Category:	Best Business Communications Campaign
Title of Work:	Why Prysmian?
PR Agency:	Ridgemount PR
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Company Name:	Prysmian Group, Trade and Installer (T&I) division
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BUDGET: Over £100,000

OBJECTIVE / BRIEF

Prysmian Group is the world's largest manufacturer of electrical and communications cable. In the UK, Trade and Installer (T&I) is an important division for the group, supplying electrical cable to SME electrical contractors. As the products are supplied through distribution – typically specialist electrical wholesalers – Prysmian's direct contact with its end-user customers has been limited. Anecdotal reporting in 2016 suggested that brand awareness with this key target audience, while still high, was in decline.

The following objectives were set for the campaign:

1. Increase awareness of the Prysmian brand and the key product benefits
2. Establish Prysmian as the centre for technical expertise and advice
3. Persuade our audience to develop into positive advocates for Prysmian
4. Make an impact

STRATEGY

1. Identify the benefits that differentiate Prysmian products from their competitors and which can persuade contractors to make a positive brand choice in a commodity market.
2. Research the audience to understand current levels of awareness and investigate where and how contractors research product information
3. Create a high-impact promotional campaign across all existing touch-points with the contractor audience.
4. Build a body of advice and information on topical issues, establishing Prysmian as the primary source of technical advice on all cable issues and
5. Promote this content directly to users via social media
6. Test, measure and analyse all communication activity regularly to fine-tune the promotional campaign

MEASUREMENT / EVALUATION

The campaign started with market research. 400 electrical contractors were polled to establish the base level of brand awareness and to understand more about their behaviour.

The results drove the campaign: we established the issues of most importance to the contractors and also where they find product information. We established that the majority refer to trade publications for information but that they also use social media – particularly Facebook.

Each element of the campaign activity had its individual measurement criteria, but for the whole campaign, three overriding objectives were set. To increase:

- prompted awareness by 4%;
- unprompted awareness by 9%
- Net Promoter Score from 40% to over 50%.

Market research was repeated three more times throughout the campaign to check on progress.

The year-long campaign launched in June 2017. With three months still to go:

- prompted awareness has risen by 5%
- unprompted awareness by 6%
- Net Promoter score now stands at over 60%.

METHOD DEPLOYED

We developed a high-impact, multi-channel campaign, taking Prysmian promotion into entirely new territory. Prysmian used a new, more approachable voice, communicating its expertise with less formality and focusing on digital channels for the first time.

We used established channels – trade publications, wholesaler outlets and websites – and added video content, online communities and digital promotion, injecting a big dose of vitality into the programme.

The campaign focused on four key attributes of the Prysmian brand, which research indicated are of primary importance to our audience:

- High quality product that performs with complete reliability
- Guaranteed compliance with all relevant standards
- Made in Britain
- Unparalleled technical expertise and advice

These attributes collectively support the proposition “Professionals Choose Prysmian” – used across the advertising campaign and website.

The WhyPrysmian? website was developed as the central resource for the campaign . We steadily built a body of relevant and useful content adding blog posts weekly. Subjects were suggested by topical issues in the industry and, as the campaign progressed, we were able to answer questions and issues raised via our direct engagement with contractors. Blog posts were promoted via Facebook and Twitter with both organic and promoted content.

The results were immediate and impressive. In July, traffic to the WhyPrysmian site increased by 1,450% over the previous month (up to 7,530 visits) with a bounce rate of less than 10%. 89% of this traffic was driven by social media. Visitors to the leading blog page in this month had an average dwell time of eight minutes – demonstrating the relevance of the subject for our audience.

The audience did not only consume the content – they reacted to it. Responding to comments from contractors brought Prysmian closer to its users than ever. Key concerns were highlighted, but so too

was an enthusiasm for the promise of the Prysmian brand. From these responses we built a community of Prysmian advocates whose insight and comment is being incorporated into the ongoing campaign.

