

Communication Strategy

In general terms, in the development of its communication strategy, Graz 2003 pursued the following basic principles and strategic directions.

Print & electronic media

- >> Concentration on a few mass media, however with a high level of commitment to these
- >> Priority for content and PR joint ventures over traditional advertising
- >> Joint-venture participation in a high-circulation weekly programme newspaper for umbrella branding
- >> Promotion of programme co-operation in the electronic media sector

Outdoor advertising

- >> At supra-regional level, umbrella brand marketing only, no product marketing. Product marketing confined to the regional sector.
- >> Intensive involvement of all available communications systems in the eastern part of the city of Graz - even away from the outdoor advertising media traditionally available for booking, for the high-profile promotion of the umbrella brand (flags, displays, large-area banners, vehicle fleet, play area branding, etc.).
- >> Comprehensive branding at all points of arrival in Graz (airport, railway station, motorway exits, etc.)
- >> Specific selection of Point of Interest locations outside Graz and at important traffic axes with individual messages tailored for the point of application (for example, "Welcome to Vienna, the most beautiful suburb of Graz" on the motorway leading to Vienna's Schwechat airport; "The Capital of Culture greets the City of Sport" on buses in Salzburg, etc.)
- >> Presenting the logo as a reality logo in public places (e.g. three windows, a three-way effect)

Below the line and guerrilla marketing

A disproportionately high amount of work was carried out in this segment, concentrating on popular international cultural rendezvous and festival locations. The gala openings of international festivals were specifically exploited with a wide range of campaigns individually tailored for the location.

Programme advertising

Concentration on the regional sector as cross-selling argument but not primarily as incoming argument. Implementation of the umbrella brand in the programme advertising and in co-operative advertising forms as well, with several dozen joint event promoters.

Time planning: mix of themes in the regional programme campaign

Communication time on air for programme contents cut to extreme minimum, so as to reduce internal competition and to make it possible to be continually presenting new topics. For this purpose, we set up our own all-year-round outdoor advertising network throughout Styria at specifically selected Superstar and Star points at which topics could be switched at minimal cost.

Focus groups

The inhabitants of Graz themselves are the communicators: 200 focus group presentation and training events in the year 2002

In the second half of the year 2002, more than 200 (!) focus group presentation events took place, addressing all groups of people coming into contact with visitors to the Cultural Capital (hotel porters, tourist guides, taxi drivers, park wardens, the police, bus drivers, railway officials, teachers, etc.). By the beginning of the programme for the year, this had seen more than 7,000 people having been in direct personal contact with the management level of Graz 2003, involved in the Cultural Capital project and turned into sources of knowledge and multipliers. As a result, more than 26% of all out-of-town visitors to Graz 2003 came on the basis of personal recommendations.

CUSTOMER BONDING

Unity of 'customer', product and marketing

A series of programme items was designed to involve the population of Graz directly as co-participants in the Graz 2003 programme, thus firmly anchoring the Cultural Capital of Europe project deep in the consciousness of the inhabitants of the City:

Mountain of Memories

In the year 2002, the Office of Memories gathered together the memories of inhabitants of Graz, these being presented throughout the programme year in the Mountain of Memories exhibition in the gallery complex in the Schlossberg in Graz. More than 20,000 individual memories reflecting the social history of the city were recorded, in this way laying the foundation which resulted in Graz becoming Cultural Capital of Europe through the self-presentation of the actual inhabitants of the city.

17 Graz Districts of Culture

In each of the 17 Districts of the City of Graz, a cultural project for the immediate local environment was developed over the course of joint discussions held with the inhabitants of the relevant districts.

Sanitary facilities: domestic culture for sub-standard dwellings

The programme for Graz 2003 was based on a broadly applied cultural concept. Within the context of the Sanitary Facilities project, several hundred sub-standard local authority dwellings in Graz were outfitted with bathroom and toilet.

Play Graz: host families for young people

The international school-student games (these are the Olympic Games for 10 to 14-year-olds) brought together participants from all continents to meet in Graz. Those young sports men and women who did not have to stay together with their group for reasons internal to the team were placed in host families with children of the same age.

Art taxis as mobile information offices

Throughout the entire programme year, there were 15 'art taxis' in constant operation throughout the city, integrating an on-board art video line as well as filmed details of the overall programme.