



## Sharp Focus Yields Coverage and Credibility for Specialized Software Firm

FS Communications' work with Design Power, Inc. demonstrates how sharp focus can build a leadership position for a small company in the specialized engineering software market.

From 1998 through 2000, FS Communications worked with Design Power to establish the software company's core product as a leading edge computer-aided design (CAD) tool for chemical process plant design. The complex product, which must be highly customized for each implementation, is licensed on a per seat basis to relatively few companies specializing in capital-intensive chemical plant design/build work.

Knowing that the target media for this industry would report on working results, not performance claims, FS Communications worked directly with Design Power's customers to develop detailed success stories. Although the end users were often reticent about publicity, FS Communications was able to collect information and obtain approvals for a small portfolio of customer stories. These were pitched to key industry publications, resulting in feature articles in Chemical Engineering magazine, Computer-Aided Engineering magazine, Chemical Online, and others.

In 2000, Design Power asked FS Communications to aid in defining a second niche for its software tools in order to leverage the power of its knowledge-based software engine into a broader market. The agency worked closely with the management team to reposition the company's messaging and product line.

After conducting media and competitive positioning research, the agency developed recommendations for Design Power to enter the market for customized product configurator solutions. The research included review of the competitive environment and definition of target audiences for complex manufacturing using an engineer-to-order (ETO) business model.

FS Communications then supported the "launch" of the expanded product set with traditional public relations tactics, including an expanded list of media and industry analyst targets, development and placement of a bylined article to establish expertise in the manufacturing/enterprise resource planning (ERP) arena, and a product announcement (which essentially repackaged the core product). The portfolio of CAD-oriented stories was positioned as an example of the capability of the company's product configurator to support ETO solutions.

To ensure that the target group understood the significance of the new messaging, the agency scheduled and supported one-on-one meetings over a period of several months.

While maintaining a profile in the engineering and CAD-oriented publications, FS Communications was able to expand the company's coverage into publications read by executive management at manufacturing organizations including CIO Magazine,

- more -

Desktop Engineering, Industry Week, Managing Automation, MidrangeERP, MSI, and Product Data Management Report.

As a result of the campaign, Design Power significantly increased the number and quality of sales inquiries it received. Subsequently, a new management team brought on board by investors elected to curtail its communications programs.

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