At the same time, a press relations campaign sees by-lined feature articles appearing in key trade publications, supporting Prysmian's position of expertise and thought leadership. To date nine such features have appeared in titles such as Professional Electrician, Electrical Contractor News and Electrical Wholesaler.

To promote the focus on local, high-quality manufacturing we developed a "how it's made" video, filmed in Prysmian's Aberdare facility. Designed primarily for social media distribution, we tested different versions before deciding on the final cut for full-scale promotion.

Once promotion got underway we were able to monitor the drop-off point and realised that many viewers were missing some of our key messages. We re-edited the video into shorter, bite-sized sections, each concentrating on one key message, and promoted the shorter versions via Facebook. To date, the full video has achieved 150,000 views – at a cost of 18p per view (including all video production and promotion costs).

RELATION TO OBJECTIVES AND COST EFFICIENCY

There are approximately 140,000 electricians in the UK, the vast majority work for small businesses. They are constantly on the move and difficult to reach, but use their mobile phones to run their daily lives. Our campaign was designed to break into the channels they use every day with timely, relevant and engaging content.

There is little guesswork in this campaign: we have established the key messages through research and every aspect of the campaign is tested, measured, evaluated and revised where necessary.

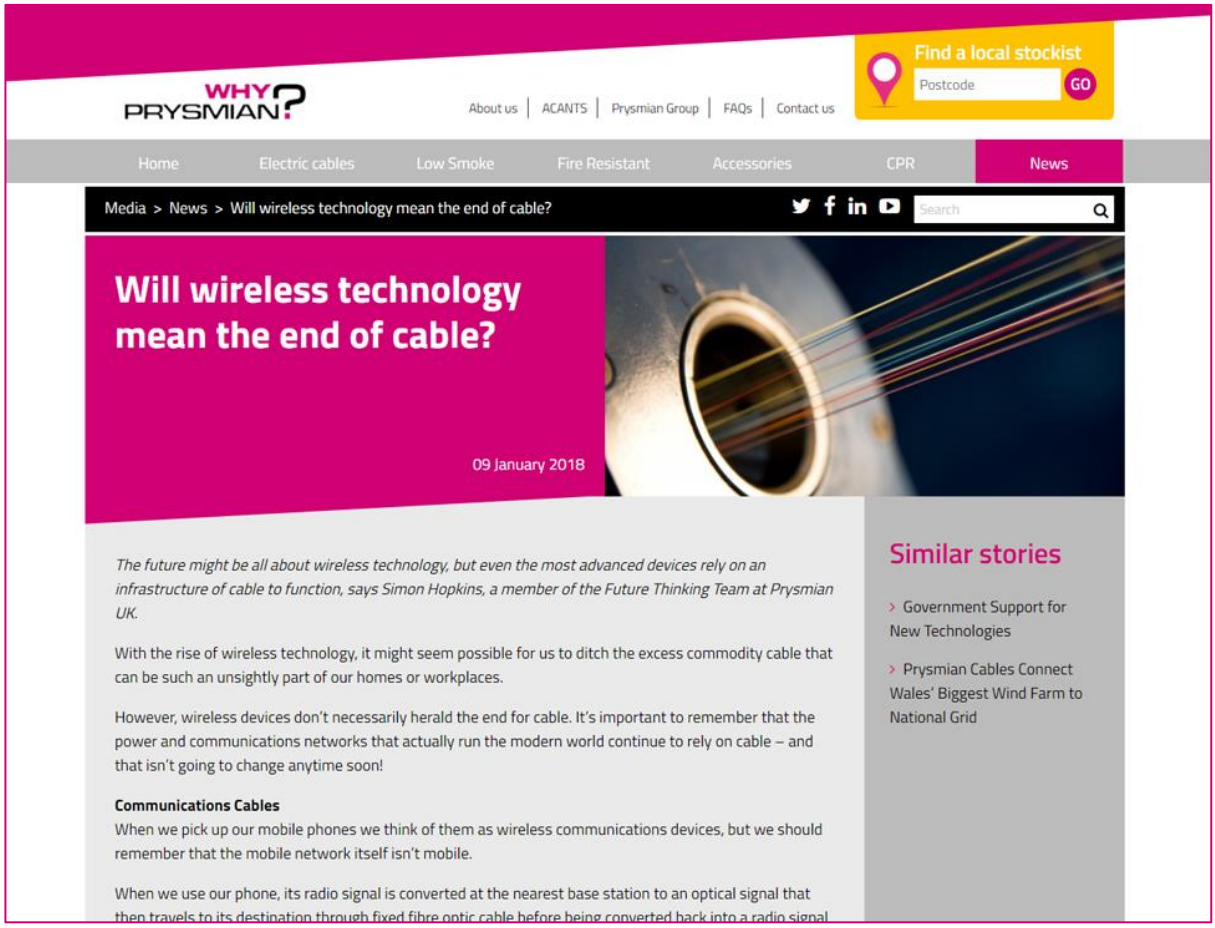
Digital channels have proved hugely cost-effective in terms of proven results – cost per click, per video view and per engagement all used as measures. The wider press relations and advertising campaigns cannot be individually measured in the same way, but contribute to the overall change in perception and awareness.

