



Client: **Dunlop Slazenger Group**

PRCA Consultancy: **Shine Communications**

Campaign: **Slazenger Hits Cricket World Cup for Six**

PR Sector: **Consumer**

Winner of a PRCA Outstanding Consultancy Practice Award



Client: **Health Education Authority (HEA)**

PRCA Consultancy: **Manning Selvage & Lee**

Campaign: **Saving Upsets, Helping Children Enjoy Food Safety**

PR Sector: **Healthcare/Government**

Winner of a PRCA Outstanding Consultancy Practice Award

PR IN PRACTICE

The following case studies are examples of PR consultancy work and, more specifically, PR campaigns in practice. They demonstrate the enormous scope and diversity of the UK's PR consultancy industry and appear by kind permission of the respective PRCA members and their clients.

Background

It was the year the Cricket World Cup came to England. For cricket bat manufacturer Slazenger, it was an opportunity to maximise exposure for the brand both within the UK and internationally. Slazenger is a brand steeped in heritage and it needed to overcome any stigma attached to this in order to appeal to the next generation of consumers and meet tough sales targets.

Slazenger was not an official sponsor of the World Cup, but it was the equipment sponsor of several members of the England squad, including then captain Alec Stewart.

Objectives

- To create a contemporary image that would attract younger customers to maintain Slazenger as the premier cricket brand.
- To create an ownership of the event on a budget far smaller than official sponsors.
- To create an intrinsic link between Slazenger's handcrafted bats, its sponsored players and the Cricket World Cup to position Slazenger as the premier cricket equipment brand.

Solution

- Develop a "blue bat" campaign to create media and spectator interest. This injected colour into the game and helped create a contemporary image.
- Maximise celebrity endorsement through captain Alec Stewart, despite limited celebrity time/access.
- Pursue links with other organisations to extend the campaign reach and budget.

Activity

- Celebrity interviews.
- Tour of the Barnsley factory for the media.
- Photocalls with celebrities such as Caprice, Anneka Rice and Rory Bremner.
- Giant inflatable Blue Bat, which featured at all England matches.
- Blue Bat branded T-shirts.
- Third party links with The English Cricket Board (ECB), the Barmy Army (a group of England fans) and a short film shot by TransWorld International for broadcast on Emirates Airline.

Results

- Media campaign achieved an outstanding 143 media hits over a period of just three months, reaching a UK audience of over 98 million consumers.
- Coverage was achieved against a background of cricket news fighting for editorial space against the more glamorous sports such as football and the climax of the Premier League season.
- 77 minutes of branded television coverage was achieved which boasted excellent key message delivery. This alone reached an audience of 25 million viewers.
- TransWorld International/Emirates piece featured a six minute Slazenger-branded film reaching a staggering 81 million households in 18 countries. The piece was also shown on all in-bound Emirate flights during the tournament.
- Sales increased by 34%, including 40% growth in the education sales sector, reflecting increased brand appeal to younger consumers.
- The Barmy Army has become a new source of revenue for Slazenger cricket as it now sells jointly branded Slazenger products via its website.

Background

A four-year boy contracted a particularly virulent strain of the bacteria E-coli, after playing with a goat on a school visit to a city farm and then eating before washing his hands. He was in a coma for 12 days and suffered such severe brain damage that the only way he can now communicate with others is by blinking. He is not alone and, according to the Public Health Laboratory Service in the UK, many of these cases could have been avoided through good food hygiene practice.

A pan-European survey conducted by Eurobarometer identified food hygiene as a key issue throughout the European Community (EU). Acting on these findings the EU launched the first ever pan-European Food Safety Information Campaign, commissioning the HEA to develop the consumer education campaign on food hygiene in the UK.

Objectives

- To provide all primary schools in England and Wales with the right information and resources to teach good food hygiene practice.
- To encourage the teaching of food safety in the classroom.
- To raise awareness of and encourage basic food hygiene practice within the target group of 7-11 year olds.

Solution

- Commission research to identify audiences and develop key messages.
- Set up Food Advisory Groups to develop the resources needed to teach basic food hygiene and involve teachers, head teachers and key-stage co-ordinators from primary schools across the country. (The feedback from these groups determined the timing and content of the schools packs underpinning the schools programme).
- Develop two cartoon characters, 'Safe-T' and the 'H-Squad' to capture the imagination of 7-11 year olds.
- Distribute the schools pack to primary schools across the country with advice on how food hygiene could be integrated into lesson plans.

