

## CASE STUDIES

### BE HERE CORPORATION

MEDIA AND PARTNER RELATIONS CASE STUDY

When Spiralgroup started working with Be Here Corporation, developer of a panoramic 360-degree camera lens technology, the personally-financed company was looking for a way to launch in a powerful yet low-cost way.

Spiralgroup leveraged its Company You Keep approach by helping find a larger champion that would support the Be Here launch. We convinced Apple Computer that Be Here technology was an excellent proof point for their soon-to-be-introduced Quicktime VR. We negotiated with Apple to build a customized Web site using Be Here technology and to highlight Be Here in their MacWorld main keynote address. As a result, Apple spent in excess of \$250,000 to produce these and other associated Be Here-focused events.

Apple chairman Gil Amelio's 10-minute introduction to Be Here led to immediate coverage on CNN and other national news stations. Within weeks, Be Here was chartered by The Associated Press to shoot Clinton's presidential inauguration. The follow-on media tour was so successful that major broadcasters Bloomberg, CNN, CNN/fn, and MSNBC jumped at the chance to demonstrate the technology. At MSNBC, the interview brought the MSNBC Webmaster rushing to the floor to buy a unit.

Over the course of a year, Spiralgroup set up more than 140 interviews for Be Here, providing them with the greatest breadth of coverage of any company in their industry.

### THE BAAN COMPANY

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS CASE STUDY

With 28 separate business units spanning five continents each handling their own PR, The Baan Company asked Spiralgroup to help consolidate its diverse international requirements to be serviced by a single firm. Spiralgroup met the challenge by developing Baan's first global PR program.

Spiralgroup audited each of Baan's business units to learn of their procedures, budget practices, needs and concerns. We then leveraged that knowledge into an RFP process targeting the world's top agencies. The three-step process, each with clear benchmarks and deliverables from participating agencies, took sixty days, narrowing a list of 20 leading contenders to the final recommendation.

We found that Baan's needs were best served by two agencies that had a vested interest in working together. By retaining Fleishman-Hillard in the US and Brodeur Porter Novelli in Europe – both owned by Omnicom Group – Baan could ensure global program coordination combined with regional expertise. Spiralgroup helped the agencies build a strong PR team in conjunction with Baan's various units, assisted in designing and executing the first stages of a worldwide program, and directed Baan in the selection of its first international PR director.

## BLINKX

### PRODUCT LAUNCH CASE STUDY

Blinkx, a small search engine company headquartered in London, sought to launch in the United States. The difficulty was that they had a small budget and were a latecomer to a field dominated by Google, which was soon to go public. The company's unique value proposition was that the technology could "read" what was on your computer, automatically linking to information you needed on your computer and on the Web.

Spiralgroup's strategy was to (1) piggyback on the notice Google was getting; (2) take the story first to the blogging community -- notorious iconoclasts who would resonate with a "what's better than Google?" story; and (3) further challenge Google by taking a contrarian approach, proposing that the search engine of the future... demanded that the search engine become invisible and automatic to the user.

The positive response to the strategy was automatic. Leading blogger OmMalik wrote "[when I saw Blinkx], I got the same shiver of excitement when I first met with [the founders of Google.]" Within days, over 5,000 blog discussions were taking place about Blinkx, leading to many journalists to contact us proactively. As Google approached its IPO, Blinkx was noted in much of the technology discussions and achieved standalone coverage in such key publications as the *Boston Globe*, *BusinessWeek*, *InformationWeek*, *Newsweek*, *Red Herring*, *Reuters* and the *San Jose Mercury*. The launch was so successful that *Red Herring* sardonically noted that Blinkx's biggest problem might be "too much good publicity" -- and Blinkx achieved its goal of over one million downloads a full year ahead of schedule.

## CISCO SYSTEMS

### SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS AND INTERACTIVE SERVICES CASE STUDY

When you're as busy and fast-paced as Cisco, encouraging middle and upper-level management to promote your business through extracurricular speaking engagements can be a problem. When handed the charter to improve their speakers bureau, Spiralgroup created a company-wide Web-based initiative that appealed to each employee's desire for professional development and capitalized upon their speaking or writing skills.

To build participation, Spiralgroup knew that we had to make each employee -- not Cisco -- the industry experts, the "heroes" of the program. The existing speakers program only appealed to about 50% of Cisco employees: people who were extroverted and comfortable with making public appearances. To compensate, we added a new dimension: the opportunity for employees to also *write* for the company via opinion or technical articles. By doing this, we increased the program's appeal to the remaining half of the Cisco population: introverted people who were reluctant to speak, but would be glad to author pieces on behalf of the company.

