

WPPED CREAM 2008

PUBLIC RELATIONS | WINNER | OGILVY PUBLIC RELATIONS
BSM LEADERSHIP AND THE ADVENTURES OF MARK & GREG

SITUATION ANALYSIS

It is extremely tough for business technology providers to communicate meaningful differences. Vendors are famous for saying and doing the same things. Complex and prolific product offerings present significant communication challenges. BMC has over 500 technology products and its competitors are equally broad.

To create a simpler and more customer-focused business, BMC, four years ago, pioneered Business Service Management (BSM)—a corporate strategy promoting better synchronization between IT and business. BMC (NYSE: BMC), a US \$2 billion business, staked its future on this approach. With no advertising budget, BSM placed the communications mantle onto the shoulders of PR. The company's success largely hung on PR's ability to drive wider market buy-in to the BSM vision. However, while industry analysts had validated BSM, the concept was misunderstood by a significant number of influential commentators. For many, BSM was just another three-letter acronym. What's more, competitors were staking claims to BSM.

With so much riding on BSM, the PR effort had to address the confusion and sell the vision, providing better reasons for customers to invest in BMC's BSM technology, rather than its competitors.

OBJECTIVES

To establish BMC as the leading BSM proponent among key influencers, including journalists, analysts, implementation partners and market commentators. Specifically:

1. To increase BMC's BSM news media reportage over the previous year by at least 100 percent;
2. To capture the greatest share of BSM voice in business and IT news media; and
3. To achieve news coverage that would reinforce existing customers' confidence in their investment in BMC.

AUDIENCE ANALYSIS

Independent news media offered a powerful vehicle that reached all audiences. Business and IT print news media outlets were principal targets. Through them we aimed to reach existing and potential customers. IT analysts, as opinion formers, were also important. In addition, targeting implementation partners, as other influencers, would help get our stories retold. We also wanted to reach BMC staff, and recognized that sustained favourable news media publicity would reinforce the notion that they worked for a winner.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

The strategy for BSM: make it real was a fourpronged campaign designed to bring BSM to life, using characters, emotion and a collation of credible support to enliven storytelling. The overall approach had to deliver the following:

- A sustained yearlong business-to-business campaign principally aimed at establishing a market wide understanding of BSM.
- A framework and materials that BMC's Asia Pacific PR agencies (eight geographies) could use in their own way, customizing as required.
- A device or idea that could be used in a number of formats and channels. The campaign's central axis was two fictitious characters—called Mark and Greg—who told BMC's story from their own personal experiences, making BSM real.

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CREATIVITY AND ORIGINALITY

Using fictional characters as the central ploy to engage independent news media, who are largely concerned with reporting facts—who would have thought? This counterintuitive approach had not before been used in this category and it got the message through. It was a refreshing approach incorporating humour and irreverence to convey abstract business technology.

EXECUTION

1) THE ADVENTURES OF MARK AND GREG: We rejected the jargon that so often obscured, rather than illuminated, the workings of BMC's products and services (and indeed those of so many other vendors). Instead, we crafted two central characters with everyday problems to spearhead the campaign. A storybook called 'The Adventures of Mark & Greg' was born. Based on the lives of two fictitious CIOs (BMC's target customers): Greg, who is constantly fighting fires in his shambolic, errorprone technology organization; and Mark, who runs a slick technology operation and shares his words of wisdom with Greg in the hope that it will make Greg's life a little easier. The interaction and dialogue immediately shone the light on the very problems faced by CIOs every day and painted a vivid picture of BSM's value.

2) THE ADVENTURES OF MARK AND GREG—ON THE ROAD: The book was launched at an AP-wide BSM media education road show. During 2006 more than 80 journalists in seven countries were briefed as part of this initiative. Regional PR agencies applied extra localization to improve uptake in individual markets. For example, parts of the book were translated into different languages to support a specific country focus. The PR team in China adapted one chapter to a script, hiring actors and a set, and staging a play to open the press briefing. Most geographies used local customers to validate Mark and Greg for their markets; and local BMC implementers and industry groups, such as the local chapter of the IT Service Management Forum, were engaged to localize the BSM story.

3) FIT FOR BUSINESS—PUTTING NUMBERS TO MARK AND GREG: Next we had to create a bridge between the fictitious characters Mark and Greg and the current market situation. We needed a stamp of credibility—a body of evidence that substantiated the scenarios depicted by our central characters. To get there we used respected business-to-business researcher the Economist Intelligence Unit to conduct statically robust Asia Pacific research of IT managers. The questionnaire was architected to provide a snapshot of IT's ability to support business (IT fit for business) and quantify the existence of characters like Greg (IT unfit for business) and Mark (fit for business). The findings provided excellent news fodder to extend the Mark/Greg BSM conversation.

4) BRINGING BSM BACK HOME: The next opportunity was to directly relate Mark and Greg's experiences (and BSM) back to BMC's technology roadmap. A two-day international press event was organised for 20 highly influential journalists recruited from AP and EMEA. This event was delivered with a difference.

1) Press briefings announcing key news followed a US chat show format, with a moderator and 'studio guests,' including BMC experts, a customer, partner and analyst discussing the news of the day. The interactive conversation, which began with an onstage dramatisation of a related section from The Adventures of Mark & Greg, gave the press a more colourful delivery of the news.

2) The press event's second day was designed to demonstrate BMC's thought leadership and seed story ideas to garner press coverage for the following 6-12 months. Press participated in briefings around hot industry subjects including: ITIL 3, green IT, Toyota Motorsport's accounts of BSM in Action, compliance, industry views from the CTO. Once again, in striving to leave a vivid impression of BMC's point of difference, journalists were able to participate in an airport simulation exercise, where they applied the principles of BSM to running an airport (keeping planes in the air!).

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EVALUATION OF SUCCESS

On the hard measures of news media reportage and share of voice, the campaign delivered exceptional results:

- The campaign produced a total of 574 favourable BSM technology and business print stories across the Asia Pacific region over the awards period.
- The total was a 120 percent volume increase of favourable BSM coverage over the previous year.
- For the award period, BMC dominated its competitors on share of news media voice related to BSM.
- Market analysts, perhaps the most influential commentators, endorsed BMC's BSM leadership: Forrester: SWOT Analysis: BMC Software, Q4 2006: "Out of the [Big Four], BMC is a visionary and thought leader regarding topics such as BSM and the CMDB, and provides the products to support this leadership."

Softer measures of campaign success also demand examination. No more so than the ripple effect created by the campaign's central characters Mark and Greg, who were applauded by typically hard to please journalists:

"I applaud BMC for taking such a creative approach to make a topic that is quite complex, so much easier to understand" (Steven Deare, ZDNET Australia).

"IT is boring, but the 'Adventures of Mark and Greg' is fun and thoughtful, explaining the dilemma of IT in non-IT language, BMC did a good job on this." (Deng Jian, China Computerworld).

- The campaign has been promoted internally at BMC as a best practice case study.
- The book - The Adventures of Mark and Greg - has been embedded in BMC's global new-hire programme. Every new BMC employee is given their own copy.
- Mark and Greg - the movie: BMC has created a video, based on the book, used to support marketing activities around the region.
- It is also worth noting that over the last two years BMC's stock price has increased by 46 percent; and the company recently recorded its ninth consecutive quarter of meeting or exceeding revenue and non-GAAP earnings per share guidance.