

# Witherspoon Case Study

## Client

ZestFest, *Chile Pepper* magazine

## Background

ZestFest, the largest spicy-food trade show in the Southwest, has been presented by *Chile Pepper* magazine in Fort Worth for five years, making it a go-to for spicy and zesty food lovers and retailers in the Metroplex and across the nation. *Chile Pepper* recently underwent a change in ownership which presented continuity and logistical challenges for the magazine's current owner, New York-based Goodman Media Group. Witherspoon was engaged to publicize the event and assist with community and local business relations.

## Strategy

A detailed communications plan was created to generate local and regional excitement about the event. As a result, several key broadcast media placements, including morning show features and Fiery Food Challenge judging segments aired the week prior to ZestFest.

## Execution/tactics

### • Calendar listings

Witherspoon posted ZestFest and Burger Bash information on 20 online local community calendars. Though there are not accurate numbers that detail how many people view these calendars, our surveys indicated that many attendees read about ZestFest online.

### • News releases and media advisories

Witherspoon drafted and distributed a total of four news releases prior to the event. Media advisories were also sent Sept. 5 through Sept. 9 to a list of local news programs and daily papers. These advisories detailed schedules for the day, Burger Bash and Fiery Food Challenge judging, as well as chef performance schedules. In addition, Witherspoon prepared an article on the event for *Downtown Fort Worth*, a local publication that focuses not only on our downtown area but the Stockyards and Cultural District as well.

### • Media kit

Seventy-five media kits were distributed which included bios on each chef, *Chile Pepper* editor Gretchen VanEsselstyn and publisher Jason Goodman, as well as a map of the trade show floor, a fact sheet, a chef stage schedule and a disk of photos.

## Results

Public relations efforts garnered clips and articles in *Downtown Fort Worth*, the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, *Fort Worth Business Press*, *TCU Daily Skiff* and the *Gourmet News*. Also a photo and listing in *Fort Worth, Texas* magazine's "Worth Doing" section and a photo listing in the *Business Press*' "Frames" section. The estimated value of this print coverage totaled \$28,792. Our efforts also garnered 10 television news program segments that reached 819,514 viewers for a total estimated publicity value of \$37,098.78. Combined publicity value of broadcast and print totaled \$65,890.78. Attendance increased to 10,000 in 2007 which more than doubled the turnout in 2006.



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