



Apparent Networks: Positioning a Company and a Technology; Building Image and Reputation

Situation

Apparent Networks was founded as Jaalam Technologies (Hebrew for hidden) in 2000 by network infrastructure experts with more than 60 years of combined experience with some of the world's largest companies to develop and market proprietary and patent-pending network intelligence software invented by one of its founders. By 2003, it was ready to ramp up sales and marketing for its AppareNet software product, which could analyze even the most complex global network infrastructures, identify the sources of hidden problems within hours and sometimes minutes and then perform continuous monitoring to ensure maximum performance over time. GCS, headed by Tom Gable, was retained to help position the company and build brand image and reputation in support of the company's business and marketing plans.

The Plan

The Gable team developed a multifaceted strategic plan that would include renaming the company, creating new positioning for its technology and ramping up image and reputation through media relations, trade relations, analyst relations and marketing communications. Research indicated that their software could be differentiated and their management team positioned as strong spokesmen for changing trends in network infrastructure needs. Because of budgetary constraints, the agency launched the program in phases: building credibility with the media, expanding to the analyst community, and then providing ongoing evidence of the quality of the company through white papers, commentaries and product reviews. The program required innovative approaches, such as conducting the company's first east coast analyst and media tour via telephone, arranging remote on-line demonstrations of the product and entering the company and its software into awards programs.

The Results

Starting with fine-tuning the company's position in initial news releases announcing new contracts, the Gable team ramped up awareness, understanding and the reputation for Apparent Networks according to plan. The name change to Apparent Networks from Jaalam was linked to matching the company identity with its software and points of differentiation. Milestone news releases built steady buzz in the industry. Following the telephone media and analyst tour, Apparent enjoyed a steady increase in the number of

positive feature stories appearing in major trade publications. Because of relationships built by the Gable team with the media and focus on technology, even the resignation of the CEO and return of the chairman to run the company didn't hurt momentum. Subsequent in-person media and analyst tours to the east and west coasts generated additional coverage and positive recognition. The agency created white papers to position AppareNet's technology team at the highest level. One paper – on the "Seven Deadly Sins of Network Degradation" – appeared in multiple media. Based on agency work, Apparent Networks saw a steady increase in media and analyst coverage, hits to its Web site, inquiries to its 800 numbers and leads for its sales staff. Content analysis of the coverage and interviews with key media indicated that after less than 18 months Apparent Networks had achieved its goal of positioning both the company and its technology at a higher level than the competition.

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Apparent Networks – Media Coverage Summary

- Application Development Trends
- Baseline
- BC Technology
- Business 2.0
- Business Communications Review
- Call Center Magazine
- Canada IT
- CIO
- CNET/ZDNET
- Computerworld
- CRN
- EE Times
- eWeek
- Espicom Business Intelligence
- Federal Computer Week, Government Computer News, Signal Magazine
- Globe Technology
- InformationWeek
- InfoWorld
- Intelligent Enterprise
- Internet Week
- Light Reading
- Network Computing
- Network Magazine
- Network World
- Next Generation Data Center Forum
- Telecommunications
- The 451



Apparent Networks – Analyst Meetings

- Aberdeen Group
- EMA
- Forrester
- Giga Group
- IDC
- The Yankee Group

