

Case Study

Company

Avacta Life Sciences

Avacta Life Sciences (Avacta) is harnessing the advantages of its proprietary Affimer® platform to develop safe and efficacious cancer immunotherapies and powerful research and diagnostic tools. In its therapeutic programme, the Company is combining Affimer technology with its pre|CISION™ targeted chemotherapy platform, to improve the overall safety and therapeutic potential of anti-cancer treatments. The Company aims to take its first drug into the clinic in 2020.

Avacta's Affimer reagents are also ideal tools for use in a wide variety of diagnostic applications, offering numerous advantages as novel engineered alternatives to antibodies. Avacta is working with diagnostic partners worldwide to develop Affimer proteins for evaluation, and also developing a small in-house pipeline of Affimer-based diagnostic assays for licensing.

Objectives of the project/programme

Zyme has worked with Avacta continuously since early 2016, to raise awareness of the Company's Affimer® technology and its applications in diagnostics and therapeutics, through science-driven communications that validate the technology and highlight its unique competitive advantages to generate alternative scaffold proteins versus antibodies.

The programme has leveraged Avacta's track record and strong credentials, to support creation of commercial opportunities and raise the profile of the scientific and management team as leading experts in the field.

Zyme's approach

Our approach has included:

- Establishing messaging for both the therapeutics and diagnostics sides of the business in line with corporate objectives, and developing messaging hierarchy documents to ensure communications resonate with each of Avacta's target audiences.
- Providing strategic communications advice, including development and successful implementation of a science-driven communications plan, detailing timings for all PR activities such as conferences (for arranging interviews with trade journalists), feature article opportunities, press releases, industry awards, and supporting PR materials. Zyme works closely with Avacta to ensure that the plan is reviewed regularly and kept up to date, highlighting key deadlines.
- Drafting, reviewing and editing, and distributing press releases, with a focus on the life science trade and regional media, and briefing key

contacts to maximise coverage and secure interview opportunities

- Securing feature and article opportunities for Avacta to contribute to, to position the Company as a key industry thought leader
- Providing support around conferences and Avacta-hosted events, including arranging briefing meetings with attending media to maximise effectiveness and ROI.
- Highlighting opportunities to enter industry awards, including business, regional and innovation focused schemes. Drafting and supporting submission of entries.

Achievement highlights

Key achievements have included:

- Developed trade-focused communications strategy and rolling PR plan for both therapeutics and diagnostics sides of the business.
- Developed PR materials to align messaging and raise awareness of the Affimer® and pre|CISION™ platforms, including messaging documents, media factsheets, Q&As and technology one-pagers.
- Drafted or reviewed and edited, and distributed over 40 press releases, achieving a high level of coverage across a broad range of trade and local media outlets for all Company news, including programme updates and partnerships.
- Secured over 18 opportunities to contribute thought-leadership and technical articles to target trade publications including: GEN, Drug Discovery World, Drug Discovery News, Drug Target Review, European Biopharmaceutical Review, The Pathologist, 360Dx, Bioanalysis, and MedNous.
- Provided writing support, where required, for article placements and blogs featured on the website.
- Supported entries to a range of industry awards, including: European Mediscience Awards, Business Weekly Awards, Yorkshire Business Masters, Cambridge Independent Awards, BioNow, Fierce Innovation, IOD Yorkshire and North East, OBN Awards, SCRIP Awards, One Nucleus Genesis BioNewsRound awards and MedTech Breakthrough Awards.
- Supported client at conferences and events, securing interviews with the media including GEN at PEGS Europe, Drug Target Review at Festival of Biologics, Biocompare and Informa at BIO. Also provided ongoing strategic advice for cancelled/postponed conferences.
- Promoted and secured press attendance at Avacta's London Science

Day Event which resulted in article opportunities post-event.

Client comment

“Zyme’s expertise in life sciences PR has helped to significantly grow our awareness within the industry. We have worked with Zyme for a number of years and find the team to be very effective as well as flexible and responsive.”

Marketing and Communications Manager, Avacta Group plc