

Case Study: The Wilkinson Sword Cutting Edge of Comedy Campaign

At the 2002 AMEC Awards, this case study won the prestigious Platinum Award for Starfish Communications and Metrica.

Introduction

Starfish has built an enviable blue-chip client list since its launch in 1987. Clients include Colgate-Palmolive, Switch, Warner Bros, Wilkinson Sword, Samsung and handbag.com.

Starfish's market specialisms include retail and home, fashion and travel, beauty and healthcare, food and drink, finance and media - across the disciplines of corporate, consumer, trade, business to business and internal communications.

Starfish has been rolling out its evaluation service to clients in partnership with Metrica since the beginning of 2002. Colgate-Palmolive, Switch and Wilkinson Sword have already joined up to the service. This case study focuses on a project report for the Wilkinson Sword Cutting Edge of Comedy campaign.

Why Starfish wanted to measure:

Starfish decided to outsource media evaluation for the following reasons:

- To receive a third party endorsement of the success of our campaigns.
- To work out which campaign strategies were working and which weren't.
- To cut down on exec time evaluating coverage internally.
- For advice on target audiences, future strategy and planning.

How Starfish did it:

Education

The first step was to begin an educational programme for staff and clients about the benefits of media analysis. Once this was achieved, it was important that everyone knew how to use the reports for their own needs.

Metrica's employees have attended meetings at Starfish's offices, presenting credentials, taking briefs, talking through reports and running lunchtime workshops to discuss the reports. Both companies felt it was important to empower all staff, from account assistant up to board director to be confident in relaying the information in the reports back to the client. The clarity of the charts and accompanying text made this task easy.

Planning ahead

Starfish meets with Metrica before each campaign to discuss the PR plans, set criteria for the media analysis and discuss the role of media evaluation. As a result the whole process is transparent - Starfish know what they need to achieve for their clients and what they are expecting of Starfish in terms of results.

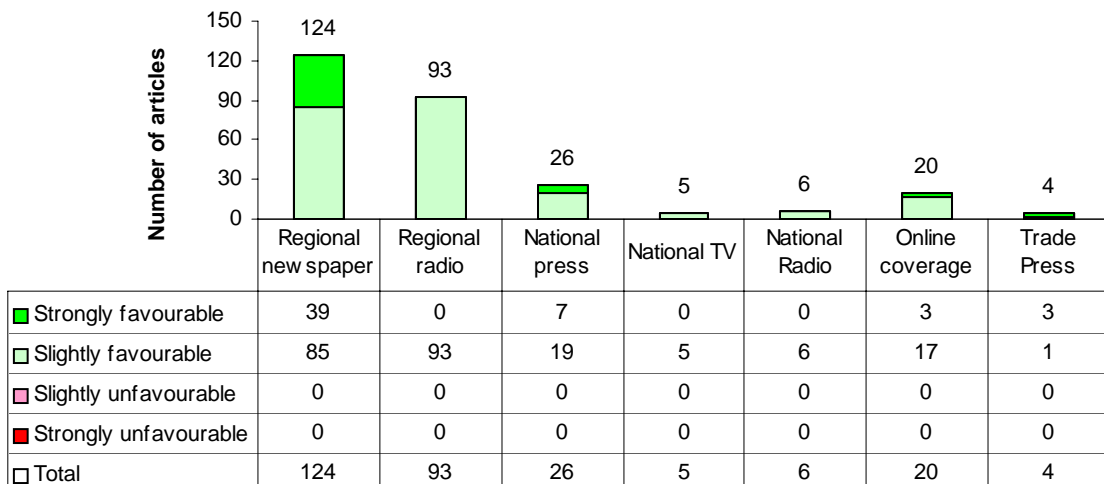
Format of the report

The Wilkinson Sword team wanted to evaluate its 'Cutting Edge Of Comedy' campaign. This focussed on a stand up comedy competition, with nationwide heats building up to a grand final at the Edinburgh Festival. The report focussed on favourability, reach to target audience, message delivery, prominence of branding and region to see if the PR had had an effect on participation during the campaign.

