

VIRGIN MEDIA

*DIVERSITY AND
INCLUSION INITIATIVE*



THE BACKGROUND

When Virgin Media told us they were facing a gender diversity challenge, we were confident we could help them overcome it.

It's no secret that, as a leading communications and telecom provider, engineers and technicians are vital to Virgin Media's core business. Unsurprisingly, these roles feature prominently in its hiring requirements. But in 2017, the company typically attracted more applications from men.

While employees were visiting millions of customers at home, across the UK every year, Virgin Media's workforce didn't reflect the gender diversity of its customer-base.

At that time, a Virgin Media gender diversity report revealed that nearly 73% of its existing workforce was male. But our client was determined to redress this imbalance, and achieve gender parity by 2025. As their trusted recruitment partner, so were we.

Our first move? We set up a joint working group to tackle the problem, head on. We met each week and set the wheels firmly in motion.

Quickly, we identified that if Virgin Media was to meet its 50/50 male-to-female target, the business needed to focus first on its Residential Field Technician (RFT) vacancies. At that time, out of nearly 1300 RFTs working across the UK, only 25 were female.

"IT IS FANTASTIC TO SEE VIRGIN MEDIA CHALLENGING THE BELIEFS THAT THE TECH ROLE IS A JOB ONLY MALES CAN DO."

PAUL GOUGH - Area Field Manager - Cardiff

THE OBJECTIVES

To kick things off, we ran a pilot scheme across Cardiff, Plymouth, Portsmouth and Flitwick. In each of our four key locations, we set the target of making five female hires over a 12-week period, from 'go live' to offer.

In one year, we'd only recruited four women into the RFT role across the whole UK, so this was hugely ambitious.

As ever, research formed the backbone of our approach. By analysing application numbers from previous campaigns, we identified that female applications made up less than two percent.

To get clear on the role's realities, we spoke to Virgin Media's existing female RFTs. This helped us build a profile of the ideal female candidate - exactly who we wanted to attract.

Our 'Women in Field' recruitment strategy quickly followed. We rolled out new copy, imagery and collateral to showcase the amazing women already doing the job.

We honed a bold call to action that would inspire women to apply, immediately.

Virgin Media produced the 'People like Louise' video to chronicle the day-in-the-life of an RFT apprentice and convey the authentic experience of a woman working in the field.

Check out the film:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qtjxllPysLQ>

Meanwhile, their competitors were trialling similar schemes. We knew we needed something truly disruptive to draw attention to our campaign. So we created a social media ad campaign to target women we thought might be interested in this line of work.

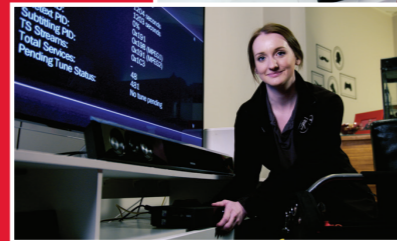
To drive interest and discussion, we featured hashtags like **#levellingthefield** and **#becausewhynot**

With this, we wanted to build communities of female recruits within our pilot locations and develop a sustainable, welcoming environment for women.

Our goal was never to stop men from applying.

But we did want an overt, unmistakable message that would reach and resonate with women who'd never even considered a role like this.

Be What You Want!



Virgin Media are recruiting

Female Residential Field Technicians In Cardiff

Full and Part Time Opportunities

We're levelling the playing field
[#becausewhynot](#)



Discover more at
virg.in/becausewhynot
[Facebook.com/virginmediajobs](https://www.facebook.com/virginmediajobs)
[@virginmediajobs](https://twitter.com/virginmediajobs)

Female Residential Field Technicians

Full and Part time opportunities
Basic salary £22,500 • OTE £28,000 + amazing benefits

Why come and join us?

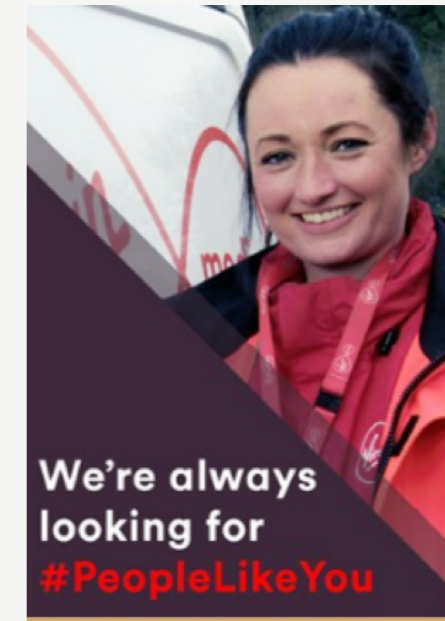
- Because...you're ready for a new challenge
- Because...you love delighting customers
- Because...you're all about great job satisfaction
- Because...you'll receive full training and support
- Because...you have an interest in technology
- Because...you'd love to join our female revolution

