

How We Help bet365 attract the UK's Top IT Talent

A 9mm Public Relations Case Study

bet365

About bet365: Founded in 2000 in North Staffordshire, bet365 is the world's largest online sports betting business. The company employs more than 3,000 people, is live in 18 languages and delivers an unrivalled online experience to over 21 million customers worldwide.



The Challenge

bet365 is a private company in every sense. A family business founded by Denise Coates CBE, it took the decision early on to play its cards close to its chest. A major innovator in enterprise software development, much of its work is a closely guarded secret.

"We took the deliberate decision not to talk to people about what we do. Our focus was on building the best company we could. One that would lead the industry in technical innovation and product execution," said **Martin Davies, CEO of Technology, bet365**.

However, by late 2010, bet365's attitude towards self-promotion was changing. The business was growing quickly and the incumbent technologies were struggling to keep up with demand. It was crucial the business attract top technical talent to help develop new ways of working.

But recruitment was slow.

"At that time, our recruitment programme wasn't delivering the results we'd hoped for. We felt our low profile was an issue. The Internet is an important research tool for job seekers but when you went online, there was little information on the scope or scale of our business," said Davies.

Martin saw value in a public relations programme but had concerns. bet365 had a good story to tell in terms of its technical development and the entrepreneurial culture it had nurtured, but there was only so much he was prepared to disclose.

"We knew we had to raise our public profile but it was important we found the right balance between what we could and couldn't say. We wanted to tell people what we do without giving away our competitive advantage," said Davies.



"The Internet is an important research tool for job seekers but when you went online, there was little information on the scope or scale of our business".

"We knew we had to raise our public profile but it was important we found the right balance between what we could and couldn't say".



The Solution

bet365 appointed 9MM PR for two key reasons. The strength of its online gambling/technology industry experience and its specialism in thought leadership.

"It was important we worked with people that understood our business. But who could also communicate the scope and scale of our technical development in a compelling way. We liked the idea of our people telling those stories," said Davies.

Media exposure would certainly help to raise the company's profile. However, for the campaign to be successful, it had to steer people away from their career comfort zones (London's technology hub) and towards something new and untested (an online betting company in Stoke).

This would require more than the usual boasts of great working environments and competitive company benefits. To find out what would motivate them most, 9MM spoke directly to the community.

Their investigation demonstrated the target audience was motivated by 3 key drivers:

- To feel like they are contributing to something meaningful
- To challenge the norm and be challenged by their work
- To feel valued for the contribution they make

Addressing these needs through compelling story telling, backed up with authentic evidence became the beating heart of the campaign.

"9MM is able to tread that fine line between finding the angles the media and IT community find interesting and ensuring we maintain confidentiality," said Davies.

"It was important we worked with people that understood our business. But who could also communicate the scope and scale of our technical development in a compelling way.

"9MM is able to tread that fine line between finding the angles the media and IT community find interesting and ensuring we maintain confidentiality.



"You can see the measurable impact our PR programme has had at our new Manchester office. We opened fully expecting it to take time to recruit. But instead we've filled it really quickly."

The Result

9mm has built a PR programme that continues to [achieve consistent coverage in key technology trade media.](#)

This has resulted in:

- bet365 established as a major British technology business and success story
- A profound change in perception amongst the IT community
- Martin Davies consistently making the top 50 of Computing Magazine's Top 100 IT Leaders

The Impact

bet365 is a significant employer of technology talent and recruitment is much less of a challenge.

"You can see the measurable impact our PR programme has had at our new Manchester office. We opened fully expecting it to take time to recruit. But instead we've filled it really quickly. This has a lot to do with the hard work of Warren Hughes who runs the office. The other piece is the profile we've achieved in the tech world," said Davies.

As a result of the PR programme's success, 9MM has been drafted in to help develop the content for bet365's new careers portal.



Key Lessons Learned

We are constantly debriefing our work to see how we can improve what we do. Below are 5 key takeaways that we've learnt during our work with bet365. We hope you find them useful.

1. When developing the strategic direction of your PR programmes and content campaigns, don't succumb to the temptation to look at your business first. Start with your audience and their key drivers.
2. Ensure your messaging and positioning consistently refers back to the key audience drivers identified during your research.
3. Seek evidence for each of your key messages and put it at the heart of your campaign.
4. This is a constantly evolving process. As your business grows and evolves, ensure that your content, copy and evidence continues to keep pace with it.
5. Use your spokespeople to tell a more compelling and human story that offers greater insight into your company and the products and services it provides.

For a more detailed guide on how to execute content campaigns that inspire action, [click here](#).