

Power Up: Launching Caterpillar's Microgrid Power Solution to an International Audience

Planning/Content

In the industries of agriculture and construction, Caterpillar machines are world-renowned and instantly recognized as the best in the field. While Caterpillar also has decades of experience in the power generation sector it is not nearly as iconic in this space. So when Caterpillar planned to launch its latest power offering, the Microgrid Solution, it turned to Gelia to promote the product to an international audience.

The Microgrid Solution offered by Caterpillar includes renewable energy sources, like photovoltaic (PV) solar panels, combined with traditional generator sets and advanced energy storage. Caterpillar had previously installed the microgrid at its Tucson Proving Ground (TPG), an off-grid facility where the company tests large equipment. A summit on the microgrid for Cat equipment dealers was already scheduled for April 2016, so it was up to Gelia to also fit in a media event with only two months to plan. Supporting objectives included:

- Provide marketing momentum for launch of the Cat Microgrid solution through media relations
- Plan a media event and tour of microgrid for at least 4 editors of relevant publications
- Secure coverage of the microgrid launch in 15 publications that did not attend the event

The total client budget for the campaign was \$20,000 for planning and execution, which included PR writing, media relations and logistical coordination both prior to and during the event.

Creativity/Quality

Gelia first developed a two-tiered media list, naming key publications to invite to the launch event and other magazines that should receive a digital media kit on the new offering. The media list included notable publications in the following subcategories, identified as target markets for the solution:

- Electric power
- Microgrid and utility
- Mining
- Africa and Middle East business

Once the most important media members in each category were identified, Gelia got to work pitching the media and coordinating the logistics of the event. Gelia positioned the program as an exclusive media opportunity for outlets to see a microgrid installation firsthand and speak to Caterpillar subject matter experts one-on-one.

However, many media members needed a visa to travel to Arizona, but only had a few weeks to process their paperwork. So it was imperative to confirm attending media as soon as possible in order to get the visa process underway.

At the same time, Gelia prepped the client on each publication with a detailed briefing book. This book included background

on the publication and attending editors, editorial calendar opportunities and past coverage of Caterpillar products.

Once media members were confirmed, Gelia helped to arrange flights and hospitality for each editor. The agency also wrote and produced all supplemental materials for the media tour of TPG, including the media presentation, news release, TPG fact sheet and product and company backgrounds. Gelia also compiled bios for each Caterpillar subject matter expert who would be on-hand for one-on-one interviews.

With all of the preliminary logistics and supporting materials finalized, it was time for Gelia, the client and the media to make their way to Arizona.

Assessment/Results

The microgrid launch event exceeded the original goal of four editors by two, with six industry editors attending from leading publishers:

- Alain Charles Publishing (UK)
 - Africa & Middle East Textiles
 - African Review
 - Technical Review Middle East
- Pennwell (UK)
 - Decentralized Energy
 - Power Engineering
 - Power Engineering International
 - Renewable Energy World
- Spintelligent Publishing (South Africa)
 - ESI Africa
 - Metering & Smart Energy International
 - Mining Review Africa
- Alternative Energy Africa (US)
- Forester (US)
 - Business Energy
 - Energy Storage Solutions
- Solar Builder (US)

At TPG, Gelia led the editors through a press conference and group Q&A session, a tour of the microgrid installation and 13 one-on-one interviews with Caterpillar subject matter experts. Gelia also distributed a digital press kit to 100 additional targeted media outlets worldwide. Within two months of the launch event and media tour, Caterpillar garnered 28 web and print articles from media outlets on five continents and 55 social media posts from key media outlets and industry influencers, including the event attendees. This number also exceeded the original goal of 15 non-attending media coverage by seven articles. The coverage resulted in a 377 percent return on investment for Caterpillar and helped secure the Microgrid Solution as a top-tier offering from the company.

Besides the initial coverage from the media event, Caterpillar and Gelia have established permanent relationships with key editors and publications in the renewable energy and power generation markets, which has continued to generate coverage for Caterpillar as the microgrid product grows.