

**PR PLAN TO RAISE AWARENESS**

# **Your Company**

**IN THE NETHERLANDS & BELGIUM**





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### Karianne Hoekstra

Zeekhoe Communicatie | the Netherlands

Your Company seeks to create awareness of the company and its products and services by bringing these to the interest of press and end users in the Netherlands and Belgium. Meeting this goal requires communication on a regular basis with the parties involved. Zeekhoe Communicatie is exceptionally experienced to shape these issues into a pr/communication proposal.

The main objectives of the pr activities is to introduce Your Company to IT professionals, decision makers at CxO level and channel partners within the region and to strengthen the market position of Your Company, as well as the relations with end users, through the Dutch and Belgium media and events. The target media include Tier 1 trade journals for the IT industry and trade and business magazines targeting specific vertical industries with IT & Cloud sections, as well as online publications informing these markets.

This eBook outlines our philosophy, history, expertise, and program for pr activities that we could theoretically undertake for Your Company on a monthly basis. This will lead to an excellent relationship with 'key influencer press', the positioning of the company in the Dutch and Belgium markets, and the generation of editorial interest. All activities described are dynamic and may be adapted to circumstances as soon as this is required. Ongoing evaluation will determine whether, and how, the strategy needs to be adjusted.

The media plan is comprised of a combination of corporate and locally created content such as news articles (press releases), blogs, background information, analyses, by-lined articles, and interviews. Subjects include the organization and the products and services of Your Company as well as the vision of Your Company on market developments and the resulting strategy propositions.





## Paul Zeebregts

Zeekhoe Communicatie | the Netherlands

### Our philosophy: be proactive and creative

Zeekhoe Communicatie is a respected and trusted partner of Tier 1 IT and business journalists seeking news, opinions and the technical vision of our specialized IT clients. We aim for excellent relations with local press, resulting in high quality coverage. With our content creation service, we produce relevant and attractive pr materials.

We are known for our no-nonsense and hands-on pr approach. We put a solid pr plan in place and focus on maximum output and results. To keep Your Company on the radar of Dutch and Belgium journalists, we set up a constant flow of corporate and locally created content.

We keep a close eye on current affairs and are well informed about editorial calendars, current dossiers, theme days, etc.

Thanks to news-jacking/rapid response, we ensure that our clients receive constant attention and gain acknowledgement as a thought leader in their field.

### Focus for Your Company

We will approach the media on subjects such as the vision, mission, products, services, and USPs of Your Company. In addition, we will introduce Your Company as a thought-leader in the fields of your expertise.

We will train your local management or spokes persons in interacting with the media and position them in the local spotlights by producing or translating / localizing blogs and by-lined articles.

We also propose a personal introduction of the management with the media via online conferencing. Further, we propose to create social media posts and short videos on their behalf.

We can support Your Company in event promotion. We will create convincing invitations and follow-up materials. We enlist our media partnerships and social media following to bring the event to the attention of the target audiences. We are present and actively involved during the event.





## Corneel Haine

Evoke PR | Belgium

In public relations and marketing communications, partnerships with local agents are essential. As an English-speaking region known for its openness to being prospected for business by foreign companies, you would think marketing in the Netherlands and Belgium should be less of a 'localized' effort than in other European countries. However, as fluent they may be in English, local media, and even IT professionals and CxO's in the boardroom, prefer news articles and other communications to be presented in their native language, and of local interest and relevance. It is a mistake, therefore, to think that your corporate pr and marketing materials do not need to be specific to the Netherlands and Belgium or need no translations.

### Journalists prefer:

- Content in Dutch. They will often disregard content in English.
- News with a local angle: new hires, new projects, new products, etcetera, for the Dutch and Belgian markets.
- Quotes from, or interviews with, local spokespeople.
- Local customer input, quotes and reference cases.
- Blogs (by-lined by or attributed to a local author) addressing local trends and themes or the local impact of international trends and themes.
- (Market) research findings that include the region.

### Outside-in

The Benelux does not have a tradition of market analysts publishing their insights, findings, or opinions in trade or business media.

The Dutch and Belgian media are generally less interested in 'inside-out' or 'self-promoting' news such as financial results or Gartner Magic Quadrant positions.

Information on mergers and acquisitions and new investments are received better if there is a local angle, investor or interest.





“Media and, indeed, media consumers, in the Netherlands and Belgium, prefer news articles and other communications to be presented in their native language, and of local interest and relevance.”

We render the following services on basis of a monthly retainer and / or quarterly results-based pr. All activities are optional, dynamic and flexible. They will be adjusted to best fit the required communication needs at any given time. Prior to initiating our relationship, we will propose a bespoke pr plan based on your needs, requirements, and goals.

- Executive messaging/planning workshop
- Develop and maintain target media list
- Development of bespoke pr plan
- Rapid response program for breaking news comment
- Regular planning calls and strategic review
- Press clipping coordination and reporting
- Produce or translate / localize and distribute corporate or local press releases / media bulletins
- Produce or translate / localize and publish opinion pieces/blogs
- Publication of corporate interview/article/ case study in target media





## Developing a Go-to-Market Strategy: Case Study

“No business can thrive without partnerships,” says Marc Jepkes, Sales Manager Enterprise & Telco Netherlands at Fortinet, a global leader in broad, integrated and automated cyber security solutions.



