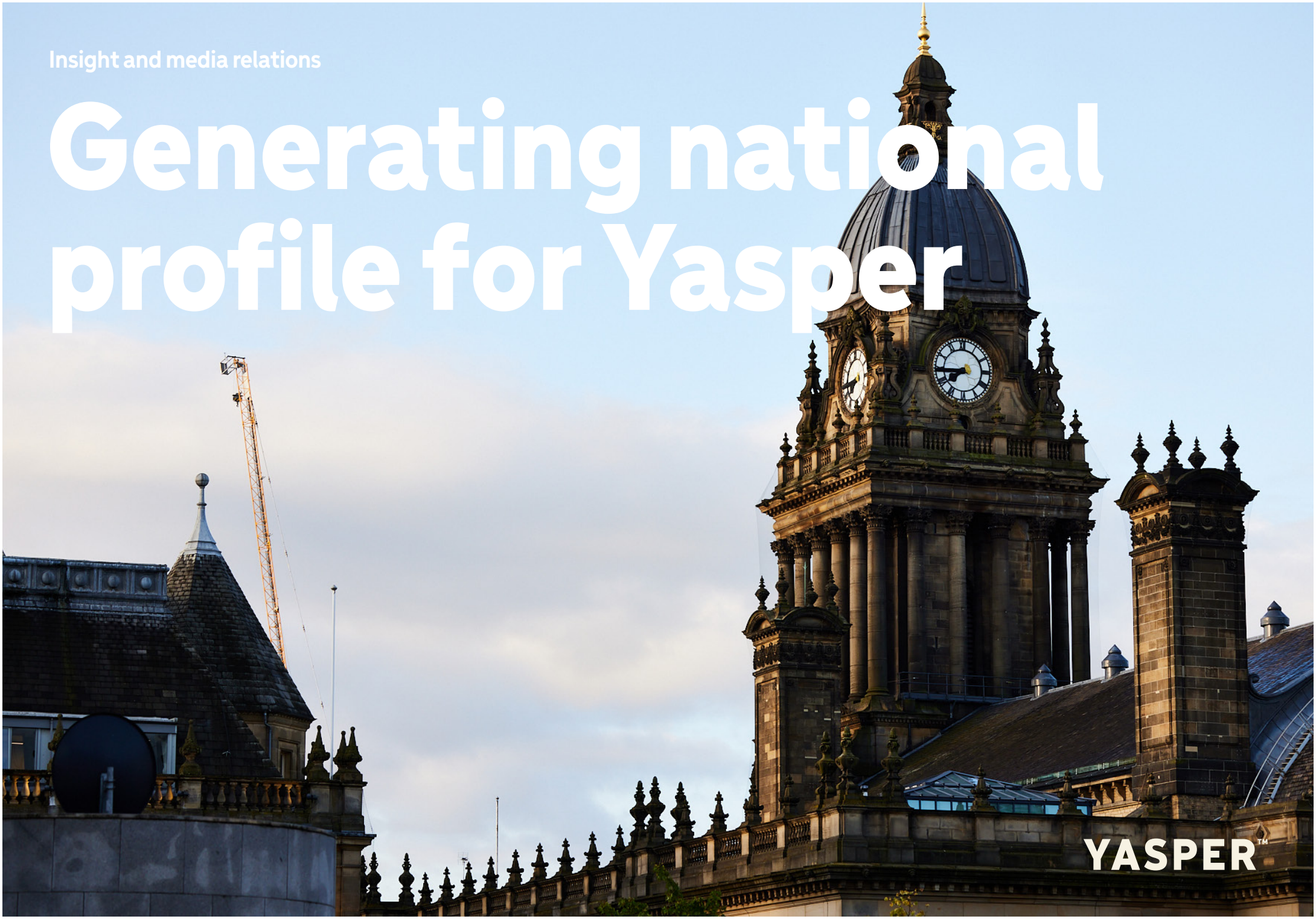
Insight and media relations

Generating national profile for Yasper



What

When launching Yasper, we knew that it would be important to generate cut-through and brand awareness. As a new business, we were keenly aware of how important it would be to create a digital footprint on trusted news sites in order to improve our website's domain authority. We wanted to get across our insight-led approach, while also showcasing our copywriting, design and media relations credentials.

We came up with the idea of creating a series of insight reports, which would capture an important subject, gather third-party data and analyse trends in order to create newsworthy content. While we wanted to host the reports on our website, we also knew it was important to capture data on potential customers.

An intriguing mayoral race where levelling up is a key question

OPINION

Julian Pearce

Traditionally if you were to think of North Yorkshire politically, your thoughts would turn Tory blue.

But look at constituency level polling for some of the areas within the electoral division, and the picture isn't so clear. Later this year, York itself could well return two Labour MPs and there's even talk of Harrogate turning out for the Lib Dems.

Add these ingredients together and what we have is a mayoral race unlike any before.

