

## Case Study: Strategic Guidance, Marketing and Publisher Relations Support

Our client was a new publishing company that began with a single idea – to provide textbooks, online, by the chapter.

Our collaboration began in October 2009 when Maverick was approached to provide top-level strategic support that would take the embryonic idea into a full-blown product.

In close discussion with the client, Maverick developed a 5-year business development plan that set out the areas that needed to be considered in order to allow the company to grow. The plan explored a variety of factors including product proposition, market segmentation, competitor analysis, plus critical factors for success. It also included a fully loaded sales and marketing plan, complete with customer segmentation and target customer profiling, brand promotion and positioning as well as a suggested tactical marketing roll out plan.

Pleased with the end result, the work led to further consultation with three next stage engagements.

Maverick supported the client through the process of identifying and appointing a suitable technology partner that would create and build the platform that had been envisaged. This work included assisting with the RFP generation in addition to the vendor selection and negotiation process.

At the same time, Maverick associates were also requested to provide initial and first phase Publisher Relations support - a role that subsequently continues on an ongoing basis to this day. Work here included reviewing and re-writing the original publisher contract; researching and establishing a priority list of relevant publisher partners (as the proposition was an aggregated platform service); and then approaching these potential publisher partners and executing the relevant contract negotiations and agreements - including royalty and payment structures, content delivery and ongoing legal advice and support.

Maverick also supplied the marketing support and resources that would launch the final service to the UK market. The initial marketing strategy was reviewed and a final plan created that set out how the client could approach the UK market and its range of potential users, customers and institutional influencers.

It was supported by a complete marketing communications plan that included both online and offline tactics. Maverick then proceeded to deliver the plan via a number of differing Marketing Communications initiatives. Support here included writing and designing a full suite of marketing materials and exhibition graphics; PR and PR outreach across all major student, trade and national press (including relevant listservs, LinkedIn, web and blog sites); PPC advertising campaigns and Search Engine Optimisation; plus developing a campaign to launch the platform at Fresher's Fairs across several key London-based institutions.

Also, as the primary customers were UK students, these campaigns required some innovative marketing tactics and stunts in order to effectively engage and hold their attention! The final launch plan encompassed a range of activities from brand ambassadors employed at each institution to distribute leaflets and giveaways and encourage students to sign up, to targeted email campaigns to student union members and web advertising on student union websites. Other more creative approaches included “clean advertising” (where adverts are “cleaned” into pavements and walkways in and around campuses) to use of Bluetooth technology to distribute specially-created promotional codes to anyone with blue-tooth enabled devices.

Since the launch, the client's new platform has gone from strength to strength and currently provides content from 14 leading publishers in the sector to student customers across nearly all UK Universities. Requests were regularly received from students living outside the UK so now our client is also delivering content on a worldwide basis. With every step of the way, Maverick has been pleased to provide support and assistance and we look forward to continuing this relationship and seeing what the future holds!