Jepkes joined Fortinet in August of 2005 and was given the task to introduce Fortinet in the Benelux and lay the foundations for the Benelux sales and marketing organization.

In 2011, Jepkes sought a partner to help to create awareness of Fortinet and its products and services by bringing these to the attention of press and end users in the Benelux. He looked at several PR companies before choosing cyber security specialist Zeekhoe Communicatie. “Zeekhoe’s proposal outlined a program for pr activities it intended to undertake for Fortinet”, says Jepkes. “What attracted us to this proposal was that it is dynamic in nature. All activities are adapted to real-time circumstances. Ongoing evaluation determines whether, and how, the strategy needs to be adjusted.”

Fortinet deliberately chooses not to work with global or pan-European pr organizations, but with local boutique agencies. “This assures close relations with partners who develop a high level of knowledge and dedication to protect our interests,” says Jepkes. “Local knowledge means our communications are tailor

made for these markets, thus achieving the optimum results for Fortinet.”

The Benelux being a key region, Fortinet sought a partner that could manage activities in the Benelux as a one-stop-shop. “Zeekhoe made us aware that every country in the Benelux region requires a particular approach and a local agent. For Fortinet, managing three relatively small areas was a big ask. Fortunately, Zeekhoe takes this off our hands as well. Thanks to its participation in the global Code Red Security PR Network, we deal with one partner, but we have local agents working for us in every member state of the Benelux.”

“From the start 10 years ago, we enjoy working with Zeekhoe as a respected and trusted partner that combines the service and accessibility of a small business with the influence, drive and results of a large agency.”



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## Supporting growth and awareness: Case Study

Zivver is a Dutch tech scale-up that supports organizations in securing their sensitive data, ensuring compliance, and preventing data leaks.



In 2020, Zivver management decided it was time to engage a professional pr agency to represent its external communication interests. The company preferred to work with a small and specialized agency with extensive in-house knowledge of IT, as well as the agility to adapt quickly and create high-quality content. Zivver found the right fit in Zeekhoe Communicatie.

Jori Besteman, VP Marketing at Zivver: “We value close and personal cooperation, with direct lines of communication. Trust is a huge part of that, but so are results. Zeekhoe Communicatie has many years of experience as an IT pr agency and knows how to enthuse the media. News is never merely circulated; Zeekhoe checks in advance which news platforms are relevant and whether we can afford a journalist a scoop. This approach strengthens our bond with journalists and leads to many in-depth stories in the media.”

### Launch of a new product

In addition to writing press releases and media alerts, Zeekhoe Communicatie also creates additional content. “Shortly after the Covid-19 crisis started, Zivver introduced secure video conference solution for organizations: Zivver Meet”, says Besteman. “Zeekhoe Communicatie realized considerable coverage and, within

two months, produced ten appealing blogs and an in-depth research report. With this, our pr agency showed that it scores high on both quality and quantity.”

### Media Blitz

In the fall of 2020, Zivver raised \$ 17 million in a new investment round. Besteman: “Zeekhoe Communicatie set off a media blitz and arranged interviews with the two most important financial newspapers in the Netherlands: Het FD and De Financiële Telegraaf. Zeekhoe also secured coverage and interviews with our CIO Rick Goud on Tier 1 IT and business news platforms. The quantity and quality of coverage was impressive, much to our CEO and the investor’s delight. In the coming years, we are confident that Zeekhoe Communicatie will provide us with excellent support and will make an important contribution to broadening our brand awareness.”



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## **Trusted partner for IT Security Firms seeking pr in The Netherlands and Belgium**

For more than 15 years, Zeekhoe Communicatie is a leading IT pr agency in the Dutch and Belgium regions. Zeekhoe was founded by Paul Zeebregts and Karianne Hoekstra, two former IT journalists, with a specialization in IT security. With a keen ability to 'translate' the technical messaging of IT to the business interest of the board rooms, we advise and guide our customers in building a valuable and lasting reputation with IT (security) media.

Our inventive and tailor-made pr proposals are based on extensive knowledge of public relations, tight-knit relations with IT and business press and understanding the local culture and customs of end users. We know how to communicate in an effective, appealing and open manner, resulting in excellent coverage and valuable in-depth interviews.

## **Public Relations versus Content Marketing**

The dynamic media landscape has seen traditional print trade publications being overtaken by online news sites and more direct contact with end users through social media. Focusing energies only on contacts with journalists means leaving many inroads to your audience unused.

Research has shown that companies looking for a new B2B supplier will have made about 60 percent of their decision before making contact with or inviting proposals from potential vendors. Most of this initial fact-finding and due diligence is based on what they find online, which is why it is vital to have a competitive, compelling and highly visible web presence in your target market.

## **Content is King**

A pr agency nowadays needs to be versed in content creation and have the capability to produce advertorials, blogs, interviews and articles, and, increasingly, videos.

Zeekhoe Communicatie is versed in producing content for your own website, as well as for news sites we partner with. We can also create content for your social media and YouTube channels.

According to ComScore, the Netherlands has the highest global usage rates for both LinkedIn and Twitter. Usage rates are considerably lower in Belgium and Luxembourg but both sites may still be a useful part of building your contacts in the respective markets. As your pr and content partner, Zeekhoe Communicatie will also help you to create a local social media presence and expand your social network in the Benelux.





## Zeekhoe Communicatie

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