**Because why not?
Be what you want!**

Visit virg.in/femaletech



The screenshot shows a website layout with a navigation bar at the top containing links for 'About Us', 'The Roles', 'Early Careers', 'Recruitment Process', 'Working Here', 'Blog', 'Locations', and 'Job Search'. Below the navigation is a 'Job Menu' dropdown. The main content area features a red header for 'Articles' and a featured article titled 'Levelling the field in our tech community'. The article includes a photo of a woman in a red and orange high-visibility jacket standing next to a white van with the text 'Are you ready to be...'. The article text discusses the company's goal of achieving gender parity by 2025 and the launch of the #becausewhynot campaign. A sidebar on the right contains a 'Blog' section with a list of job vacancies: 'RETAIL SALES EXECUTIVE - PART TIME - CROYDON', 'RETAIL SALES EXECUTIVE - PART TIME - HARROW', 'RETAIL SALES EXECUTIVE - FULL TIME - WARRINGTON', and 'RETAIL SALES EXECUTIVE - PART TIME - ILFORD'. Below the article is a 'Ready to discover your potential?' button and a 'Return to Blog List' link.



ARTICLES

THE RESULTS

The pilot was a total success!

In just ten weeks, we'd received no less than **945 applications in four locations** – considerably more than we'd had the year before, across the whole of the UK.

A staggering **94% of applications came from women**. We achieved our target, hiring 20 new starters across the four pilot regions. More than this, we actually doubled Virgin Media's entire female RFT workforce.

In locations like Flitwick, we got a greater response to our new message than our previous campaign, which was targeted at both women and men.

Candidate engagement throughout the entire process was also stronger than ever before, with the **candidate drop-out rate decreasing from 35% to 22%**. More candidates than ever attended the final assessment events.

Crucially, in addition to these great results for the business, our message to candidates remained true. We'd communicated the exact benefits and challenges of the role authentically, and in a way that every candidate understood.

THE RESULTS

All candidates – male and female – had everything they needed to make an informed choice, without any surprises.

To gauge exactly what women, in particular, thought about our strategy and advertising campaign, we sent a survey to every candidate, successful or not. Within it, we asked about their experience of the recruitment process and – most significantly – why they applied.

Overwhelmingly, female candidates said they found our ads were disruptive and direct.

And our message, **‘calling all women’**, left them in no doubt that this was the kind of work they could carry out.

“I will have 6 female techs with my team soon, and it’s great to change the dynamics of the team in terms of gender. I am personally looking forward to assisting in their development and watching them grow into great field techs.”

Paul Gough - Area Field Manager - Cardiff

THE FUTURE

IS LOOKING WAY MORE FEMALE

Now, we're working with Virgin Media to roll out similar targeted campaigns, across the whole of the UK. Our ambition is to recruit a minimum of five female RFTs across every region, attracting 60% more women to these roles.

Everything we achieved during the pilot will fundamentally strengthen our future success – particularly as we've doubled the community of female RFTs, helping to promote referrals and reduce attrition.

We'll use the personal stories of the 20 new RFTs to enrich and grow the content for our campaigns. They'll serve as a powerful reinforcement of our original message, making it clear that these roles truly are for women.

The campaign has also laid the foundations for a strong female management pipeline. As a result, Virgin Media has an emerging population of engaged female RFTs to develop into the leaders of the future.

Undoubtedly, this cohort has helped to break down many long-held misconceptions around the suitability of women for the RFT role. It's been one of the most significant and far-reaching outcomes of this campaign – one that promises to impact on the future of recruitment at Virgin Media.

Hiring managers were delighted with the quality and determination of female candidates at the assessment events. That has created a genuine appetite to target and recruit more female candidates into the RFT role, across the entire Virgin Media business.

It was very surprising to see the standard of candidate. Most commented they probably would not have thought about applying, had it not been advertised the way it was. Since starting, they have shown great customer service skills. Also, having reduced the gender gap within the team is great. The team have made the new starters feel welcome and offered support when required.

SIMON SHERLOCK

Area Field Manger, Virgin Media