



Client: *NHS Blood & Transplant*  
Campaign: *Bleed For England*  
Category: *Not-For-Profit*



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

We're excited to tell you how Pablo helped NHS Blood & Transplant (NHSBT) empower the nation to Bleed For England.

### OBJECTIVE

To generate 100,000 new blood donor registrations during a national distraction: The Rugby World Cup.

### SCALE OF THE TASK

There are 8,000 blood transfusions in the UK every day. Meeting this demand requires more blood than you would think. But because blood doesn't last long in storage, new donations are always needed. This urgent need is married with the shocking fact only 3% of us are registered donors. By the autumn of 2015, NHSBT needed 100,000 new registrations to maintain secure levels. However, at this time, The Rugby World Cup gripped Britain and NHSBT were acutely aware that the distraction of major national and sporting events historically sees registrations drop by up to 25%.

## KEY RESULTS

- Registrations **up 30% year on year** when they might have been expected to drop by up to 25%
- A daily registration **record of 1,315** beating the previous daily record of 1,190
- A campaign record of **101,295 registrations** delivered in 10 weeks, more than any other NHSBT campaign ever before
- Cost per registration slashed from **£34 to just £19.50** during the campaign
- Attendance at blood donation sessions **increased 117%** year on year

## THE CAMPAIGN APPROACH

- Bleed for England mixed passion for rugby and patriotism through a suite of compelling, player-led, online and offline content and a powerful call to action
- It generated huge amounts of organic press and social attention– including celebrity and third-party endorsements that added significantly to registration numbers

## A WORTHY WINNER

There is no better effect marketing can have than saving a human life. With Bleed for England, Pablo and NHSBT have saved or improved up to 300,000 of them.

## THE STRUCTURE OF OUR ENTRY

Our paper has 3 sections:

1. The Strategic Context
2. Executing our Integrated Campaign
3. The Result

### 1. THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

*A constant need for blood*

NHSBT need more blood than you think. Around 8,000 blood transfusions take place every day in the UK and all of this blood comes from voluntary donations made by members of the public.

While many of us might think donated blood is used mainly for emergencies, it is vital for a wide variety of life-saving procedures. Donated blood is split into its constituent parts so that one donation can go on to help up to three different people:

NHSBT's goal is to consistently hold four days of supplies, but it faces a persistent supply problem. Donated blood does not last long in storage. Red blood cells have a shelf life of just 35 days and platelets last only 7, so fresh donations are always needed.

With just 3% of the UK population registered to give blood - and the mandatory 8-week gap between donations - NHSBT are dependant on the generosity of a very small group of donors to maintain supplies to help the thousands of people who need it.

## *The marketing challenge*

By the autumn of 2015, NHSBT needed to attract 100,000 new registrations to guarantee secure levels of supply. Pablo was asked to help them achieve just this.

To add to our challenge however, this hole in registrations needed to be filled during the 2015 Rugby World Cup. Previous experience had taught NHSBT that major national and sporting events could distract potential donors. In the past these events have seen levels of registration routinely fall by up to 25% as people's attention is focused elsewhere.

## *Getting to our insight*

During moments of national pride such as the Rugby World Cup, a wave of emotion sweeps through the hearts of sports fans that all want to see their country succeed. Around the world, millions of rugby fans watch in awe as their national heroes make physical sacrifices on the field of play. At Pablo we wondered whether, rather than letting this enthusiasm distract from the drive to generate registrations, we could use it to our advantage.



Pablo's approach to tackling the problem was informed by a unique insight tool developed by the agency: 'The Sports Panel'. This proprietary panel of experts gives us quick access to elite athletes, coaches, back room staff and physiologists from across the sporting world. It has helped us develop powerful insights that bring consumers and brands closer to sport.

In one of our panel meetings we discussed how during large, international sporting events like the Rugby World Cup, fans around the world often marvel at athletes so dedicated to their home nations that they willingly bleed for their countries. Blood is a common sight on the rugby field and is a mark of dedication and commitment, but this is in stark contrast to the fans' own behaviour. Only 3% of us in the UK routinely give our blood to help others.

Our strategy was inspired by this contrast between the commitment and patriotism of the rugby players during the tournament and the admiration, but inertia, of the fans. We decided to encourage ordinary people to show the same strength of character as the players they admire and 'Bleed for England'.

## 2. EXECUTING OUR INTEGRATED CAMPAIGN

NHSBT does not have large budgets and so to support this initiative our media selection focused largely on four online films and promoted posts and tweets on Facebook and Twitter. What little budget we did have allowed for some low-weight TV and a series of outdoor posters.

The success of our strategy relied heavily on the power our content - featuring well-known Rugby World Cup winners and current England players - to engage fans; as well as on the ubiquity of social media during RWC 2015.