Activity

- Launch event at a primary school, with *Ready! Steady! Cook!* chef, Lesley Walters and Baroness Hayman, food safety minister.
- Website (www.foodhygienecontrol.hea.org.uk) and board game developed.
- Placement of 'Safe-T' and 'H-Squad' cartoons in the *Beano* and *Dandy*.
- Parents targeted through a feature on *GMTV*.
- Anecdotes of food poisoning from the stars of *Hollyoaks* placed in teen magazines.
- Research commissioned among children on attitudes to food hygiene.

Results

- Evaluation revealed campaign educated 51% (2.7 million) of primary children on the need for good food hygiene practice. These children (twice as many as before the campaign) now understand the risks involved.
- Extensive media coverage reached two out of five mothers at least twice and just over half of all primary school children at least twice.
- 83% of coverage included tips on food hygiene, 83% included mentions of the schools pack and 75% mentioned risks of bacterial contamination in food. At least one key message conveyed in all coverage.
- 53% of all 7-11 year olds were able to recall the PR activity on food safety, 51% covered food safety in class, up 10% from the September findings.

Background

The Government's flagship Transport Bill, as originally drafted, included a clause that would have allowed minicabs to carry out substitution services, in the event of a rail service being cancelled or discontinued.

Minicabs are not required to be accessible to wheelchair users. Licensed taxis however, are, under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

If the clause went ahead, a situation would arise whereby on the discontinuation or cancellation of a rail service, substitution vehicles would not be accessible to wheelchair users. Licensed taxis would not necessarily be used for substitution services, despite the fact that following a previous Act of Parliament and at great cost to the trade, they were required to be.

Objectives

- To influence policy makers and thereby get legislation amended to ensure all vehicles legally required to carry out railway substitution services meet accessibility requirements.

Activity

Working closely with the client over a number of months, AS Biss & Co helped lead a communications campaign that created maximum support for a change to the Bill.

- Liaising with Parliamentary Agents to establish suitable wording for an amendment to the Bill.
- Identifying and briefing key Parliamentarians who would campaign in favour of the amendment and table it on the floor of the House of Commons. This included drafting speeches used in the House during the passage of the Bill.
- Identifying and activating key third party organisations (especially disability groups) to ensure their support for the campaign. Most notably this resulted in a number of major disability charities writing to Ministers in support of the amendment.



Client: **London Taxi Board**

PRCA Consultancy: **AS Biss & Co**

Campaign: **Railway Substitution Services**

PR Sector: **Public Affairs/Government**



Client: **Financial Times**

PRCA Consultancy: **Countrywide Porter Novelli**

Campaign: **Spreading the budget knowledge**

PR Sector: **Corporate**

Results

- Following lengthy debate at Committee Stage in the House of Commons, the Government committed to give further consideration to the issues raised. Subsequently, in the House of Lords, the Government brought forward their own amendment addressing the issue of railway substitution services.
- Bill amendments enacted to guarantee that all railway substitution services carried out by vehicles which meet the accessibility requirement expected of licensed taxis as set out under Section 32 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Background

Financial Times is recognised as the number one business newspaper in the UK but the FT Group is keen to use PR to leverage its unique brand and reputation both across Europe and internationally. A communications programme was developed to underpin all its marketing efforts and help increase its circulation and readership to a larger and more diverse audience.

Budget day was felt to be an ideal opportunity for PR but part of the challenge in generating any coverage for the FT was the fact that other media are not keen to feature one of their competitors. So a creative solution had to be found to capture the imagination of broadcast media and generate quality coverage.

Objectives

- To position the *Financial Times* as the most comprehensive and accurate source of reporting, comment and analysis on the budget, from both business and personal finance objectives.
- To enhance *Financial Times* journalists' reputation for expertise.

Solution

- Create a 'budget box' campaign to create media and spectator interest.
- Brand London taxis and brief knowledgeable drivers to create awareness 'in the street'.

