those destinations that were ready it should be about putting destinations first – (destinations meaning the place – such as Manchester, Chester, etc or the specific venue).

There was a strong feeling that product development and marketing should be more closely aligned and connectivity should be encouraged with the wider offer such as to the hotels, food and leisure.

There was also discussion about the balance between mass and niche packages or products. Specialist or niche packages might be a suitable part of the offer or product but how it is incorporated will be vital as there is the drive to appeal to the wider market as a key part of the project.

It is clear that the direction for industrial powerhouse should consider that industrial heritage for many key destinations is not central to their offer so the future development of industrial powerhouse should take this into account.

A number of key influencers felt that industrial powerhouse should be more strongly linked into the current placemaking agenda – This means making places attractive for local people to spend time as well as providing places that are appealing for visitors. One leads to the other - good places to live are good places to visit.

## **5. Missed opportunities ‘how do you celebrate history without becoming trapped by it?’**

Interviewees were asked more broadly in what ways they thought industrial powerhouse could improve in the future, there were a number of strands interviewees thought were worth developing.

Most agreed that ‘word of mouth is critical’ the project needs to reach out more widely and create a buzz around what is happening.

It was felt there was an opportunity to link in more directly with more engaging ‘global’ threads and there was perhaps unexplored potential in the lifelong learning agenda.

A number of interviewees asked ‘how do we help a number of venues to market collaboratively?’ The resolution to this some thought could be in the industrial powerhouse project - planned and specific interventions and events could be the most productive way of developing it into a project which drives visitors and raises awareness.

Jeremy Deller’s Procession that formed part of the Manchester International Festival was a useful illustration of under-utilised opportunities for industrial powerhouse to link industrial heritage to today and to personal stories.

There was debate about the role of enthusiasts, some felt that a small minority were actually holding onto industrial heritage and almost making it inaccessible to the wider public, others felt that enthusiasts as both participants and audiences were under utilised and could play a central part in telling the story.

The natural and man made landscape is important in the project as this provides the backdrop to the stories and shows how the areas have evolved – it also helps link into the current story, as the entire Northwest has been shaped by industry.

Linking the industrial heritage to the modern day was a link that needed further and more rigorous exploration interviewees asked ‘how do we engage with cultural sector, R&D and local communities of today and make it relevant?’

‘Voices and stories’ – ‘real people, real histories’ was something that without exception interviewees felt was important and missing for the current offer we need ‘richer places and place-based experiences’ One respondent challenged ‘can we break out the collections and set them in the streetscapes?’

The pace of the project was also important ‘there should be an urgency, greater relevance and a reality check.’

One respondent summed this drive up ‘we need to interrogate stories and make them contemporary and relevant’

## **6. Practical issues**

As with all projects big or small scale there needs to be a keen eye on the practical issues associated with industrial powerhouse.

Interviewees were keen to emphasise the limitations of the project itself – that it is a marketing project and it can only achieve some of the wider aspirations of the interviewees with co-ordination action from the tourist boards, venues, NWDA, local councils, etc.

As an ERDF funded projects there are predefined outputs that industrial powerhouse has to meet as part of that contract.

There are training and product development issues we have to recognise And whilst it is important to broaden the reach and scope of industrial powerhouse one interviewee warned that the project ‘shouldn’t lose sight of the fact we have a critical mass of industrial heritage’.

## **CHAPTER 3 EQUITY**

### **Focus groups**

The focus groups were mixed age and interests. The group were drawn from a number of sources including people who took part in the questionnaires and alerting networks to register. Participants were selected for their spread of age, interest and occupation. There were two focus groups – one in Manchester (12 people), one in Chorley (10 people).

The focus groups were not intended to be a quantitative measure of people's behaviour but simply provide a useful snapshot into what they like to do and how they like to do it when it comes to planning leisure activity.

### **What we like to do**

Unsurprisingly for a group with such a diverse spread of age and interests the spectrum of what they liked to do was very broad. We asked the groups to select from a number of cards the key elements that constituted a good day out.

