



Die Native-Speaker Agentur

## **newstalk 3, 2007: Crowdsourcing**

### **Crowdsourcing. Creating a storm in marketing.**

Crowdsourcing shifts the concept of outsourcing up a gear by opening up business related tasks (that a company would normally do itself) to the online community. In marketing terms, this is proving to be a fruitful technique for brand development.

englishtalk first came across crowdsourcing in *Brand Republic* online. It has little in common with user-generated content because from start to finish, crowdsourcing taps into the wealth of consumer knowledge and ideas in a structured way, leaving the company firmly in control. The BBC or CNN, for example, ask viewers to send in their photos or videos of main news items, but ultimately the company decides how to handle them.

### **Building brand equity with a little help from your customers**

It's all too easy for brands to lose touch with their target audience. R&D isn't only expensive – it can also be time consuming and include so many opinions that the product's original consumer appeal falls by the wayside.

Managed the right way, crowdsourcing can help to:

- cut costs
- generate original ideas
- increase productivity and creativity
- strengthen customer loyalty by giving consumers a way to shape their favourite brand
- hit current consumer trends thereby partially reducing risk.

Brand managers, however, must keep in mind that 'crowds' are not colleagues. The process and structure need careful consideration: from handling consumer responses to clearly communicating compensation for ideas.

### **Who's in with the crowdsourcing in-crowd?**

More and more companies are inviting consumers to contribute to a brand's development. Take L'Oréal. Remember the TV ad with the Japanese fan unfolding across the screen? Crowdsourced. And it saved them a fortune!

Procter & Gamble use Innocentive, a crowdsourcing-based site, to ask scientists for solutions to some of their product issues.

But perhaps one of the most successful examples is istockphoto.com. Getty Images, one of the world's largest photo agencies, recently paid \$50 million for istockphoto – a website where amateur photographers sell their images at a fraction of the cost of professionals (and quite a useful resource at [englishtalk](http://englishtalk.com)).

### **Ready to take on the trend?**

Crowdsourcing could be the beginning of a whole new way of communicating with consumers. Our suggestion? Consider the crowdsourcing concept next time you're kicking off a round of R&D. It could be the source of some major inspiration.

© 2007 [englishtalk](http://englishtalk.com) Ltd. All rights reserved.

Need to quote this article? Please let us know.

[englishtalk](http://englishtalk.com) Ltd | Neue Brücke 3 | 70173 Stuttgart, Germany  
Tel: 0711 88 27 307