

Client: **Danfoss**

Category: **Best use of creative**

Campaign: **Ecopolis**

INTRODUCTION

District energy is a highly efficient way to heat homes and buildings by recycling waste heat from power production and other industrial processes. Danfoss is the world leader in engineering district energy networks and wanted to promote this technology as a solution to lowering emissions and energy consumption.

INSIGHT

Stakeholder insight

Create demand by engaging new stakeholders
– i.e., political and urban development leaders
– with a view to shaping the EU regulatory environment in favour of district energy.

Channel insight

Tap the existing momentum on sustainable cities by framing district energy as an essential component in the creation of greener cities.

Branding insight

Position district energy as sustainable heating infrastructure for the urban environment.

Background

Danfoss is a world leader in the supply of components and systems for district energy (DE) networks – a.k.a district heating. While DE is extremely popular in Danfoss’ native Denmark, it is virtually unknown in many other parts of the world. Slowing growth at home and huge potential abroad was the stimulus for Danfoss deciding upon an ambitious long-term strategy to bring district energy to the world.

The concept

Power plants typically work at an efficiency of 40%, meaning 60% of all energy is lost during the process, usually discharged as heat. The concept of district heating is to capture the waste energy and use it to heat water, which is then distributed via a network of insulated underground pipes to homes and buildings for heating purposes. The brilliance of the system is that it reuses energy already in circulation (and often wasted) so requires not net increase in the use of valuable fuel resources.



The opportunity

District energy isn't a new idea, but it's found new relevance in world seeking practical solutions to de-carbonisation. The latest generation of DE infrastructure (4G) is a strong facilitator of lowering carbon emissions, increasing energy efficiency and the inclusion of renewable energy sources. While penetration of the EU heating market is only 10%, the prospects are huge with 70% of Europe potentially able to benefit from DE. Unlocking this potential required putting DE on the radar at an EU and global level.

Communication objectives

Essentially Danfoss wanted to grow the global market for DE, with an initial focus on the EU. In order to do this, specific branding and marcom goals were:

- Through issue advocacy, highlight the need for greater energy efficiency and the advantages DE can bring in this regard
- Increase awareness of DE among energy policy makers as a category within the energy sector
- Change the perception of DE, positioning it as a “green” infrastructure for heating urban regions

Ultimately, the objectives above were designed to support the first major tangible milestone, which was to get district energy recognised for the first time ever in the 2012 EU Energy Efficiency Directive.

Barriers

- Awareness
Sadly, DE is the best-kept secret in Scandinavia
- Access
Danfoss lacked contact with political decision makers
- Perception
The legacy image of DE is often outdated and negative
- Regulation
DE is not recognised in decarbonisation legislation, resulting in a lack of binding incentives
- Practicalities
Financing and implementation are not easy

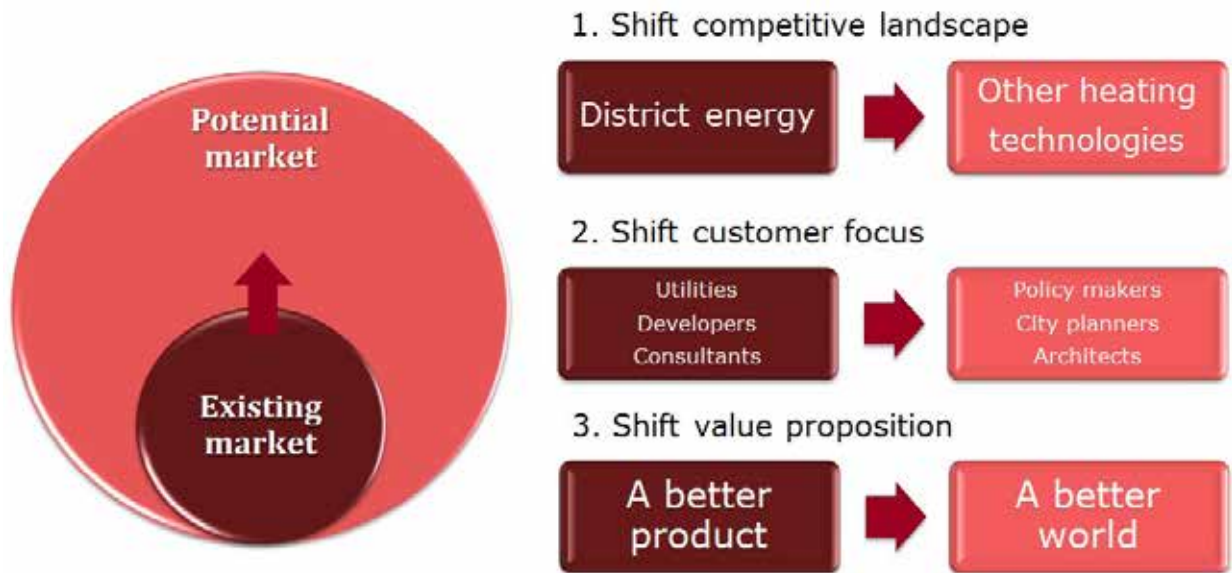
Target group

Beyond its customer base, Danfoss now had to reach out to a broader, more popular set of stakeholders, with the purpose of creating new demand for DE by raising awareness of its environmental and social advantages:

