

HEADLAND CONSULTANCY USES AN FT GROUP SUBSCRIPTION TO EMBED COMMERCIAL AWARENESS ACROSS ITS CLIENT TEAMS



The challenge

Teams at communications specialist Headland Consultancy require accurate sources of industry analysis in order to capably identify the risks and opportunities that will influence the corporate communications strategies of their clients.

The solution

An FT Group Subscription enables trusted, agenda-setting FT reporting to be accessed and shared across the firm. Individuals can customise alerts to their own interests and consume those articles on their choice of platforms and devices.

The benefits

The breadth of the FT's industry commentary, along with its deep analysis of key business issues, ensures that Headland's consultants are equipped to showcase their commercial acumen, and become more effective advisers to their clients.



“The FT is just a complete staple for us. For a certain type of client and type of work, it's the first and the last word on those specific industries and what those clients care about. It's like our lifeblood.”

Oliver Tilley Partner, Headland Consultancy

Experts in protecting reputations

London-based communications specialist Headland Consultancy advises organisations ranging from retailers and technology companies, to financial institutions and professional services firms on all aspects of their corporate communications strategies.

The complexity of the modern media landscape means that it's never been more difficult for businesses to protect their reputations. Firms look to Headland not just for creative input, but also expert commercial acumen and a deep understanding of what's driving sectors, as well as emerging risks and opportunities.

Whether providing guidance on financial communications, stakeholder relations or marketing communications and corporate campaigns, teams across Headland require trusted sources of global breaking news, industry commentary and thematic analysis to inform their work and ultimately deliver results for clients.

As the preeminent reference paper of record for global financial and business events, the FT is a critical publication for Headland and its client base. An FT Group Subscription equips all Headland employees with access to premium FT content across their preferred platforms and devices.

Agenda-setting, market-moving coverage

The sheer volume of information available digitally means there's never likely to be a shortage of articles or topics that could be highlighted or used as talking points. Customer-facing advisers therefore need to be able to cut through the noise and identify the most impactful issues that are likely to shape client strategies.

Del Jones is a Director at Headland, working predominantly with financial institutions and professional services firms. The ability of the FT to raise important questions in a more impactful way than other publications provides Del with a valuable steer on what he should be talking to his key contacts about.

"The FT's [runaway markets series](#) really set the agenda for how we're thinking about the massive amounts of stimulus that have gone into the markets," Del explains. "Seeing that this was really going to affect the communications strategy of so many organisations enabled us to explore the issues raised and influence how our clients have approached it."

Rob Walker, a Director and PR Specialist for a number of Headland's listed and private clients, also highlights the impact of the FT's reporting on markets and how that in turn prompts valuable discussion with clients. "The FT produces a lot of exclusive, market-moving content," says Rob. "Being able to have access to that as it breaks is indispensable when in conversations with clients around various topics and issues."



The FT then provides a range of tools to ensure that PR professionals never miss a breaking story that could spark or inform a client engagement. As well as instant email alerts, myFT enables all Headland staff to create their own morning briefing, which is tailored to their specific needs. “The [myFT functionality](#) means I’m less likely to miss anything of interest to me or my clients,” explains Rob. “It’s a very effective way of delivering the news and commentary that I need to read about each day.”

Identifying future risks and opportunities

At a micro level, it’s crucial that Headland’s advisers are well-informed on anything that’s directly linked to a client. It’s equally important however that they’re on top of the broader macro themes and trends that are shaping the business environment. Oliver Tilley is a Partner at the firm and as well as looking for opportunities for clients to raise their profile, also identifies potential risks that organisations need to manage.

“We’re constantly looking at new intel and new information about those big themes shaping everything.” Oliver explains, “Whenever there’s a new issue or topic I need to get my head around, almost the first thing I’ll do is go to the search bar of [ft.com](#).”

While FT deep dives on the impact of the coronavirus pandemic across industries have been invaluable, Oliver highlights a number of other themes where the depth of the FT’s analysis has helped inform his understanding and subsequently the advice he’s provided to clients. “Obviously coronavirus is a big one, but then you have other pillars like climate, which is only going to become increasingly important as we head towards COP 21,” he explains. “We live and die by the quality of our advice and our understanding of the issues and the news agenda. The FT just puts us in a really strong position.”

Leaning on an editorial team of over 600 journalists around the world, the FT is widely recognised for its ability to make connections between macro themes and their impact across regions and sectors. Joanna Trezise, a Partner at Headland, cites two examples in particular where FT coverage has prompted thinking about how her professional services clients approach certain issues.

“[FT Moral Money](#) has provided great insights into ESG and commentary around how companies are doing it or not doing it,” Joanna says, “Another one is diversity, and how the FT has reported on diversity trends, both from a gender and race perspective. Not many publications look at the world of accountancy or law in as much depth as the FT does, and that’s then supplemented by the broader thematic writing.”



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Joanna Trezise
Partner, Headland Consultancy



Flexible knowledge sharing

The onset of the coronavirus pandemic and the immediate shift to remote working heightened the need for flexible access to key information sources across the firm. Where articles may have previously been discussed at a colleague's desk or in a meeting room, Headland's FT Group Subscription enabled staff to share and discuss FT coverage on email and messaging platforms.

As well as sparking internal debate, Del explains how the FT is used as a source of real-world case study material for learning and development. "We have L&D sessions internally, where somebody who might be an expert in a particular area will educate our people on how to improve as comms professionals on a specific topic," he says. "Lots of these sessions start with some media analysis, and the FT will be front and centre of that."

Having the option to access and share FT content across multiple devices is hugely beneficial to Joanna, as she regularly flags key stories both internally and externally. "I often look at the FT on my phone and share the link directly from the end of an article, or gift the link to someone if they're not a subscriber," she explains. "Everybody on each client team needs to be able to read everything as soon as they want to, and share that without difficulty."

Enhancing commercial acumen at all levels

Headland's FT Group Subscription is a statement that it demands all its people are well-informed. "We expect the whole agency, top to bottom to be briefed on the issues and media that really matters," says Oliver.

For an organisation where expertise is its core product offering, knowledge is everything. "The main benefit of having the FT Group Subscription boils down to knowledge and everyone within the organisation having access to that," Rob concludes. "It's that information that ultimately gives us the platform to advise our clients better."



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Rob Walker Director,
Headland Consultancy



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