FINALIST 2013

B2B AWARDS



Category number:	**12**
Category name:	**Best limited budget campaign**
Programme/initiative name:	**Axon, Network Testing**
Agency:	**Mason Zimbler**
Brand or client:	**Spirent**
URL or microsite:	http://axon.spirent.com/
Word count:	**Summary 200 words**
	Main entry 999 words (excluding headings)

Summary

Challenge:

To launch a new product, Spirent Axon, to an audience not previously targeted by Spirent.

There was limited customer data available, and a maximum limited budget.

Solution:

Spirent planned to launch and showcase Axon at a flagship industry event: Cisco Live 2013.

The campaign used this as a platform for communications raising awareness of the product and conveying its benefits. Audience insights from previous research were used to ensure precision tailoring of activity. This ensured proposition development and messaging, as well as media selection, tone and content were finely-tuned for maximum resonance.

Overall, the strategy focused on innovative development of digital assets and social media activity. A tight focus on Cisco Live helped achieve maximum impact with the budget. The aim was to achieve optimum reach and quality engagement, partly through leveraging the event buzz.

Results:

- ✓ 341,816 social campaign reach
- ✓ 654 leads generated

The outcome was a small but mighty campaign that conveyed powerful messages to the right audience in the right way, leading to tangible lead generation. In the client's words:

"We were generating leads even before the event itself."

i. About the client company

Spirent designs, develops and delivers network testing equipment and services for the communications industry. This includes tools for service management and field testing as well as securing and managing networks.

This entry focuses on the launch of Axon, a field-based test platform that delivers reliable, real-time results for fast network troubleshooting.

ii. Strategy – broader business objectives and how this activity relates

The brief was to launch Axon to a market not previously targeted by Spirent: Enterprise IT professionals and field service deployment engineers employed by Systems Integrators.

Key challenges included a lack of contact data for this audience and a modest budget.

Spirent attendance at flagship industry event Cisco Live 2013 (London, January 28 – February 1) was earmarked as the platform from which to launch the product.

Utilising previously commissioned audience research, the agency was tasked with defining a strategic approach to generate leads from Cisco Live.

iii. Objectives of the campaign

- Generate awareness of Axon
- Generate leads from Cisco Live 2013

Activity focused on raising awareness of Axon and educating the target audience on performance and business benefits that were pertinent to their role.

iv. The target audience

The target audience was Enterprise IT professionals and field service deployment engineers employed by Systems Integrators. Their role is frequently characterised by fire-fighting and repetitive routine tasks.

Proposition development and messaging drew on the fact that Axon could help them quickly and easily measure and validate performance across the entire network.

A key resource underpinning the activity was in-depth audience research from Aberdeen Group. This helped to shape and strengthen decisions surrounding media selection and asset development. Importantly, it enabled messages, tone and content to be tailored to address specific audience needs and disposition.

v. Media, channels or techniques used

Media selection was shaped by four key factors:

1. As well as having minimal contact data, there was no advance visibility of Cisco Live attendees – so direct marketing was out of the question
2. Research findings indicated that the target group does not tend to read industry magazines – so traditional above the line advertising would not reach them
3. The research showed that the audience tends to turn to online resources and peer influencers when learning about specific technology, and prefers materials in electronic format
4. General research about IT professionals shows they increasingly use of social media as a research medium when making decisions about new technologies

This led the agency to devise a strategy that focused on **digital assets** and **social media activity** to generate awareness of, and engagement with, the Axon brand before, during and after Cisco Live. It also sought to capture data and generate prospect leads for sales follow up.

Campaign microsite

A dedicated microsite was created as a call to action destination for communications activity. This enabled Axon's proposition to be communicated in a way that was relevant and engaging to the new target audience, without compromising Spirent's positioning for existing products and markets.

Messaging, tone and content were refined in line with the Aberdeen research findings. The aim to was to enhance the effectiveness of online communication, track visitors and facilitate sales conversion.

Image 1: Axon microsite homepage



Social media activity

LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter were identified as the most relevant platforms for the target audience due to their levels of penetration and engagement. They were also being utilised by Cisco Live, providing additional opportunities for engagement and wider reach and Spirent was the key sponsor of the Cisco Social Media lounge at the event. Activity involved identifying influencers and engaging in real-time conversations before, during and after the event. To maximise engagement and create a buzz during the show itself, a 'social hook' concept was developed: a social game implicitly conveying the Axon benefits.