Historical, cultural, and something fun all scored highly. Most liked to feel like they were learning something but not being force-fed learning.

### **What we are looking for and how we find it**

This question relates directly to the questionnaire, in terms of how people find information.

The questionnaire highlighted the internet / websites as a first port of call for information. When this was fleshed out in the focus groups it became clear that this independent search was entwined with word of mouth and personal recommendations. This will be an important consideration in terms of the final outputs of the project.

Many people were also on mailing lists that they had joined through choice and that often were about a specific interest such as film (e.g. Cornerhouse) events, music etc, usually from the venues they were interested in. They found these sources of information particularly useful as they were relevant to their spheres of interest.

Obvious 'hygiene factors' were mentioned – shops, café's, guided tours, family friendly (although some went out of their way to avoid family friendly activities!).

Most people liked the feeling of independence on a day out, being guided or alerted to something such as a venue, event, festival was helpful but when they arrived they enjoyed most the freedom to discover elements of the place by themselves.

Leaflets were also a key part of information gathering and building understanding, often used in different ways – some people were leaflet 'junkies' and could not resist taking an armful of leaflets wherever they

go, others were more reserved taking a leaflet at the end of a visit to read at their leisure and to use for reference if they go again.

### **Words**

Participants were asked to discuss their reaction to a number of key words. This intended to provide a broad view of the responses to the words but helps us see a snapshot of people's initial gut reaction to some of the words used within the project

### **Industrial**

-Dirty, sooty, trendy (bands like All Saints), married with 'revolution' and it's exciting, Hacienda and Factory, Allan doesn't like it as it's too much like a hard day's graft and a reminder of work, cold.

### **Heritage**

-Belongs to you, pride, it's ours to see and keep, it'll be there for our children, more pleasing than industrial, crochet and crafts. industrial revolution, Vivienne Westwood. Industrial and Heritage clashes, – industrial I think of the Full Monty, heritage I think of Beatrix Potter, soft.

### **Revolution**

-Action, about to happen, has happened, pioneering, progressive, The Beatles, 1060s, Che Guevara, violence, vodka and fighting, political upheaval, Russians.

### **Powerhouse**

-Electricity, corporate (top level), Alex Reid, The Apprentice, self-important, eighties power suits - a Gladiator!!! very branded, a marketing consultancy, it should be said in an American accent, it speaks to people who aren't from the UK (e.g. American's / Australians)

### **History**

Really interesting, reminds me of school, has negative connotations of school and text books - I think of dusty old textbooks, school, museums, worst subject at school, it's a big, beautiful word, it appeals to me but not my family

### **Museum**

Crochet, suits of armour, art, I like it, museums are great, stuffed animals, glass cases, though they don't have the same stigma they used to, too many museums are dusty, musty depositories

### **Original**

Not related to industrial heritage. Geoff prefers the word 'genuine'. It's overused and people are suspicious – why would anyone need to state their originality?

### **Contemporary**

Can alienate some people. Contemporary and industrial don't really go together.

### **Modern**

Synonymous with contemporary. Makes you think of art.

#### CHAPTER 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

When John Reader penned his seminal book on cities (their growth, their history, their future) he cited Manchester as the city that would make all others 'old fashioned' if not 'obsolete'. He goes on to quote, directly, the Frenchman DeTocqueville on the subject of the first industrial city: "From this foul drain the greatest stream of human industry flows out to fertilise the whole world."

That was in 1835, in the technological, political and economic crucible that was Manchester, the city that shaped the modern world and which has the potential to do so again. Across the world, technologies were adopted and trade links established with England's Northwest. Our modern brand image was born out of these industrious times.

Now our challenge as a region is to continue to use that powerful historical and contemporary legacy of industry and innovation to shape our brand into a compelling and irresistible proposition for visitors from both near and far.

