

FirstGroup £10m media planning and buying account up for grabs

By Jonathan Harwood

FirstGroup, the bus and rail operator, has put its £10m UK media planning and buying business up for pitch as part of a statutory review. It is currently handled by Edinburgh-based agency Feather Brooksbank.

The review will include all of the company's domestic operations, First Great Western, First Capital Connect and First ScotRail, and one in five local buses in Britain in more than 40 towns and cities. It also runs tram services in some UK cities, including Croydon.

It is not known if the incumbent is planning to repitch for the account, which it has held since 2000.

The company has a roster of creative agencies that work across its different brands, including Sheffield-based Dig for Fire and Guerilla Marketing.

Last year, it appointed Leith to the First ScotRail ad account (*MW* March 15). They will not be affected by the review.

A spokesman for the company said it was an "opportunity for us to test the market". The new contract will run for four years. The review will be overseen by Paul Stapleford, who is part of the purchasing group.

FirstGroup also operates services in Ireland and North America. They will not be affected by the UK review.



FirstGroup: The UK media account is currently handled by Feather Brooksbank

Fish4jobs to sponsor E4 TV comedy Scrubs

Fish4jobs, the recruitment website, has signed a £2m deal to sponsor hospital comedy *Scrubs* on E4.

The deal includes all current series of *Scrubs* as well as the new series of the show, which runs from next month until May and September until December.

The *Scrubs* sponsorship forms part of a heavyweight marketing campaign that fish4jobs has planned for 2008.

It will also include radio, online and press advertising, as well as a number of strategic partnerships that will run throughout the year.

Fish4jobs marketing director Lisa Walker says: "Scrubs is the perfect partner for fish4jobs, with its loyal audience of 16- to 34-year-olds mirroring that of our site."

The deal was negotiated by The7Stars, which was appointed as Fish4's media planning and buying agency

last year, and Channel 4 Sponsorship.

Fish4jobs is creating a series of animated adverts for the show, offering job seekers light-hearted hints and tips to help them find their next job.

Fish4jobs claims to be the UK's most popular recruitment website with more than 2.7 million unique visitors attracted to the site each month. The site features more than 80,000 new jobs every month spanning a broad range of employment sectors.

Fish4, which is jointly owned by Newsquest Media Group, Trinity Mirror and Guardian Media Group Regional Newspapers, has worked with Publicis in the past.

The agency was appointed to handle the brand's advertising account in 2000, following a pitch against the then Mustoe Merriman Herring Levy and Duckworth Finn Grubb Waters.

Dave secures major role in rebranding Five channels

Five has appointed Dave, the Engine Group-owned branding agency, to spearhead a complete rebrand of the broadcaster's portfolio of channels and properties.

The agency will revamp the on and off-air identity of channels including the main Five channel, Five Life and download service Fivedownload, which is due to relaunch later this year (*MW* December 6, 2007). Lisa Opie, director of content, pitched the business last year, but insisted advertising agency Vallance Carruthers Coleman Priest (VCCP) would remain on board (*MW* November 29, 2007).

The refresh comes less than three years after the terrestrial channel was last rebranded and 15 months after the launch of digital offshoots Five US and Five Life (*MW* September 19, 2006).

It also comes after the broadcaster wrested Australian soap *Neighbours* from



Opie: Has signed up the Dave agency for Five

the BBC. It is shifting its news slot back to 5pm so it can air *Neighbours* before existing Aussie soap, *Home & Away*, at 5.30pm. The refresh is not expected to be in place by February, but it is planning an ad campaign to announce the arrival of the soap.

Opie was handed responsibility for marketing services following the departure of marketing director Jane Scott late last year. The portfolio refresh is her first major project.

A spokeswoman for the broadcaster says everything will be reviewed and considered. She says Dave has been briefed to create a look and feel, both on and off-air, which "injects attitude and personality into the brand". Five appointed VCCP to handle its £5m ad business in April 2006 after a pitch overseen by the AAR.

Opie adds the broadcaster "needs" a change to reflect the next stage of its development.

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