

Submission for the Austrian BEST PRactice Award

Project: Midnight delivery of sixth Harry Potter novel "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince" via Österr. Post AG's parcel service

Contractor: Österreichische Post AG – Business Division KEP (Kurier.Express.Paket)

Agency/Implementation: communication matters

Project Period: 1st October, 2005

Contact Partner: Peter Menasse

Start Situation

KEP (Kurier.Paket.Express) is one of the five business divisions of Österreichische Post AG (as well as the branch network, letters, infomail und media-post divisions). It is responsible for parcel-service sales, as well as for the collecting and delivery of parcels and EMS deliveries.

KEP is currently the clear number 1 in the parcel business for consumers. It has optimized its opportunities in terms of logistics in the last few years and is superior to all of its new competitors. KEP is an innovator and strong service partner and deliverer in a changed competitive situation.

However, KEP's innovative services are not so well-known publically. As a result, there needed to be activities planned that would characterize the competitiveness and innovation power of KEP. The delivery of the new Harry Potter novel, which was permitted from 1st October, was the ideal platform to demonstrate this "new flexibility". KEP chose the earliest possible delivery date (1st October at 0:01 a.m.) and organized a midnight delivery together with the book-store chain A&M.

Dialog Groups

General public, media, customers, employees, Harry Potter fans

Target Definition

The project had two main goals. Firstly, creating consciousness in the population and in customers about the innovative services and competitiveness of KEP - with the new flexibility the main focus. Secondly, to increase employee identification with the company and its services.

Strategy

A special KEP delivery service was chosen to create the publicity needed to reach these targets. Thus, partners were selected who could make “parcel delivery” an experience and exciting. A midnight delivery of the sixth Harry Potter novel “Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince” at the earliest possible time of 0:01 a.m. on 1st October was planned with the book-store chain A&M. The campaign should also be carried out for the company employees, as well as part of efficient media work.

Implementation

The midnight delivery of the Harry Potter novel on 1st October was in two parts: on the one hand, a party was organized for employees (by KEP) and, on the other, the delivery of individual parcels was accompanied by journalists (media work supported by communication matters).

KEP organized a Harry Potter party for postal staff and other employees in the nostalgic Orient Express Hall at Südbahnhof train station on the night of 30th September to 1st October. At exactly midnight, postal workers began swarming out of the Orient Express Hall into Vienna with their yellow delivery wagons to the sound of euphoric music to deliver the new Harry Potter book.

communication matters supported the media work for this event. There were targeted, personal interviews with journalists from print media, radio and TV, firstly at the employee party and later as they accompanied individual postal workers during deliveries. To ensure there was enough camera footage, the agency organized a Harry Potter party in a private home with ten children waiting for the delivery after midnight, along with an ORF Team, editors from the radio broadcaster 88.6, the “Wiener Zeitung”, “Die Presse” and the “Kronen Zeitung”. Journalists from ATV plus, “Falter” and a further ORF Team accompanied other postal workers during their night’s work. An interview with the radio broadcaster Antenne Wien and intensive contact with editors from the “Kurier”, which had organized its own Harry Potter party, rounded off the media work.

Success control

The amount of the reporting on the Harry Potter midnight delivery was above average. Reports appeared in the following media because of the successful work by communication matters: “Falter”, “Die Presse”, the “Wiener Zeitung”, the “Kronen Zeitung”, the “Kurier” – print and online editions; ZiB 1 and Wien heute, ATV plus and Antenne Wien. All media present at the Harry Potter party organized by the agency also used the camera footage recorded there. The midnight delivery event and Österreichische Post’s modern parcel services were the focus of all the reports and not the Harry Potter novel, as may have been expected.