

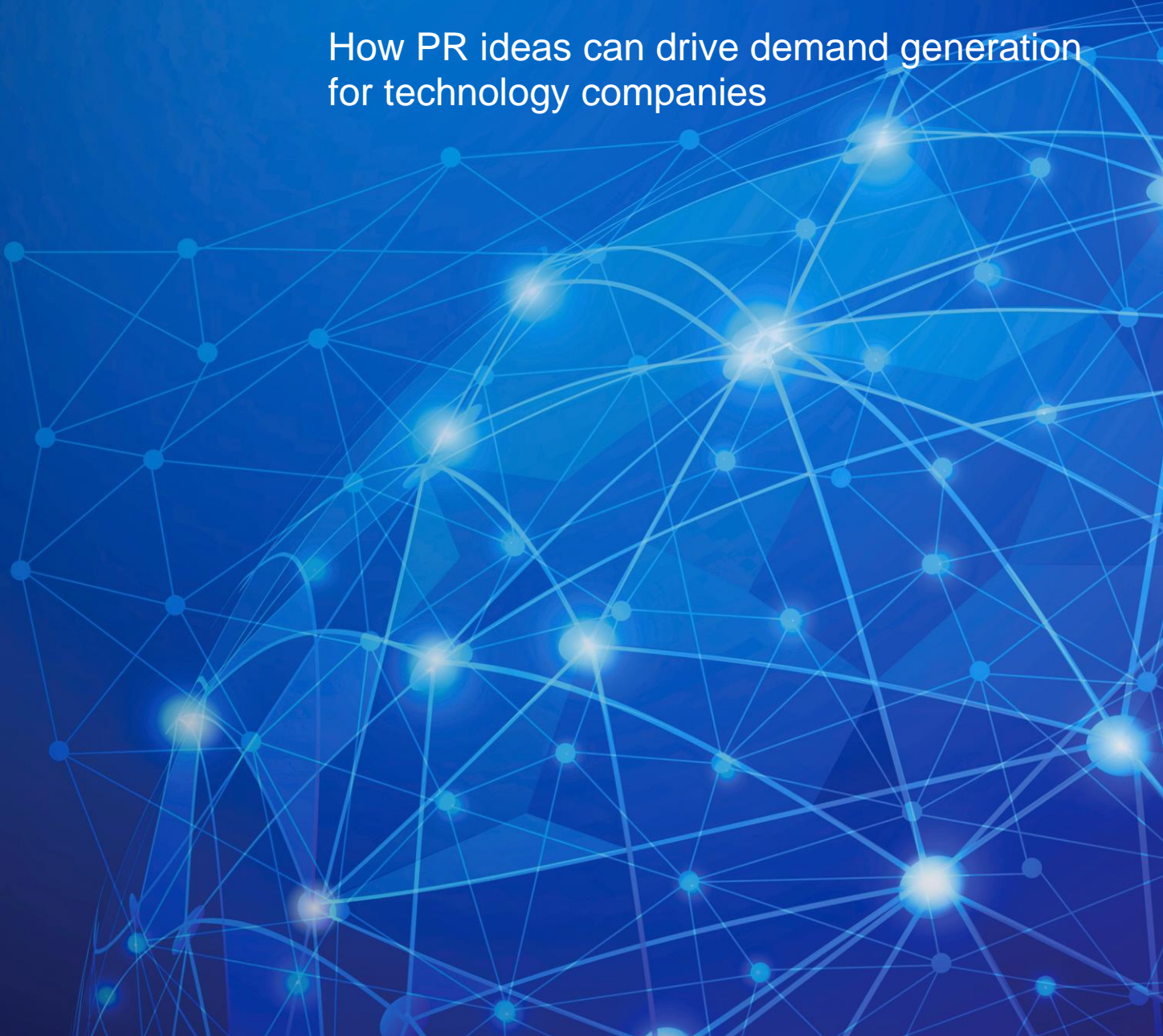


**WORLD COM**  
Public Relations Group  
The Local Advantage. Worldwide.

# Best Practice Guide

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How PR ideas can drive demand generation  
for technology companies



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# Introduction

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We are often asked by our clients for guidance on how to run integrated PR and demand generation campaigns - especially within the tech space. As a result we asked Worldcom Public Relations Group experts, from around the world, to provide their advice for best practice in their territory.