CREATIVITY AND ORIGINALITY

Social media is a new concept for many B2B product manufacturers. It required a leap of faith for Prysmian to sanction a campaign relying so heavily on an untested communication process. Changing the language, tone and culture of the communication was also a challenging decision. The combination is leading to an unprecedented degree of engagement with the professionals who use cable products every day on site – it's not a selling process so much as a process of building an understanding.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED WITH THE CAMPAIGN

Website design, advertising creative, point of sale material and video production by HCT Creative
PPC and digital advertising by IB3
SEO and website traffic analysis by Catalyst Internet Consultancy



The Why Prysmian? Website acts as the central point for all content with regular blog posting driving traffic

A still from the "How it's made" video

COVER STORY

WIRELESS FUTURE?

Simon Hopkins, of the Future Thinking Team at **Prysmian UK**, continues his discussion on the necessity of cable infrastructure.

When we pick up our mobile phones, we think of them as wireless communication devices – but in reality the phone is only one part of the story. We're mobile, but the network isn't. When we use our phone, its radio signal is converted at the nearest base station to an optical signal that then travels to its destination through fixed fibre optic cable – whether that destination is in the next street or the other side of the globe – before being converted back into a radio signal at the point of final delivery.

This network of fibre optic cables is a state-of-the-art global communications technology on which all of our internet-based communications rely. The simple reason is that no wireless system can match the capacity, speed or reliability of fibre-optic cable.

Early this year, a new transatlantic communications cable is due to go into service – the latest of a series of new cables promising ever faster transmission speeds. Jointly owned and funded by Microsoft and Facebook, the Marea cable has a maximum throughput of 160 terabits (trillion bits) per second. Microsoft claims it to be 16 million times faster than the average home internet connection and that it is capable of streaming 71 million high-definition videos simultaneously.

These companies are not investing in a soon-to-be-obsolete infrastructure. Rather, they see this type of cable-based network as the foundation for the predicted explosion in cloud-based technologies. Since they use light to encode information and remain unfettered by weather, cables carry data faster and cheaper than satellites. The reality is that the cloud is actually under the sea.

Home comforts

While the global giants of modern communication are investing in international channels, at a more local level we can see the demand for home entertainment, the connection of household appliances with smart control systems, and remote diagnostics increase the need for efficient broadband cables to every home.

At the same time, the introduction of ever more capacity to smartphones is resulting in the installation of more antennas on every street – a process that will be hastened considerably by the introduction of 5G networks – all of which need to be connected to both the power and communications infrastructure.

