

Digital Information Boards

Cadent Lane Rental Industry Publication

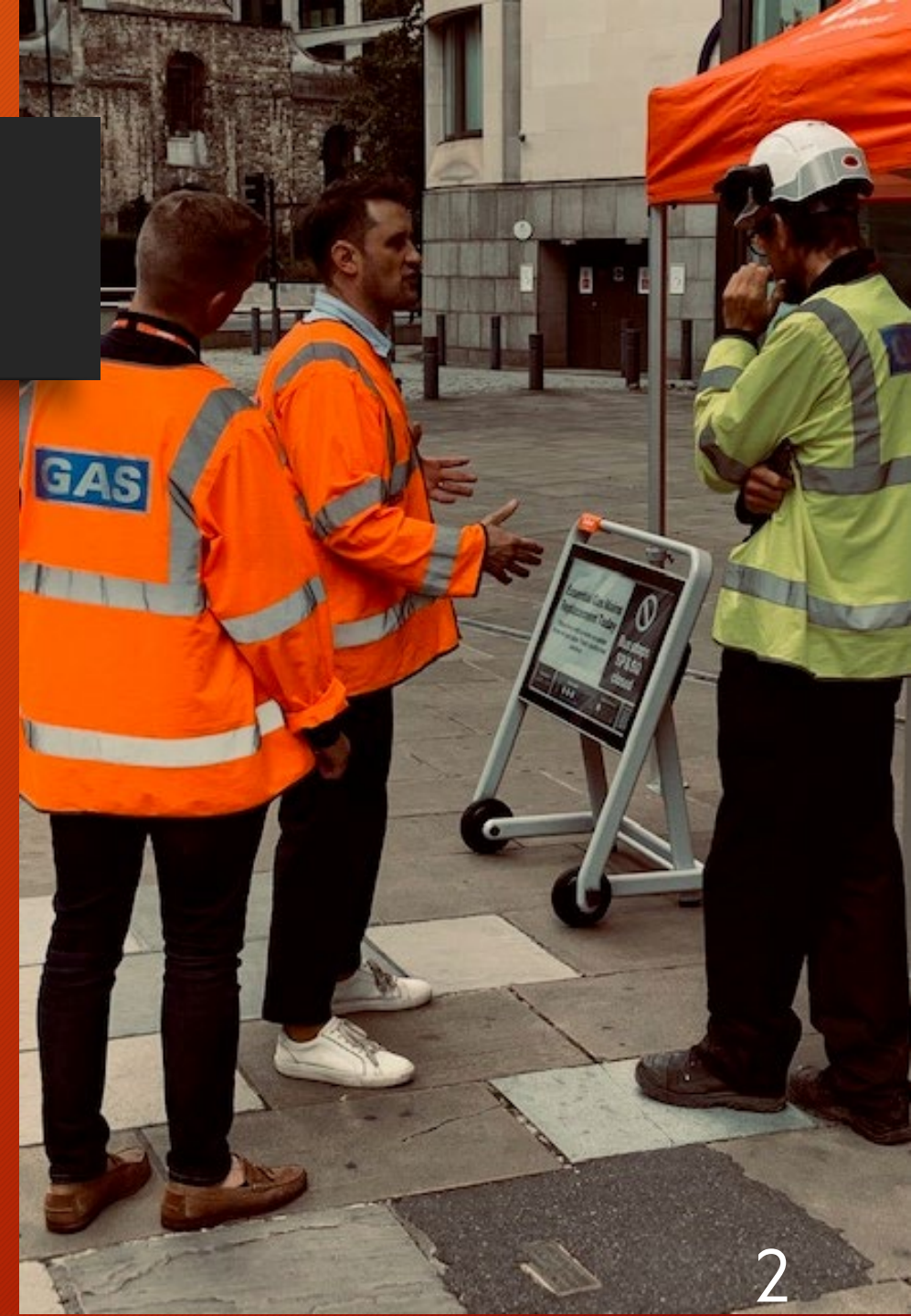


Introduction

To keep daily life flowing in the Capital requires approximately 500,000 works to take place each year. Temporary traffic signs are required when undertaking street and road works which must be clear, concise, legible, and consistent across all the contractors who carry this out on behalf of utility companies and highway authorities. This is particularly important where journeys pass through multiple locations/works to avoid confusion.

Traditionally, information relating specifically to the works taking place has been limited to standard text on plastic boards (in some instances written by hand) detailing the permit reference and estimated end date, along with relevant traffic management signage. Limiting information in this way, can be detrimental to public perception of the sector, especially when delays outside of a contractor's control occurs or in instances where no visible work is taking place.

To increase customer awareness around the necessity of works and the processes involved, Cadent set out to develop and trial a digital display board which could provide live site information to the travelling public.



The Project

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The aim was to provide key information to all travel modes, as well as businesses in the vicinity who may be affected by works, to improve customer experience. After contacting several stakeholders to establish any known solutions which could be trialled, it was determined that nothing of this nature was available within the sector, so alternative options were sought.

Cadent purposefully approached businesses with limited knowledge of the sector, for an independent and fresh perspective. As a result, Phantom, a digital marketing company with technology, marketing and communications experience, were chosen to work in partnership with the project team. Research identified live information could be displayed on a board, powered by clean energy, and therefore no greater impact than that of traditional methods.

Following initial discussions, a concept was developed, with consideration around transportation, logistics and live data distribution. A working prototype of a paper cast ink screen was then produced by industrial design consultants, which included the development of a bespoke frame and back-office management system. Delivered over the course of 2 months, the finished article, took into account relevant environmental and safety requirements.

Outcomes

Live trials of the boards were scheduled for February 2020, however the pandemic delayed these until late July 2020. During the trials the frame and armoured screen were tested to document performance and durability under different site and weather conditions, with positive outcomes identified.

In addition, clean air monitors were added to the units, capturing emissions data at street level which could be developed further in future, for use as part of TfL's healthy streets approach under the Mayor's Transport Strategy.

The customer information board was found to be capable of providing the public with regular updates remotely using a digital display and it's durable and sturdy design was easily transported between sites, crucial in London's high footfall areas.

Feedback from the public, operatives and other sector stakeholders, was positive across all those engaged and the project received a nomination for the Roadworks Charter Awards 2020 for Best Use of Lane Rental Funding.



Conclusion

The units worked well in all environments and provided the additional benefit of emissions data capture.

With positive feedback received from all stakeholders, the project was a clear success and received interest from multiple parties for use on their respective sites.

Overall, the objective to deliver real-time information was achieved, with the development of the back-office management system in demonstrating that this approach has the potential to become mainstream.

The project team will now investigate how this could be scaled up for business as usual use.



TfL Lane Rental Scheme

Optimising customer journeys through the delivery of safer, innovative and sustainable roadworks



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