



SolcaraSpotlight
Connecting communicators
to enhance reputation

International Media Relations at AstraZeneca

Co-ordinating media relations within a single press office can be challenging enough, but where the media relations team is in many locations and spread across several time zones the complexity increases significantly.

Brown with a rare perspective on how to effectively manage and co-ordinate media relations inside a fast moving, high profile multi-national organisation.

“Quite simply we appear ‘joined up’ because we are!”

AstraZeneca is one of the world’s leading pharmaceutical companies, with a broad range of medicines designed to fight disease in important areas of healthcare, including some of the world’s most serious diseases. Active in over 100 countries and with manufacturing sites in 19, AstraZeneca is a truly global organisation.

In common with most multi-national organisations, AstraZeneca has press offices in key locations across the globe.

AstraZeneca’s Media Relations Manager, Steve Brown, has over 30 years experience of press and media relations.

Following an early career as a journalist, he joined the company’s press relations team while it was part of ICI, remaining with the business when it was spun out as Zeneca in 1993 and it was subsequently merged with the Swedish business Astra AB in 1999.

This wealth of experience provides

“One of the biggest media relations challenges faced by a business like AstraZeneca is just how do you track and manage press enquiries across so many time zones and geographies”, said Brown.

“The pace and sophistication of communications continues to grow at such a rate that we need to ensure that each of our spokespeople has immediate access to our position on key issues, wherever they find themselves. Where we have already responded to a particular journalist enquiry in one country we need to ensure that we respond consistently to the same issue in another territory, or if there is some local reason for a different response, then we need to record this and share it across the team.”

To meet these demands the media relations team initially used a combination of email and network folders in an attempt to share information between team members, as well as with company spokespeople.

“This really wasn’t satisfactory”, explained Brown. “A journalist would phone up with a question and it



took far too long to hunt around the network for the correct briefing note.”

In 2006, the challenge of continuing to give a consistent and timely response to press enquiries prompted AstraZeneca to look for a better solution.

“When I first saw Spotlight I was extremely impressed, I hadn’t seen anything like it before”, said Brown. “Now, several years later, I can honestly say that it provides everything we need and more. For example the Briefing Centre enables us to maintain a sizeable

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library of responses to standard questions all of which can be searched in seconds.

For our spokespeople this has removed any sense of panic when a journalist calls them, they can immediately locate the response they need, relax and stay in control of the conversation.”



AstraZeneca - Horizon Place, United Kingdom

One of the key reasons AstraZeneca selected Spotlight was to help their international press offices collaborate better.

"It is now so easy to track press enquiries across different countries", explained Brown. "Every media enquiry and our response are held in Spotlight, so if a story gets picked up by the

media in several countries we remain entirely consistent in the message we give out. Quite simply we appear 'joined up' because we are!"

The fact that Spotlight is hosted by Solcara has simplified the deployment for AstraZeneca. "We wanted a media relations management service, and with Spotlight that is exactly what we have," said Brown. "I don't want to have to think about software, I just want to get on and use the service."

"I think Spotlight is very effective and, being 'live', is in tune with today's fast moving communications world. Our press team find it really simple to use yet there are just so many things you can do with it," concludes Brown.

Solcara Spotlight - the benefits

- ▶ Online access ensures everyone, irrespective of location, is on message
- ▶ Communicate consistently across brands, geographies & teams
- ▶ Prioritise high value press enquiries & activities
- ▶ Improve productivity by reducing duplication of effort
- ▶ Streamlined review, approval & publishing of press releases
- ▶ Monitor & analyse media coverage to assess the effectiveness of your communications; measure results & ROI
- ▶ Easily publish content from Spotlight to your corporate web site; audit journalist activity to measure interest
- ▶ Enquiry management & tracking - visibility over who said what to whom
- ▶ Journalist monitoring enables accurate targeting of messages
- ▶ Media list management provides contact history & improves targeting
- ▶ Online briefing centre for spokespeople ensures that everyone can deliver a consistent message
- ▶ Ready to react prepackaged briefings simplify response & ensure consistency & speed

Solcara
The Long Room
Coppermill Lock
Harefield
Middlesex UB9 6JA
United Kingdom

Telephone
+44 (0) 1895 820 950

Fax
+44 (0)1895 820 955

Web
www.solcaraspotlight.com

Email
info@solcara.com