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– Tim Cox, Principal, Z!ng Public Relations

Challenge

Z!ng Public Relations must evaluate and select hundreds of contacts and publications across numerous industries to ultimately make the right pitch at the right time and net results for clients.

Solution

Vocus Public Relations provides a comprehensive media database integrated with complete contact management and campaign planning capabilities, giving Z!ng everything it needs to know about a contact and publication – all in one spot.

Results

Z!ng eliminated manual contact management and list-building, can locate key contact details in seconds and creates attractive, valuable reports for clients in a fraction of the time it took before.

Z!ng Public Relations Zeroes in On Key Contacts, Client Results with Vocus

Customer Profile

Z!ng Public Relations, a small public relations agency located in California’s Silicon Valley, provides cost-effective PR services for both emerging and established companies. Z!ng offers all the essential elements of PR campaigns with a focus on staying continually plugged-in to clients’ markets and target media. Some of the brightest stars in their respective industries, Z!ng’s clients cover a range of market sectors, including high-tech, financial services, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, biotech and consumer industries.

Challenge

Z!ng Public Relations focuses on a single goal: plant its clients’ products and services firmly in the minds of their target customers. Though it sounds simple enough, accomplishing that depends on keeping up with hundreds of contacts and publications across numerous industries to ultimately make the right pitch at the right time and land valuable coverage for a client.

As a small firm, Z!ng looks for every opportunity to streamline its efforts so it can devote more time to getting results for clients. Over the years, the firm has evaluated and used many media contact databases to identify and target contacts, build lists and create reports. However, without centralized, integrated contact management capabilities, Z!ng found it tough to fully understand the context for a new pitch in the context of previous outreach activities, and to accurately track campaign progress and measure results for clients.

Vocus Public Relations Software Solution

Z!ng first looked to its existing media database, which at the time had just added activity and project tracking features. Unfortunately, the application seemed cumbersome and was not compatible with the firm’s Macintosh computers.

Tim Cox, Principal of Z!ng Public Relations, found the CRM component he desired in Vocus’ On-Demand Software for Public Relations. Vocus offered a comprehensive database of over 800,000 contacts, award listings, speaking opportunities and other quality data integrated with the advanced contact management capabilities Cox sought for keeping up with the firm’s many relationships and campaigns.

With the help of TeamVocus Professional Services, Z!ng implemented Vocus quickly and smoothly. TeamVocus provides personalized training and best practices advice on using the software for the client’s unique needs. Vocus’ attentive training and support empowered Z!ng

to use the software's many capabilities from the start. "Vocus has a focus on customer service and training, and ensuring you are confident using the product," Cox said.

Every Detail about a Contact – in One Location

With the software, Z!ng now manages all details about contacts in a central location. In minutes, the firm can hone in on the right individuals at target publications to focus pitches and create lists for each unique industry and company.

"With Vocus, you can seamlessly switch from looking at a contact to seeing editorial calendars for a publication to getting the lowdown on that publication," Cox said. "In other systems, you have to switch from one part of the database to another. With Vocus, it's all together. If I want to look up a contact, I can do that quickly, see what that person does, see what contact we've had with that person in the last few months, and look at their editorial calendar for the next six months. I would call that seamless integration of all the data into one unified database. That's a big deal for me."

Z!ng also relies on Vocus for emailing, ensuring that all email communication with contacts is stored with the appropriate contact record and publication. Likewise, the firm can record the details of phone conversations and media coverage in Vocus. "Having this historic tracking of all contact with someone is very useful in terms of understanding where you're at with that editor," Cox said. "Otherwise, it might be hard to remember that you sent that same contact an email recently regarding a different client."

The firm can also distribute news directly from Vocus, which allows it to deliver news directly to an individual's inbox based on their interests. Z!ng also uses Vocus Email Campaigns for more interactive email distribution. Recipients can click on links within a press release that take them to more information or let them respond to the sender. Vocus keeps track of who received and opened the release. Cox sees this capability as eliminating a major PR conundrum: the question of whether to follow-up with a phone call to ensure the contact received the release. Beyond that, editors can now indicate their level of interest in a news release, enabling Cox to respond to their needs quickly.

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Simple, Attractive Reporting Adds Value for Z!ng Clients

Z!ng also relies on Vocus to create regular reports for clients. Cox uses a customized report template, created by Vocus Professional Services, that shows all outreach activities and coverage for a given month. Before, this process could take half a day to piece together from email and phone logs. In fact, it was so time consuming that Z!ng ran reports infrequently.

Now, Z!ng easily creates attractive reports, leading the firm to include reports as a regular service to clients. "With Vocus, reporting is easy for me to do quickly and efficiently, and present to clients as a valuable service. It allows clients to reinforce the value of PR internally. It helps them be a hero."

Results: More Time to Focus on Client Results

With an integrated media database and detailed contact management, Z!ng spends less time searching for information – giving the firm essential time to devote to keeping clients in the news. Z!ng can locate all details about a specific contact in seconds, build targeted lists in minutes, and create client reports in half an hour, instead of half a day.

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About Vocus, Inc.

Vocus is the global leader in on-demand software for public relations and government relations. Vocus offers Web-based software that helps companies to meet today's local and global communications challenges, and to build and manage relationships with reporters, analysts, elected officials and other key audiences. Our award-winning software helps customers manage media relations, news monitoring and analysis, interactive email campaigns, online newsrooms and government relations activities. Vocus software is delivered as an easy-to-use and cost-effective annual subscription, with no need for internal hardware, software or IT support. Vocus has received broad industry recognition and is used around the world by more than 1,000 organizations in five languages. Vocus is a privately held company with headquarters in metropolitan Washington and offices in North America, Europe and Asia. For more information please visit www.vocus.com or call 800.345.5572.