The content of the Guide is based on the questions answered by our experts to a Webinar first aired in November 2016. You can listen to a recording of the Webinar by clicking on this [link](#)

We hope you find the Guide helpful. Further Guides will be provided for each of our other Technology Webinars.

If you would like to discuss any of the topics raised with any of our experts, please contact Crispin Manners @ [crispinmanners@worldcomgroup.com](mailto:crispinmanners@worldcomgroup.com)

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# Panelists

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## **CZECH REPUBLIC**

**Patrik Schober**

## **GERMANY**

**Martin Stummer**

## **ITALY**

**Diego Biasi**

## **THE NETHERLANDS**

**Peter Drent**

## **UNITED KINGDOM**

**Crispin Manners**

## **FACILITATOR**

**Todd Lynch – USA**



## What sort of outcomes are we including under the heading of generating demand?

### UK

Generating demand can be defined in a number of different ways. It can mean generating sales leads and that's how most organisations would define it. However, it can also apply to creating demand for any kind of desired outcome. This could include signing up to a petition, donating money to a charity, downloading a document or guidance note, making a booking for an event, joining a brand adviser group, taking a survey, entering a competition or even signing up for a webinar like this one.

For BMC Software, we created the Churn Index to highlight which sectors had the highest levels of customer churn. This succeeded in getting prime time breakfast TV coverage and pick-up in the Financial Times and a wide range of other publications across Europe.

But the true measure of success was that the data behind the Churn Index also created the content for a seminar series that explained how BMC could help eliminate the sources of churn. The seminars were attended by Chief Technology Officers – the first time BMC had secured attendance from this level of senior buyer. Every seminar was sold out.

The key thing is understanding whom you want to take action and what action you want them to take.

### ITALY

In the app generation, downloading apps can be added under the heading of generating demand. For the app company Babbel, we not only helped to promote downloads, but also helped to increase the usage time of their app.

### GERMANY

When defining outcomes for demand generation, it really depends on where you want to go. One of our clients Tenable Networks Security, who were already well known in the IT security area, wanted to be seen as leaders in the automation and media industries. Their desired outcome was to develop new target groups so our campaign was designed to build a following amongst the automation community.

Sales leads are of course the first thing that comes to mind when talking about generating demand. Building awareness and the interest of the audience for more news and information about a company and its products is also a crucial aspect of generating demand.

### NETHERLANDS

Generating demand can include a number of different outcomes. This can include things such as engagement, brand awareness, web traffic, media coverage and, of course, thought leadership.

**Generating sales leads is the obvious outcome for any demand generation activity. But there can be a wide range of desired outcomes.**

**These outcomes could include, downloads, membership of groups, building web traffic, securing votes, triggering donations and co-creating content.**

**It makes sense to look at demand generation in its broadest context when you are planning your campaign.**

## What kind of PR ideas can deliver both thought-leadership and leads?

### GERMANY

As with most PR campaigns, the kind of ideas you can deliver depends on the target group. You have many different PR tools like press releases, surveys, whitepapers, videos, social media, analyst reports, statements, articles, research from surveys, webinars and ambassador programs. The goal will dictate what tool you will end up using.

### NETHERLANDS

Podcasts and vodcasts are growing mediums that people use to digest information. FAQ's and factsheets are also popular. In the Netherlands, themed content platforms are becoming very popular.

In general, other PR ideas can also include research reports, surveys, whitepapers or blogs.

### UK

PR ideas need to have content that connects with business needs, lifestyle needs and the passions of the people you are targeting. It has to provide an opportunity to do something that excites the individual or provides information that adds value to the individual or business.

