

Case Study | Bell Helicopter

80:20

Background

Bell Helicopter (www.bellhelicopter.com), the iconic US rotorcraft manufacturer, wished to maximise its media profile at the 2008 Farnborough Air Show in order to update the market on a period of significant strategic change. We were engaged at short notice on a project to provide local media relations expertise and ensure that the company made an impact.

Response

After undertaking an intensive familiarisation with Bell's business, we began by agreeing key messages with the company to establish its position on issues such as corporate performance, strategy, product lines, Europe and high profile military programmes. We also prepared a grid of Bell's senior executives, the topics on which they could comment and their availability.

We acted quickly to liaise with Farnborough International's media centre team, securing one of the remaining favourable press conference slots and agreeing various other logistical issues.

We initiated a media outreach programme with key aviation trade publications and selected international business titles, with the objective of securing prominent coverage for Bell in the show daily magazines (published on-site during the event), as well as senior executive interviews in the Bell chalet and a good turnout at the press conference.

In addition, we proposed a number of media engagement opportunities to strengthen Bell's relationships with top-tier journalists.





Results

- Through timely and tailored approaches to the show daily editors we secured real prominence for Bell throughout the week, including full-page CEO interviews in Flight Daily News and Aviation Week on the first day
- The press conference held on the first day was attended by over 25 journalists from premier aviation publications from the UK, USA and continental Europe
- A full schedule of executive interviews was arranged during the show, giving Bell's executives the opportunity to explain the benefits of its new strategy and to update the media on particular helicopter programmes
- We secured one-on-one interviews with the Financial Times, Wall Street Journal and DowJones, giving Bell the opportunity to deliver its message to European and US business communities

Client Verdict

“Through the efforts of 80:20 we were able to increase our pre-show interviews significantly, which in turn raised our visibility during the early days of the show. This increased activity continued throughout the event with multiple press interactions, follow-up stories and additional press inquiries. I was very pleased with the outcome of our cooperation, the ease of working together and the professionalism of the 80:20 team.”

Greg Hubbard, communications director

