

Prompt's experience in web-related businesses: creating news, case studies and commentary to increase visibility

Case Study: Clickstream

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- Titus Suck,
Director,
Sales & Marketing
Clickstream

Clickstream provides software for gathering data about how people use websites. Although the company doesn't provide tools for analysing this data, it does partner with many companies who provide such tools in what is known as the 'web analytics' market.

Clickstream was formed in 1999 and in 2004 it engaged Prompt Communications to manage its public relations programme. "Clickstream had never done any marketing before, but the company had reached the stage where it needed to raise its profile in the marketplace," says Titus Suck, Clickstream's director of sales and marketing. "We had to get information out there about what we do, how we do it and where we do it. I can't see how a technology company of our size (15 people) can find out all the places this information needs to flow, so we decided to work with a PR consultancy who could provide specialist help."

Ten PR agencies were screened over a period of six months before Prompt was selected. "We got a boilerplate response from a lot of companies, but not Prompt," says Suck. "Prompt quickly grasped our technology and what we were trying to achieve. We also clicked with the personalities of the team: we felt we were in safe hands and that Prompt would help us on our way."

Messaging grid

Prompt began by consulting with Clickstream and producing a messaging grid, outlining the key ideas Clickstream wanted to communicate to its prospective customers, partners and investors. "It wasn't clear to us at the beginning how much we would get out of this," says Suck. "It can seem all too trivial, but the messaging grid came into its own. It was immensely helpful – it clarified in our own minds what the messages should be and helped identify where we hadn't thought the message through. We've used it to improve all our collateral development and sharpen our verbal communication with potential customers on the phone."

He adds: "Technology companies of virtually any size are so convinced of their own technology, they forget that they need to get the message out in a way that is intelligible, hits some hot buttons and makes people take notice. The messaging grid really structured our thought process."

Press releases

Prompt has been ensuring a regular flow of press coverage for Clickstream by producing and distributing a press release each month, including pitching by telephone to key publications to ensure journalists have a clear understanding and are more receptive to the story. The press releases have included a major product launch, a thought-leadership survey about online privacy and two strategic partner announcements.

“What we most appreciated about the press releases – apart from the fact that they are always clearly written – is how quickly Prompt reacted,” says Suck. “It’s all well and good to plan to have one press release a month, but sometimes something happens suddenly and you need to get something quickly into the marketplace.”

team directly, resulting in a quarter page of news coverage of Clickstream’s new product Datasherpa and a compelling write-up of a privacy report Clickstream published. “Prompt did a brilliant job on this,” says Suck. “Within weeks of us discussing NMA and identifying it as a key publication, we were in it. We were very excited about that.”

Within the first six months, Prompt had secured Clickstream coverage in top priority publications including *Information Age*, *New Media Age*, and *Revolution*.

“Press coverage reinforces the value of Clickstream to our partners and customers and plays an important role in communicating our growth to our investors,” says Suck.

Case studies

One way Clickstream demonstrates the value of its products is through case studies, revealing how other customers have used Clickstream’s technology to reap business benefits. Prompt’s specialist writing team interviews Clickstream’s customers to research the case studies before writing them up.

“It’s no mean feat to put together a well written case study that avoids a lot of the jargon we’re typically confronted with,” says Suck. “We’ve been able to use the Virgin Money case study to demonstrate capability but we’re not just using it as a testimonial – through the customer interviews conducted by Prompt we’re also learning about how our customers are using our technology and we are using that knowledge to actively sharpen how we pitch ourselves to prospects.”

Prompt has a team of dedicated professional writers with a range of senior journalistic and media experience. The writers begin by interviewing appropriate team members at Clickstream to research the press release before drafting it. “Press release production never took much of our time,” says Suck. “We would talk about a press release and it would just happen. In terms of management time, that was perfect.”

Prompt also helped Clickstream to identify news opportunities and package news in a way that would be attractive to target publications. “It was helpful for us to receive guidance on how to structure a press release, what we should do with it and how to move from trivial internal news to outward facing stories that get coverage,” says Suck.

Clickstream identified *New Media Age* as a key target publication and Prompt pitched news stories to the editorial

“Prompt is always there for us. They’re always responsive and I can use them as a sounding board: I never feel the clock is ticking.”

- Titus Suck,
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Expertise

Prompt only works with technology companies, and its consultants have extensive experience of a wide range of hardware and software technologies.

“It was certainly helpful that the Prompt team had a knowledge and an understanding of the web analytics market,” says Suck, “but it went deeper than that: Prompt has an understanding of technology issues that is independent of specific applications, and this will be more important as Clickstream moves beyond the simple horizon of web analytics.”

He adds: “Prompt has a clear understanding of technology issues and speaks technology language. Even if there are specific aspects of what we do that might not be known to the Prompt team, or there is jargon we use to describe it that they’re not familiar with, they have an instant grasp of what we’re talking about. Everyone in the team has worked with different technology companies a number of times. It comes through in how Prompt writes, how Prompt thinks, the suggestions they make, the publications they suggest – literally everything they do is underpinned by that technology expertise.”



Communicating technology to business

About Prompt Communications

Founded in January 2002, Prompt Communications offers expertise across all marketing disciplines, teaming its consultants’ extensive knowledge of the technology industry and markets with experience of pan-European media, analyst and marketing campaigns. Using highly targeted marketing, PR and corporate copywriting initiatives, Prompt Communications helps its clients gain the visibility they need to achieve their business objectives, from increasing sales to enhancing reputation with stakeholders. For more information please visit www.prompt-communications.com or contact us directly.

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