Our campaign launched with a 3-minute online film called 'Making of the Rose'.

# PABLO

This features 4 well-known former English Rugby World Cup winners - Jonny Wilkinson, Martin Johnson, Matt Dawson and Ben Kay - giving blood for the very first time. As their blood is taken, each talks about the pride they felt when they first pulled on an England jersey to play for their country. Then they talk about how blood donated by ordinary Britons has made a difference to their lives or the lives of their family and close friends.

At the same time, a few drops of their blood (called a run-on and usually used for testing) are set aside, mixed with red ink and water and used by visual artist David Bayo to paint a dramatic image of England rugby's rose emblem. We watch as the English rose is created from the blood-water mixture behind the players' voice-overs.

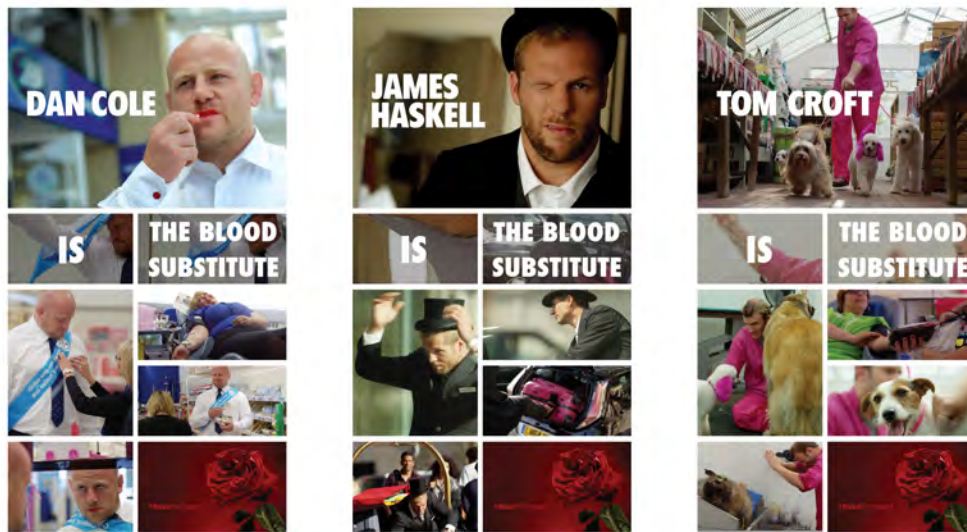
Images of this 'blood rose' art, the players and their reasons for donating were later featured in our outdoor executions.



## MAKING OF THE ROSE

We continued to build the link between the commitment of international rugby players and blood donation in 3 further online films.

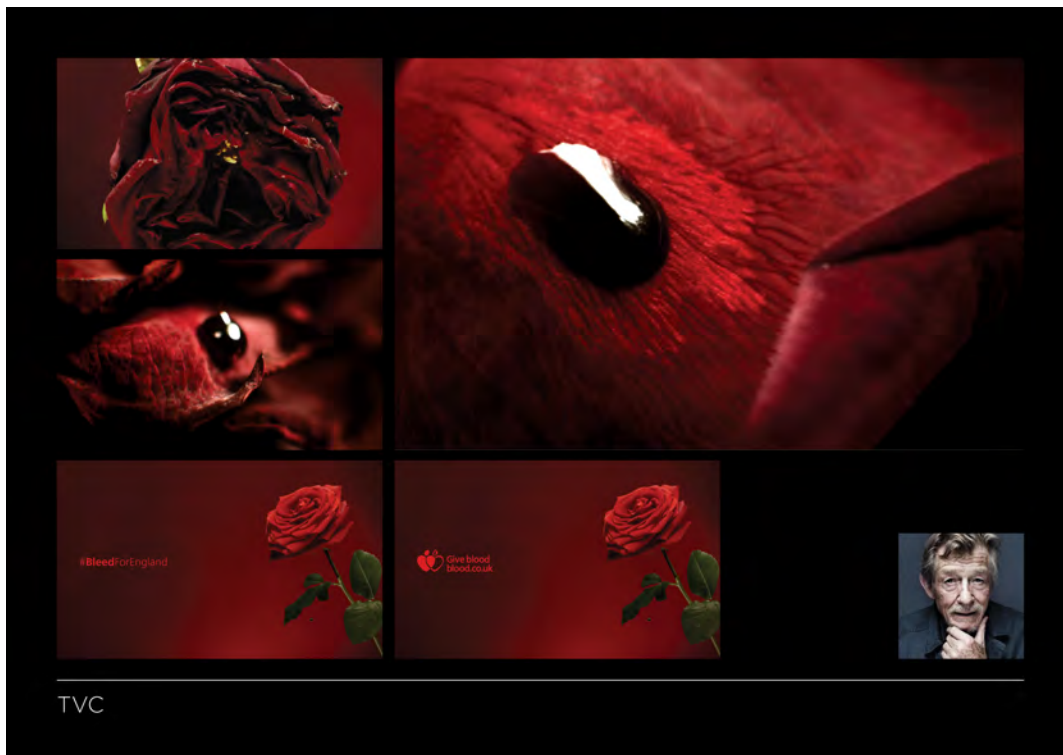
For health reasons, the current England squad are barred from donating blood during the season. Instead, in light-hearted short films, England stars Dan Cole, James Haskell and Tom Croft 'substitute' for a member of staff at a branch of Boots, a doorman at the London Hilton and an employee at a Leicestershire pet grooming centre, so that an employee can be free to attend a blood donation session. A series of promoted tweets and Facebook posts drove awareness of these online films.