The objective is to create content that triggers a desired action. In the lead generation context, the first objective is to secure permission to communicate. This means that a value exchange needs to take place. You need to provide something of sufficient value so that an individual will share their personal contact data with you. By offering this content free of charge, you will trigger Robert Cialdini's law of reciprocity – people will feel indebted enough to do something for you in return.

Thought leadership content can take many forms depending on the audience you are targeting. This includes best practice guides, infographics, articles, slideshows, leaflets, whitepapers, eBooks, guides, case studies, seminars, webinars, videos or podcasts.

Content, however, can also take the form of an experience. For example, you could provide people the opportunity to attend a roundtable debate or a special event with a popular speaker. The form the content takes will depend on whom you want to take action – and the interests that drive them.

**The most important thing is having an idea that connects with an individual's lifestyle or business needs and passions.**

**There are a wealth of different PR ideas such as podcasts, whitepapers, videos and webinars that can deliver both leads and thought-leadership.**

**Content can also take the form of an experience, such as a roundtable discussion or exclusive event.**

## Would you recommend a big bang approach or a drip feed for an integrated campaign?

### UK

If you are trying to raise your profile above the horizon, then you will need something impactful. If you want something more sustained, then you want to have something dripped out over a long period of time.

A drip approach has a number of advantages. It is better to break the story into bite size chunks so you can release it over time. This way you not only make it easier for people to make your content work to their advantage but you also create the opportunity to build a following.

Research shows that it can take as many as seven 'touches' to move someone from a cold contact to a customer. And 80% of business decision-makers would prefer to get company information in a series of articles versus an advertisement. So, creating the means to capture and then sustain interest is very important.

Selling would be more suited to a drip feed whereas raising awareness would be suited more to a big bang approach.

**For a longer, sustained sales campaign, a drip approach would be more suitable than a big bang approach.**

**For a company that is looking to raise awareness quickly, a big bang approach would be more effective.**



## What different types of content can be developed from a PR idea?

### CZECH REPUBLIC

PR ideas generate a range of content, including: press releases, articles, social media posts, video content, teasers, seminars and podcasts. In order to generate leads, it is also important to have a micro-site which can display all the content. There could be a call to action, such as a questionnaire which will grant access to the report once completed, thus capturing contact data.

Through a single piece of content, it is possible to run a long-lasting campaign across various media channels.

### ITALY

This is a fast consumption era and habits have changed to favour short and frequent bits of information. We have to accept this and persuade companies to align with this trend. Images and videos are mandatory for every PR project nowadays. Content must be created with social media in mind in order to catch the social target.

With Babbel, we developed content that took inspiration from millennials' passion for TV series. We launched a press release targeting lifestyle media with the concept: Learn Spanish like Pablo Escobar from Narcos. The release was very popular as it drew on the interest of learning languages in a modern way. This resulted in a peak in downloads and usage of the language learning app.

### UK

We are seeing more integrated content campaigns that cover digital, social media and offline content. A single idea can be developed so that it works in every communication channel used by the target audience.

For example, you could create a report from a piece of research, and release results to the press; but you can also create a video summary and use voiceover from the video as a podcast that could be promoted across social channels and on a company's own website.

The research could produce valuable recommendations which could be captured in a text download, summarised in an infographic or a slide presentation.

Every piece of content could be shared on every appropriate channel from Facebook to LinkedIn and YouTube to Wikipedia. You could then extend the impact by creating experiences that bring the content to life and into the lives of the people you are targeting.

**Content-driven campaigns must start by thinking about how your target audience prefers to find and consume information.**

**This will immediately mean you need an integrated mindset that expects to use content across all appropriate online, social and offline channels and experiences.**

**It is important to include video content as this is fast-becoming the preferred medium in today's short attention span world.**





## Can PR content be run at the same time as demand generation?

### UK

You can do it either way or even in parallel, it all depends on the idea and the audience you are targeting. The critical thing to get right is the idea. How you activate the idea to create the right action will depend very much on whom you are targeting.

