

Rolling out the Rainbow Carpet: Pride 2019

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This year's Pride celebrations were especially poignant as it is also 50 years since the Stonewall Riots, and the importance of pride events remains just as potent – for both celebration and education.

Pride week last year proved that flying a rainbow flag speaks volumes in declaring an area a 'safe space', and so it returned yet again. This is in addition to our permanently renamed meeting room, Barbara (after Barbara Gittings) which serves as a perpetual reminder of our commitment to inclusivity and diversity at MediaCom.. Along with the visual reminder of our commitment to growing the inclusive culture at MediaCom, we held a week of events which gave a platform to new opinions and opportunities to ask questions.

We had Dr Richard Williams join us from SOAS University to talk about how universal

queer identities are and the history and music of queer communities around the world. We had Tag Warner, CEO of GayTimes come in and talk candidly about the importance of pride, the role of businesses, and the fantastic work of Amplifund; a partner of MediaCom's that works to amplify LGBT+ voices in communities globally. In the spirit of celebrating diversity, Thursday saw MediaCommers flock to the rooftop with a visit from the fabulous Madonna Kebab who hosted an evening of drag-bingo.

Throughout the week, a selection of MediaCommers shared their pride stories; these recollected the writers' feelings of pride and what feeling proud means to them. Space was created for questions to be asked anonymously and answered by our LGBT+ group: from how to support a friend who's just come out to how to be the best ally.

In addition, we were lucky enough to have further support from some of our suppliers who kindly enabled the week to be even bigger and better. Special thanks must go to BuzzFeed, Twitter, Mail Metro Media and Quantcast for their support and treats.

"I.D, our brilliant LGBTQ+ resource group, put their collective heart and soul into our Pride activities this year and they did a great job! But the reason the group exists is to ensure that this isn't just about one week. This education, celebration and sharing of experiences is part and parcel of what we do at MediaCom. We're so grateful for the multitude of passionate voices driving change and enriching our culture." – Nancy Lengthorn, Head of Diversity and Inclusion at MediaCom UK.

Saturday saw twenty MediaCommers join other GroupM agencies within the PrideM network to march and show support at (perhaps the biggest yet) Pride in London. For the first time since participating in Pride in London, the network were able to secure a float which promoted the GroupM message of #AllMeansAll .

There is still work to be done; brands are being increasingly called upon to consider what

they are giving back when they take from a community. However, whilst rainbow-washing remains a strong topic of debate in the community, some of the biggest brands are now beginning to 'walk the walk' as well as 'talk the talk'.

At MediaCom, our feeling of pride isn't limited to one week; the work to continue to grow the diverse and inclusive environment that we are lucky to be working in isn't over.

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