



## ***Case History***

### **Norton Company: AVOS Product Launch**

#### **The Challenge:**

Norton Company introduced a line of sandpaper disks with a revolutionary design. The disk's triangular (versus customary round) shape and holes in the disk and mounting pad allow the operator to look directly at the surface during finishing operations.

This design of the AVOS (Allows View of Surface) System offered many user benefits, including:

- Continuous finishing, since the operator does not have to lift the sandpaper disk away from the surface to check on work progress.
- Cooler operation, extending abrasive life.
- Efficient removal (via the holes) of waste.

The company allocated no advertising funds to launch the AVOS System, relying on editorial coverage to gain immediate awareness of and interest in the new product.

#### **The Objectives:**

- Gain awareness of the AVOS System launch and understanding of its unique user benefits among key markets nationwide, including manufacturing, production, and maintenance engineers, managers, and professionals in the automotive, aerospace, furniture, appliance, and other industries.
- Provide third-party (editorial) substantiation of Norton sales force and distributor product-performance claims to customers about the new product.
- Achieve an understanding and acceptance of the AVOS System that would help the Norton marketing team meet ambitious first-year sales goals.

#### **The Strategies:**

- Individual, in-person briefings of 16 editors of leading, national trade publications in their offices by a Norton-agency team.
- Programmed telephone and mail contact with secondary trade publications by the agency team.

- Follow -up throughout the year to: enter the AVOS System in new -product contests and to seek its inclusion in year-end new -product directories and other trade-magazine staff-written feature articles.
- Advance alerts and after-the-fact reprints of major editorial placements to the Norton field sales force and distributors. Contributed AVOS updates to existing quarterly field-sales and distributor newsletters.

**The Results:**

- The AVOS public relations campaign helped Norton Company exceed its first-year sales goal by 35 percent. The first-year goal was reached in eight months.
- 1,252 qualified sales leads were generated from the AVOS publicity, at a cost per sales lead of \$11.69.
- 33 articles about the AVOS product were published in one year, with continuing coverage into the following year. Articles represented a total circulation of 2,898,757 and total potential impressions of 7,246,893.
- The Industrial Design Society of America (IDSA) selected the AVOS product for a silver medal in the IDEA Competition; winners were announced in an issue of BUSINESS WEEK.
- Bell Ringer Award from Publicity Club of New England.