

## CIT MARKETING STUDENTS COLLABORATE WITH CORK AIRPORT TO DEVELOP COMPETITIVE MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS PROPOSALS



### BACKGROUND

Cork Airport is the second-largest of the three principal international airports in the Republic of Ireland, after Dublin and ahead of Shannon. It is located 6.5 km south of Cork city in an area known as Farmers Cross. In 2018, Cork Airport handled 2,392,821 passengers, a 3.7% annual increase. The beginning of 2019 brought the launch of a new advertising campaign for Cork Airport across several channels including radio, out of home, online display, social and email. The overall objective of the campaign is to grow passenger numbers and increase the Cork Airport market share point across Munster. The new campaign includes the launch of the new tagline, 'Love Taking Off' and subtle repositioning of the brand to better connect with and inspire customers.

### THE NEED

Over 50 direct services currently operate out of Cork Airport. Yet potential customers in Munster turn to Dublin Airport, due in part to a lack of knowledge of these routes, and the greater variety of destinations and schedule options available from Dublin. Fourth-year Marketing students were tasked with developing competitive marketing communications proposals for Cork Airport, to support their newly launched campaign. With a budget of €30,000, the vision for these proposals was to make Cork Airport the airport of choice for passengers throughout Munster. The target market for the campaign should be people from counties in Munster who are currently using Dublin Airport. The Cork Airport team felt that this collaboration with students provided an opportunity to appeal to a new younger audience that weren't currently flying from Cork Airport. Students were given detailed briefings from members of the Marketing team at Cork Airport, who gave significant time to answer questions and give feedback on the students' ideas throughout the semester.

### THE SOLUTION

Twenty-five student teams presented their proposals to the Cork Airport marketing and management team. The top four teams were chosen to compete in the Student Challenge event, held in partnership with the Marketing Institute of Ireland. Some of the finalists' proposals included:

- 'De Love Bugs', which involved the creation of storyboards for video advertisements using mascot advertising. The focus was to tell an emotional story in a quirky and humorous way.
- #WeGetYou, which was centred on an emotional video portraying two fictional characters as they mark various milestones in their lives travelling from Cork Airport.
- 'Close To Your Heart', which recommended the use of experiential marketing involving a pop-up event at a number of locations around Munster. Participants would take a personality test to identify their dream holiday location and then explore that location through a virtual reality headset.

### BENEFITS OF THE ENGAGEMENT

By unanimous decision, the winning team of Claire Smith and Joanne Hegener was announced ('De Love Bugs' campaign). These two talented CIT marketing students were the grateful beneficiaries of a €2,500 bursary from Cork Airport. Another finalist, Zoe Hendrick, was chosen to undertake a three-month paid internship with the Marketing team at Cork Airport.

The benefit to Cork airport was gaining fresh innovative ideas from the students which they can implement in upcoming campaigns.



L-R, Michele McManus and Lisa Scannell, Marketing lecturers in MTU, Pío Fenton, Head of Marketing & International Business in MTU, Ray Loughheed, MII Cork Chairperson, Gerard O'Donovan, Head of Faculty of Business and Humanities in MTU, Kathryn O'Dwyer, Digital Marketing Specialist, Cork Airport, Kevin Cullinane, Head of Communications and CMO, Cork Airport, and the winning team, Claire Smith and Joanne Hegener.

**"We were really inspired working with the students, who exceeded our expectations. The students came up with fresh, innovative ideas, and within each pitch there were excellent outputs. We will be selecting a number of ideas from all pitches and executing them over the next few months."**

**- Niall McCarthy, Managing Director of Cork Airport**