# B2B MARKETING AWARDS 2014

**Category number:** 11

**Category name:** Best use of thought leadership

**Programme/initiative name:** Integrate Britain

**Agency:** Stein IAS

**Brand or client:** TalkTalk Business

**URL or microsite:** http://www.talktalkbusiness.co.uk/partners/why-become-a-partner/systems-integrator/

**Summary:** 199 **Word count:** 1,000

**Please watch our short video here:**

http://all.awards.steinias.com/TTB/10042014/integrate-britain.htm

**Please note: This award entry is confidential / not for publication (due to stock market rules, regulations and client confidentiality)**



## Summary

Historically, TalkTalk Business (TTB) had struggled to reach enterprise audiences (250+ employees). The brand lacked credibility with Corporates and the technology partners that traditionally serviced big business: Systems Integrators (SIs) and Value-Added Resellers (VARs).

With little experience of this segment, the telco had been communicating on an ad hoc basis without any insight into either parties' wants or needs. Strategically, a thought leadership campaign would reposition TTB, build credibility and produce an asset of genuine value to the marketplace which would also be flexible enough to work across multiple channels.

The output was the Integrate Britain Report: a comprehensive write-up of detailed qualitative and quantitative research conducted by Ovum and tackling the key issues affecting the target audiences. The unusual, but effective, decision was taken to work with leading industry titles and hold roundtables to devise and test the thought leadership themes directly with enterprises and SIs/VARs.

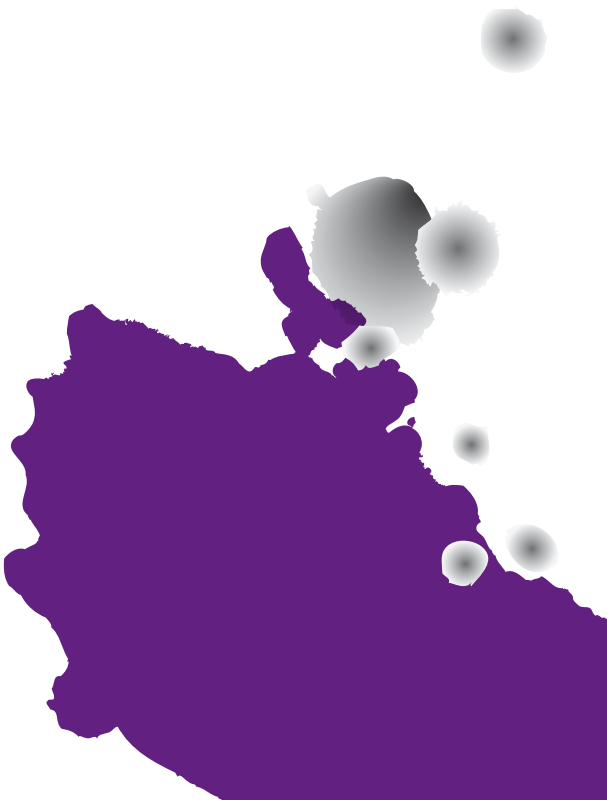
Insight from the report was used to develop thought leadership-led assets: emails, PR, webinars, roundtables, social and advertising. The outcome was a steady stream of high quality leads and measurable engagement with all campaign assets – £5.7million sales pipeline to date – putting TTB on the radar of its most hard-to-reach audiences.

TalkTalk Business

IN ASSOCIATION WITH OVUM

STEIN IAS

Stein IAS engineered a successful collaboration between TalkTalk Business and Ovum



## About the Client Company

TalkTalk Business – telecommunications provider

## Strategy

TalkTalk Business (TTB) was embarking on new territory at the start of 2013. Established as a provider to Britain's SMEs, TTB had struggled to gain traction with large enterprises. Engaging Systems Integrators (SIs) and Value-Added Resellers (VARs) was a key objective for TTB if it was to succeed in entering the consciousness of the corporate decision maker.

Up to now, TTB had been second-guessing SI and enterprise needs. The decision was taken to place research at the heart of the exercise with the overriding strategic objective of producing market insights that could be used flexibly to:

1. Understand the market dynamics (attitudes and behaviour on both sides).
2. Report back to primary audiences (resellers) and build trust.
3. Create thought leadership assets for multi-channel inbound/outbound marketing, data capture and lead nurturing.

## Objectives

A content-driven research project was undertaken to:

- **Get TTB on the radar with Systems Integrators (SIs) and Value Added Resellers (VARs).** – getting prospects to engage with the campaign content (awareness stage).
- **Get the industry to reflect** upon the danger of defaulting to preferred suppliers.
- **Give TTB a credible voice** among enterprises.

## Target audiences

- **End-users:** CIOs, FDs, Procurement and other C-level decision makers in organisations with 250+ employees.
- **Resellers:** SIs/VARs offering access to some of the UK's biggest businesses.

