

Winston's Wish:

How Cision Powered An Increase in Press Coverage And Reach By 228% In A Single Year



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The challenge at hand

Established in 1992 Winston's Wish is dedicated to supporting children after the death of a parent or sibling. Research shows that every 22 minutes a child in Britain is bereaved of a parent; this equates to 24,000 newly bereaved children each and every year.

How do you reach out to these families? How can they, and the professionals involved in supporting them, be made aware of the practical and therapeutic services available to them? How does one create a sustainable fund to provide for the long term needs of these families?

Executive Summary

Winston's Wish is the leading childhood bereavement charity in the UK. The charity's focus is to ensure that all bereaved children, young people and their families in the UK receive the support they need to achieve their full potential. Raising awareness of its services and creating sustainable funds to provide for the immediate and ongoing needs of bereaved children and their families is paramount.

Challenges

Winston's Wish was searching for a way to get their message across to an audience on a national level in order to secure relationships and generate funds for their mission.

Solutions

Cision offered Winston's Wish a comprehensive list of media contacts and outlets in its media database and allowed them to connect with their targeted audience through its press release distribution increasing coverage by 228% in a single year.

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This was the dilemma for Winston’s Wish – fundraising initiatives and regional news coverage gained through personal press contacts were relatively successful but it was clear that a more sophisticated and extensive facility was needed to reach out to and engage with key national media in order to raise greater awareness of the charity’s work and to enable them to help more bereaved children.

‘Winston’s Wish is a national charity and as part of our communication strategy, it’s vital for us to attain regular regional and national media coverage. This press coverage can help us draw attention to fundraising campaigns; share positive, impactful stories from our beneficiaries; raise the profile of our charity and celebrate its achievements,’ explains Liam McKinnon, press officer at Winston’s Wish.

The charity soon realised that it needed a stronger and more streamlined communications approach to take its message mainstream and to the attention of key media contacts who could push their story out to the influencers in their network.

‘A great deal of our time was taken up in researching media contacts and quite often being passed around until we reached the relevant contact. We had a good rapport with local publications but felt this needed to be extended regionally and nationally in order for us to be recognised as a leader in our field of work,’ said Liam.

It was then, in August 2013, that Winston’s Wish signed up for Cision’s media database, press release distribution and influencer engagement packages.

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How Cision helped

With these packages, Winston’s Wish was instantly able to put out its press releases on time and on the most appropriate distribution channels – whether that be email, web or social, to reach the widest audience; identify and connect with relevant media contacts and outlets across the UK; and engage with social influencers who are writing about child bereavement or other

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related topics.

The ability to obtain contact information, pitch preferences and gain social demographics was also vitally important for the charity and made possible with Cision.

Tailored approach

After discovering the needs of the charity, a dedicated account manager from Cision was assigned to the Winston's Wish team and extensive training courses were set up to make sure the team could maximise product performance and experience. `

`The staff at Cision were able to talk us through how the software could be tailored to our needs and how to get the best out of it,' said Liam. `What we were quick to find is that CisionPoint is updated daily with the latest

journalist role changes and additions, which means we're always able to contact the relevant people.'

Report Card

`Cision was not only a solution, it was a turning point for Winston's Wish,' states Liam.

He offers a detailed explanation on the impact CisionPoint has had on the communication strategy and the overall mission statement of charity:

`One way of monitoring the impact of using Cision is to compare the amount of press we received as a result of using the contact database from Cision. In 2013/14 – the amount of coverage we received increased 228% on the previous year. In 2014/15 we are on course to top this once again.

`We have also been able to target

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specific areas of the country by using Cision's filtering system; for instance we recently launched a new drop-in facility in the North West and it was important for us to build contacts in this area. Using Cision, we were able to pinpoint not only the relevant publications but the individual journalists who we could work alongside to publicise our presence in the area.

'Since we have extended our contact reach into the North West, 100% of

our press releases have been covered in the local news.'

According to Karen Galpin, communications and marketing manager at Winston's Wish: 'We are very grateful for the use of this invaluable database of journalists – it has enabled us to deliver news of our services, partnerships and events to a wider audience of relevant media and to get great coverage as a result which, in turn, raises awareness of our work.'