You could create a PR story by running a demand generation event which is so successful it creates its own news. The Generous Store is a good example. Created by a Danish chocolate brand, the Generous Store was a pop-up shop that traded free chocolate for social media pledges to do something nice for someone you know.

The lure of free chocolate caused massive queues to form outside the store in Copenhagen. This created a wonderful photo story and caused the social media pledges to go viral. The power of an integrated campaign like this was that the chocolate brand was now associated with being generous and doing good things for people. The impact was sustained by asking people to make an initial pledge and then asking them to show their pledge in action via a second post.

In the example of BMC, we created the news story first to establish the credibility of BMC for target buyers. We then went on to create the management guide and seminars to allow the story to come to life in a business sense and to create sales opportunities.

### ITALY

It depends on the nature of the objective. In general, the classic teaser then reveal rationale is still a good approach.

For example, in our DriveNow launch, we delivered PR contents to the media in advance without reducing the launch news effect.

### GERMANY

Generally, PR sets the ground for the following marketing activities, but PR shouldn't stop there. It ought to accompany them moving forward.

### NETHERLANDS

PR can be used to launch a demand generation campaign, but they should be run simultaneously so that interest in the demand generation activities can be sustained.

**The key thing to get right is the original idea. It's important that it is compelling enough to get your audiences to take the right action.**

**Whether PR or demand generation comes first – or is run in parallel – depends very much on the idea and the desired outcomes.**

**Either way, good PR can sustain interest in demand generation activities and aid conversion.**

## How can PR actions support the achievement of demand generation targets?

### NETHERLANDS

Proof of value is very important to generating demand. As a result, customer case studies always have a good effect on demand generation targets. Other 'proof' content such as well as product tests, reviews and user reports are also helpful.

### GERMANY

It depends on your target audience and your campaign. It is important, however, to make an impact that gets the attention of target buyers. PR does well in grabbing attention. PR should also accompany the whole campaign and use the knowledge and results generated to keep the campaign alive and interesting.

### UK

PR can help in a number of ways. The first is to bring credibility to the brand. An award-winning campaign we created for Taulia brought the benefits of their technology to the business media through a financial report called 'Charting the Trade Credit Divide'. This converted what would normally be a dry financial subject into an economy-threatening issue. The profile this created in the media generated a sales pipeline of \$24 million – twice the annual target!

By supporting the report with the creation of the Trade Credit Improvement Consortium a partnership with trade associations and professional bodies, we were able to sustain interest in the initiative throughout the year.

**PR actions are essential to the success of demand generation campaigns.**

**PR can help in raising awareness of a brand as well as building market credibility.**

**PR actions can also deliver the vital component of the 'proof' buyers need to feel that it is safe to make the purchase.**

**PR can also sustain interest in the demand generation activity.**



## Does the same team have to run an integrated campaign of this type or can it be run by separate PR and marketing teams?

### ITALY

According to our experience, it's better to have two different teams – one PR team and one marketing team. Ideally, they should be within the same agency and strongly integrating the activities. This type of approach needs continuous internal communication to align actions and optimise the results.

### GERMANY

PR and marketing team have the same goals but different expertise. It is vital to have open communication between the teams so that everyone is involved and understands the ongoing status to ensure that the goal is met.

It doesn't have to be the same team; however, the teams need to cooperate closely to make sure that targets, activities and timing are integrated and build on each other.

### CZECH REPUBLIC

It is important to make sure that where budgets are held does not become an obstacle to effective integration. It is vital to explain to all participants in the campaign what each budget holder will achieve and how the campaign will help achieve both departmental and organisation-wide targets. This provides the foundations for effective integration.

### UK

The key thing is to start with an integrated idea and campaign with very clear objectives and KPIs. This plan can be executed by different teams – with each team clearly understanding how they can deliver against their own KPIs.

### NETHERLANDS

The best thing would be to create a project team consisting of both PR and marketing professionals to run the integrated campaign.

