

# Success Story

techimage®

**Industry:** Wireless Networking, Home Automation

## Award-winning PR Puts Z-Wave In Control

### Business Challenge

The Z-Wave Alliance, a consortium of more than 125 independent manufacturers, faced a time-critical challenge following the agreement among competing member companies to develop wireless home automation devices based on the Zensys open standard. Independent manufacturers making up the Alliance were developing the best quality wireless home control devices that would work together in and around the home.

In launching an intensive search for a PR agency to promote its consortium, the Alliance sought a firm possessing both experience and a broad reach. Time was a constraint due to the need to get an agency on board for the first press release and announcement of the creation of the Z-Wave Alliance. After deliberations, the six founding member companies agreed that Tech Image would provide the strategic approach and fast results it desired.

### Background

While many consumers are aware of the term 'smart home,' they equate an automated home as a "possibility for the future." Smart home technology has been featured in many articles, yet most editorial content focused on high cost, limited scope and scalability of any new wireless system. Z-Wave was a largely unknown brand and needed widespread editorial exposure within the consumer and contractor marketplace.

One of the challenges Tech Image faced when promoting Z-Wave to reporters and editors was the lack of deliverable products. The initial thrust of the program was to establish the Alliance's presence. Then the effort would focus on the strengths manufacturers and the Z-Wave technology would bring to home owners across the country.

### Solution

Tech Image researched regional and national media who might cover smart homes, home controls and wireless home networks. The creation of the Z-Wave Alliance was announced in January, 2005. Tech Image and the Alliance agreed that a combination of strategically distributed press releases combined with aggressive media relations efforts and the winning of industry awards would meet objectives of the campaign.



### Client

Z-Wave Alliance

### Challenge

- Grow alliance partners and awareness of new standard while stimulating consumer demand

### Solutions

- Used demos and alliance partner successes to capture attention of media

### Challenge

- Combat the commoditization of the LCD display monitor

### Solution

- Selected Tech Image for domain expertise
- Executed aggressive product reviews campaigns
- Made strong entrée to new markets, such as video gaming, home theater and home entertainment

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Tech Image also revamped the Web site into a more consumer-focused destination. By setting up spokespeople as experts, the Alliance was able to achieve:

- positioning as THE premier solution for wireless home control
- maximum awareness using media relations, press releases, feature interviews and successes by winning industry awards
- increased Web site traffic through targeted media placements
- increased awareness among prospective manufacturer members

## Results

Tech Image launched a national media campaign to create demand for Z-Wave products. Product starter kits encouraging demos were sent to key media. Media relations efforts were expanded to include publications like Better Homes and Gardens, Florida Trends Magazine and This Old House. A Florida press event netted nine minutes of news coverage in Tampa. And an Alliance open house attracted more than 200 attendees from 120 companies and 20 countries.

Tech Image arranged more than 140 media interviews at trade shows in less than a year. News coverage on members ran in the Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Tribune, CE Pro, Builder and TWICE magazines, on Boston.com and at the Custom Home Online news site. Overall, more than 150 news media outlets worldwide covered Z-Wave Alliance news. Zensys, the technology developer, was named Electronic House magazine's and CEDIA's (Custom Electronic Design & Installation Association) Product of the Year. Five Z-Wave Alliance members received individual CEDIA Product of the Year awards. Moreover, Z-Wave was named "Best Enabling Technology of the Year" by the CABA, the Continental Automated Buildings Association. The Z-Wave Alliance exhibit also won CNET's "Best of CES Award" in 2006.

*"It's kind of incredible how Z-Wave has catapulted into the home tech limelight in the past four to six weeks. Z-Wave has been gathering steam for the past year, but I never thought the old Web-era phrase 'resistance is futile' applied to Z-Wave. For now Z-Wave has the PR advantage. The Z-Wave companies have some strong momentum."*

— Steve Zurier, *Builder magazine*

Equally important to advancing the Zensys open standard, the Alliance added more than 115 new member companies during the period of the Tech Image-led PR campaign.

## About Tech Image

Tech Image is Chicago's most experienced technology PR firm, with a 14-year track record of success.

Our mission is to help companies increase sales by building awareness with key decision-makers and influencers.

We succeed by offering 100% senior-level talent plus the global resources of the Worldcom Public Relations Group to implement targeted, scalable media relations campaigns that produce bottom line results.



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