



CASE STUDY

MEDIA RELATIONS AND THOUGHT LEADERSHIP: CHRIS GRAFF

THE CHALLENGE

Manufacturing entrepreneur and efficiency enthusiast Chris Graff approached The TASC Group with the goal of creating a competition to identify the best business plan to take recyclable material from New York City and use it to both manufacture and sell a product locally, offering the winning company a \$500,000 prize. TASC was brought on to develop and manage all of the infrastructure for the campaign, dubbed the [NYC Curb-To-Market Challenge \(CTMC\)](#).

THE STRATEGY

TASC's strategy included structuring the contest rules, timeline, launch strategy and promotional materials; cultivating and managing partnerships with key stakeholders; building a judging panel; and executing a media outreach and promotional strategy to put the CTMC in front of applicants worldwide. TASC developed relationships with key stakeholders and experts in the circular economy and recycling spaces — including leaders at the NYC Department of Sanitation, NYC Economic Development Corporation, investment firm Closed Loop Partners and sustainability incubator RISN—to seek input on how to best structure the contest and recruit for the CTMC's judging panel.

TASC engaged nearly 50 universities around the country, inviting participation from a critical pool of students, professors and researchers. TASC developed promotional partnerships with leading industry organizations, including the Danish CleantechHUB, leveraging its Circular City Week as a platform to publicly launch the CTMC, immediately reaching hundreds of thought leaders and experts in the industry. TASC developed a judging panel comprised of government officials, private industry executives and circular economy advocates. TASC also conducted media outreach to entrepreneurship and sustainability-focused publications and social media influencers.

THE RESULTS

The CTMC's launch and subsequent winner announcement landed coverage in leading business and all major trade outlets, including [Crain's New York Business](#), [Next City](#), [Waste360](#), [Recycling Today](#) and [Resource Recycling](#), garnering millions of online and social media impressions. TASC's publicity work generated dozens of submissions from five different countries. Six applicant teams were selected for in-person presentations to the judging panel in New York City, two of which were selected as co-winners, each receiving a \$250,000 investment. Both companies have since expanded operations in New York City, and TASC's work has helped procure access to millions of dollars of additional angel investment, enabling both companies to continue to bring about significant positive environmental impact.

100+ MEDIA PLACEMENTS