**It is vital that integrated campaigns have integrated teams working on them.**

**The integrated team can draw from both PR and marketing teams but the team must start with an integrated idea and campaign with very clear objectives and KPIs.**



## How would you use social media to support both demand generation and PR objectives?

### UK

Before deciding to use social media you need to understand the target audiences and the channels they use to communicate. If social platforms are appropriate for the campaign, they can be used in a number of ways. These include: building awareness, securing validation and triggering sharing of content. It can also include creating content and co-creating content – such as advice guides or photos and videos that bring brand messages to life.

Social media can also be excellent at using Cialdini's law of Social Proof. This is where people will be encouraged to take a desired action if they see people like themselves doing the same thing. This can be used in campaigns to generate increased demand and awareness.

### ITALY

In addition to all the other benefits, social media can be used for website traffic generation. I think social media inclusion in PR campaigns should be mandatory. Platforms such as Facebook, have action buttons like "buy now", which make triggering action much easier.

### NETHERLANDS

Social media plays an important role in the direct targeting of audience. It makes it possible to create and share relevant and educational content.

**Social media has become a key tool in supporting PR and demand generation. It can be used to target the audience directly, make call-to-action easier and build awareness.**

**Social media is also a great tool to use Social Proof to build trust in a brand and to trigger the desired action by an audience.**

**The metrics you use will be defined by the objectives you set. If sales leads are the goal then don't waste money measuring press coverage.**

**Understanding what needs to be achieved will shape the idea for the campaign and the metrics.**

## **How would you measure the success of an integrated PR and demand generation campaign?**

### **CZECH REPUBLIC**

For a PR manager, success could be measured through the number of articles generated, engagement levels on social media or attendance on webinars. C-level managers are more likely to look to tangible business impact such as the leads and revenue generated.

### **GERMANY**

This will depend on the campaign. There could be concrete measures such as sales and leads, but equally success might be securing a high number of downloads or the sharing of content. It is always important to assess objectives during a campaign and adjust targets and activities based on what you are learning along the way.

### **UK**

It depends on what you are setting out to achieve. If the goal is selling out an event, then the metric is clear – the number of attendees. If it's creating a sales pipeline, then it's equally clear. If the campaign needs awareness and pipeline, then you need to measure both.

Understanding what needs to be achieved will shape the idea from the outset. That's why the campaign for Taulia was designed the way it was. It wasn't just about press coverage, it was about pipeline too. In this case the target was \$12 million and we generated \$24 million.

### **ITALY**

It's difficult to evaluate the sales or lead results linked directly to a PR campaign unless clear tracking is put in place at the outset. The outcomes from social media campaigns are directly measurable. From a PR side, we can measure the impact through the number of articles, readership, reach and sentiment.

### **NETHERLANDS**

Success can be measured through various means such as web traffic, social buzz, media coverage, sales leads or downloads of supporting material.



## Do you have any tricks that can be used to increase conversion in demand generation campaigns?

### CZECH REPUBLIC

I would recommend using as many communication channels as possible. I would always include online as this can trigger immediate action. I would also use one-to-one communications through social media, newsletters or direct marketing.

### GERMANY

Bearing in mind there is no “one size fits all” solution, my ‘trick’ would be to know your audience as this defines where you need to go. I would also say use all available tools and integrate them.

### ITALY

It is important to know what the consumer wants. If you put yourself in the customer’s shoes and follow the customer’s journey, you’ll find a number of ways to pursue your goal. Look for what is trending with your audience and connect to the trend. Providing exclusivity is another trick you can use.

### NETHERLANDS

If you want to be certain an idea will work then pre-test it with a feedback panel. Building proof of value with testimonials by Key Opinion Leaders is also effective. Finally, research can be very effective at creating powerful content.

### UK

One good trick you can use in increasing conversion is using Social Proof. People are more likely to buy in if they can see like-minded individuals buying in. This can be created through using recommendations, case studies, reviews or Vox Pop style videos.

Another psychological trick is the Law of Scarcity. If people think something is in short supply they will be more inclined to buy and to buy quickly.