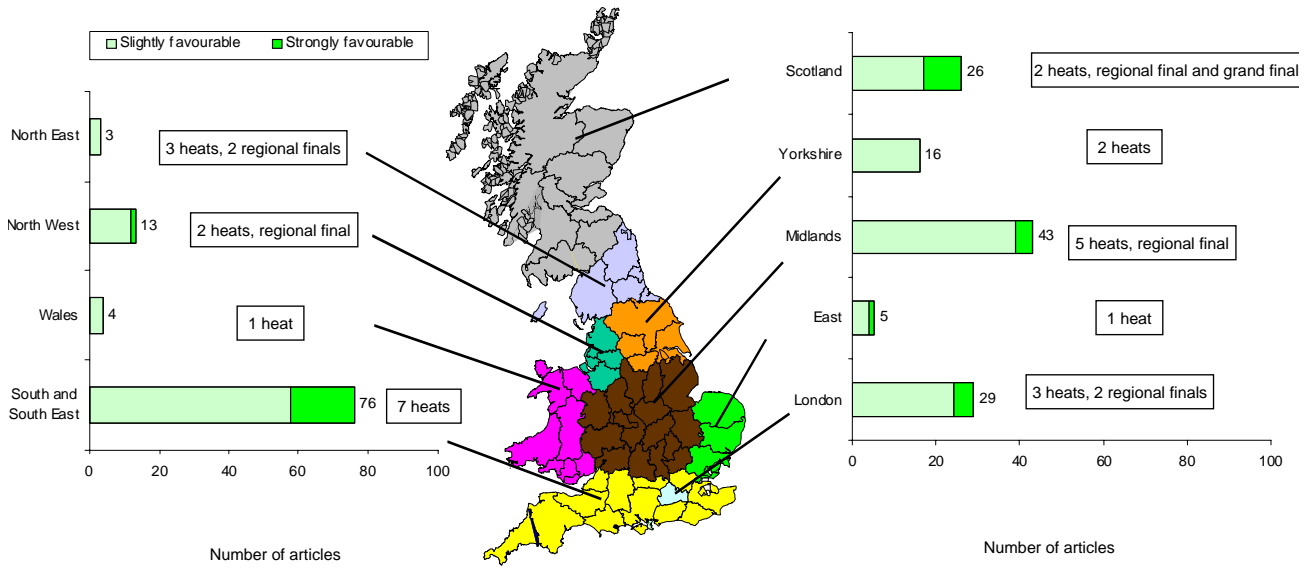
What the analysis showed:

The aim of the Wilkinson Sword ‘Cutting Edge Of Comedy’ campaign was to:

- Focus less on functionality, align the brand with a fun proposition.
- This was achieved and proved in the analysis through message tracking – 82% of articles mentioned the campaign title ‘the Cutting Edge of Comedy’. The brand name featured in 85% of articles, and references to Wilkinson Sword’s products featured in 20% of coverage.
- Target young men (and women).
- This was achieved and proved using Metrica’s reach and frequency analysis. This showed that a higher proportion of the target audience was reached (and more frequently) than all adults.
- 72% of 16-35 year olds were reached 3.2 times during the campaign.
- 77% of 16-23 year olds were reached 3.1 times during the campaign.
- This compares well against 61% of all adults being reached 3 times.
- **This demonstrates effective media targeting.**
- Target regional titles.
- As the campaign was based on a nationwide tour, regional media relevant to each local event were the core target. Evaluation confirmed that the majority of press was published in the regional press and radio – however, coverage within national media was more effective than originally anticipated, resulting in 26 articles.



- Raise awareness of the regional heats
- Metrica broke the coverage down by region, and linked the results back to the number of heats in the area. All regional cuttings correlated directly with regional heats that had taken place on the tour – indicating no wastage in coverage.



How the analysis helped Starfish:

The first aim of using Metrica's evaluation system was:

- To receive a third party endorsement of the success of campaigns
 - Starfish knew that their campaign had been successful but Metrica's analysis proved it. The endorsement enabled Starfish to demonstrate to their client that coverage had been effectively targeted to their key audiences.
- To work out which campaign messaging was working and which wasn't
 - The analysis showed that 85% of coverage featured the Wilkinson Sword brand name and 82% of coverage mentioned the comedy campaign title – in both cases a better result than targeted. However, the evaluation also indicated that only 1/5th of articles referred to Wilkinson Sword **products**, lower than targeted, which highlighted a need to work harder in 2003 at generating coverage that was also product specific.
- To identify which editorial angles worked and which didn't
 - The evaluation also helped to highlight the types of storylines that were the most receptive amongst media and those which weren't.
- To cut down on exec time evaluating coverage internally.
 - Now that each of our cuttings is logged onto a database, it is easy for Starfish to sort the coverage depending on client needs. The company can quickly produce lists of which journalist or which publication has produced coverage for the client. It is easy to generate lists of coverage sorted by date or by brand – the possibilities are endless. This has allowed Starfish account execs to spend more time focussing on PR – which ultimately leads to better a better value offering for our clients.
- Advice on target audiences, future strategy and planning.
 - Metrica is able to advise Starfish on how to reach target audiences, which will help Starfish to expose more of them to coverage more frequently in future campaigns.
- Commenting on the importance of the evaluation, Julien Speed, Joint Managing Partner of Starfish Communications said:-

“The Cutting Edge of Comedy tour was the biggest below-the-line sponsorship activity undertaken by the brand for some time. This subsequently meant a reduction in above-the-line expenditure and therefore a full analysis of its effectiveness was required to assist with 2003 brand planning and whether to continue with this strategy.

“Media support for the tour was a key factor in assessing its cost effectiveness and this evaluation is helping to shape the 2003 strategy.”

General Summary

Even in the first stages of the roll out of the evaluation service, Starfish's objectives have been met. Starfish has been able to add value to the work they have been doing for their clients, and the use of an external agency has added credibility to their evaluation of results.

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