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TBI breaks ground with viral marketing campaign

TBI Communications, the strategic marketing consultancy for scholarly publishers, has recently launched the 'Perfect 10' viral marketing campaign on behalf of the BMJ Group. Seeded to a quarter of a million initial recipients, it's believed to be the first major use of viral marketing technologies in the reference information sector. The campaign takes the form of a quiz, designed to test clinical practitioners' medical knowledge and to encourage them to "challenge a friend"; its objective is to raise awareness and instigate free trials of *Best Practice*, BMJ Group's new clinical decision support tool.

The quiz was produced in conjunction with Tamba Internet and features patient diagnosis and treatment questions from OnExamination, acquired by the BMJ Group in 2008. It aims to draw attention to potential gaps in clinicians' knowledge that can be filled by *Best Practice*. Players can add their score to a global or custom leaderboard in order to compare themselves to the friends and colleagues they challenge.

"The *Best Practice* tool represents an innovation in structuring clinical decision-support information, so it was a good fit for exploring a new marketing technique," says Eunice Walford, Marketing & Customer Services Director at the BMJ Group. "We worked closely with TBI – whose team, crucially, are well-acquainted with our markets and our business – in selecting this fresh new way to communicate with our audiences."

"Many academic publishers struggle to see how viral marketing could work with their particular products and markets," says Colin Meddings, Strategic Marketing Manager at TBI Communications. "Our role is to help our clients apply the concept in a way that will resonate with their target audience. When you find that fit, potential customers will happily spread the news and give you their contact details for future marketing contact, so it's a cost-effective way to generate some excitement about your product and to capture new leads."

The incorporation of existing BMJ Group content also highlights the potential for publishers to re-purpose latent assets in exploiting viral marketing. "Viral is a channel, not a culture," explains Charlie Rapple, TBI's Head of Marketing Development. "It's not all drumming gorillas. Publishers and societies, with their archives full of content and artefacts that are of interest to their subscribers and members, are in a great position to create and circulate campaigns that will appeal to recipients and make them want to share it with others."

The 'Perfect 10' viral game can be accessed at <http://bestpractice.bmj.com/perfect10.html>

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About TBI Communications

TBI Communications is a strategic marketing and communications agency specialising in providing services to academic and professional publishers and societies.

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