**The most important ‘trick’ is to know your audience.**

**Then you can use a variety of ‘psychological’ tricks to aid conversion – such as the laws of social proof, scarcity or expert status.**

**It is vital to put yourself in the shoes of your target audience and follow their journey.**

## How would you go about creating the original idea for the campaign?

**Ideas that work for your audiences start by really knowing your audience. There is no substitute for in-depth research.**

**Get away from the office to create great ideas – it'll free your mind.**

**Use people from different departments. Nobody has a monopoly on good ideas.**

### UK

With all good campaigns, effective research is fundamental. There is no substitute for intimately understanding your target audiences. If you know what drives them, then you can create an idea that drives them to take the right action.

You also need to create the right environment for creative thinking. Someone once said: 'You can't have unusual thinking in the usual places'. I believe that if you want a truly creative idea you need to get away from your normal working environment.

I also recommend that you use human psychology to provide a framework for your ideas. Cialdini's Six Cognitive Shortcuts is an excellent framework which we use all the time.

### ITALY

An effective approach is to look at the campaign with the consumer's eyes. The role of the agency is to imagine this journey and make it easy to understand, engaging and effective.

### NETHERLANDS

When creating the original idea for the campaign, you should have people from different trades develop a concept together. If you can facilitate contributions from experienced individuals from PR, marketing, web design, advertising and social; you can create compelling ideas that are likely to work through all appropriate channels.



## Does an integrated campaign need to generate a lot of press coverage to be successful?

### UK

Not necessarily. It all depends on what action you are trying to trigger and how that will be measured.

Press coverage may expose your campaign to a wider audience, but may not attract the right people that you need to convert. In this sense, it is more important to focus on the rate of conversion rather than your reach. In the Taulia example, where lead generation was the most important goal, we focused on a top tier of influential media that included less than 20 titles. One piece of coverage in the Financial Times generated almost 25% of the pipeline achieved and over half of the target!

### ITALY

Not necessarily. What really matters is the quality of the coverage. It's more important to select the right media to influence your target audience rather than generating loads of generic articles and blog posts.

For example, in the apps sector it's more important to have online coverage linked with social media rather than a column in a prestigious print publication because the conversion rate is the real KPI.

### NETHERLANDS

Not necessarily, but it can be a good catalyst for driving awareness. Most important is the quality of the coverage in terms of content and media outlet so that it drives the right action and outcomes.

**The audience action that press coverage triggers is more important than the volume of coverage achieved.**

**It is always important to target the greatest points of influence. Sometimes this will include the media but sometimes it won't.**





## Would you use social advertising and/ or traditional advertising to support a PR-led campaign?

**Social media plays a key role in a PR campaign and paid advertising on social media can guarantee that your content will be seen.**

**Advertising can also be very effective but has to be used smartly.**

### ITALY

I think that this may become the rule. With social media, you have to use paid advertising to ensure your content will be seen. One can be a bit cautious when using money to support content but it is necessary to guarantee some visibility. In Italy, we have seen a huge boost in outcomes when we use a little bit of our budget wisely.

Digital and social media are the perfect tool to reach impactful results within a short period. Some examples could include social ads to promote events, drive web traffic, encourage downloads or enter competitions.

### NETHERLANDS

In the Netherlands, it is more common to invest in native branded content and commercial partnerships instead of traditional advertising. This model is becoming more important in our region especially when it comes to tech and channel media. For these kind of branded content campaigns, you have to ensure you have a budget to buy the editorial space within a magazine.

### UK

Any smart company would want to use every tool in their toolkit to extend their reach affordably. If you look at the UK, high street banks still spend billions on traditional advertising when a targeted social advertising campaign could be much more effective – particularly for encouraging App downloads or account switching.

Again, this depends very much on who you are targeting and what you want them to do. For the right campaigns, we would very definitely use social media and support it with social advertising. However, we would also invest in effective SEO and SEM techniques and PPC if this would trigger the right response.

Target your budget where it will deliver the best value.

