



OBJECTIVE:

Fortis Inc., a national health insurance company now known as Assurant, wanted to develop a consistent corporate image, raise its public profile, educate both agents and consumers about its products, and improve communication and equity across its three product lines (Individual, Small Group and Specialty).

TARGET AUDIENCE:

Industry and consumer media, health insurance agents, small-business owners, benefits managers and general consumers.

STRATEGY:

Develop and implement a national public relations program to build community relations, communicate key messages from an expert position, create a corporate identity that differentiated Fortis from the competition, influence insurance purchase decisions of individuals and small groups, and provide issues management and government relations support.

CREATIVE:

Using press releases, media kits, and feature articles authored on behalf of company representatives and placed in trade publications and the mainstream consumer media, we positioned Fortis as an expert in the industry. We effectively rebranded the company with a more positive corporate identity by consistently emphasizing the company's commitment to choice, affordability and accessibility. We also developed media relations protocols for disseminating information in response to media inquiries; prepared an issues management/crisis plan; integrated communication and public relations efforts between product lines, governmental bodies and executive management; and created brand equity in order to support sales efforts.

RESULTS:

The company experienced a significant increase in exposure in trade publications and the mainstream consumer market, as well as substantial operating efficiencies from aligning its product lines.

All of this, combined with its growing reputation as an expert in the industry, led to an improved public image and increased sales of its health insurance products. Year one of the program (a partial year), Fortis received a return-on-investment (ROI) of 6 times their media investment. Year two brought 354 media exposures from ten feature articles and 34 press releases for a ROI of 17 times their media investment. Year three, Fortis received 444 media placements and realized a ROI 45 times their media investment.