Activity

- A red *Financial Times* 'budget box' was sent in advance to national television and radio programme editors. The box contained journalists' biographies and detailed their areas of expertise. Audio and video samples of their broadcast experience were also included, to highlight suitability of FT journalists as spokespeople.
- Regional BBC and commercial radio stations also received journalists' biographies.
- Drivers of branded FT London taxis thoroughly briefed about the implications of the budget for the man-on-the-street by FT news editor. Taxi drivers then spread this budget knowledge to their customers, and the session was filmed as an exclusive with the BBC1 *Nine O'Clock News*.

Results

- Taxi briefing featured on BBC1 *Nine O'Clock News* on budget day and positioned the FT as more than just a 'city' paper.
- FT journalists interviewed about business and personal finance, on:
 - BBC2, *Newsnight*
 - Carlton TV, *Bulls and Bears*
 - BBC Radio 4, *The Message*
 - BBC World Service
 - IRN (syndicated to 180 UK news desks)
 - 3 local BBC Radio stations
 - 12 commercial local radio stations
- Longer-term relationships with broadcast media improved as a result of their reaction to the 'budget box'.
- Campaign named Winner of *PR Week* 'Best Use of Broadcast' Award 1999.

Background

In October 2000 the Board at eVestment PLC, an internet investment company listed on the Alternative Investment Market (AIM), impressed the City when it successfully completed a reverse takeover of stockbroker and fund management firm, Christows Ltd, for £54 million.

The market would soon realise that this move was merely one piece in a very large jigsaw as eVestment sought to transform itself from internet incubator to an investment-banking group within a six-month time frame. From August 2000 to March 2001, VLP managed the communications surrounding this metamorphosis – encompassing two name changes, two EGMs (exceptional general meetings), two significant acquisitions and dramatic Board restructuring – and helped to successfully turn eVestment into the Evolution Group PLC, via EVC Christows.

Objectives

- To position the company as dynamic; leading the way out of the dot.com investment gloom.
- To distance the company from the harsh media criticism surrounding internet investment that was occurring at the time.
- To exploit publicity for the company's investment portfolio and its respective news flow.
- To keep all shareholders and stakeholders informed and educated about corporate developments.
- To exploit positive shareholder and opinion leader sentiment towards eVestment's transformation into an investment bank and its boardroom restructuring.
- To raise the profile of the Board.

Solution

- Develop PR techniques beyond standard investment announcements, allowing eVestment to 'put its head over the parapet' and build share-of-voice over competitors.
- Target publications and media outside the traditional city 'pink' pages.
- Provide a quick turn-around (two hours or less) of Company announcements to the London Stock Exchange, and making sure investments and write-downs are viewed by investors in a realistic and transparent light.
- Allow the PR team to be available to the Board 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Monitor daily a broad range of online and traditional media, bulletin boards and chat rooms, advising the client of shareholder sentiment and emerging issues in the marketplace and react accordingly.
- Manage and advise on corporate identity changes and internal communications.

Tactics

- VLP created a series of media opportunities around the theme of 'managing well in the dot.com slump', allowing eVestment to emphasise the value of prudent portfolio management and a realistic attitude to the risks of hi-tech investment.
- Arrange for key journalists to meet with the whole board in an informal and transparent setting.
- Several times a day VLP monitored key financial websites for shareholder reactions to eVestment activity. Individual shareholder queries were answered immediately and the client was able to react rapidly to issues that might impact on share price. VLP worked alongside another PR consultancy that targeted specialist financial media, city editors and select financial press.
- From a series of seminars, run in conjunction with The Carphone Warehouse's wireless investment fund, (WIP), to a reception for institutional investors at Kensington Palace, VLP worked with eVestment to devise, implement and gain maximum PR exposure from its events programme.
- Throughout the M&A (mergers and acquisitions) activity, first in October 2000, then in March 2001, VLP gave the media as much access to the Board as possible.

Results

- Extensive online and traditional media coverage across business and financial press, including *Sunday Business*, *CNBC* and *New Media Age*.
- Turnaround of sensitive Regulatory News Service (RNS)**** announcements within 24-hours between briefing and release to Stock Exchange.
- Investor concerns allayed, often on an individual basis, during write-downs and management team changes, minimising negative impact on share price.
- Media monitoring and brand consultancy allowed the EvolutionGroup to focus on corporate reputation issues often not addressed in the investment marketplace.

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Client: **eVestment PLC**

PR Discipline: **Financial**

PRCA Consultancy: **VLP**

Campaign: **The theory of Evolution (PLC): turning a high-tech incubator into a niche investment bank**