## Do you have a good example of a campaign that created thought-leadership and generated demand?

**We developed a number of award-winning campaigns for both B2C and B2B technology clients.**

**In all cases – including those targeting a business audience - it was the high human interest in the content that we created which drove a high level of results.**

**These campaigns demonstrate that it is always worth investing in a creating an idea and the content that is strong enough to deliver the desired outcomes.**

### UK

BMC Software had been successful at reaching management level IT buyers with a technological pitch but wanted to get more traction with board level buyers around business related topics. We carried out consumer research in a number of European countries to find out how often consumers changed supplier and the reasons behind their decision to switch. The results were presented in the BMC Churn Index – highlighting which industries had the worst churn record and the main causes of churn.

Because the content of the research had such high human interest, and because we calculated the business cost of switching suppliers, the Churn Index was appealing to both business and mainstream media. It achieved press coverage in 11 European countries including: prime time TV coverage on BBC Breakfast, business coverage in The Times online and FT.com and technology coverage in titles like IT Week.

The story provided the foundation for a Management Guide by BMC on eliminating the sources of churn. The guide further reinforced BMC's Thought Leadership status. The Guide was used to support drip and nurture email-marketing campaigns and also as the content for a seminar series designed to attract Chief Information Officers. The seminar series was a sell-out – leading to significant sales success and the decision to replicate the campaign in the Asia Pacific region.

### ITALY

In October, we launched an integrated PR and marketing campaign for a car sharing service in Milan called DriveNow. Before the PR launch we managed different activities from Guerrilla Marketing to Out of Home communications. The campaign had one team running PR and another team running marketing activities. One team handled the media to build up momentum and the other team worked on media marketing beforehand to prepare Milan for the launch of the service. The campaign in Milan was one of the best launches in Europe with over 55,000 registered users within the first month – 25,000 registered within the first seven days. We just won an industry award for this project.

### GERMANY

We organised a PR campaign for our customer Tenable Network Security around their unique abilities for securing industrial networking environments. It proved to be a huge success driving awareness, leads and sales. With a tightly integrated PR & marketing campaign we positioned Tenable as an innovative technology leader for B2B IT security with a unique technology for industrial environments. During the campaign, we arranged multiple interviews placed articles, commentaries and research statistics for the target group in a huge number of IT security and automation media. We also supported the campaign through marketing by using webinars, whitepapers and lectures by customer experts at important industry events. The excellent PR results were matched by a significant increase in leads and sales. The level of success encouraged Tenable to replicate the campaign to other markets.

## **CZECH REPUBLIC**

We worked with a law firm to promote a class-action suit against Volkswagen during “diesel-gate”. Their goal was simple: to gain 150 signatures supporting the lawsuit within two months. We set up a landing page and a Facebook page. We also held interviews about “diesel-gate” and produced Q&A’s which we hosted on a micro-site. One of the Partners in the law company became one of the star figures in “diesel-gate” and was invited by the media to explain how the public could fight against Volkswagen. The campaign surpassed its goal with over 200 signatures backing the lawsuit. The campaign won us various PR awards.

## **NETHERLANDS**

We launched an integrated campaign for SIDN – the company that manages the .nl domain for the Netherlands. We launched a report on trends on Internet use by Dutch consumers. The PR and marketing teams worked together throughout the campaign.

Because of the human interest in the report, the PR activity generated a lot of coverage in consumer and national daily titles. The campaign provoked a lot discussion around the development of domains and how young people have switched to using their own domain.

It created high brand awareness for SIDN and a significant number of downloads of the report.



**If you would like to discuss the content of this document, or its recommendations, or to talk to one of our experts about your communications needs, please contact: Crispin Manners [crispinmanners@worldcomgroup.com](mailto:crispinmanners@worldcomgroup.com)**

**or**

**If you would like more information about Worldcom and its partners, please contact Todd Lynch, Managing Director @ [toddlynch@worldcomgroup.com](mailto:toddlynch@worldcomgroup.com) or call Todd on +1-212-286-9550.**

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