



In 2007, the company that created the pedestrian trencher category more than 50 years ago, The Charles Machine Works, Inc., developed a new, revolutionary product that could replace its legacy machine. A lot was riding on the successful launch of the Ditch Witch Zahn, named by the agency for Ed Malzahn, the company's founder and inventor of the original pedestrian trencher.

SITUATION

Ditch Witch wanted to create immediate demand for a machine that didn't exist yet.

INTELLIGENCE

Assessment:

We listened to lots of contractors from all over the country talk about digging in the dirt. They waxed eloquent about the wonderfulness of running a powerful machine. They talked about the challenges of doing more with less: less money, less time, less equipment, less labor, less space. This led straight to the "one thing" for the Ditch Witch Zahn.

THE ONE THING

Macho just got easier.

INFLUENCE

The Campaign:
It's Coming.

The launch campaign rolled out in three phases over several months. The first phase was a teaser campaign that began with small-space print ads in trade publication classifieds that were obituaries of existing trenchers, anonymously placed. This began the buzz.

The second phase turned up the tease. Banner ads online linked to an intriguing video portending the doom of existing trenchers and plows. Again, anonymous and unnamed.

The campaign's third phase revolved around a microsite at itscoming.us. Here, over the space of several weeks, lots of clues were added about the nature of this launch: pieces of blueprints, old photos, a mysterious radio broadcast, an old T-shirt, a journal. All of it leading up to a launch date during the industry's biggest trade show.

A comprehensive launch to the industry coincided with the ICUEE trade show in Louisville, KY. Customers and media were invited to see the machine, operate it and hear about the story of how it came to be. Print and online ads, a marketing push through the dealer network and a public relations blitz helped push buzz into the following year.

IMPACT

Not only did this generate a lot of industry and online buzz, this microsite won a national ADDY and a Webby. But most importantly, it produced tangible results for our client.

- Exceeded sales expectations by 10% in the first month.
- Received 30,000 visitors to itscoming.us in the tease phases.
- Received as many web visitors to thezahn.com in the first two weeks, as in previous months to ditchwitch.com.
- Lots of bloggers wrote about the teaser campaign as it developed.
- Received dozens of mentions in industry media outlets.
- Generated hundreds of sales leads for the Ditch Witch dealer network.