

Feature Story

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Publisher uses 'Narnia' to push beyond Christian core

By Michael Bush - 6 Mar 2006

<http://www.prweek.com/us/search/article/543493/publisher-uses-narnia-push-beyond-christian-core>

Christian-book publisher Broadman & Holman wanted to capitalize on the hype around the December 9 theatrical release of C.S. Lewis' *The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe* by publishing four related books: *Jack's Life: The Life Story of C.S. Lewis* by Lewis' stepson, Douglas Gresham, *Narnia Beckons*, *Further Up & Further In*, and *The Keys to the Chronicles*.

STRATEGY

The goal: differentiate the books from the more than 210 Narnia-related titles that were about to hit the shelves. "The plan was to promote the books in a pre-film 'read-it-before-you-see-it' campaign," says Jennifer McAndrew, a literary publicist at **BookPros**. Each author was pitched as an expert source, with Gresham offering an exclusive and personal viewpoint. "Lewis was a Christian theologian, but we wanted to show these books would appeal to more than just a faith-based audience," McAndrew says.

TACTICS

Because of their long lead times, **BookPros** first pitched book reviewers and religion writers at wire services and top dailies. "We used the same strategy to target religious media, focusing on national print media first, and then radio and TV outlets," she says.

RESULTS

The effort generated nearly 300 radio, TV, online, and print interviews, and placements with *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Religion News Service*, *Christianity Today*, the Associated Press, and ABC's *Nightline*. These led to a full-page feature story for Gresham and *Jack's Life* with *USA Today* and an interview in *Entertainment Weekly's* Narnia cover story. A week before the film's release, *Jack's Life* hit number 329 on Amazon's bestseller list.

FUTURE

Disney is making a theatrical version of *Prince Caspian*, the next book in the series, and Broadman & Holman is exploring potential book tie-ins.

PR TEAM: Broadman & Holman Publishers (Nashville, TN) and **BookPros** (Austin, TX)

CAMPAIGN: Narnia Book Launch

DURATION: September to December 2005