

Case Study

Gebrüder Weiss

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www.gw-world.com

Bernhard Hagen lives in two professional worlds: the Chinese and the European. Hagen PR is a valuable partner for us when it comes to the positioning of our brand in a seemingly exotic market like China.

Frank Haas, Gebrüder Weiss, Head of Corporate Brand Strategy & Communications

The client

With around 8.600 employees, 180 company-owned locations and a turnover of 2.46 billion euros in 2023, Gebrüder Weiss ranks among the leading transport and logistics companies in Europe. Under the umbrella of the Gebrüder Weiss Holding AG, based in Lauterach (Vorarlberg, Austria), the company includes not only its core business of overland transport, air & sea freight, and logistics, but also a number of highly specialized industry solutions and subsidiaries. This bundling of services allows to respond to customer needs quickly and flexibly. In China, the company operates from 19 locations in the most important transport hubs of the country.

Having implemented a variety of ecological, economic, and social initiatives, the family-owned company, which has a history going back 500 years, is considered a pioneer in terms of sustainable business today.

For more information, please visit:
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Strategic goals

In an in-depth workshop in Shanghai in the second half of 2017, the following medium

and long-term strategic goals of PR activities in China were defined:

- Optimization of the visibility in relevant on- and offline industry publications in the fields of logistics and transport through professional, market relevant Press Releases and Technical Articles.
- Strengthening of the brand recognition in the market “Greater China” and positioning of Gebrüder Weiss as a global full-service logistics and transport provider.
- Active development of media relations with Chinese B2B industry media and realization of media collaborations and advertorials.
- Strategy development, conception, content creation and management of a Gebrüder Weiss WeChat channel for the efficient weekly communication with the defined Gebrüder Weiss target groups. These target groups include current and potential employees, current and potential clients and partners, decision makers of the logistics industry, transport and logistics journalists as well as multipliers.

Actions & results

At the start of the cooperation, the Hagen PR team in Shanghai realized a comprehensive PR strategy package.

One part of this package was a detailed analysis of the B2B media market in China, Hong Kong and Taiwan and the compilation of a media database with all the important information about readership, quality, print run, click rate, advertising rates as well as the relevant contact information of journalists and publishers. This media market analysis was a fundament for the following Gebrüder Weiss media work in the market.

In addition, key topics, target groups and communication channels were defined during this strategy process.

A schedule for regular conference calls and meetings with the Gebrüder Weiss teams in the headquarters in Austria and in Shanghai was set up. These calls and meetings were crucial for the planning of topics and fine-tuning of stories and content.

Hagen PR compiled quarterly PR reports, in which the development of the previous three months was evaluated and analyzed.

The realized B2B Press Releases (in simplified and traditional Chinese as well as in English) discussed market relevant topics and resulted in very positive media feedback. Topics included the 25-year and 30-year anniversary of Gebrüder Weiss in China, the successful expansion in South China, the growth of the company and its services along the new Silk Road, the economic development of Gebrüder Weiss in the Far East, new warehousing services in Chongqing and Chengdu, the establishment of a specialized E-Commerce service as well as the introduction of a new training platform for GW employees, highlighting the importance of a perfect customer service.

Press Release results were very positive from the very beginning of the cooperation: In the first year alone, among many others, high priority trade magazines and websites such as China Logistics Times, Modern Logistics 现代物流报, Chinese Shipping 航运交易公报, Logistics

Insights Asia (HK), China Highway 中国公路网, China Logistics Purchasing 中国物流与采购, China Storage & Transport 中国储运 and Logistics & Material Handling 物流技术与应用 reported about the projects and successes of Gebrüder Weiss. On top of that, more than 500 online reports were generated, boosting the visibility of Gebrüder Weiss on Baidu and other Chinese search engines.

Since then, media visibility improved and remained high every year – and not only in all the important trade media: On the occasion of the 30-year-anniversary of Gebrüder Weiss in China, Hagen PR organized a TV interview with the Shanghai based business channel Yicai. The first broadcast of the interview with Mr. Yongquan Chen, Managing Director of Gebrüder Weiss China, was watched by 2.8 million people.

The development of the WeChat 微信 channel of Gebrüder Weiss was also very satisfying from the start. The channel includes a "mini website", where followers can find the most important information about Gebrüder Weiss - a company portrait, the company values, its history, products and services as well as contact and recruiting information. Weekly, the followers were informed with WeChat articles. The topics were manifold: interesting China projects, new products and services, events or celebrations at GW China, articles or photo stories about the unique history of the company, HR stories, a series about countries in which GW is active, and very successful engagement campaigns, in which followers needed to answer questions correctly to get the chance to win various GW gifts.

Thanks to this colorful content, especially the very successful engagement campaigns, the Gebrüder Weiss WeChat channel grew dynamically and developed into a key communication channel.

In a workshop in Shanghai at the beginning of 2019, it was decided to accelerate and further develop the media and social media work in the long run, with the goals of optimizing the media visibility and the social media communication in the years to come. Since then, the visibility both in trade media and in Social Media was improved year after year.

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