

## The Somme Département Restoring its tourism image following flood disaster

The Somme suffered extensive flood damage in 2001/2002. It was feared that the consequent bad publicity would severely damage tourism to the area. We were commissioned to run a 'damage limitation' publicity campaign to point out that the damage affected only a limited part of the area.

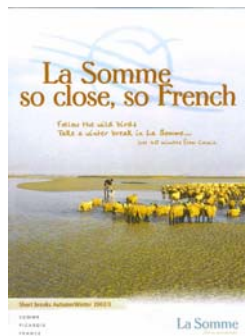
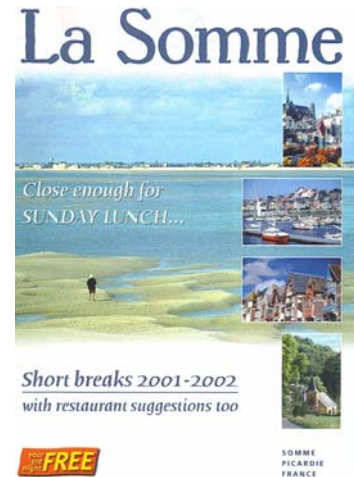
We argued successfully in favour of a **positive approach** to highlight, in the interests of a strong long-term image, the area's positioning as...

- a vast unspoilt terrain where nature and wildlife are preserved
- its ease of access to the UK (a theme we'd already started building for them in 2001)
- and its authentic "Frenchness"

and to publicise their programme of special offers to actively encourage visits.

We felt that drawing attention to the flood damage risked recalling the devastation of World War I and its associations with muddy trenches and killing fields (one of the reasons for us to use the French name "**La Somme**" rather than The Somme in 2001).

Furthermore, the floods had not received much media attention here in the UK because our media had concentrated on the flooding taking place here at home.



The campaign comprised:

- the adaptation into English of the special brochure prepared for the French market
- devising a new title and sub-text on the front cover aimed at the British market
- its despatch by post to selected databases
- some press and on-line advertising
- emailing to databases
- the subsequent development of a database for the Somme as a result of the publicity campaign.

### La Somme. So close, so French.

Only 40mins from Calais or Dieppe, and you're in a world apart. Walk, sightsee, potter, shop. Eat great food. Stay in smart hotels, ancestral homes; in mediaeval towns, lush countryside or on the seafront.

Get your FREE brochure now. **020 7836 2232** (UK)  
[accueil@somme-tourisme.com](mailto:accueil@somme-tourisme.com) (quote ref: csma)

**3-night breaks from only £29pp**

your first night FREE

We wrote and despatched press releases about the offer; and negotiated discounts on cross-channel travel to help counter the rising cost of travel.

We also designed a microsite which presented the details of the offer, linking seamlessly to the Somme's own website. [\[Click to see\]](#)