

Case Study

Company

Owlstone Medical

Owlstone Medical (Owlstone) has developed a breathalyser for disease that has the potential to revolutionise early detection and precision medicine, with applications in cancer and a wide range of other conditions. Breath Biopsy enables disease to be detected earlier, when treatments are more effective and more lives can be saved. By identifying patients most likely to respond to a particular therapy, Breath Biopsy can also ensure that the right therapy is given to the right patient at the right time, helping to reduce healthcare costs.

Owlstone Inc was founded in 2004 as a spin-out from the Engineering Department at the University of Cambridge, and is a profitable business selling FAIMS technology to military and industrial customers globally. Owlstone Medical was spun out from Owlstone Inc in 2016 to develop and commercialise FAIMS in medical applications.

Owlstone Medical is headquartered in Cambridge, UK.

Objectives of the project/programme

To support Owlstone Medical with the development of a strategic PR and communications plan to establish the new spin-out as a standalone company and raise awareness with new investors, customers and potential partners in industry and academia. The program also needed to evidence breath analysis as a proven diagnostic test and position Owlstone as the leader in the field.

More recently, following the company's continued success and development, the objectives have prioritised positioning Owlstone Medical as an established and growing, multinational company with proven technology and international investors and profiling the Company's dual strategy for biomarker discovery – Endogenous metabolites and Exogenous 'EVOC' probes.

Zyme's approach

Our approach has included:

- Facilitating a messaging workshop to define Owlstone's proposition and key messages that resonate with each key audience; drafted clear and consistent messaging to be used across all communications
- Providing strategic communications advice, in line with the communications objectives including recommendations for the launch of a new website.
- Increasing coverage in business and trade press (life science and health science) with targeted press releases, award submissions, technical articles and face to face meetings with journalists where possible.

- Maximising effectiveness at key conferences and high-profile industry events with media relations activities, including arranging interviews and media briefing meetings
- Building existing social media profiles, to engage with the target audiences and drive traffic to the website

Achievement highlights

Key achievements have included:

- Secured interviews for Owlstone's CEO, Billy Boyle, with national and international press resulting in coverage from The New York Times, The Financial Times, The Sunday Times and The Economist
- Consistently high numbers of opportunities for contributed articles and interviews secured in target trade publications including BioWorld Medtech, ClinicalOMICS, European Pharmaceutical Manufacturer (EPM), European Pharmaceutical Review (EPR), EP Vantage, 360Dx/GenomeWeb, Medical Device Network, Innovations in Pharmaceutical Technology (IPT), MedGadget, MedTech Insight, Pharmaphorum and WIRED
- Supported communications announcing the launch of significant clinical trial with CRUK, to generate outstanding level of interest from key audiences. Regular coverage for news announcements in key media publications including BioWorld Medtech, Business Weekly, Cambridge Independent Cambridge News, Drug Discovery News, Drug Discovery Today, Drug Discovery World, Fierce, GEN, GenomeWeb, Medtech Innovation and Technology Networks
- Reviewed website and made recommendations for development of a new site; worked alongside Owlstone's marketing team and web design agency to deliver a refreshed website to better meet business and communications objectives
- Developed media Q&A to support communications strategy for Company products and services, including EVOC probes
- Supported entries for industry awards and accolades including submissions and PR for;
 - Named the winner of the MacRobert Award 2018 by the Royal Academy of Engineering
 - Genesis BioNewsRound Award winner 2018
 - "Medtech Company of the Year" finalist in the 2019 European Lifestars Awards
 - EVOC Probes named in The Scientists "Top 10 Innovations" of 2019
 - Named "Life Science Company of the Year" at the Cambridge Independent Awards 2019

- Named as one of FierceMedTech's "Fierce 15" companies of 2019

Client comments

"Zyme has provided us with strategic guidance and a very proactive approach in developing our PR and communications programme. Zyme's industry knowledge and network of media contacts has created opportunities for us to build our profile and establish breath as a new diagnostic modality. We have been very impressed by the breadth and quality of media coverage achieved on a regular basis, in key trade publications and global business press."

Billy Boyle, Founder and CEO, Owlstone Medical