This new platform -- called the Cisco Pen & Podium Program -- allowed employees to capitalize upon and develop their speaking and writing skills, and established a rewards system that ensured the company was made aware of the contributions made by each of these employees.

To support the program, Spiralgroup designed and built an intranet site to simplify the participation process for busy professionals. The site includes a central repository of key messages, presentations and articles, making creation of new materials with a standard look a snap. Other easy-to-use features include a searchable database of speaking and writing opportunities, an events deadline roster, a biographies database, and online professional resources. The site also provides pre-developed abstracts for speaking and contributed article opportunities for quick review and submission. A selection of ghost writers are made available to help employees draft articles or speeches when needed.

To keep the program in front of employees, Spiralgroup also created a bi-weekly newsletter that is sent by e-mail to tell employees of recent successful "hits", secured engagements, announce new opportunities, and share tips on being better speakers and writers. Spiralgroup continues to manage the program for Cisco, underscoring its success and their satisfaction.

## CISCO SYSTEMS

### PRODUCT LAUNCH CASE STUDY

Spiralgroup jumped into action when Cisco's Small/Medium Business division (Cisco SMB) asked for assistance with the upcoming launch of the division and its new hosted applications effort – just six weeks away. The challenge wasn't just to introduce Cisco's new initiative, but to move press and analysts away from their traditional product-centric focus on Cisco as a networking provider to a recognition of Cisco as an innovative provider of software solutions for the growing SMB market.

In a matter of days, we developed a PR plan that distinguished the real news behind the launch, refined messaging and identified all partners. The Spiralgroup team crafted the launch presentation, created three primary news releases outlining Cisco's strategic, hardware, and software perspectives, and wrote and handled approvals for ten partner releases and two customer releases. At the same time, Spiralgroup planned, booked and supported the associated media and analyst tours.

The launch of the Hosted Applications Initiative and Resource Network for Small/Medium Businesses exceeded all objectives. Our media outreach was so successful that we secured meetings with 100% of Cisco SMB's target list, leading to a solid buy-in from press and analysts alike. The resulting positive coverage and analyst support positioned Cisco as not only the Internet networking leader but as a technology player that was ahead of the curve, driving forward the market push toward hosted applications.

## CISCO SYSTEMS

### INTERACTIVE SERVICES CASE STUDY

Wanting to keep employees informed but realizing that its current online news summary wasn't hitting home, Cisco engaged Spiralgroup to develop a more effective method of delivering its news internally.

Taking the project over from another PR agency, Spiralgroup first audited Cisco employees. The team quickly discovered that the current summary provided too much information, with much of it not being relevant to each reader. Recognizing that people voluntarily will read only information that interests them, Spiralgroup designed a new software-based delivery system that allowed each employee to tailor the news they received.

When employees signed up for the newsletter, they first noted their interest in receiving summaries where Cisco appeared in the news, where competitors appeared, and/or for industry news in general. They then indicated the publications and analyst firms from which they wanted to receive the news and stated their areas of interest. Using these personalized filters, each week the system automatically e-mailed a customized newsletter to each employee. The new service increased readership and generated a stronger internal awareness of Cisco's activities within its industry.

## EYEWIRE

### COLLATERAL DEVELOPMENT CASE STUDY

When Spiralgroup began developing press collateral for EyeWire, an online provider of royalty-free visual content and images, it realized that the best way to reinforce its client's messages was to incorporate EyeWire's offerings directly into the materials themselves. Driving home the fact that EyeWire truly did offer unparalleled imagery, Spiralgroup used its client's unique fonts, images, and other design elements to attract the media's attention and visually demonstrate EyeWire's competitive advantage.

Spiralgroup used complementary fonts and added distinctive graphics to EyeWire's press releases, corporate materials, and throughout the company's roadshow presentation. A short sentence noted that the elements came directly from EyeWire's stock of imagery products and provided collection details. This "visual branding" let reporters experience firsthand the significant breadth and depth of EyeWire's offerings even before the read a single word.

## **GAY.COM**

### STRATEGY AND POSITIONING CASE STUDY

Gay.com's late launch into the gay and lesbian market space faced a tough challenge: PlanetOut, a top-tier VC-funded startup that was well-known for its deal with America Online.

After analyzing direct and non-direct competition – such as Women.com – Spiralgroup determined that Gay.com's key strength was the fact that it managed the Internet's largest online chat area for gays and lesbians. Building on its chat strengths and leveraging its incorporation of other interactive tools – such as e-mail, message boards, and instant messaging -- Spiralgroup envisioned a way to translate those strengths into revenues.