- Public servants (policy makers and civil servants)
- Professional opinion leaders (architects, city planners, etc.)
- Community leaders (NGOs, interest groups)

Strategy

Achieving its goals required Danfoss to rethink everything. The most significant change in strategy was the decision to focus on political and urban development stakeholders to drive market creation. This in turn required rethinking the message and channels accordingly.



Positioning strategy

There is a strong pre-existing movement involved with sustainable cities. This movement is becoming increasingly visible and the positioning strategy for promoting DE was to tap into this existing conversation. By using pre-existing momentum, Danfoss saves time and money, while ensuring it connects with a relevant and already engaged audience. The task was to associate DE with the wider sustainable cities movement, presenting it as an essential component in the creation of green cities and sustainable development.

Content strategy

With the decision to focus on issue advocacy and category branding, a thought leadership strategy was taken in terms of content, with the aim to:

- Provide authoritative, impartial insight into the societal value of DE
- Make DE accessible, framing it in terms everyone understands
- Inspire further dialogue
- Associate DE with sustainable cities

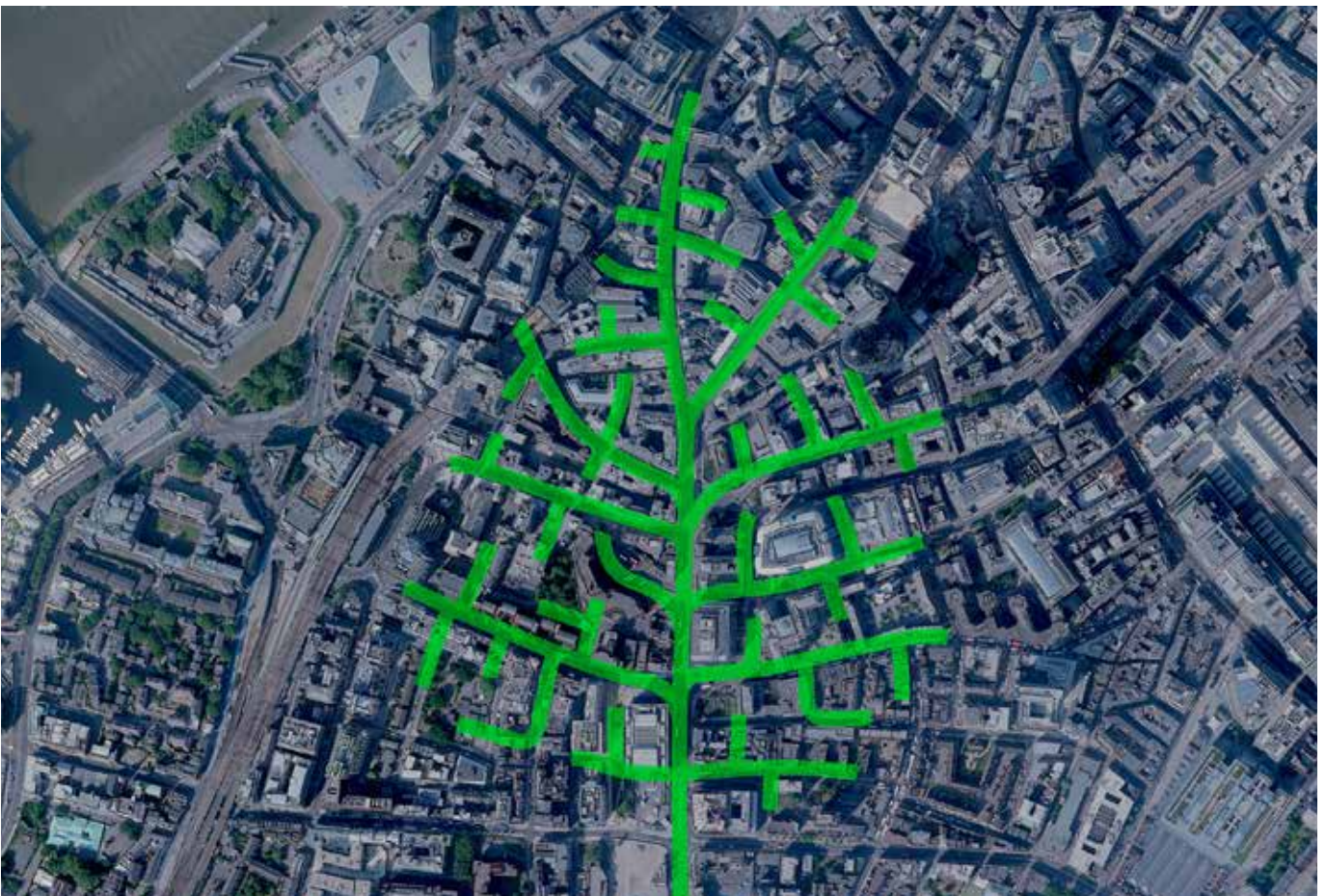
Campaign planning

The overall buying cycle can be seen overleaf.

