

FOI Release
Information released under the Freedom of Information Act

Title: Social Media Spending

Date of release: 16 May 2014

Information request

The following request relates to Government spending on social media. Each element of the request relates to the financial years 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14.

The total amount of money paid to Facebook and Twitter in each of the above financial years to increase the department's prominence on the respective platform.

For Twitter please specify:

The amount spent on increasing the following of the @BISgovuk account (<https://twitter.com/bisgovuk>). This includes but is not limited to money spent placing the account in the 'who to follow' section of the website.

The amount spent sponsoring specific tweets, detailing the five most heavily-sponsored tweets.

Whether any money was spent promoting accounts other than that specified above.

As BIS appears not to have a Facebook account, please specify why this platform is not being used, and whether there are any plans to begin using it in future.

Please also include the department's justification for any spending, and relevant evidence for how successful or otherwise the spending was.

Please also specify whose responsibility determining spending on social media would be, and whether the department pays any third parties for advice or consultancy relating to social media.

Information released

Twitter

BIS did not spend any money on increasing followers for @bisgovuk. No money has been spent on sponsoring specific tweets or promoting any other Twitter accounts belonging to the Department.

Facebook

BIS does not manage a corporate Facebook page. We believe that our audiences are more interested in specific campaigns led by the Department, than the organisation as a whole. There are no plans to manage a corporate page in the future.

Listed below are the campaigns for which we have spent money on Facebook:

2011/12	SME Support	£ 20,938
	Student Finance inc HE Changes	£ 46,412
2012/13	Student Finance	£ 14,013
	Business is GREAT Britain	£ 19,821
2013/14	Business is GREAT Britain	£184,467
	Student Finance	£ 59,473
	Intern Campaign	£ 2,037

Facebook advertising is used for:

1. driving traffic to campaign web pages. For example, taking people to the National Careers Service website during the Student Finance campaign;
2. increasing engagement on a specific topic. For example, the campaign to promote the rights that interns should expect.

Facebook campaign results*SME Support*

The main objective of this Facebook activity was to drive traffic to the Business in You website.

The campaign targeted people thinking about setting up a business, those that had just set up a business and small businesses looking to grow.

Facebook activity delivered 11,385 visits to the Business in You website in 2011/12.

Student Finance including HE Changes

The main objective of this Facebook activity was to promote the financial support available to go to University.

Our target audience are 17 and 18 year olds and in 2014, 21-25 year olds, 25-34 year olds and 35-44 year olds considering part-time study.

In 2011 display advertising was seen 20,104,845 times and generated 87,463 clicks.

In 2012 display advertising was seen 29,820,484 times and generated 27,545 clicks.

In 2013 display advertising was seen 159,241,287 times and generated 55,492 clicks.

In 2014 display advertising was seen 26,236,319 times and generated 36,369 clicks. This time the campaign was linked to National Careers Service Facebook page and had 523 Facebook likes and 27,717 Facebook actions.

Intern Campaign

The main objective of this campaign was to promote the rights that interns should expect and also promote the Pay and Work Rights Helpline number.

The target audience was 18 to 24 year olds taking internships.

Paid for Facebook advertising increased the number of people who liked the fan page from 329 to 4,495 and delivered more than 1,000 views of a video. More than 1,100 visitors clicked through to the information on www.gov.uk.

Business is GREAT Britain

The main objectives of this Facebook activity are to drive traffic to the GREAT Business website and increase the number of people who liked the Business is GREAT Britain page.

The Business is GREAT Britain Facebook page reached just over 53,000 likes at the end of March 2014.

Paid for advertising was seen 151,790,197 times and generated 440,000 actions, including an additional 20,000 likes, as well as clicks through to the campaign website, comments and views of photos and videos.

Advice and responsibility for social media spending

Advice on social media spending is received from the strategic communications agency employed for each campaign (if applicable) and M4C in their capacity as the Government's media buying agency.

Responsibility for social media spending rests with the marketing and digital communications teams.

By 2015 BIS will have reduced our total administrative spend by £500million - 50% in five years - and plan to go even further. Our spending on communications has also decreased by £1.4 million over the same period

Low cost and no cost activity continues to be the standard for the majority of our work. When we do spend money digital media is often the most cost efficient way to achieve results and impact. BIS evaluates its communications activity to ensure it is adding value, for example the Business is GREAT Britain campaign, for which BIS commissioned a campaign through Facebook, led to advertising views of almost 152 million.

The overall GREAT Britain campaign has secured an economic return of over £500 million from its first year of activities, and is currently delivering a further estimated £600-800 million in 2013/14 as well as securing a series of awards.