

Case study: WasteGo



Before Wide... **Furious stink over firm's landfill plan**
Waste is 'making residents sick'
Rubbish dump owners raise a stink in village

After Wide...



Euro MP's praise for controversial waste site
 A handful of members of the European Parliament have praised a controversial waste site for meeting with the community.
 The King's College MP, Philip Jones, visited the site in the East Midlands village of Peterborough, near Donibeston, on Tuesday.
 He was accompanied by the local MP, Alan Gold, and the local councillor, Alan Gold.
 The MP's visit was part of a wider campaign to improve the site's reputation.
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CLIENT REQUIREMENT
WasteGo landfill site copes with controversy
Client Briefing
Campaign (1) Landfill Directive
PR Team Briefing
Timescale 29 June 10 July 2004
Budget for or estimate
 In December 2003, landfill site WasteGo near Peterborough became the first such site in the UK to process only hazardous waste, under an EU Landfill Directive that came into force on 16 July.
 The site became a focus for national and local interest as the July deadline approached and WasteGo hired Wide PR and Alan Gold PR to protect its reputation.
 However, within three weeks the situation developed into a potential crisis when WasteGo fell into dispute with the Environment Agency.
Objectives
 To contrast positive relations with the media, while ensuring residents were kept up to date with developments. To establish WasteGo as an industry expert on hazardous waste.
Strategy and Plan
 As WasteGo's traditional media and community relations policy was to refuse interviews and site visits, it had a history of negative coverage, often



Landfill: The Peterborough site run by WasteGo switched to hazardous-only waste
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cloned voluntarily, rather than being forced to do so by the authorities. In addition, on crisis days, in the absence of the firm's chairman and MD, the company provided a spokesperson and access to site for TV crews.
Measurement and Evaluation
 The story focused on Radio 4's *You and Yours*, BBC TV news bulletins and Anglia News, which local print interest was gained from the *Sandford Mercury*. Further interest is expected from the *Sandford Mercury*.
 In-house evaluation showed that many of WasteGo's key messages were put across, despite some negative 'toxic dump' epithets and counter-claims on the firm's position from the Environment Agency.
Results
 All coverage represented WasteGo's opinion, but BBC *East Midlands* reporter Simon Shaw Hare pointed out that it was difficult for the media to decide whether WasteGo's statements were voluntary or enforced.
 The PR team had to stress to the media - which suspected a health scare - that the site was a licensed hazardous waste site, not a landfill.
 WasteGo is now maintaining a proactive media relations policy, while building on relationships with key journalists, politicians and residents through visits and open days.
 Mary Condit

Concerns over landfill tip ease
King's College
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Waste site 'poses no health hazard'
King's College
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WasteGo is the UK's first hazardous-waste only landfill site

Client brief: Improve WasteGo's reputation with the local community and establish it as a spokescompany for the industry

Wide strategy: Defuse tensions by opening communication channels locally to explain how procedures exceed legal requirements. Seek endorsement from regional politicians. Position WasteGo as industry exemplar with media

- Campaign highlights:**
- Effective crisis management at the time of the EU Landfill Directive minimised negative coverage
 - Community liaison programme initiated, including newsletters & site visits
 - Successful visits organised for the local MP, MEP and set up with the EU's Environment Committee
 - Media training provided by Wide for BBC, ITV and local media appearances