



ResMed: The U.S. Government Wakes Up To the Problem of Sleep Apnea

Situation

ResMed, the world's leading manufacturer of products to treat obstructive sleep apnea, was looking for ways to raise its image and credibility in the investment community and beyond. Scientific papers were generating some narrow interest. What was the bigger story? ResMed retained The Gable Group, Tom Gable's previous firm, to look at the bigger picture. The team found that the Department of Transportation had proposed a new rule to restrict the amount of hours truck drivers could drive without breaks for sleep. The team alerted ResMed's CEO that regulators were missing a key part of the picture. According to research he helped conduct at Stanford, 78 percent of truck drivers suffer from obstructive sleep apnea, a sleeping disorder affecting 20 million Americans. It wasn't necessarily the quantity of sleep the truckers were getting; it was the poor *quality* that made them sleepy - and dangerous - drivers.

The Plan

Gable research found the DOT had scheduled regional hearings on the issue. The agency developed a three-pronged approach to gain positive exposure for ResMed's CEO as an expert and evangelist on issues related to sleep: the team arranged for him to present testimony at the California hearing, attended by many local and transportation reporters; they drafted and placed a by-lined article in several of the dailies in cities hosting hearings; co-authors were identified for the column for newspapers requiring a local author; a series of meetings were organized with legislators in Washington, D.C. to correspond with a conference the CEO was attending.

The Results

ResMed's CEO enhanced his reputation as the sleep evangelist. His testimony prompted a flood of calls, and the by-lined article immediately increased traffic to the company's Web site. Reprints of stories and white papers were provided to key media and analysts, helping differentiate ResMed versus the competition. In addition, several legislative leaders asked for more information and one key U.S. Senator was considering offering an amendment to the bill that would provide for sleep tests of the nation's truck drivers. ResMed is now on bigger and more important radar screens and several important target audiences have gained a new recognition about the importance of treating the cause of sleep apnea, not just the symptoms.