

Building a strong institutional brand presence

Asset managers continue to be an important source of information for institutional investors, but managers will need to combine the different advertising channels if they want to build a strong institutional brand presence. This is one of the key takeaways from Fundamental Media's periodic research among institutional investors which was recently concluded in the UK, France, Switzerland and Germany, while the field work in the Netherlands has just been completed.

Institutional investors across Europe are using digital media and mobile devices more than ever before. In the online media landscape, LinkedIn has great momentum and is a key source that institutional investors rely on for reading industry news and content of asset managers.

Although online media consumption is growing in each market, local language print titles still have a very strong position, particularly among the largest institutions in each market. Print editions of local language trade publications and newspapers are among the top five most read media in all markets, particularly in Germany but less so in France.

From a pan-European perspective, a print title like Investment & Pensions Europe (IPE) still has substantial reach across the institutional media landscape. IPE is the most read institutional print title across the researched markets followed by the Economist and the Financial Times, although the latter isn't as strong in every continental European market.

Events are another important source of information for institutional investors, but their role differs across Europe, with investors on the continent relying more on events than their British colleagues. Events targeted at institutional investors are mainly hosted locally in the respective markets.

Improving communication

When asked about the communications they receive from asset managers, many European institutional investors indicated it could be more efficient, simpler and clearer. More transparency, honesty and consistency would also be welcomed by many respondents. On the other hand, managers' unsolicited product placement activities (product push) are leaving many institutions overwhelmed and annoyed, especially if these sales pitches are not targeted specifically to their needs.

More than 80% of Swiss respondents and 70% of French respondents did not name any asset managers when asked which managers have standout communication, indicating either a low affinity with the question or that none of the asset managers are yet perceived as strong communicators in these markets. In the UK and Germany, respondents mentioned a large variety of different asset managers with no company being mentioned by more than 20% of respondents.

Reach and recency are vital

Despite the growth of online media, managers cannot forego local language print media. The convergence of online and offline channels is creating more opportunities to target insti-

tutional investors by setting up highly targeted, integrated and measurable marketing programmes. Audience-led programmatic advertising has become an important way to reach professional audiences across borders.

Reach and recency are vital to building an institutional brand presence in the competitive cross-border institutional landscape. To enhance reach and recency it is vital to engage the institutional audience through multiple channels and during a longer period of time.

Between September 2019 and March 2020, [Fundamental Research](#) surveyed institutional investors in the Netherlands, the UK, Switzerland, the US, Germany and France about their views on global trends, asset manager communication, manager selection, their media consumption habits, and their top asset manager brands. Fundamental Research is a part of Fundamental Media, a specialist agency providing media, marketing and tech solutions for the asset management industry globally.

