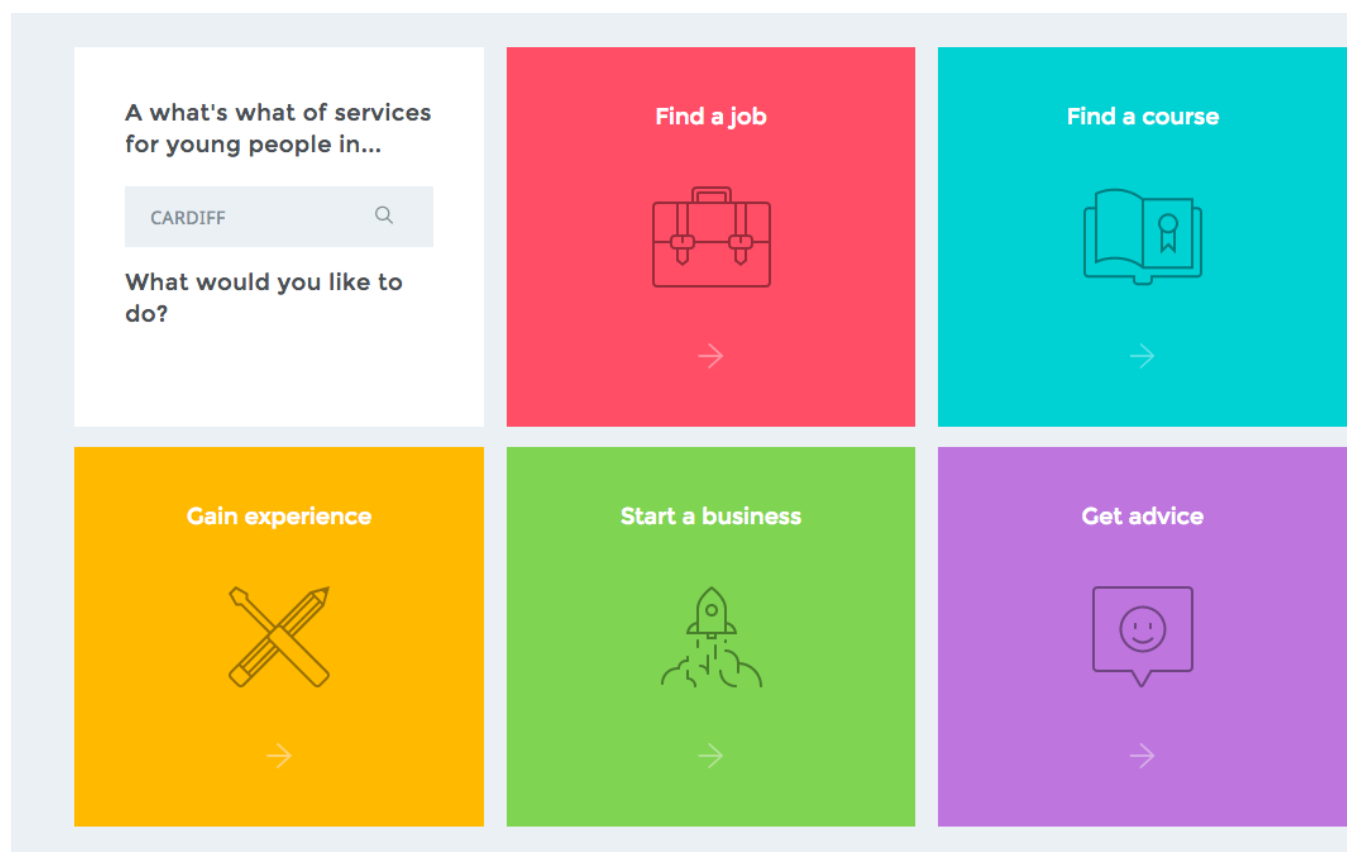


POINTR. HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE ACCESS EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION QUICKER



1. Helping young people to find and access local services

Pointr is a new service designed by PDR in partnership with The City of Cardiff Council, that helps young people find and access local services quicker and more effectively.

There are more than one million young people unemployed in the UK, each costing the government an estimated £153 per week, that's £56,000 every year*.

As well as being demoralising for a young person, every person not in employment, education or training is a huge cost to public finances. By making it easier for young people to access the services that are relevant to them it could not only have a huge impact on young peoples lives but also result in a significant savings for Government.

Our research told us that services for young people are often fragmented with national and local government spending significant amounts of money on services for young people.

But there's a disconnect, with many young people are unaware of what's available to them. In many cases the confusing messages created by this complex system are often pushing young people away from initiatives designed to support them. PDR set out to design a solution to this.

2. What did we do?

PDR organised a hack event for government staff working with youth services in South Wales. Over 40 participants from youth services teams, careers advice services and third sector organisations as well as software developers and designers from PDR to "hack" 3 data sets relating to jobs, training and education opportunities in South Wales.

The hack resulted in 5 early stage prototypes ranging from simple app solutions to a reimagined careers advice for the digital age. PDR then focused on developing these further, working with Cardiff Council and Careers Wales to identify some of the reasons why young people weren't finding the opportunities available to them.

10 young people participated in structured user testing sessions at PDR's user testing lab. This identified how NEETs currently search for work on the Internet, use social media and the usability of existing government services.

"It is impossible to get started and find anything – or find the place where you can actually look at the vacancy" - teenage research participant

One of the common themes emerging from this initial research was that whilst there are many existing government services that support those who are unemployed, often it's not clear what they are offering; which are the most relevant and why you should approach them. We used these insights to develop Pointr.

Our insights told us that simplicity and clarity of navigation was key. The most popular and trusted websites for finding work and training were those that provide a simple search feature as the main function of the site. Websites with many features were less popular and led to less success in finding relevant opportunities.

Pointr needed to be simple, clear and useful.

3. What was the result?

PDR built a prototype site supported by a Google advertising campaign, which ran for two months. This cost-effective method resulted in over 1,000 young people using the prototype. We used analytics to review how it was working and whether users were able to locate information that was relevant to their needs.

The prototype validated assumptions about Pointr and highlighted what needed to be improved. These included design solutions such as;

Pointr doesn't include a blurb about an entire organisation, just the relevant services they offer and the details and relevant benefits of that service to them.

Pointr also ensures that the services are presented and explained to the young people in simple terms that get right to the point of why that service meets their needs.

PDR built two prototype versions of the Pointr service and then a working BETA version that was populated by live data provided by Cardiff Council. The service links to the services, programmes and organisations offering employment or training to young people in Cardiff and provides organisations with feedback on service quality and relevance from Pointr users.

At present, Pointr is in beta stage and running in Cardiff. The service is currently being used by careers advisory teams working for The City of Cardiff Council in 19 schools in the city. The teams deliver career planning to 14-16 year-olds and Pointr is used to support this activity, enabling a smooth transition from secondary education to employment, education or training.

* Based on data from the Work Foundation Average that estimates the average cost to the state of a NEET between 16-18 is £56,000 report - Report 'Off The Map - The Geography Of NEETS'

PDR are in the process of expanding Pointr to work in Belgium and Ireland as part of The SPIDER Project, an Interreg IVB project led by PDR. To find out more about the work that's happening on the SPIDER project please visit www.thespiderproject.eu

To find out more about Pointr you can visit the beta website www.pointr.wales.