

Lifting UK manufacturing to new heights with Oleo International

A global leader in energy absorption products has strengthened its domestic market presence and achieved over £50,000 of trade press coverage after embarking on a PR and marketing campaign with Bridge PR & Media Services.

Oleo International had long been one of the UK's best kept manufacturing secrets. A British designer, manufacturer and distributor of buffer equipment for the elevator, rail and industrial sectors, the company had developed a strong brand overseas in China, Germany, India and the USA among other nations, but had neglected its domestic profile. The company was helping the Midlands, and Coventry, to lead the way in worldwide engineering, but very few national suppliers and customers had been exposed to the brand, and were unaware of the overseas success story the business had become. In an attempt to strengthen its domestic profile, and continue to saturate overseas markets, the company saw PR and marketing as key and contacted Bridge PR & Media Services for an eighteen month PR and marketing campaign.



A different view: When it came to raising the profile of Oleo in the UK and overseas, a strategic PR and marketing campaign was launched to tell Oleo's stories of innovation and UK manufacturing expertise.

At a glance

Objectives:

- To raise awareness of Oleo International in the UK and domestic markets
- Continue to promote Oleo International overseas
- Position Oleo as an innovative manufacturing company to young people
- Demonstrate Oleo's successful export history

Challenges:

- Maintaining a consistent brand presence across multiple markets and industries
- Securing national broadsheet coverage for Oleo's new elevator buffer product

Results and benefits:

- Over £50,000 of trade press coverage
- Feature in the Financial Times
- Double page spread in Global Trader magazine
- Consistent press coverage across multiple markets
- Oleo positioned as a global leader in buffer technology in a number of professional trade magazines
- Overseas press coverage in India and the US

A multi-faceted campaign

There were multiple facets to this campaign. The brief was to raise awareness of Oleo International in the UK, as a British manufacturer and successful exporter, whilst also retaining a high business profile overseas in countries such as India, China and the US. The company is also a large local employer and has strong ethics about hiring apprenticeships and graduates. With many automotive OEM manufacturers nearby, the talent pool was drying up for Oleo, so it also needed to reach out and connect with young people and demonstrate to young engineers some of the innovation and design skill within the UK manufacturing sector.

Reaching new heights with the Financial Times

One of the most effective ways to build a nationwide brand profile is to have a regular and sustained presence in trade media. Oleo had little prior experience of PR and external marketing so its media presence was subsequently small. However, as a multi-million pound exporter, Oleo was a company rich with stories that would immediately appeal to the trade media.

Bridge started working with Oleo International at a very exciting time for the company. Already a globally recognised name in the elevator market, the company was designing and manufacturing the world's largest elevator buffer from its Coventry manufacturing facility, to be installed in some of the tallest buildings in the world. The innovative new product was the only of its kind capable of supporting elevator drop speeds in excess of 20 metres per second.

Bridge approached the story as a three-phase campaign.



Hitting the headlines: Bridge got Oleo's story featured in the Financial Times in a special feature on elevators.

Initially came the announcement to the media that Oleo was embarking on such a project. This would create initial interest around the story, and start to establish the Oleo brand in the UK. Publications such as Design, Products and Applications and Machinery Market helped to break the initial story announcing the project, but the best was yet to come.

In order to make its new buffer compliant, Oleo also needed to construct the world's tallest elevator buffer testing tower on site in at its Coventry manufacturing facility. The dedicated elevator buffer test tower is the largest such facility in the world, measuring 33 metres tall, and has since become a landmark in the local area. This was another strong story that not only demonstrated some of the innovation and expertise in the UK manufacturing sector, but also the ambition and aspirations of companies in the sector.

The final piece in the jigsaw came when Oleo confirmed it had received certification for Europe and China, which demonstrated the project had been successful and the UK had designed and manufactured the world's largest elevator buffer, a product that had long been in demand.



Reaching new heights: Bridge took a three-phase approach to breaking Oleo's story, resulting in £20,000 of press coverage.

Throughout this campaign, Bridge maintained close contact with national broadsheet titles, keeping journalists updated on the progress of the project at regular intervals. The resulting media coverage was worth over £20,000 based on the Advertising Cost Equivalent measurement model, and secured Oleo column inches in The Financial Times as well as trade magazines such as The Manufacturer, Construction Manager, High Rise Facilities and Engineering and Technology magazine among other titles. Additionally, the story was also featured in overseas publications, such as Elevator World India and Elevator World in the USA.

Covering all bases

As a business servicing multiple markets, it was important that Oleo maintained a consistent presence in each individual industry it serves and a strategic Marketing Communications Plan was key to achieving this. A Marketing Communications Strategy and Plan complete with a content calendar was produced and regular meetings organised.

During these, Bridge got together with key personnel at Oleo and planned press campaigns on a quarterly basis.

Oleo's elevator buffer project was understandably the focus within the company, but Oleo is showcasing similar innovation in the rail and industrial sectors too. The company's rail simulation software is continually being updated by Oleo, and is one of the leading programmes available worldwide to investigate the sensitivity of a whole train crash energy management system for collision response. Throughout an eighteen month period, Bridge stayed in regular contact with key journalists working on specialist rail publications, feeding them with regular stories on the update of Oleo's software and its work in the market.

When Oleo later released its industrial simulation software, designed on the same principles as its flagship rail product, the story was featured in key publications within the industrial dock and port market, including Engineer Live, Materials Handling World and International Trade magazine.



Consistent trade coverage: Oleo benefitted from a consistent presence in a number of trade magazines.



The company’s success as an exporter of products to the rail, industrial and elevator markets made Oleo a shining example for other businesses in the UK considering exporting. Such an impact the company’s stories had made in the UK, that Global Trader, an international product portfolio, featured a double page spread on Oleo in its annual *Export Guide*, case studying the company as a successful global exporter of goods.

A multi-market press campaign and PR strategy helped Oleo to not only keep a strong global brand presence, but also re-introduced the UK market to the company, proving a shining example of the innovation and skills that still exist within UK manufacturing.

A global reach: Global Trader magazine featured a double page spread on Oleo in its annual *Export Guide*, case studying the company as a successful global exporter.



***“This was our first real effort to sustain a long term media presence for our brand in the UK and we were really impressed with the results. Bridge secured consistent trade press coverage and ensured that our brand and company key messages were profiled in a number of leading national publications.*”**

“They made an effort to really understand our business and the sectors in which we operate and transferred this knowledge into impactful media coverage.”

Sandy Andringa, Marketing Manager, Oleo International