

How to spell G-O-L-D in public relations

 By [Marcus Brewster](#)

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At the 2015 PRISM Awards for PR Excellence, marcusbrewster's campaign for Robertsons #SkyDine was awarded the Gold in the category: Practices - Best use of an event to build/change reputation.

The campaign consisted of a series of in-flight activations where kulula passengers were surprised and delighted to be served a haute cuisine meal designed by celebrity chef Reuben Riffel. Delivered in collaboration with Unilever agencies The Hardy Boys and Liquorice, the objective was to create and build conversation around the Robertsons Herbs & Spices range, and to stimulate usage amongst consumers.

Receiving a gold PRISM Award, the highest honour the PR industry can convey, made me analyse what alchemical ingredients go into a Gold campaign and led me to the following spelling guide of how to make PR magic:

G is for Goals

At the start of any briefing, we always want to understand what the objectives are. Sometimes they are commercial (we want to sell more product, we want more feet through the door, etc) and sometimes they are communication goals (we want to be top of mind, we want to be perceived as x, etc). More often than not, it's a combination of the two, as often you can't achieve a commercial objective (I want to raise my prices) without addressing a communication one (my product needs to be positioned as a luxury item).

And it's amazing how different clients have different measures in mind. A good question to ask: "What does success look like to you?"

O is for Outcomes

Forget inputs and outputs, the only thing that keeps clients happy is Outcomes. A lot of hard-working marketing communication agencies across multiple disciplines - not just PR - can put in many hours burning the midnight oil and not produce results. So, although a client may acknowledge that an agency tried to do their best, good intentions alone don't move the needle. No matter how sympathetic or appreciative a client may be about the time (inputs) devoted to his or her account, that client will not renew the supplier's contract if the agency can't demonstrate how their outputs led to campaign outcomes.

L is for Labour

Call it human capital, call it talent, call it resources, a great campaign idea will not get off the ground without very good staff. Most executives with seniority get promoted away from the coal face into managerial or strategic roles. That can create a lacuna in an agency between the top people with years of experience and the grunts who survive on enthusiasm and free Wi-Fi. Because public relations is such a focused discipline, it needs incredibly efficient, detail-centric multi-taskers. A great campaign may be seeded in a compelling creative idea, but if there is no or limited execution, it can't be considered a success.

Great work - gold-winning campaign work - can only happen when there are great workers in the agency.

D is for Dazzling

For a campaign to win an award, it needs to have some sparkle, some daring, some magic. PRISM trophies are not ever

handed out for play-by-the-rulebook campaigns. No agency gets acclaim for doing bread-and-butter PR, we need to show evidence of rewriting that rulebook. Excellence is rewarded for setting new standards of achievement and showing how much beyond expectation a campaign can deliver. It's not enough to meet target, the dazzle manifests in over-achievement.

The felicitous integration between creative, digital and PR agencies created a perfect storm of success: #Skydine trended ahead of the Oscar Pistorius trial and the activation clip went viral, becoming the #1 ranked clip for March 2014. Industry recognition poured in, with an Orchid Award from IOL media/advertising columnist Brendan Seery, Hero campaign of the Week kudos from 702 commentator Andy Rice, and SkyDine was the Experiential category winner of the Creative Circle Ad of the Month Awards for March 2014. The campaign subsequently went on to win two Loeries: Media Innovation: Single Medium and Events & PR: Live Activations.

Deeolan Govender, Marketing Manager, Robertsons at Unilever South Africa praised PR's "seamless integration with activation and digital agencies, and a great understanding of our brand".

The PRISM judges comments on marcusbrewster's Robertsons #SkyDine campaign made reference to "highly creative concept attracting huge interest in target markets, planning perfectly executed, ample and well-illustrated evidence provided of outstanding execution and the results it delivered." That's a long way to spell G-O-L-D.

ABOUT MARCUS BREWSTER

marcusbrewster is a brand synonymous with PR excellence in SA. An industry innovator, leader, and inspiration, Brewster affiliated his multi-award winning boutique firm with larger Level 1 BBBEE marketing/comms agency MediaRevolution for scale in 2016 and went on to launch Marcus Brewster International in Europe the following year. Marcus currently lives on - and actively promotes - the Mediterranean island of Malta. For African, S. African and European PR enquiries, contact marcus@marcusbrewster.com or WhatsApp on (+356) 9931 3322

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