

THEDUBS

FINANCIAL CONTENT MARKETING

The Financial Services Forum Submission for Agency of the Year Award

October 2018



Marketing Activity: Describe some of your notable recent financial services marketing campaigns, projects or initiatives. What did they achieve? What made them successful? (100 Marks)

The Dubs were appointed in the retained Global Content and Social agency role by Aberdeen Standard Investments in 2013 and thereafter launched the ASI 'Thinking Aloud' content publishing programme in 2015. The goal being to challenge traditional channels of client engagement to provide their primary audience of wholesale and institutional investors with considered, informative content confirming the brand's credibility and assisting potential clients' transition from consideration to conversion.

In 2018, the programme radically scaled to incorporate Standard Life Investments as part of the newly merged Aberdeen Standard Investments business.

At its core, the programme is driven by a daily publishing schedule of journalistic level, thought provoking content of the highest value, distributed across the brand's owned social media channels and amplified to reach new targeted audiences. The result – a global roll out of 'Thinking Aloud' to over 20 markets that deliver tens of thousands of hours of engagement each year and has become the primary communication channel. It has developed a lasting relationship with its owned audience that will grow and add even further value to the business over time.

The scope and global scale of the 'Thinking Aloud' campaign is world leading for the asset management industry and demonstrates how The Dubs are both peerless and industry leading in our approach and delivery of content marketing programmes.

Innovation & Product Development: How have you helped clients develop products or services in recent years that generate long-term sustainable growth? (100 Marks)

The Dubs has always positioned itself as a strategic partner to our clients. We have worked with First State Investments as their global digital agency since 2012, so we were the obvious team to support the launch of their first campaign for their Diversified Growth Fund. The brief was to grow First State Investments' reputation as a multi-asset provider in the United Kingdom. From the beginning, we were mindful of First State's position against other, more established DGF fund competitors, and also conscious of reputational damage other companies had suffered when their products had not returned as they had intended. Given the challenges of the marketing brief, paired with a modest budget, it was imperative that we employed a highly-considered, agile approach to campaign planning, ideation, execution and measurement.

Diversified Growth Fund: A Smart Evolution was the result, positioning the product as DGF 2.0, a superior, more evolved version of traditional DGF funds.

Our client took a position of *"In recent years the reputation of financial institutions has been tarnished. With the help of The Dubs, we are creating an environment of trust in a landscape where confidence has often been diminished"*. **Brodie Neader, Head of Digital, EMEA & US. First State Investments**

So we took this audience demand to rebuild trust literally and created interactive digital tools that provided complete transparency and an open communication to the fund team. The DGF Navigator shared every asset

allocation throughout the Fund's history as an interactive data tool and DGF Wiki invited users to submit questions to the investment team. These tools were gated behind lead generation forms, which enabled us to retain and nurture leads via ongoing email communication; helping us to deliver data-informed marketing-qualified leads back to the business.

This campaign is now seen by First State Investments as a benchmark for future strategic communication.

People and Talent: How does your agency support the improvement of financial services marketing? (50 Marks)

As content creation, publication, distribution and amplification are the four key tenets of our content publishing programme and form the foundation for the continuous creation of genuine, sustainable, educational and high-quality content publication this requires organisational change within our clients' businesses and of course our own.

Over the past 20 years we have evolved from an application software company to a web development company to a digital marketing agency to now a content publishing agency. This has driven an evolution of the staff we now employ with skill sets in finance publishing strategy, paid social media buying and editorial journalism.

As we nurture talent to ensure we have the right people in the right roles with the tools for this ever changing landscape. The talent pool is shifting to reflect this change and we consult directly with our clients to ensure the organisation is structured in a way to reflect the growing need for these finance organisations.

The Financial Services Industry: What impact has your agency had on the financial services industry in the last 18 months? (50 Marks)

The Dubs has been dedicated to working solely in the financial services industry for over twenty years and we are peerless in the work we do. By shifting away from traditional advertising towards continuous content publishing, we're decreasing 'noisy' advertising and ensuring the delivery of highly relevant, targeted content in its place.

This is not a simple task within traditionally marketing focused global finance organisations, so requires interaction with the highest level stakeholders (CEO/CMO) as organisational and financial restructuring is often required. This often needs to be seen as a 10 year+ plan, not just by quarter or even fiscal year for our clients and as such requires an agency that understands both the finance landscape, the clients it services and where content publishing has a role, we which do.

Our impact on the industry has therefore been dramatic, businesses are now shifting away from traditional media spend, employing publishing staff and focusing on scalable and sustainable channels such as social media as primary communication to their clients. As traditional media diminishes further over the decades to come, clients who have adopted this programme can now own their destiny without being reliant on a marketing model that is quickly failing.