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Corporate Communications — No.2

Communicating opportunities to encourage investment

CLIENT: Virtek Vision International Inc.

PRODUCT/SERVICE: Precision laser based technology

SITUATION:

A spin off of the University of Waterloo, Virtek started as a precision laser based automation company whose products could reduce production times, simplify processes and increase quality. The first products commercialised gained wide acceptance within the pre-fabricated construction and aerospace industries. Over the years, the technology was applied to new products and markets, most notably, biotechnology and the analysis of proteins and DNA.

The company had successfully re-positioned itself from an industrial to high-tech company, but their efforts in the biotechnology market were extremely difficult for investors and analysts alike to comprehend. The science and products were extremely complex, both in application and in methodology. Even with the widespread media coverage of the Human Genome Project, investors were relatively uninformed.

OBJECTIVE:

To explain the extent of Virtek's biotechnology opportunities to encourage investment and increase shareholder value.

STRATEGY:

All corporate communications to focus on explaining Virtek's biotechnology business and opportunities.

TACTICS:

Simplified communications to answering the "Top 10" questions Virtek was receiving about its biotech business and opportunities. This "Top 10" theme was applied to the annual report, annual meeting and all investor presentations.

RESULTS:

In 2001, Virtek raised an **additional \$30 million in investments**. The company was able to purchase FONA, a strategic biotechnology asset with huge market potential and no direct competitors.

Investor and analyst feedback was extremely positive. Average responses from an online questionnaire gave the annual report a 9 out of 10 rating.

