



Case Study: Wensleydale Creamery

objectives

Situated in the market town of Hawes in the heart of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, The Wensleydale Creamery prides itself on being the only maker of real Yorkshire Wensleydale cheese in the World.

GREEN was tasked with devising a creative campaign to support The Wensleydale Creamery's bid for Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) which aims to promote and protect food products in the EU. Under PDO rules manufacturers of cheese based outside Wensleydale, North Yorkshire, would be banned from calling their cheese real Yorkshire Wensleydale.

PDO status for The Wensleydale Creamery would protect the regional heritage of real Yorkshire Wensleydale cheese. It will also help to ensure that consumers are getting the genuine article – a hand-crafted cheese made in Wensleydale. Key objectives included:

- Successfully promote and support the Creamery's bid for PDO status;
- Build and maintain brand profile with key multiples and independents;
- Increase sales across the Real Yorkshire Wensleydale range;
- Generate significant news coverage in consumer and trade press;

From the beginning GREEN was determined to spread the word about Real Yorkshire Wensleydale via the web and through emerging social media, making best use of a dedicated Wensleydale blog; the blogosphere; Wikis; podcasts; and other UGC.

GREEN also made best use of online social networks like Flickr, Facebook and other feeds to add to the "conversation". Our aim was to use social media as a platform to spread the "conversation" about Wensleydale and translate that into genuine deadwood media coverage.

GREEN Communications

GREEN Communications are specialists in public and media relations, crisis management, design, digital media, copywriting and events management. We are also recognised leaders in the growing field of social media.

We exist to help our clients win the reputation they deserve, focused on delivering real measurable benefits that add to their bottom line.

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A petition in support of the campaign – available online and at the Creamery's visitor centre – was also put in place.

implementation

GREEN developed the Wensleydaleblog– using the WordPress blogging platform - which integrated several social media tools including Facebook, Flickr and a discussion forum, as well as Digg, Technorati and Del.icio.us ranking tools. We also included an RSS feed to allow visitors to subscribe to our feeds.

The blog also made tactical links with other partner sites including the Yorkshire Dales National Park, British Cheese Board, Wallace & Gromit and the Yorkshire Post which launched their own "Uniquely Yorkshire" campaign in support of Real Yorkshire Wensleydale ensuring regular coverage. They also developed a dedicated website in support of the campaign.

An entry for Wensleydale cheese was also accepted by Wikipedia which further added online authority to the campaign. Elsewhere, GREEN established an online petition for those wishing to support the PDO campaign and launched a series of competitions to get people involved.

A podcast of a poem – To Make Wensleydale Cheese - written by Yorkshire poet Ian McMillan also generated further traffic and media coverage.

creative

GREEN brainstormed a series of creative angles to be used on the website. These included:

- Wensleydaleblog – A dedicated weblog was created and updated regularly with news about PDO and other developments at the Creamery. Other social media tools were also used including Facebook and Flickr.
- Online Petition – An online petition was created inviting visitors to add their support.
- Wensleydale Cookery demonstration – More than 60 consumer and cookery writers were invited to an event at Nat Mags House where celebrity chef Brian Turner demonstrated a range of Wensleydale recipes. Pictures of the event were posted on the Wensleydale Flickr account.
- An Ode to Wensleydale – Yorkshire poet Ian McMillan was commissioned to write a poem in praise of Yorkshire's favourite cheese.
- More Wensleydale Gromit! – Britain's favourite plasticine characters and cheese fans, Wallace & Gromit were approached for their support and a post was placed on the site.

results

Phenomenal press coverage was achieved, including a news piece and a supplement in the Daily Telegraph; The Times; The Daily Express and BBC News online. Extensive regional coverage was achieved in the *Yorkshire Post*; *Yorkshire Evening Post*; *Northern Echo and Darlington and Stockton Times*. Coverage was achieved in numerous trade titles, including *The Grocer*; *Food Industry News*; *Food Manufacture*; *Fine Food Digest*; *Dairy Industries International*; *Farmers Weekly* and *International Sandwich and Snack News*. Meanwhile, consumer women's press featured stories about the cheese and associated recipes including *Fresh*, *Delicious*, *Express Woman*, *BBC Good Food* and *Country Kitchens*.

The Yorkshire Post launched their own Uniquely Yorkshire campaign with a dedicated website in support of the Creamery. This ensured regular coverage throughout the campaign. The total AVE is calculated as £200,000.

Significant broadcast coverage was achieved including mentions on BBC Radio 4's flagship Today programme; BBC Radio 2 news and GMTV news. Locally there were several features on BBC Look North, Calendar and Tyne Tees.

Wensleydaleblog continues to attract more than 400 unique visitors a week. Visitors can leave messages of support, sign the online petition and upload pictures and recipes. A podcast of Ian McMillan's poem in praise of Yorkshire's favourite cheese was also broadcast on the site and formed the basis of a poetry competition – which generated further press coverage.

Meanwhile, the blogging community have created a "conversation" around the PDO bid and have thrown their support behind the campaign [see Appendix A]. The blog is augmented by a Flickr picture gallery and on Facebook there are two Wensleydale cheese appreciation societies.

More than 100 comments have been left on the Wensleydaleblog and using BlogPulse analysis the level of online conversations about Wensleydale cheese has been immense [see Appendix B]. Online word-of-mouth support has been witnessed on Twitter, Facebook, Pownce and several other social media networks.

During the course of the campaign more than 300 supportive blog posts were written about Wensleydaleblog and the PDO campaign. Bloggers included MEPs, US food and drink blogs, and Yorkshire ex-patriots.

More than 18,000 people signed the petition in support of the campaign and this was delivered to Westminster. The PDO application is due to go to Brussels once approved by DEFRA and the final decision is due later this year. Wensleydaleblog continues to be updated.

David Hartley, Managing Director of the Creamery said: "GREEN has worked hard to deliver a fantastic PR campaign generating huge interest in the Creamery. We have been particularly impressed by how the blog has generated so much goodwill for our brand."

Our Awards

2000: Best Charity Campaign / PR Professional of the Year / Consumer Campaign of the Year 2002: Best Use of Photography or Design / Best Consumer Campaign 2004: Consultancy of the Year / Best Business to Business Campaign / Best Use of Photography / Best Community Campaign 2005: Young Communicator of the Year / Best Use of Photography / Low Budget Campaign / Relationship Management Campaign 2006: Young Communicator of the Year / Consultancy of the Year / Corporate and Financial Campaign / Low Budget Campaign / Best Use of Photography 2007: Not for Profit Campaign / Low Budget Campaign / Corporate Campaign 2008: Best Corporate Campaign