Sandwiched between the West Yorkshire powerhouse and the Tees Valley city, which has forged its own path, this new electoral area is geographically enormous and incorporates industry, spa towns, seaside resorts, mile upon mile of farmland, and Yorkshire's historic capital.

And what's been seen to date is an energetic and high-profile campaign from two highly credible, front-runners in: David Skaith (Labour) and Keane Duncan (Conservative).

Both have set out their stall to deal with the area's significant challenges – transport and housing being cited among them.

So far, we have seen an election campaign fought on local issues. Both candidates have been hitting the streets and the doorstep, making the case why voters should place their trust in them.

A mayor for York and North Yorkshire represents a new kind of devolution.

Comparing the area to Greater Manchester or the West Midlands is like comparing chalk and cheese.

Priorities will be different; the demographic of the electorate will be different; and the way the new mayor operates will have to be different.

This will be the most rural mayoralty to date, and it will afford the winner the ability to set out their own stall as the, ever-evolving a rural influencer.

But don't make the mistake of thinking that the role will play second fiddle to the metro-mayors of the North.

The new mayor will hold significant sway over policy and play a leading part in representing the unique mix of urban and rural communities.

Not only will this be an important role for the region, but there is the opportunity for this election to be a blueprint for rural representation.

Levelling up our rural areas is just as important a task as in the towns and cities. Housing is one of the most acute challenges that a new mayor will need to address.

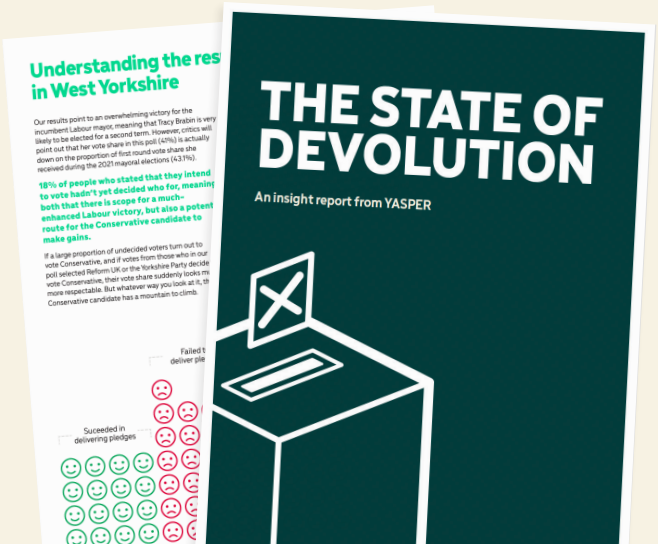
It's not so much about finding suitable sites for new developments – they exist – it's about ensuring that they're built in a way that is sensitive to the needs of all, working alongside the private sector in a constructive and ultimately effective manner.

Similarly, kickstarting regeneration and industry – ensuring there is a steady supply of high-quality jobs for local people, will be a topic that needs urgent attention. Again, the fund is there, and a new mayor needs to take hold urgently.

Yorgov's polling in the neighbouring areas of West Yorkshire and the Tees Valley presents a mixed picture when it comes to the public perception of mayors and a salient lesson for those aspiring to this new role.

While the public generally seems to agree that mayors can play a role in levelling up, many still question their effectiveness.

The York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority will be working flat out to engage voters.



How

Knowing that 2024 would be a pivotal year for politics in the UK, we wanted to deliver unique insights that would be valuable to our potential audiences. We came up with the idea of creating political polling that would look at two key mayoral races in the north and pass judgement on the wider levelling-up agenda.

We commissioned British Polling Council member Censuswide to survey 1,000 people in two mayoral areas: West Yorkshire and the Tees Valley. We worked with knowledgeable journalists, businesses and representative organisations to arrive at a set of questions we believed would deliver valuable insights.

We worked to secure exclusive opinion pieces from two candidates in another mayoral race – North Yorkshire – providing additional value for our audiences. We then worked with regional and national journalists to help ensure the story got the coverage it deserved.

180%

monthly increase in web-traffic compared to rolling average

248 pieces

of media coverage across print and digital

3 insight reports

generated, gathering 50 new data captures

Results

Upon launch, we generated immediate cut-through with key media titles. Having spoken with multiple national and regional journalists, we timed the release of the data for maximum impact and coverage.

Our work to sell-in the story ahead of publication resulted in 248 pieces of on- and offline coverage, all mentioning Yasper and most quoting us. National coverage included the Daily Express, Mirror, Independent, i News, and MailOnline. We also secured outstanding regional coverage in the likes of the Yorkshire Post, Yorkshire Live, and Teesside Live.

The timing of the report going live generated tens of thousands of engagements of social media, including celebrity interactions with the likes of football pundit Jeff Stelling and presenter Steph McGovern.

We led the agenda on this type of polling, with several other more established organisations following suit. In a key year for politics, we ensured that Yasper was front and centre of the debate.

YASPER™