



Category: Best Use of Media Relations

Company: McCann Bristol and Haynes Publishing

Entry title: Haynes Explains life with cheeky parodies

Brief and objectives:

The world's leading publisher of illustrated workshop car and motorcycle manuals, Haynes also publishes a wide range of automotive, sport, leisure, military and lifestyle titles.

Recognising Haynes' rich heritage and reputation as the brand everyone trusts for practical information, the Haynes Explains concept came about when the publisher realised that it could create highly entertaining material based on its classic workshop manuals by developing step-by-step guides to four stages of life.

Brief:

To develop a proactive media relations campaign (September-December 2016) raising awareness of 'Haynes Explains' – four brilliantly observed pocket-sized titles focusing on Babies, Teenagers, Marriage and Pensioners, written by international best-selling crime author Boris Starling.

This was the first time that Haynes had ventured into parodying their manuals by applying their inimitable step-by-step style to real-life situations.

With the print run at 35,000 copies per title, this was also set to be Haynes' highest ever print run per manual with no advertising support.

A concerted PR effort was therefore required.

Objectives:

- Introduce new audiences to the brand
- Ensure loyal fan-base not alienated
- Gain cut-through and market share.

Rationale behind campaign, including research and planning:

With limited budget, we needed to identify groups beyond the traditional Haynes fan and focus on new audiences that provided us the greatest opportunity for a targeted approach.

However, Haynes Explains was a real departure for the brand, seeing it move into untested territory for the first time – with a risk that hardcore fans might think these lighthearted books were laughing at hobbyists and automotive enthusiasts.

Haynes needed to be presented as a fun and informative brand without discrediting its heritage.

McCann used its 'Truth to Meaning' planning tool to determine the best approach using the four 'C's':

Consumer – Identified target audiences outside Haynes' core fan-base – predominantly family members and colleagues looking for Christmas gift inspiration.

Company – Haynes was venturing into uncharted territory – didn't want to alienate core fan-base but needed to balance with need to grow sales.

Category - Reviewed competitors in the marketplace (namely Ladybird and Enid Blyton titles) to understand what 'me too' brands were doing – ensured messaging differentiated Haynes series as trusted brand for guidance.

Culture – Nostalgia/vintage trend was popular with people looking back to their childhood needed to capitalise on this through media outreach.

The research identified the following insights (truths):

- Objective: Introduce new audiences
Truth: Showcase why the Haynes brand is as relevant today as it was 50 years ago to new audiences by dialing up vintage/nostalgic trend
- Objective: Gain cut-through and market-share
Truth: In a crowded gifting space, play on the trusted expert and tone of voice Haynes is famous for
- Objective: Ensure loyal fan-base not alienated
Truth: Create comms buffer between Haynes and Haynes Explains, leveraging voice of series author Boris Starling – a Haynes super fan

Strategy and tactics, including the types and variety of media utilised, creativity and innovation:

We needed to position Haynes as a universal brand with wide-reaching appeal, rich in heritage and a trusted brand for practical information.

Strategy:

Key to the strategy was finding a super fan of Haynes who could help us passionately tell Haynes story to the media and demonstrate why it's as relevant today as it was 50 years ago - who better than award winning author Boris Starling – the man behind the series? This was a Haynes first –leveraging the author as its spokesperson allowed us to be more cheeky and irreverent.

A phased media relations campaign was developed to meet challenges identified through the planning phase:

Objective 1: Introduce new audiences

Truth: Showcase relevance of brand

Tactics & creativity:

- Leverage vintage trend through targeted and eye-catching mailer to engage media

- Target media for larger features on Haynes Explains ahead of launch to create excitement

Objective 2: Gain cut-through and market-share

Truth: Play on trusted expertise

Tactics & creative:

- Target national and online media through features and gifting ideas
- Sustained and intensive media relations campaign
- Use press materials, including iconic diagrams and drawings, to signpost and educate media

Objective 3: Ensure loyal fan-base not alienated

Truth: Create comms buffer

Tactics & creativity:

- Leverage huge Haynes fan and author Boris Starling as mouthpiece for media relations activity.

Implementation of tactics:

We had to get traction quickly, but samples were in limited supply until October onwards. Running in tandem with an in-house social media campaign, phased PR activity ran between September – December 2016:

Phase 1: September – create excitement

- Creative mailer – the four titles wrapped in bespoke vintage Haynes paper sent to 30 journalists
- Commenced feature placement targeting media, offering supporting materials including diagrams from the books plus interviews with Boris Starling to capture his passion

Phase 2: October – secure features/gifting

- Continued feature placement
- Targeted Christmas gifting features/sent samples

Phase 3: November – December – gifting

- Relentless press office targeting Christmas gifting features.

Measurement and evaluation:

Outputs:

- 74 pieces of coverage, including:
 - National coverage: 21 pieces (inc. The Daily Mail, Metro, The Sun, The Mail on Sunday, The Guardian, Woman's Own, EN Magazine, Autosport)
 - Broadcast coverage: 6 pieces (inc. TalkRadio, BBC Spotlight, BBC Radio Solent)
 - Regional coverage: 34 pieces (inc. Dorset Echo, Northern Echo, The Herald, Eastern Daily Press)
 - Online coverage: 13 pieces (inc. theguardian.com, dailymail.co.uk, thesundaytimes.co.uk, wessexfm.com)
- Total campaign readership – 32m
- OTS – 96m
- 100% positive coverage

Outcomes:

- PR activity, supported by in-house social media campaign, resulted in total sales of 200,000 units - a 75% increase from Haynes' initial forecast
- Haynes subsequently commissioned 8 new Haynes Explains titles to be published Autumn 2017
- Two fast reprints were needed to meet Christmas demand
- Coverage supported sales team in driving stockist enquiries for gifting - selling the books via the supermarket and gift trade was a first for Haynes
- All four Haynes Explains titles still top Haynes' 10 bestselling books sold on Amazon.co.uk

“The strength of the Haynes brand combined with clever PR took a series of untested titles to new consumers. Media interest created enabled Haynes to punch above its weight in the media and retail market...plus, they were well written and amusing books!” Jeremy Yates-Round, Managing Director Consumer Publishing at Haynes