



MANCHESTER: CITY LIFE CAPTURED IN A DIGITAL PORTRAIT

- **Manchester's daily online conversations are brought to life in stunning new artwork by Brendan Dawes, commissioned by EE**
- **Man United and the Stone Roses prove the most talked about topics in Manchester**

18th December, 2012. Manchester: From Strictly to Skyfall and the Stone Roses to Man United, the hot topics that get Manchester talking online have been captured for the first time ever in a unique digital portrait of the city created by world renowned digital artist, Brendan Dawes.

Commissioned by EE to mark the arrival of 4G in the city, Dawes worked closely with the data analysis team at University College London (UCL), capturing the social media conversations and topics trending across the city over 4320 minutes - three days' worth of analysis from 29th – 31st October¹. This time period represents the day before, during and after the period in which 4G was introduced to Manchester.

The result is a fascinating digital snapshot of life in Manchester in 2012. Dawes and UCL worked within the categories of sport, politics, film, music, TV, educational, culture and weather – aiming to dig deeper into the topics that affect how people communicate in the city and what they talk about when they go online.

Each chosen topic and the hundreds of thousands of digital conversations associated with them are represented by a specific colour coded keyword. From the keywords at the bottom of the artwork a series of lines flare out to form a myriad of coloured interlinked circles. The thickness of the lines and the size and brightness of the circles represent the popularity of each topic and the frequency at which people were speaking about them.

The big clash between Man United and Chelsea was the hot topic over the monitored period, represented in the artwork by the colour red. The huge explosions on the visual relate to when Man United scored their goals, showing that lots of people were reacting to those key moments. The red colour that dominates on the outer edges is a result of that game being played – a genuine representation of that moment in time.

Another topic which is reflected in the artwork is iconic Manchester band, the Stone Roses who announced some shows during the monitoring period – represented by huge explosions of the colour green across the artwork.

Steven Day, Chief of Brands and Communications, EE commented: “People know Mancunian as soon as they hear it. Now, for the first time, we’ve discovered what it actually looks like. EE has launched superfast mobile 4G and Fibre Broadband in Manchester, and we wanted to mark this in a visual way that everyone in the city can relate to and enjoy”.

Brendan Dawes said: “It is the people and the activities within it - work, play and the connections within that define a city. This design is a modern sophisticated response to the representation of a city - formed from millions of bits of data as people talk and interact about the biggest events of the day. The shape, derived from nature, evoking the organic nature of a network softens the often harsh representation of digital, leaving instead an impression of a modern dynamic system, that we call cities, in the 21st century.”

Councillor Nigel Murphy, Manchester City Council’s executive member for the environment, said: “People who work and live in Manchester are incredibly switched on to digital age, and as superfast mobile 4G and other innovations come to the city, that is only going to increase. This piece of artwork is a fascinating way of showing what we are talking about online, and it’s no surprise that those conversations prominently feature Manchester’s three main passions – music, football and the weather.”

The key areas that the research focused on during the research period were:

- New York
- X Factor
- Skyfall
- Pride of Britain Awards
- 4G
- Money
- MPs
- Strictly Come Dancing
- Happiness
- Weather

The artwork will be displayed free to the public at Manchester Town Hall from 18th December

For more information on EE, please visit www.ee.co.uk

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For further information, images of each city portrait or comment from an EE spokesperson, please contact the team at M&C Saatchi PR:

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Research

¹The data was captured during 29th to 31st October 2012 - the day before the launch of EE, the launch day and one day post launch.

About EE

EE is the UK's most advanced digital communications company in Britain, providing mobile and fixed line services to 27 million customers, and is the first company in the UK to provide 4G mobile services alongside fixed-line fibre.

EE is the company that runs the Orange, T-Mobile and EE brands in the UK.

Its 4G service will cover a third of the population by the end of 2012 and its fibre service will cover 50% of the population by the end of the year.

EE's mobile service currently provides coverage to 99% of the population with 2G and 98% of the population with 3G.

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