THE BLOOD SUBSTITUTES

*The rugby stars featured in 4 our films all gave us their time for free.*

As well as this online content we also had a small budget for broadcast TV. The TVC used the powerful and evocative voice of the actor Sir John Hurt over a shot of an iconic but withered English, red rose. We learn from him that 'less than 3% of people support England in a way that matters' and that the nation needs 100,000 new donors.

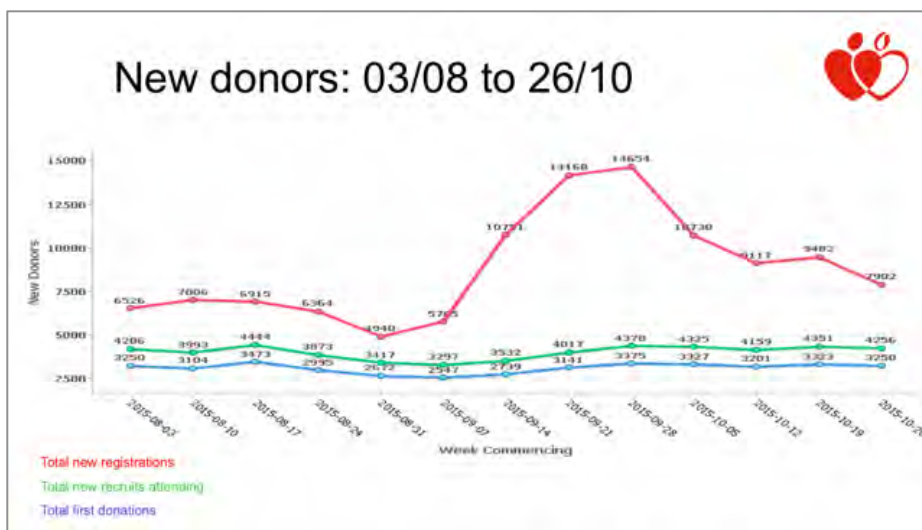


As we listen, a few drops of blood are seen falling onto the petals of the rose – the England rugby team’s emblem. The donated blood revives the wilting flower as Sir John Hurt’s voiceover urges us to ‘Do something amazing and bleed for England.’

### 3. THE RESULTS

#### *Record registration levels*

And, at the end of the 10-week campaign, Bleed for England delivered a total **101,295 registrations**. This equates to 1,315 new donor registrations a day, a record number of daily registrations for any NHSBT campaign.



And, at a time when registrations were expected to dip by up to 25%, we actually saw a 30% year on year increase.

It is still early days, but the number of new registrations becoming donors and attending a centre from this campaign is currently running at 41.5%. Each one of these donations can positively impact the lives of at least three people in need of blood or blood products.

#### *Unleashing the power of social channels*

Many of these new registrations came via social channels. Traffic to blood.co.uk from social increased by 117% year on year for the campaign period and appointments increased by 86%. 79% of sessions coming direct from social were from new visitors.

Our Bleed for England films attracted 20 million campaign impressions via VOD. Those posted on Facebook received overwhelmingly positive comments and enjoyed record high rates of completion.