Activity fell into three phases:

i. **Pre-event**
   – Engaged with Cisco's setup channels (LinkedIn group, Twitter, Facebook)
   – Effective use of Spirent's own channels
   – Influencer marketing - identify and engage key social targets, particularly bloggers
ii. **During event**
   – Social campaign hook (see **social game**)
   – Engaged attendees posting #Ciscolive and other event based social activity at the event to encourage visits, both real-world and online
   - Encouraged @Spirent following with #SpirentAxon posting that connected people to real-world and online resources
iii. **Post-event**
   – Followed up on leads and activity made during the event using captured data

Messaging, tone and content of the activity were refined in line with the research findings. The aim was to enhance the effectiveness of online communication, track visitors and facilitate sales conversion.

Social game

This rich conceptual idea created a platform for fun interaction with the target audience both at the event and outside it. Drawing on the core proposition of Axon, it engaged users whilst demonstrating the core benefits of the product and encouraging social sharing.

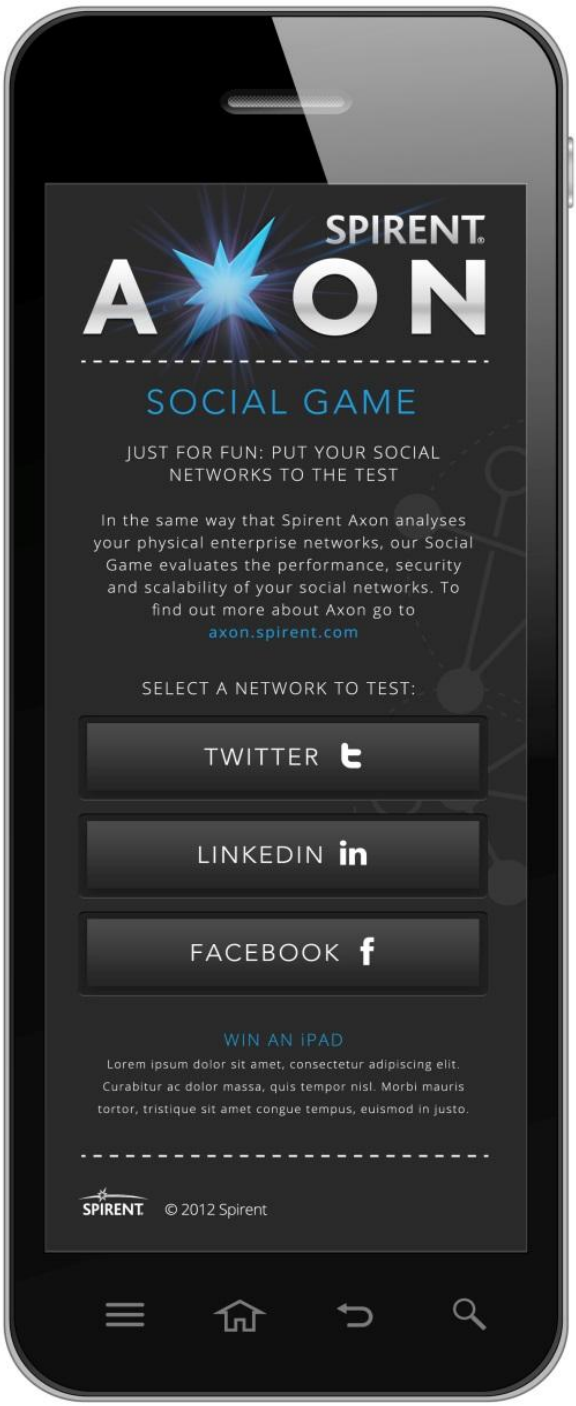


Image 2: Front page of the Axon social game

vi. Timescale of the campaign

Brief: November 2012

Planning & Development: December & January

Campaign: mid-January to mid-February 2013

vii. Budgets

These details were provided to judges in the original submission but are commercially sensitive and therefore confidential.

viii. Results

Objective	Results
Generate awareness of Axon	341,816 social campaign reach • surpassing expected 10,000 addressable audience by more than 3000% 92,327 campaign reach January 14 – February 6 • (mentions audience + retweets audience + @Spirent followers) 39 retweets and third party Twitter mentions during Cisco Live 73,522 peak social audience during Cisco Live
Generate leads from Cisco Live 2013	**654 leads generated** Of these: • 147 marketing qualified leads via microsite during the campaign period (filled in contact form & downloaded info) • 358 engaged leads via social campaign including references and recommendations by key industry influencers • 86 leads via social game • *Financial details were provided to judges in the original submission but are commercially sensitive and therefore confidential.* Data capture also provided good foundations for future activity and lead nurturing

ix. Client testimonial

"We had a great level of coverage and exposure and we were generating leads even before the event itself and new business shortly after"
*(*Martin Vickery, Corporate Marketing Director at Spirent Communications