CHAPTER 4 RECOMMENDATIONS



## CHAPTER 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Reversing the messages

Much of the feedback directly or indirectly showed that the Industrial Powerhouse approach was 'upside down'. To understand what is meant by this the diagram below demonstrates the approximate proportion of the message as it currently exists in the project. Industrial Powerhouse consumes the vast majority of this then the themes only the very tenacious visitor are likely to get to the information they really want.

It was clear from the feedback that no-one (or only the very specialist!) get up in the morning and say 'I'm going to have an industrial powerhouse day!' Visitors are looking for something to do that brings in multiple layers of desires from a day out or something to do.



In reality visitors (local and from further afield) are more likely to seek things to do and places to go in the reverse – something more similar to the diagram below. Where the 'brand' is much lower down in the mix and the promise and accessibility to information of a quality destination and experience takes priority.

### 2. Brought to you by...

This approach takes 'Industrial Powerhouse' into a 'supported by' or 'brought to you by' role and takes events, campaigns or interventions to the top of the mix. By doing this Industrial Powerhouse becomes much freer to promote and support events that capture the imagination and interest of potential visitors.



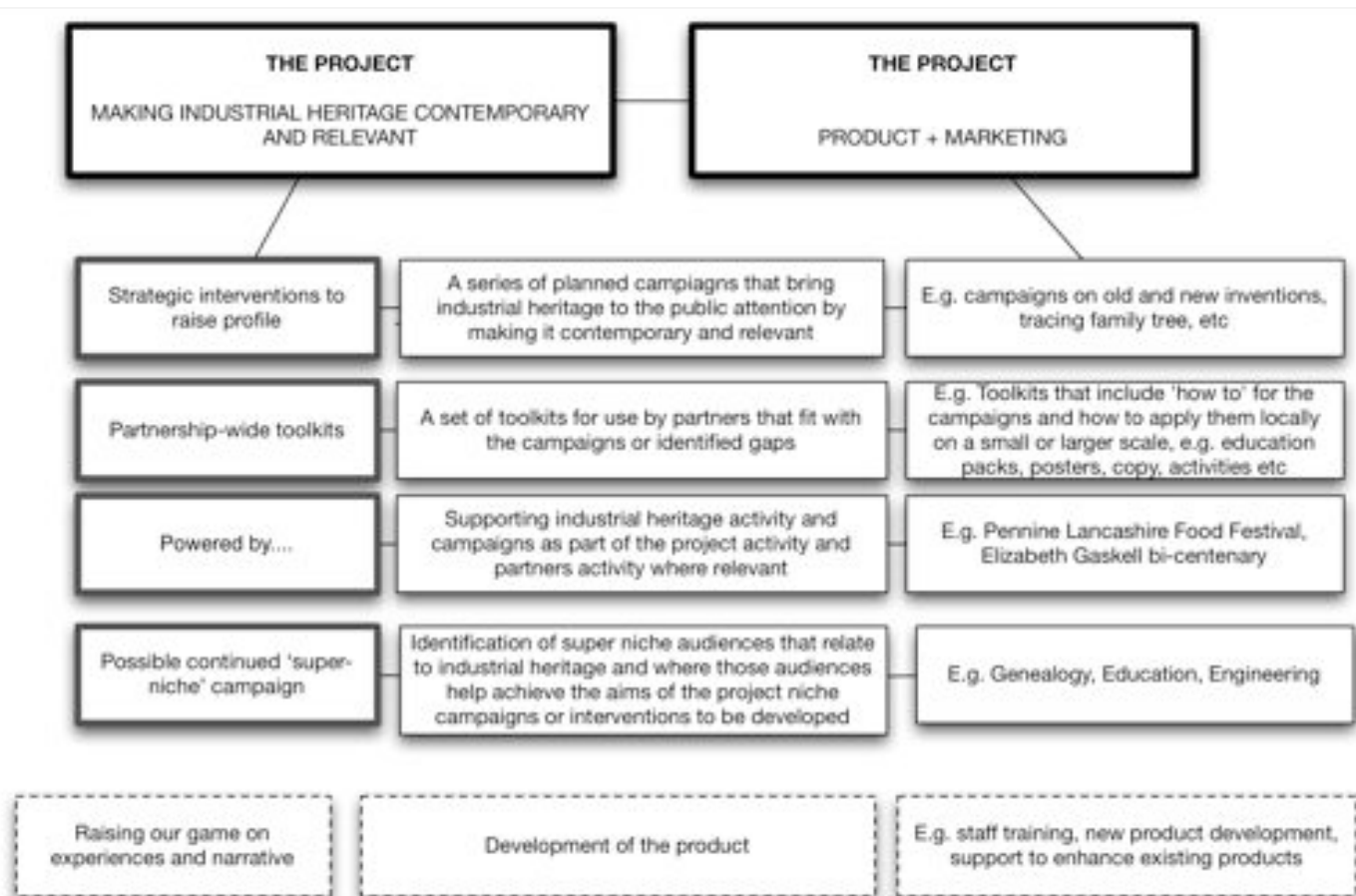
### 3. Approach

#### 1. Making industrial heritage contemporary and relevant

The momentum that should drive the industrial powerhouse project is to make industrial history contemporary and relevant. This should be intrinsic to the development of the look and feel, the 'brought to you by name' the toolkits and any super niche campaigns

#### 2. Marketing and product are intrinsically linked

To be successful the marketing and the product must work together. The marketing can't make a promise that the product doesn't deliver, the product is enhanced through high quality and relevant marketing. The project (Industrial powerhouse) cannot deliver this in isolation and so has to work hand in hand with product development to achieve something genuinely impactful.



### **3. Strategic interventions / campaigns**

The strategic interventions or campaigns allow the industrial powerhouse project to develop a stronger and more interesting narrative about industrial heritage. These campaigns would be developed and led by the Industrial Powerhouse project team and would through the toolkits bring on board venues, organisations and places that choose or are encouraged to get on board with the campaign.