Spiralgroup created the concept of *eCommunity* e-commerce, the use of interactive tools -- such as chat, e-mail and message boards – throughout an online community to create multiple opportunities for buyer-seller dialog.

The concept attracted both advertising dollars and goodwill from the gay and lesbian community. Advertisers could test ideas or introduce products to any demographic group, at any time, reducing market research cycles from weeks to hours. eCommunity members benefited from both the special promotions and the unique opportunity to share their opinions and ideas.

eCommunity became a key differentiator for Gay.com and a cornerstone of the company's marketing effort. At the company launch, which announced the merger of three smaller players, *Newsweek* lauded the company as "the gay equivalent of the AOL / Netscape merger" for its commercial potential.

Company president Mark Elderkin was named one of the *21 to Watch in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* by *Adweek*, which noted "eCommunity e-commerce [is] sure to become a marketing wave of the Internet future."

## **GETTY IMAGES**

### MARKET RESEARCH CASE STUDY

When Getty Images had an unclear view of the details of a competitor's upcoming product, they asked Spiralgroup for help. In just two weeks, our research team leveraged its network of contacts and delivered the full picture of Corbis' BizPresenter, including complete product parameters, expected pricing, its planned launch date and initial target customers.

## **IASIAWORKS**

### NAMING AND CORPORATE IDENTITY CASE STUDY

Spiralgroup took advantage of its extensive network of PR and marketing specialists when AUNET, an ISP for Asia-focused businesses, asked us to come up with a new company name and image within one month. The added catch was that the new branding needed to be attractive in five different countries – China, Korea, Japan, the Philippines, and the United States – and the name needed to have a lucky rendering when written in Chinese.

We quickly pulled together a team of branding experts, including the specialist that named Lucent, a graphic designer to create the new logo, and cultural and business representatives familiar with the involved geographies as well as the Internet market.

An initial list of nearly 800 potential names was developed, and then narrowed down to three in less than two weeks. Spiralgroup also conducted the necessary research to ensure the names were available for use. Company executives made the final choice and succeeded in launching the new iAsiaWorks image in time for a funding announcement deadline.

## IMPORTNOW.COM

COMPANY AND PRODUCT LAUNCH CASE STUDY

ImportNow.com approached Spiralgroup to launch its online world bazaar just weeks before Christmas – when the press was sick of dotcoms and even less interested in B2C retail sites. Turning the tables, we suggested that ImportNow.com play up the human interest angle and highlight the contrast of low-tech third-world communities – some without electricity – participating in the high-tech Internet economy.

We sent a film crew to Papua, New Guinea – considered by many to be one of the most primitive and dangerous places on earth – to film a video news release showing how a village and its artisans were leveraging the Internet to create a major source of income for their remote community. As a turnabout play, we then brought the New Guinea village directly to the media in the form of a tribal artisan who – through his interpreter – could speak to how his village was benefiting from ImportNow's unique distribution channel.

Our contrarian approach had powerful results. The media loved the artisan and his story, with Spiralgroup securing interviews with CNN, *The New York Times*, *Fortune*, and *Forbes* – plus a two-page spread in *Yahoo! Internet Life*, ImportNow.com's leading consumer publication. Our efforts also dramatically increased site traffic, meeting ImportNow.com's major objective in time for holiday sales.

## MOCANA

BRANDING / POSITIONING CASE STUDY

Mocana came to Spiralgroup with a branding dilemma: how could they take an obscure bit of security technology – so arcane that only software engineers know its purpose – and make it something of more popular press appeal? Even more, how can they develop a new brand that would evolve with them as they grew to offer more than security solutions?

After analyzing Mocana and its competition, it became clear that Mocana's technology was rapidly being accepted by the world's leading manufacturers of networked and networked devices as the *de facto* standard for security. From this, Spiralgroup developed a branding vocabulary of seven key words that distinguished the company... then applied these words to the company's positioning message and visuals.

The new branding -- "Security for a Networked Society" -- set Mocana apart from its competitors, which remained mired in arcane chip-level positioning that made it hard to understand the value they brought to business. Serving the "networked society" has become a platform upon which Mocana will be able easily base its evolving product lines. Finally, a new Mocana visual identity outclasses the competition with its more European (global) asymmetrical design approach and sophisticated color mix

## NARRATIVE COMMUNICATIONS

MEDIA RELATIONS CASE STUDY

When rich media advertising company Narrative Communications approached Spiralgroup, they wanted to improve their positioning for acquisition by an unnamed party. Spiralgroup rose to the challenge by creatively using investor relations tactics and its *Company You Keep* methodology to raise Narrative's profile and enhance its value.

