

Introduction

The Royal Show has long been a feature of the summer season, ranked with Wimbledon, Henley and Chelsea Flower Show. In July 2007, the four-day showcase of farming and rural life at Stoneleigh Park, Warwickshire celebrated its 168th year and expected to attract over 140,000 visitors to see the country's very best livestock, browse trade and retail stands and watch impressive farming and equine competitions and displays.

Objective

It was important to build on the success of the 2006 medial relations programmes and promote the show during 2007 to a wide market on behalf of the organisers, sponsors and trade exhibitors. One of the key objectives of the show was to increase the attendance of farmers and rurally connected people and re-engage with the 'mid-range' farmers who had not been attending in recent years. It was also important for visitors to attend for both business and social reasons.

Strategy

Re-invigorating visitors with regards to why they should attend the Royal Show formed a key element of the media relations campaign which targeted over 600 journalists from a variety of media targets including farming, lifestyle, countryside, rural, national and regional press. An extensive media campaign was implemented with a press launch to kick-start the activity.

Results

Mistral distributed 28 pre-show press releases, 37 features, 57 reader offers and 37 competitions, resulting in 346 pieces of press coverage (75.5 million OTS).

Visitor numbers were hard to gauge as in an unprecedented turn of events, the last day of the show was cancelled due to torrential rainfall. Mistral provided successful crisis management for this incident (see crisis management case study).