The interventions may include a variety of tools - PR, events and stunts, advertising, online presence, toolkits, printed materials, film, etc.

### **4. Partnership wide toolkits**

Subject to the type of interventions or campaigns developed the toolkits could provide a variety of tools to implement on the ground from the simple poster through to educational tools or staff briefings. These toolkits will need to be easy to use and distribute and will be provided online.

### **5. Powered by / brought to you by**

The powered by / brought to you by aspect of the project will be used as part of the campaign or interventions so it is clear who is driving the activity but as the diagram on p31 demonstrates this will be lower down in the mix than Industrial Powerhouse was previously. This also provides a useful way of the project aligning with existing activity either with a direct industrial heritage focus or where industrial heritage can be brought in with a light touch for example food festivals, music events, etc.

### **6. Possible super niche campaign**

The role of super niche campaigns will still be part of the project but in a more focused and targeted way. The important part of the super niche campaigns will be that they help the project achieve its objectives as defined by the ERDF contract. This means that super niche still has to drive visitors and demonstrate uptake, for this reason areas like education and genealogy may prove more 'profitable' than other specialist areas.

### **7. Raising our game on experience and narratives**

Raising the game means bringing the standard and the expectation up on what partners deliver on the ground. This is something the project can enhance by providing the focus for connected campaigns that capture the imagination of the public and providing the toolkits to enhance and enable delivery.

But it will require the input and commitment of partners and product developers to really make an impact. It is important that the partners and stakeholders understand that the marketing cannot achieve this alone

## **8. Naming**

It is clear from the feedback and focus groups that the name Industrial Powerhouse is not connecting with audiences or partners. For this reason we strongly recommend that a new name is developed for the project and that Industrial powerhouse is no longer used in copy or any kind of tagline.

This name will be used for the powered by / brought to you by brand and by the project team. The naming process should be creative and will consider the feedback from focus groups and opinion leaders.

