

AD



CASE STUDIES

Leveraging customer success
stories to drive new business

SUCCESS BREEDS SUCCESS

A well-constructed case study is one of the most powerful B2B marketing tools out there. It is part customer testimonial (which is always valuable in itself), but also a broader success story.

A case study allows you to prove the merits of your product or service offering in a way nothing else really can. It should form a part of broader campaigns, and to work properly, it needs to focus on a happy and co-operative customer who has a positive story to tell about a key product or service you have provided them with.

Constructing a case study

It all starts with asking the right questions. Ultimately you need to demonstrate a clear business benefit – whether it's solving a problem that was holding the business back, helping the business to grow, or reducing operating costs and increasing profitability. Whatever the core story, it needs to be presented in a clear and compelling way so that prospective customers can identify their own challenges – and potential solutions.

It is also important that the case study works for the customer profiled. They may need to commit a significant amount of time to be interviewed – and to the process of review and approval – so it's important that they see it not just as a promotional tool for you, but for themselves as well. If you commission the photography for the case study, for example, providing the customer with the images and rights to use them for their own marketing purposes is a welcome gesture.

Shaping a compelling narrative while keeping the authentic voice of the customer is a fine art. To ensure maximum value, it's worth working with an external specialist who understands how to ask the right questions and how to get the best from the conversation in order to reflect your key messages.



We've consistently found over the years that customer case studies are one of the most effective ways of engaging the interest of prospective new customers. It's one thing to hear us make claims about our products and levels of service – it's another thing altogether if those claims can be backed up by real customer experience.

AD Communications has been creating case studies for us for many years. They handle everything from start to finish, speaking directly with our customers to get the information they need and writing those stories up to a consistently high standard, providing us with an extremely valuable sales enablement tool.

Graham Leeson
Head of Communications and
Sales Enablement, Fujifilm



ONE STORY, MAXIMUM VALUE

1. Written



Even in its most basic form – a written case study is a powerful tool for distribution to media or to send, or present in person, to prospective customers. It can also be newsworthy or your target media if you can identify and highlight an appropriate news hook.

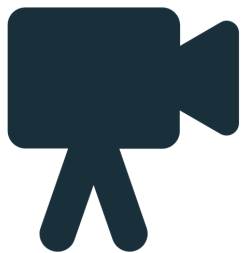
2. Designed



To maximise the impact of a case study – especially for sales people speaking with prospective customers, or customers visiting your website – it's worth designing the material into a well laid out PDF with strong visual

elements, which can be printed or downloaded. This helps to bring the key points out more powerfully and makes the whole thing more readable. At the same time, consider editing elements of the story into a presentation format that is easy for salespeople to drop into a slide deck to support a customer pitch. And never forget that professional photography can make the difference between a good case study and a great one.

3. Video



Video adds yet another dimension. A three- to four-minute summary in the customer's own words is a powerful sales and marketing tool. This could take the form of a 'traditional' video case study, with a talking head backed up by b-roll footage. Or, if budget permits,

a more cinematic-style piece has the power to capture the imagination and inspire. An existing bank of case study video content can also be edited together into themes to create a very powerful promotional tool for a particular product or service – endorsed by multiple customers in their own words.

4. Repurpose



The long-term ROI on an effective case study is huge, because its core messages can reach far beyond those who read the story or watch the video. Customers are the most powerful form of endorsement that a brand has, so every bit of value should be extracted from the content. Once you have the customer quotes and/or video footage of them, there are endless channels and occasions for which to repurpose the content again and again – including the following:

- Social media
- Corporate/sales/marketing collateral
- Guest blogs
- Webinars
- Customer publications
- Launches or customer events
- Product landing pages
- Printed displays at exhibitions
- Video walls and plasmas at shows / in showrooms
- Introductions for guest speakers at an events
- Email signatures

The power of a case study

Whatever the format, customer stories are a vital part of the marketing and communications mix. Whether a fast and simple write-up after an over-the-phone interview or a more elaborate treatment with eye-catching visuals and video, case studies provide a wealth of content to underpin your messages and prove the worth of your business offering like nothing else can.

WHAT WE DO

- Offer high-level consultation
- Create intelligent customer questionnaires
- Conduct interviews with skill and sensitivity
- Shape a powerful narrative
- Preserving the authentic voice of the customer
- Provide design consultancy and services
- Offer video production and editing services
- Handle storyboarding and script writing
- Maximise media coverage via our comprehensive networks
- Help with repurposing content for multiple channels



To explore how we can help, get in touch:

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or call Helen Tolino on **+44 (0)1372 464470**

Further guides are available to download
from the AD resources page here:

www.adcomms.co.uk/resources