While communications cable is an important part of our business at Prysmian, the cables we manufacture in the UK are just as likely to be used in the transmission of electricity. There are techniques that allow power to be transmitted without wires, but that's not without challenges, which unfortunately are down to simple physics and engineering. Is it possible to share enough power across an air gap with simple, inexpensive components without causing harm to the user?

Essential cable

Most of us will have encountered household devices that can be charged wirelessly – electric toothbrushes were the breakthrough of the 1990s and wireless phone chargers are the headline-grabbers of the early 2010s. These devices both use a system where power is transferred by magnetic fields and both rely on proximity to the power source for their effect – a power source that is, naturally, connected to the grid. Again, we have the illusion of mobility, of wire-free operation, but it is really only a convenience for the user.

Delivering electrical power from the point of generation to the point of use remains the function of the national transmission and distribution network and it continues to rely on ever more efficient cable to carry out that function.

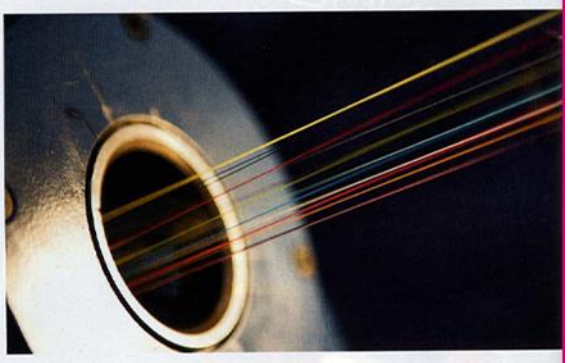
Electricity is transmitted at high voltages via the National Grid from the generators, and then through to the point of use by the district network operators. This hugely complex infrastructure needs to ensure that electricity is generated at exactly the rate at which it is being used, as there is currently only a limited capacity to store electricity.

The significant developments we are seeing in the national power supply focus on a shift towards more renewable energy generation. This shift is already well underway, with 2017 seeing the first day since the industrial revolution where none of the power used in the UK came from a coal-fired power station, while renewable power generation technologies delivered three times as much electricity as coal during the year.

Looking ahead

An increasing reliance on renewable energy sources tends to mean transmitting power over increasing distances. We are already familiar with offshore wind farms, but how about international power distribution bringing electricity from wind or hydroelectric generation plants in Scotland or Scandinavia to meet demand in South East England?

Looking into the future we can also speculate on the development of a decentralised power supply network, utilising local power generation. Why shouldn't a district housing development use photovoltaic panels, biomass boilers and a wind turbine to provide its energy requirements? Many pilot schemes are underway and most deliver excess energy they generate back to the Grid through the power transmission network provided by, you guessed it, a cable.



Cable infrastructure makes up a vital part of wireless technology systems

"No wireless system can match the capacity, speed or reliability of fibre optic cable."

At the moment, the whole power distribution network relies on copper and aluminium. These metals are simply the most efficient and cost effective conductors of electricity currently available, and are used both in high voltage power cables and low voltage domestic building wires.

That is not a situation that is necessarily permanent, and at Prysmian our research and development teams are always looking for new materials or solutions that may provide better alternatives. We were at the forefront of developing the fibre optic cable that has largely replaced copper for data communication, and it would not be beyond the realms of possibility to imagine that some new material or technology may emerge to provide a more efficient alternative to copper.

What is more difficult to imagine is a system that does not rely on a physical infrastructure. We may operate in an increasingly mobile environment with work and entertainment delivered to us via mobile devices, but there is no sign yet that the transport network for this vast quantity of energy and data to a rapidly increasing plethora of devices will be provided by anything other than cable.

But while I'm completely happy to continue to rely on that cable to keep the whole system running, it would certainly improve my quality of life (just a bit) if I got my act together and sorted out all the unnecessary wiring cluttering up my desk – here's hoping!

Prysmian UK, www.whyprysmian.co.uk

An example of the media relations programme – from ECN, March 2018