Spiralgroup recommended that Narrative leverage its relationship with current customer Procter & Gamble, the world's largest advertiser. Spiralgroup knew that P&G was also a leading participant in FAST, an industry effort exploring how to increase the effectiveness of Internet marketing. Spiralgroup proposed that Narrative provide the proof points for P&G's FAST efforts, allowing Procter & Gamble to be recognized as a leader in use of rich media technology to move advertising into the next generation.

With P&G's participation, Spiralgroup conducted an analyst conference call that described their use of Narrative technology, sharing the information as if it was an earnings announcement by openly discussing company revenues and ROI projections to garner analyst support. Spiralgroup then pitched the story to very specific business and trade publications as exclusives, resulting in two hits in *The Wall Street Journal*, Narrative's top business publication, and a three-page story in *Adweek*, Narrative's top trade target.

As a result of Spiralgroup's creative spin and big-name partnering, within weeks Narrative was acquired for \$89 million by Excite@Home.

## PRINTNATION.COM

### MEDIA RELATIONS CASE STUDY

When PrintNation.com approached Spiralgroup to secure business and technology trade coverage for its one-stop B2B site for commercial printers, the media was being inundated by news from B2B players, making it extremely difficult to get heard above the noise. Spiralgroup faced the additional challenge of getting ink for a start-up company in the less-than-compelling printing industry. Time was also of the essence: with the high number of competitive start-up operations, PrintNation.com had a very short window of opportunity to prove to investors and industry influencers that it could attract steadfast customers and revenues.

With a small team and budget, Spiralgroup quickly put a highly-targeted plan into action. The Spiralgroup team researched industry trends on a weekly basis to develop compelling package stories. The creative pitches tied PrintNation.com's operations into current B2B issues while presenting the company as a proven leader in both the B2B market and the printing industry. As a result, editors that were wary of speaking with an unknown start-up with no plans for an IPO ended up touting PrintNation.com as a B2B success story that had found the only way of making money serving the printing industry.

Spiralgroup's media relations surpassed all goals and expectations. The team wrote and issued 21 press releases over the course of the year, with articles appearing in such leading publication as *Business Week*, *Fast Company*, *Investor's Business Daily*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *Upside*. This heightened industry awareness led to PrintNation.com's receipt of three prestigious awards: *Upside* Hot 100 Companies to Watch, *Forbes* Best of the B2B Web, and the Bridgegate 100 Award given to the top 20 difference-makers in Orange County, Calif. The public relations program itself was awarded top honors for media relations by the Public Relations Society of America.

PrintNation.com's media success was a tremendous coup for a privately-held start-up working in a niche industry in the noisy B2B space. Spiralgroup efforts attracted numerous new customers and firmly established PrintNation.com as the leading site for the commercial printing industry, leading it to later being acquired by printing powerhouse Pitman Corporation.

## ROOT CANDLES

### PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT CASE STUDY

Root Candles, the nation's oldest candle manufacturer in Medina, OH, asked Spiralgroup to review their product line to see how they could build sales and gain greater media attention. The restrictions were that (1) the program had to be low cost and (2) the changes could not change the existing product line.

These restrictions sparked inspiration for us. Within one week, we had created a new marketing program for the company called *LightStyle*, which – through a simple in-store test – allows users to determine their decorating style and guides them to the Root Candles that match that style. The new program demanded no reengineering of the existing products or systems in place – simply the creation of some new marketing collateral and enhancements to the company's existing Web site.

The program is just now being launched to great acclaim from sales reps and retailers; in fact, the new line so inspired the Borders™ book chain that – for the first time –they have approached Root Candles to carry *LightStyle* sampler boxes (another Spiralgroup innovation) in all their U.S. stores. And Root *LightStyle* boxes have become the in-demand "goodie bag" gift for such awards shows as the Emmy Awards.

Media coverage is starting to flow, with the company getting attention from such major decorating and women's lifestyle magazines as *Life & Style*, *InStyle*, *RealSimple* and *iVillage*. Through our efforts, Root has become the *de facto* candle supplier for photo shoots for top-tier magazines like *Martha Stewart Living*, ensuring Root is mentioned in almost every issue.

The success of the new *LightStyle* program has led Root to introduce its first standalone retail store, the first of a series too be opened across the United States.

## SAVVION

### BRANDING / POSITIONING CASE STUDY

Savvion (formerly TDI) was one of the forerunners of the business process management (BPM) movement; its founder is one of BPM's major thought leaders. However, as the industry grew, Savvion's leadership position was difficult to reinforce in the face of fierce competition.

