

PRODUCT PR

Multimedia effort illuminates unique qualities of fresh2

PR team: Communications Factory (Cleveland), PR Newswire, and MultiVu, a PR Newswire company (New York)
Campaign: The launch of fresh2, an odor-eliminating light bulb
Time frame: May 2004
Budget: Under \$10,000 for multimedia news release production and distribution

When Technical Consumer Products (TCP) of Aurora, OH, was ready to launch the first odor-eliminating light bulb, fresh2, the company enlisted the help of Communications Factory, a small advertising agency that specializes in integrated communications for up-and-coming companies. The ad shop had to overcome an obvious obstacle: The average consumer doubted that a light bulb with air-freshening capabilities could actually rid an entire room of unpleasant odors.

"In today's day and age, people are very accustomed to hearing that a car can go faster than ever before," explains Brad Turner, plant manager of Communications Factory. But if you tell them about fresh2's odor-eliminating abilities, Turner says, "people look at you like you're from a different planet."

To establish the product's credibility, Communications Factory built a consumer base of testimonials that it included on the fresh2 website and produced a VNR. In addition, the ad agency distributed the light bulbs to average customers, pet owners, and even pet shelters across the country.

But as product recognition increased, Turner says, the promotion was ready for a big boost. To get one, Communications Factory sought assistance from the PR Newswire company MultiVu.

Strategy

MultiVu's goal was to gain wide-range exposure for fresh2, leveraging the product's existing media content, but repurposing it to reach a vast number of audiences, says Larry Thomas, SVP of MultiVu. Rather than send out text releases and VNRs to media outlets individually, MultiVu decided to reach print



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fresh2... MNR's broad, simultaneous outreach helped the product see a 10% sales increase in just six weeks

and broadcast media, online users, and consumers all at the same time. To do so, the company decided to create a multimedia news release (MNR).

The MNR offered the product "a way to really penetrate the market," Thomas says. And, he points out, TCP's product lent itself very well to the MNR.

"[TCP's] got something that is an interesting story, that has a visual component to it, and that is a product directed at consumers," Thomas says.

Tactics

The MNR that MultiVu built for fresh2 integrated commercials, b-roll, and a VNR already created by Communications Factory. It served as a single multimedia platform called "New fresh2 Odor-Eliminating Light Bulb Tackles the Stink America Hates."

The MNR was released over PR Newswire's national news line, US1, to more than 4,200 newsrooms, the company says. In addition, the MNR was sent as an HTML e-mail to more than 100 media contacts compiled from PR Newswire's MediAtlas database, and it was distributed directly to consumers through more than 3,600 websites and online databases.

Now, "if somebody is online

and does a search for 'odor elimination,'" says Thomas, "they can easily get to the MNR." The MNR might then lead consumers to the fresh2 website, where they can purchase a two-pack of the light bulb for \$19.99.

Results

In just six weeks after the MNR's release, there was a 10% increase in sales of fresh2 light bulbs, says Turner. In addition, Thomas notes, the e-commerce traffic on the fresh2 website went up threefold.

Future

"We want to get this on shelves," Turner says of the product's future, hopeful that fresh2 will be on sale at Wal-Mart and other retail stores one day. As the company gets more comfortable with the product, he says, Communications Factory, with the help of PR Newswire, would like to expand the product line to include more than just the 23-watt bulb that is offered at present.

Along with adding different wattages to the line, Turner says, the company would like to market bulbs with certain applications—for example, a bulb that is specifically for use in the laundry room.

Patricia Greco