## Media or Channels

With little market penetration or knowledge of the sector, TTB needed independent research to define the issues and understand where the brand should be positioned in an ongoing debate regarding enterprise needs versus current reseller capabilities. A new approach was taken to developing the research and validating the proposed angles. Involving key industry titles to host roundtables made-up of SIs and VARs, TTB and Ovum developed and tested the research hypotheses – allowing TTB to not only confirm market receptiveness to the suggested themes but also credibly position the brand with its key SI/VAR audiences from the outset.

**The pre-qualifying process**

Three waves of research were conducted to help define the themes of the research and market report:

1. **Developing the hypothesis:** Desk research/telephone interviews with SIs/VARs were used to determine the issues.
2. **Validating the hypothesis:** Our preliminary hypothesis was tested by Ovum.
3. **Testing the hypothesis:** Revised hypothesis tested in media roundtables (x3) with SI/VARs, hosted by the editorial teams at Total Telecom, Channel Reseller News (CRN) and Data Centre Solutions (DCS).



## The Integrate Britain Report

- Ovum (partnered with to add further credibility) conducted a web-based survey; 200 UK enterprises with 250+ employees.
- The output was an in-depth research report covering 18 pages of analysis, interpretation and expert commentary.
- The text was broken up with charts, roundtable soundbites, public sector 'in- focus' sections and industry trends. Two versions of the report were written: one for SI/VARs; one for enterprises/end-users.
- Key themes included single service provider agreements and consistency of network service delivery. Key spokespeople from TTB fronted the initiative: Alex Tempest, Head of Partners and Duncan Gooding, responsible for major accounts.
- We took a risky but informed call to be reasonably critical of the market. TTB could afford to position itself as a 'diplomat' because end-users and SI/VARs were already open about their conflicting needs. The roundtables had delivered frank viewpoints – supported by strong themes in the research – that would provide strong copy to work across all assets and channels.






### Inbound and outbound campaigns

Content from Integrate Britain was then used across the following channels:

- Email, landing pages, PR (thought leadership articles), advertising (online banners and print) and social (Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube) tactics were used to market the report.
- Webinars were hosted with two of the roundtable publications and were very successful.
- A second set of roundtables were held with all three publications. The original participants were invited back to discuss the research findings. The write-ups directed readers to download the report.

Videos







Web Banners







Roundtable discussion



## Timescales:

- May 2013 – develop research / themes alongside Ovum
- June – pre-research partner roundtables
- July – research, fieldwork, analysis and interpretation
- August – report published
- September – post-research activity

## Budgets:

- £30K for all content activity:
  - Ovum research – £20K
  - Stein IAS support – £6K
  - Stein IAS content creation – £4K

## Results

- £5.7 million in annual sales pipeline value (from Fujitsu and Azzurri alone).
- 7 qualified leads. All high calibre and in target enterprise category: Deloitte, SAP, Grant Thornton, Azzurri.
- 86 report downloads (October – December).
- 146 webinar registrations (Total Telecom / CRN).
- 48 visits to the TTB SI hub via tweets relating to research; average site visit 3mins 54secs.
- 178 views of supporting video assets representing a 49% uplift in visits to the TTB YouTube channel.
- Over 3mins average visit duration on TTB's SI landing page (rising to 7mins for the blog).
- £74K of editorial coverage resulting from the roundtables.

Editorial Coverage



## Client/ Customer Testimonials

"Having been involved in all manner of vendor/Channel/end user events over the years, I can honestly say that the TalkTalk Business (TTB) Channel Roundtable series was the most rewarding one that I have attended."

**Philip Alsop, Editor, Data Centre Solutions**



"The round table event and debate regarding the Ovum research was informative, challenging and ultimately, rewarding. I was surprised at some of the findings of the research and reaction to it with the contrasting views around the table. It specifically helped me to understand relative values of different service offerings and the need for Azzurri to differentiate that from more of a reseller focus."

**Steve Palmer, Azzurri (enterprise targets)**

"Of those that attended the roundtables and allocated to myself, I met and qualified Bluechip and Outsourcery. The best prospect is Avanade (a joint venture between Accenture & Microsoft). I met the UK CTO which has led to engagement with the General Manager of their UCC division in the UK. They have asked us to engage on a couple of ongoing projects and suggested TTB review the Avanade/ Accenture preferred supplier agreement. The CRN Webinar also produced a couple of interesting leads which are progressing with Peer1 (UK's second largest managed hosting provider), Xchanging ($1Bn IT and procurement outsourcer) and Data Track plc."

**Andy Watson, TalkTalk Business**

## Supporting material supplied

x 1 Presentation board.



Word count 1,000

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