In developing a new branding/positioning, Spiralgroup decided to play off the company's name, which is derived from the French *savoir* (to know). The new positioning message/tagline "Savvion *knows* business process management" underscored the company's role as an industry leader and provided the foundation for a marketing and public relations campaign that focused on the expertise of Savvion and its founders.

A corollary advertising program focused both on a corporate campaign – "We're savvy on business process management" – and a related customer/vertical industry campaign that highlighted Savvion's customers and their use of Savvion technology in their vertical applications ("Thanks to Savvion, I'm savvy on business process management for manufacturing.")

## SOLOPOINT

### MARKETING SERVICES CASE STUDY

Spiralgroup turned on a dime when SoloPoint, a developer of telephony call management products, changed its retail marketing strategy in mid-course by deciding to sell its main voice-mail product only through Regional Bell Operating Companies (RBOCs). Fortunately, its first customer -- Pacific Bell -- agreed to introduce the company's new SmartScreen™ product directly to its *Message Center* customers. But introduction plans soon stalled due to internal PacBell issues, and the program's kickoff was threatened.

Not wanting to lose a prime opportunity, Spiralgroup and Solopoint worked quickly to convince Pacific Bell to let us train the phone company's network of 3,500 telemarketing salespeople to sell SmartScreen as a complement to *The Message Center*, with the goal of increasing sales of both products.

To motivate employees to take the voluntary training, Spiralgroup created a highly entertaining and interactive program designed around the summer blockbuster *Air Force One*. Heavily promoted through posters and other promotional materials provided by New Line Cinema, our "traveling movie theater," complete with movie screen, candy counter, and movie-pass prizes, visited more than 40 sites to train the entire network of telesales workers in three weeks.

The whole program, from pre-promotion to post-roadshow refresher courses, resulted in a dramatic increase in SmartScreen sales at a cost of less than \$8 per employee trained! Due to the program's success, SoloPoint next asked us to develop a full-blown SmartScreen marketing program for use with all US RBOCs.

## WATTAGE MONITOR

### BUSINESS STRATEGIES CASE STUDY

Wattage Monitor gave consumers the power to switch electricity service providers in deregulated states. The company approached Spiralgroup to help better position them for success with the media.

An internal audit of the company's business goals and processes revealed that it was sitting on a pot of media gold: as a result of their service, Wattage Monitor had the most comprehensive market research and information about electric service options for consumers and businesses. Spiralgroup determined that this key differentiator would be the pivot for the company being positioned as an influential player within the industry.

A follow-on audit of the nation's top energy media revealed the positioning was correct; indeed, the information held by Wattage Monitor was so compelling that the media requested access to the data on a regular basis. Additional research revealed that the media would be willing to pay for customized versions of this information. As a result, a new company profit center – Wattage Monitor Information Services – was born.

Spiralgroup worked with Wattage Monitor to recraft company online and offline collateral, as well as developed the service's first report: a study in consumer pricing behavior in deregulated states. Spiralgroup formally introduced the new research service to media and analysts, leveraging the company president – an electricity industry veteran – as the leading consumer advocate for fair electricity industry pricing. He became a popular pundit for the energy media, fielding the weekly calls many of the press made directly to him.

## WEB SITE GARAGE

BUSINESS STRATEGIES CASE STUDY

Spiralgroup went into creative overdrive when AtWeb Inc. asked us to brand and promote its new Web site performance offerings. Capitalizing on the themes of service and maintenance, Spiralgroup recommended that AtWeb translate the idea of an auto repair shop into an Internet site where people could go to service their Web sites just as they did with their cars.

With Spiralgroup leading the marketing development team and directing site design, AtWeb developed Web Site Garage, a one-stop shop for small businesses to go get a Web site tune-up. The site appealed to consumers by offering an easy-to-use cartoon-based interface that provided high-value analyses.

Web Site Garage was an overnight sensation, completing more than 1 million tune-ups in its first 60 days. The concept inspired many imitators and won multiple awards and significant press coverage, including articles in *BusinessWeek* and *The Industry Standard*. The garage theme was so successful that it was carried throughout the company's marketing efforts, from business cards that were marked with a greasy thumbprint in the lower corner to the company founder dressed in overalls as the "Head Mechanic" for media interviews.

AtWeb's attractive services and its positive publicity led to the company's acquisition by Netscape in a stock-swap arrangement that valued the company at \$100 million. The subsequent America Online purchase of Netscape increased company value to \$212 million, with AtWeb specifically being cited by AOL as a one of the reasons for the acquisition.

Spiralgroup's success was so complete with Web Site Garage that we have worked with the company's founders on their new startup, *SimplyHired.com*. The company (which we named!) was listed last year – along with *Blinkx* – as one of *Time Magazine's* Top 100 Web Sites of 2005.