## **9. Look and feel**

Having campaigns or interventions will allow the look and feel of the project to tailor the look and feel to certain interests and audiences rather than being restricted into one format.

However there also needs to be a level of recognition that is subtle but consistent within these campaigns or interventions that connects the project to each specific activity. This may include a logo or logotype, colours, imagery, etc.

## **10. Audiences**

The audience for the industrial powerhouse project has the potential to be all encompassing and has been previously which has led to the dilution of the message. The definition of audiences will help define the interventions and super-niche campaigns and vice versa depending on the level of need and interest.

However the audience is not something that should be defined in this recommendations report but it that will come out of the strategy to follow. Therefore the 'powered by / brought to you by' brand should consider the many potential different audiences and applications in future use.

## Appendix

### Industrial Powerhouse Outputs

#### Overall

- Number of day visits
- UK overnight visits within NW
- UK overnight visits outside NW
- £economic impact of major events
- £economic impact of tourism marketing

#### Project objectives

- Increase economic benefit from International visits from £1.3m to £3.9m
- Increase economic benefit from contributory impact from £4.6m to £13.4m
- Increase bed nights from contributory visits from 12,000 to 36,000
- Increase bednights from 'international industrial powerhouse' visits from 8227 to 24,000
- Increase visits to key anchor sites from 59% of contacts to 69% by 2012
- Increase average visits per annum from visit beyond the Northwest but within the UK from 2.2 to 3 by 2012. Increase the visits from within the Northwest from 3.3 to 4 visits per annum by 2012.
- Marketing campaigns in national and international markets including e-marketing, profile at travel, trade and consumer shows and events with a reach of approximately 1m potential visitors per annum
- Increase database contacts from 6,000 to 20,000
- Achieve advertising value equivalent (AVE) of £500,000 for PR in national / international consumer, travel trade media per annum
- Enhanced interpretation at a minimum of five key sites using the latest technology, e.g. Bluetooth, GPS
- Create one job – project manager within Marketing Manchester

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#### Activities and outputs

- Delivery enhanced marketing activity in relation to the three thematic campaigns

#### Deliver marketing and promotional schemes to:

- Increased PR and advertising activities
- Increased partnership development with tourism providers
- Activities of direct marketing – e.g. print, websites, etc
- Online booking systems
- Development and distribution of brochures and leaflets within the region and beyond

#### Outcomes and wider effects

- Increased branding of key regional themes
- Increased marketing of regional tourism offer and potential
- Increased diversification of the region's tourism offer
- Increased marketing reach beyond the boundary of the region and achievement of regional and sub regional policy objectives

#### Strategic fit

The regional thematic marketing programme is a Northwest campaign with the primary objective of increasing visitor spend in the region through the focused and intensive promotion of the following;

- Industrial Powerhouse – promoting the region's industrial history and heritage with a focus upon key anchor attractions

Through increased resource and capacity, the existing campaigns will be in a position to deliver a more effective and efficient range of marketing initiatives including the following

- PR and advertising to develop and promote thematic brand awareness at regional, national and international levels

- Direct marketing to retain existing and attract new visitors to the region and to the promoted activities specifically including major events
- Utilisation of enhanced methods of emerging information technologies to raise awareness and enable more simplified bookings via the internet
- Targeted trade and consumer exhibitions to raise the profile of the activities and their offers
- Use of high quality photography and rich media content to promote the region's asset base to all across media channels
- Development of partnerships with other public, private and third sector organisations to promote the delivery of new thematic tourism products to the regional marketplace
- Funding will provide opportunities to significantly enhance the branding and awareness of the campaigns both within and outside the regions

What outcomes will the project deliver?

- Rebranding the current thematic campaign
- Increased partnership working with the private sector and other tourism providers
- A series of trade and consumer events
- New visitor packages including the identification of new industrial and heritage trails
- Increased opportunities for e-commerce, including a new online web portal
- Enhanced linkages with other projects and initiatives across the region
- Provision of universal business assistance through annual conferences
- Enhanced advertising and PR activity