

Public Relations Case Study

World Trade Center Panama A Changing of the Guard and Repositioning of the Brand



Background:

Since opening in 1996, the World Trade Center Panama has positioned itself as landmark international business complex that is a model of efficiency, operational security and safety as well as good taste and sobriety, setting the standards for mixed development construction projects in this country. In the last few years, Panama City has experienced an economic and real estate boom, fueled by the Panama Canal expansion and the solid growth of the maritime, logistics and tourism sectors. In Panama City, new office towers and mixed development commercial complexes are being constructed at a fast pace and will soon flood the market.

Recently, Mr. Guillermo Ronderos, announced his retirement as Executive Director of the WTC Panama, after more than 20 years of service. The WTC Panama Board of Directors named Mr. Remy Swaab as the new Executive Director.

Communications Challenge:

To announce Mr. Swaab's appointment as the new WTC Panama Executive Director within the context of the WTC Panama's role as a facilitator of world trade and a pioneer in mixed development commercial construction in this country, using traditional and social media, adapting our key messages and delivery to each medium.

At the same time, we needed to re-position the WTC Panama as one of Panama's best managed office towers and mixed development complexes, within the context of the current commercial real estate construction boom, and provide a going-forward vision for the WTC Panama, in light of the nation's economic boom and prosperity.

Stakeholders:

1. National and international business media with both traditional and online media.
2. National and international business executives, entrepreneurs and business owners.
3. The WTC Association and the WTC network around the world.

Implementation:

The WTC Panama contracted [Sanchiz, Siebrasse & Asociados, S.A.](#), Panama's leading public relations and corporate communications consultancy. SSA was among the founding real estate clients for the WTC Panama as well as among the first group of companies to move into the complex (April 1997).



Strategy

SSA recommended a tightly focused, high-impact media relations program targeting Panama's leading main-stream and digital media that impact the corporate world and are from the country's leading media conglomerates.

Tactics

These were: La Prensa, La Estrella de Panamá (The Panama Star), both daily newspapers, and Capital, a weekly financial, technology and business newspaper. All these media have online versions. La Prensa's online news website, www.prensa.com, is the most popular online news website in Panama. We also targeted an emerging digital media, www.panamaon.com, a news site in Panama operated by an international company.

Our press materials that we developed were one [press release](#) announcing Mr. Swaab's appointment as well as communicating news about the WTC Panama, and one [WTC Fact Sheet](#).

Implementation

For our spokesperson, Mr. Remy Swaab, Executive Director, WTC Panama, SSA obtained a total of 4 media interviews:

1. [Capital](#), a weekly business, technology and financial supplement
2. [La Estrella de Panama](#), one of Panama and Latin America's oldest daily newspapers
3. [KW Continente](#), one of two top national radio stations in Panama
4. [Tuesday Finance / La Prensa](#), a weekly business and financial supplement from Panama's leading daily, La Prensa

We also released our news to selected, prestigious media.

Our efforts resulted in a total of 7 media hits, 3 of which were feature articles for Mr. Swaab and the WTC Panama.

Feature Article Media Coverage:

1. [Tuesday Finance / La Prensa](#), August 19th, 2014, [From the Country to the City](#). The idea of a World Trade Center came forth in 1943. This was the first business network created as a channel to communicate with companies in different parts of the world. From the beginning, it achieved connecting companies in Asia with businesses in the Americas via a satellite platform exclusive to this network. "Since then the WTC functions as a Chamber of Commerce, with the difference that it is international," said Remy Swaab, Executive Director of the WTC Panama. [Print Version](#)



2. [La Estrella de Panamá](#), July 23, 2014, [New opportunities at the WTC Panama](#), "Now it is not just to connect companies; everyone can do that via the Internet. It is to validate that business contact." said Remy Swaab, Executive Director. "A company can contact us, for example, from Cyprus, and tell us that they want to do business with a company in Panama and ask us for a local references. It is a value added benefit that cannot be obtained via the Internet". [Print Version](#)



3. [Capital](#), July 21-27, 2014, [World Trade Center opens its doors to all businesses](#), The new Executive Director of facilities and services that make up the WTC is Remy Swaab, who recently replaced Guillermo Ronderos, who is now enjoying a well-deserved retirement after a long career of professional success. This young Panamanian has new plans for the brand in Panama and one of his first initiatives is to open the doors of the WTC Panama to all companies interested in taking advantage of the facilities and services offered by this organization to enhance their growth through international trade. [Print Version](#)



Additional Media Coverage:

4. [Panamaon.com](#), July 30th, 2014, [World Trade Center Panama names Remy Swaab Executive Director](#), "The strong WTC brand as well as the synergies fostered by a mixed use building with its privileged location, has ensured the success of the project," says Remy Swaab.
5. [KW Continente](#), August 3, 2014, Remy Swaab, Executive Director / Personality of the Week
6. [Tuesday Finance / La Prensa](#), Special Panama Canal edition, August 5th, 2014, [Executive Director Named](#), The international business complex, the World Trade Center Panama, has named Remy Swaab as their new Executive Director.
7. [Revista Summa](#), July 23, 2014, [World Trade Center Panama looks for a new service model](#), A platform for global reach with a local presence. The Panama World Trade Center (WTC) was a historic reference for connecting businesses inside and outside the country. Now, under the direction of Remy Swaab, the WTC Panama seeks to evolve towards a new service model.

Social Media

SSA pushed out in real time our media hits via the current social media channels with wide reach to our key stakeholders:

Facebook
Twitter
LinkedIn
Google+

Overall Results

Seven media hits from four media interviews supplemented with press release distribution is nothing less than outstanding. We were successful with every media that we had chosen as key for us. Our three feature print articles included multiple pictures, increasing the space, visibility and attractiveness of the articles. Our radio interview with KW Continente resulted in Mr. Swaab being named as “Personality of the Week” with a 25 minute interview aired on this leading radio station with nationwide reach.

Social Media channels gave our traditional print WTC Panama news media hits more reach as well increased access to our Stakeholder publics. Public response via social media was excellent. Our tweets were retweeted and favorited. Our Facebook, LinkedIn and Google+ posts were well received by social media users who indicated as such, thereby increasing even more our reach for our WTC Panama key messages.

It was a “perfect storm” of wonderful media relations efforts tied to strategic, real time use of social media that in a clear and compelling fashion, communicated the changing of the guard at WTC Panama and successfully repositioned the brand within the context of the nation’s current real estate and economic boom and prosperity.

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