

PR TVC highlights reputational risk on CNBC Africa

In what is described as a first for a PR firm, marcusbrewster is launching a business-to-business TV campaign to advertise its professional services. Presented in an infographic style, the campaign highlights the value of PR in the critical business areas of crisis communication and reputation management. [video]

The media budget for the campaign is R1,445,000 and the creative for the campaign, launching on CNBC Africa in March 2013, is the Cape Town office of JWT.

Comments company chairman Marcus Brewster, "The company has evolved over 20 years from a simple publicity shop to a full-service PR agency to where we are now: a communications firm that integrates PR with managing a variety of specialist marcomms service providers.

"The efficiency and speed with which we have been able to adapt and innovate in the organisation has sometimes outpaced the market's perception of what we offer. Some people still only think we do celebrity PR - a service which was introduced in 2001 and which has long been eclipsed in business importance by other offerings such as media training, crisis communication, speech writing, public affairs and reputation management.

"In order to position ourselves in the market more effectively, we took a 'go big or go home' approach. In conjunction with JWT, we chose to highlight the kinds of communication challenges that would be faced by big decision makers, the captains of industry. The campaign looks at how crises, incorrectly handled, can rage out of control and ultimately affect share price. Moving the playing field from brand public relations (where the agency is already well established) to corporate communications (where the firm is perhaps less well known) dictated the choice of TV channel - CNBC Africa. The channel's viewership comprises close to 5 million viewers in 48 countries across Africa.

Broadcast footprint in Africa

The station's broadcast footprint in Africa - it has nine bureaus in South Africa, Zambia, Mozambique,

Namibia, Kenya, Nigeria, Gabon and Rwanda and a further seven planned by 2014, also speaks to the large geographical remit of client assignments on the continent.

For many years, marcusbrewster has handled PR for the business development division of the Carlson Rezidor Hotel group in sub-Saharan Africa to the extent where it now has the largest hotel development pipeline of any hotel group on the continent. The firm's lobbying practice area also operates at the highest stakeholder levels of government both within and north of our borders.

"As communication professionals, we know the importance of reputation management to an organisation's bottom line. The global economic crisis was simply an extreme example of what happens to share prices when public confidence is eviscerated.

"In our own research last year, we established that company reputation was the single most important qualifier of choice as to why clients appointed us as their PR agency of record. Company reputation far outpaced determinants like quality of service and low cost.

"We are confident that investment in our TV campaign will deliver on the company reputation axis and establish the company as the go-to PR firm for any industry leader serious about doing business in South Africa and the rest of the continent."

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