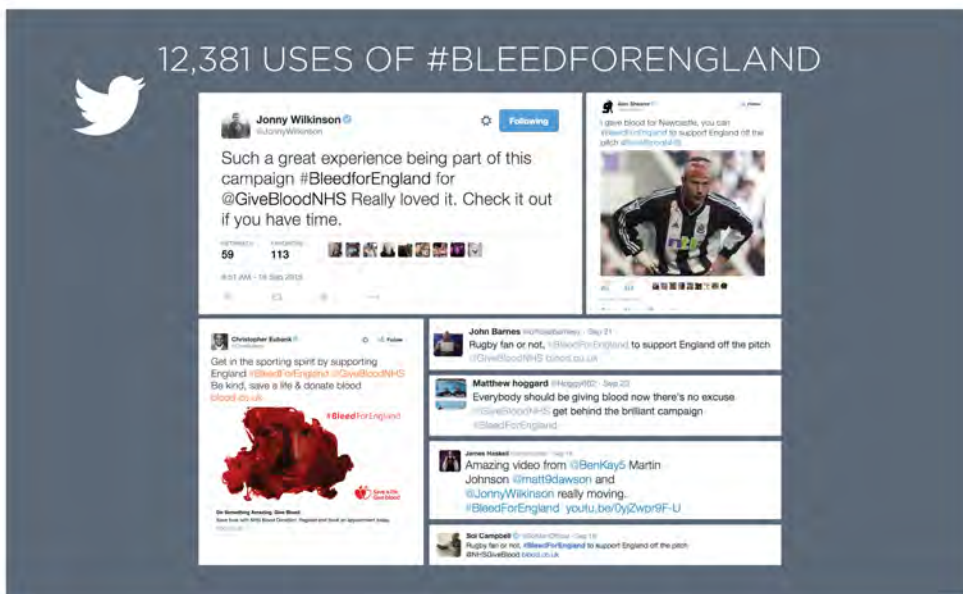
# PABLO

- 35% of click-to-play viewers completed the James Haskell videos
- Taken together, the Dan Cole and James Haskell videos delivered over 2,300 registrations alone

## *Inspiring public and third-party engagement*

We also attracted online support from 32 celebrities including Chris Eubank, John Barnes and Piers Morgan, who engaged on Twitter using the hashtag #BleedForEngland.

All together there were over 12,000 uses of the campaign hashtag on Twitter during the campaign and #BleedForEngland trended globally.



## THE CAMPAIGN TAKES OFF

Rugby Union and Rugby League clubs including Bath, Bristol, Sale Sharks and London Irish also joined in with the campaign. The clubs supported us socially and several organised their own events and registration drives encouraging their own members to sign up and donate blood.

Bleed for England also drew engagement from 17 other businesses including Tottenham Hotspur football club, Stagecoach, Mondelez, Next and Britvic. Businesses around the UK initiated their own donation activities and together these third-parties helped us reach 11,000,000 extra potential donors.



Creating noise in the press



THE CAMPAIGN TAKES OFF

Bleed for England was also picked up by the media. The campaign was featured in OK and on ITV's Lorraine!, ITV News, Sky News, Metro and in The Daily Mirror. It also featured on Talk Sport.

Altogether Bleed for England generated:

- 12 pieces of national press
- 7 national broadcast items
- 8 trade features
- 23 regional and niche lifestyle articles.

We outlined earlier why black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) blood is especially in demand at NHSBT. These groups have their own blood problems that can require specialist treatment. We were delighted when England Women's rugby star Maggie Alphonsi joined the campaign and both gave blood for us and then tweeted about the campaign to her 9,000+ followers. Her donation and the Bleed for England story was then picked up by The Voice, the UK's leading black newspaper.

*Overall, a story of success*

**101,295 REGISTRATIONS IN 77 DAYS.**  
A CAMPAIGN RECORD.

**1,315 NEW DONOR REGISTRATION A DAY.**  
A CAMPAIGN RECORD.

**117% INCREASE IN VISITORS TO BLOOD.CO.UK** FROM SOCIAL ALONE.

**20 MILLION CAMPAIGN IMPRESSIONS** VIA VOD AND TV.

**AVERAGE COST OF REGISTRATION FELL** FROM £34 TO £19.50 DUE TO THE CAMPAIGN.

**28 MILLION IMPRESSIONS ON TWITTER** - 12.5 MILLION OF WHICH WERE ORGANIC. GLOBAL TRENDING HASH TAG.

ONLINE SUPPORT FROM **32 CELEBRITY TWEETERS.**

NATIONAL AND REGIONAL TV, PRESS AND RADIO COVERAGE WORTH MILLIONS OF POUNDS.

**THE RESULTS**

**THE MOST SUCCESSFUL GIVE BLOOD CAMPAIGN EVER**

**30% YOY REGISTRATION INCREASE**

**101,295 NEW DONOR REGISTRATIONS**

Bleed for England is the most effective donor registration campaign ever run by NHSBT. Over the course of just 10 weeks – and during the distractions of a UK hosted global sporting event - we delivered **101,295 new registrations**, a recruitment rate of 1,315 per day.

Every one of these registrations has the potential to become a donation and, when the donated blood is split into its constituent elements, every single pint of donated blood improves or saves the lives of up to 3 people. That means that at our current rate of conversion (from registration to donation) Bleed for England has already had a positive impact on almost 130,000 people.

We're very proud and delighted Bleed for England has played a part doing in this - and that NHSBT seem much happier with our performance than the nation's rugby fans were with England's!