

Wainhouse Distribution Ltd – Product Recall



The Brief

Wainhouse Distribution learned of a potential safety issue with one of its baby products – the Rite Aid Mini Digital Touch Thermometer. While no problems had been reported with the thermometer in Australia or New Zealand, there was some concern that the battery compartment was not adequately secured, allowing access to the small button battery inside. Should young children gain access to the button battery, it would be a potential choking hazard. If swallowed they may suffer internal burn injuries which could result in serious illness or even death.

As soon as they became aware of the issue, Wainhouse Distribution Ltd made the decision to voluntarily initiate a product safety recall and asked Wright Communications, as its PR consultancy, to manage the communications requirements.

The Wright approach

Wright Communications immediately assigned two of its senior practitioners to the job. A letter to retailers was drafted, along with a media release and a letter to the CEO of MBIE (a legal requirement with all product recalls in New Zealand). In addition, Wright Communications developed a target media list for the media release and copy for a display advertisement to alert consumers to the product safety recall.

Wright Communications' experience with issues management meant that they were able to produce client-ready materials for approval within hours. The letters and the media release were distributed later the same day and the advertisement content provided to the selected media outlet for placement.

Client Satisfaction

"Wright Communications understood how urgent this issue was and showed its flexibility by pulling together a senior team for us. They were able to mobilize quickly and support us with external relations, while our in-house team focused on retailer communications and the operational side of the recall. At the end of the day, while no one likes to recall a product, there was a good result for us, our retailer partners and our customers."

Aaron Wainhouse – Managing Director, Wainhouse Distribution