Creative concept

Inspired by the insight that district energy is most relevant and competitive in metropolitan areas, this concept positions DE as sustainable heating infrastructure for cities. The “metro” positioning is emphasised using aerial photographs of urban settings. Specific DE benefits are highlighted by creating icons that shade certain “districts” in the image. The messaging plays with the word “district”, helping give greater meaning to term “district energy”.

Inherently universal, the concept was easy to understand globally. Specific city landmarks could also be incorporated to localise campaign visuals for particular countries.



Media

The centrepiece was a 20-page tabloid-format publication focused on issue advocacy and creating buzz around DE. It essentially acted as a content platform, containing articles, research, infographics, case studies, etc. Material for digital and live channels was also developed.

Thought-leadership newspaper

A centrepiece for issue advocacy and initiating stakeholder engagement, the tabloid-format publication is built up of a variety of thought-leadership content, e.g., articles, research, infographics, case studies, etc. Much of this content was repurposed afterwards for use in blogs, magazines, social media, presentations, etc.

Given the political nature of stakeholders, it was felt they are unlikely to respond strongly to traditional marketing materials. The political class do, however, understand news media and by making the news publication in a “tabloid” format, we tap this affinity, while creating a high-impact channel that really stands out. A high degree of independence is also reflected in the brand identity. This is not supposed to be a Danfoss sales brochure, but rather a public interest piece.

Given its broad-based content and striking format, the publication acted as a manifesto for the district energy movement, being used as a door-opener, a direct mail item or a leave behind for the Danfoss public affairs team.

Describing district energy as “recycled energy” immediately put the advantages in terms everyone could understand and engage with.



To combat outdated misconceptions, modernising the image and explanation of district energy helped readers understand how new 4G networks are highly scalable and compatible with renewable energy sources.



Infographics help explain how district energy fits into the wider energy ecosystem.

Reaching out to grassroots supporters and local government helped connect with stakeholders such as city mayors at the crucial metropolitan level.

Articles by respected independent energy journalists gave added credibility and insight, while putting the issue of district energy into context within the wider energy debate.



Quotes from leading thinkers representing a wide cross-section of interests help add personality and authority.



A case story exemplifies the vast potential of district energy in cutting emissions and lifting efficiency. We showed a strong link between winners of European Green Capital Awards and district energy. Awards like this hold tremendous political prestige and associate district energy with sustainable cities.



Based on research from a variety of sources, this section took the difficult issue of funding head-on. Using ground-breaking newly published academic research, it was demonstrated that the cost of inaction was far higher than switching to district energy.

Danfoss is promoted only on the back cover of the publication, explaining how the company is a thought leader in the innovation and engineering of low carbon technologies for heating and cooling the built environment.



Ads

Roll-ups and banners were developed for events and lobbying opportunities.



Microsite

Through an innovative content marketing campaign, CBC associated Danfoss and district energy to a wider sustainable cities movement, presenting it as an essential component in sustainable development.



Results

New market creation is a long-term strategy; however, the short term results already demonstrate real impact:

- The 20-page newspaper has been reprinted three times in less than a year, showing huge demand. It has also been produced in five languages, underlining its international appeal.
- A massive 30% of readers visited the Ecopolis landing page, showing the efficacy of the off-line publication in generating leads.
- Individual assets from the publication have been used in a variety of channels.
- In July 2012, for the first time ever, district energy was recognised as a part of the legal framework in the new EU Energy Efficiency Directive. This committed members to reduce energy consumption 20% by 2020 through the wider adoption of technologies like district energy. While this monumental achievement is down to the efforts of many parties, Danfoss' and CBC's campaign made a significant contribution in achieving this historic goal.

“Ecopolis was a revolution for Danfoss. In a company of 23,000, our CEO doesn’t use his time looking at brochures. So it tells you something that he singled out Ecopolis as one of the best communication initiatives the company has ever taken.”

Thomas Heide Jorgensen,
Marketing manager

We help B2B brands drive growth across borders

CBC is a specialist B2B branding and marketing agency that takes global businesses from complexity to clarity to commercial impact.

CROSS-BORDER COMMUNICATIONS

Ryesgade 3B
2200 Copenhagen N
Denmark
+45 35 25 01 60

letsmeet@cbc.dk
www.cbc.dk

