**Hermes Creative Award: Neste/Mahoney Environmental Canary Media Ride-Along**

**Entry Requirements:**

* **Campaign Name:** The smelly, greasy truth about how sustainable aviation fuel is made
* **Category:** 88. Media Relations – Online Placement
* **Company:** rbb Communications

**Project Summary (Objectives/challenges/solutions):**

* **Objectives:** Neste’s journey from a traditional oil company to a leading producer in renewable fuels and circular solutions was 15 years in the making. The Finland-based company, though not well-known in the United States, has embarked on a North American mission to expand its footprint and increase awareness through creative storytelling about how its products offer an immediate solution to combat climate change.

Most of the media coverage in the last two years has been about lofty net zero goals, federal legislation comprising hundreds of pages, and frankly - a lot of doom and gloom. Part of Neste's strategy was to explain how their renewable fuel is a NOW solution - meaning, fighting climate change and making a difference today - not in 2050. And what better way to do that than following a day in the life of a typical worker in the green economy - a truck driver. The difference? This truck driver collected a precious gold - the kryptonite of greenhouse gas emissions.

It was time to take reporters behind-the-scenes and get down and stinky. Our goal was to secure coverage in a Tier 1 media outlet and showcase in a compelling and visually appealing way the rarely ever seen or talked about work behind producing renewable fuel. The work of collecting used cooking oil (UCO) is dirty and smelly, but important to curbing emissions, flying sustainably, and protecting our planet.

We strategically targeted Canary Media (UMV: 224,325), whose slogan “Covering the Clean Energy Transition,” is fitting to Neste’s mission. In addition to its reach and ongoing coverage showcasing how the world is decarbonizing, the outlet’s journalists regularly craft feature-style, in-depth pieces digging into the ways businesses are moving toward a clean future.It was a match made in heaven for clean energy reporter Maria Gallucci to view the process of UCO collection through a personal ride-along.

By providing an in-depth look into the process of collecting UCO, Maria provided readers with her the first-hand objective account. In addition to the process, the objective was to also create awareness about how UCO is not only collected but refined to produce Neste’s MY sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) which reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by up to 80% compared to fossil jet fuel.

**Challenges:** How do we ensure we can provide a thorough look into the process of collecting in 2-3 hours during wintertime in the northeast without disrupting business operations?

Neste’s subsidiary Mahoney Environmental (Mahoney) collects UCO from 55,000 kitchens in airports, hotels, restaurants, sports stadiums, and food courts across the country. Each of Mahoney’s partner organizations have a seamless process set in place for the storage and collection of UCO. We needed to allow Mahoney’s collectors to follow a route and collect gallons of UCO in one day without disrupting business operations.

Next challenge? Planning and execution. rbb Communications was responsible for the coordination and media prepping of two executives for virtual interviews, brainstorming with Mahoney the best route that would provide the most thorough experience to the reporter, while also keeping in mind the location of where the reporter is based – New York – limited transportation, timeline, media deadlines, and weather.

Another challenge that is twofold was ensuring Mahoney’s truck driver was both comfortable with having a stranger join him on his route, especially media personnel, and being media trained to provide the reporter with Neste’s key messaging. But reporter Maria also needed to be comfortable with riding around with a stranger to various locations, as well as be aware of expectations and the dos and don’ts of this particular job.

* **Solutions:** rbb Communications worked closely with Neste, Mahoney, and Canary Media to ensure a high-quality, in-depth piece on a rather complicated process:
	+ Coordinate two virtual interviews – one with Neste’s US President Chris Cooper and one with Mahoney CEO Dave Kimball – to offer a well-rounded piece with several sources.
	+ Discuss and coordinate the best dates/times, locations, and route options with Mahoney and Canary Media.
		- Reporter Maria is based in New York, and it was decided the New Jersey route that starts at Newark Liberty International Airport with Mahoney’s truck driver Dale would be the best opportunity.
	+ Media prep Neste’s President Chris, Mahoney’s CEO Dave, and truck driver Dale to tell the story of how UCO and its collections fights climate change.
	+ Manage all parties’ expectations and ensure all necessary information/details about media questions, route, appropriate attire, what to expect, date/time and location were shared in timely manner.
	+ Review and approve the facts and figures to be used in the Canary Media in-depth article and monitor for the publication of the final placement.

The result was a 2600-word feature piece ([link](https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/air-travel/the-smelly-greasy-truth-about-how-sustainable-aviation-fuel-is-made?utm_campaign=canary&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=241402434&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_dOyJHmDIcfj9_xVfJV3hJ07LhSpq_IdvXOZQbAZAXV9phm8TP5fOea8lFP4n9g3uaDQWjOm4on7ZVm6KW6VqxqV0sVg&utm_source=newsletter)) providing a comprehensive look into how Neste and its subsidiary Mahoney focus on creating cleaner and renewable solutions that help reduce emissions and protect our planet for future generations. The article was featured as the headlining story on Canary Media’s landing page day-of (please see attachment), featured as the lead story in the outlet’s e-newsletter for that day which is shared with 25,000 subscribers, and syndicated by Yahoo! News (UMV: 396,915,802) ([link](https://news.yahoo.com/smelly-greasy-truth-sustainable-aviation-083000783.html)). Throughout the piece, the reporter also weaved in her own commentary that painted a visual and descriptive story: “I left with a distinctive, greasy odor still lingering on my clothes — the ​‘smell of success.’”

**Upload Support Materials:**

* Screenshot of story as leading story on website day-of
* E-newsletter attachment
* Pick-up by Yahoo! News ([link](https://news.yahoo.com/smelly-greasy-truth-sustainable-aviation-083000783.html))

**Applicable Link:**<https://www.canarymedia.com/articles/air-travel/the-smelly-greasy-truth-about-how-sustainable-aviation-fuel-is-made?utm_campaign=canary&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=241402434&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_dOyJHmDIcfj9_xVfJV3hJ07LhSpq_IdvXOZQbAZAXV9phm8TP5fOea8lFP4n9g3uaDQWjOm4on7ZVm6KW6VqxqV0sVg&utm_source=newsletter>