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TheMxGroup.com

# Proposal

Prepared For:  
Grundfos

B2B Public Relations

January 23, 2017

Dear Nete:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit our proposal to support your public relations needs for the upcoming Who Runs the Water campaign.

We understand you are looking for an agency to support your public relations efforts in some key areas, including media relations, messaging and content development, social media support, speaking opportunities, press release writing and distribution, media pitching and strategic planning. The right partner will develop message themes and pitch angles that both support the effort in expanding the Grundfos brand across its core audience while also enabling the education of the public as it relates to the importance of engaging with and supporting the local water municipality in their community. The right partner will also develop angles that align the Grundfos publicity agenda with the editorial agendas of the press in order to secure coverage that is strategic to Grundfos and on topic and trend for the media.

We believe The Mx Group is the right partner for you due to our history with running successful Grundfos programs via different marketing mediums as well as our extensive experience working with other clients with similar goals of penetrating the water utility market across the US. We understand the water utility employee psyche and the ability to think and speak in terms water operators (and other key stakeholders) relate to, respond to and will motivate action in.

On the following pages you will find our PR plan to enable the Who Runs the Water initiative. We look forward to discussing your needs in more detail and providing any additional information that you might need to complete your evaluation of possible PR partners. Please do not hesitate to ask if there is anything we can do assist you in your evaluation process.

Thank you again for considering The Mx Group!

Regards,  
Ashly Hughes  
Account Director  
630-230-2531  
The Mx Group

# Your Situation

Established in 1945, Grundfos has built a respected reputation as a leading manufacturer in a large variety of water pumps used across a variety of industries, including: commercial and residential buildings, ground water / irrigation, fresh and wastewater supply and industrial solutions.

Grundfos takes pride in its products, but also has built in an organizational philosophy around responsibility to the environment and the people that we live, work and deal with every day. Grundfos feels taking responsibility for the welfare and involvement of people in their own company and market, as well as society at large is core to their business.

With this role of responsibility in mind, Grundfos has recognized a tremendous opportunity to gain market share as an exceptional partner to the U.S. water supply and wastewater industry. Challenges currently facing this industry include:

- Fresh water supply has become a “taken for granted” commodity for US communities.
- There is limited understanding of what demands are necessary to keep fresh water pumping into American homes.
- The industry suffers from unseen infrastructure - it’s not a visible commodity. The general public cannot see the physical infrastructure to quickly and easily understand that the ageing infrastructure in the US is causing a massive 12% of all water to leak out of the system before it reaches its final destination. To restore US infrastructure, the sector needs more than \$600 billion of outside investments.
- In the past, there has been little focus within the water supply and wastewater industry on reaching out to gain favor with their local community. Recently, a growing understanding has developed that communicating with local citizens is critical to build customer relationships and generate support (rather than complaints) when infrastructure repairs or maintenance is needed.

Through a unique brand awareness campaign, Grundfos can provide strategic tools to local water supply and wastewater utility companies to fuel these customer relationships through use of social media and modern marketing tactics (like video) that most utility companies are not typically equipped (staff and expertise) to utilize. In turn, engagement will increase, public support will grow, governing bodies will be more likely to support infrastructure upgrade initiatives and Grundfos sales will increase as a result.

# Why The Mx Group

We believe The Mx Group is the right partner for your PR efforts. In the pages that follow, you'll find information on our capabilities, experience and recommended approach. In the meantime, we thought we'd highlight the things that we believe set us apart:

1. We are B2B: The Mx Group focused solely on the needs of B2B marketers and their brands. B2B is different, and we have worked exclusively to support B2B companies for more than 25 years.

2. We are sized for your needs: It strikes us that you need a partner that can play a strategic, surgical role in supporting PR needs across the US. Our team will fit around your specific needs — and we are able to “jump in and out” quickly and efficiently because of the way we are structured and the broader services we deliver.

3. We know the market: Working within the water utility market for years has given us a solid footing in the market and the landscape. We know the audience and their needs. We know the competitors in the space. We know the editors, outlets and influencers.

4. We can craft the message: Our in-house strategy and content teams are among the best in the industry at understanding client needs and translating them to actual content and themes that illicit response. We not only identify strategic opportunities and work with your subject matter experts to leverage their expertise — but we also have the teams to produce effective content, including press releases, white papers, by-lines, talking points, backgrounders and more.

5. We have a specialized PR practice: Our PR practice was built to support the needs of B2B companies. Our practice is mostly focused on message development, content creation and outreach to industry trades and influencers. We use Cision as our main system for editor research and list building, list management, listening, and press release distribution.

# Our Goals

**Long Term Goal:** Gain Grundfos market share in the US water utility market.

*Grundfos is the recognized “go-to” pump source for water supply and wastewater providers in the United States. Grundfos is a trusted resource to lean on that helps promote understanding and garner public support for the valuable service water utility providers’ supply.*

**Short Term Goal:**

- Dramatically increase the Grundfos profile in the United States
  - Specifically across US Utility companies that serve between 3,000-15,000 customers.
    - Emphasis on utility companies in IL, WI, TX, FL, CA and Northeast states.
      - Key titles: Water operators / Management
        - Differentiate between water vs. waste supply when possible
- Position Grundfos as an industry leader and educational force.
- Establish foundational relationships with targeted water utility providers.
- Create relationship- deepening opportunities that result in pump sales.

**Key Messaging / Grundfos Differentiators:**

- Grundfos is an innovative water utility supplier that understands the challenges providers face.
- Grundfos is a supportive partner lending marketing assistance to water utility providers.
- Grundfos is a force in water education.

# Our Approach

Our approach to effective B2B editorial programs is driven by the following principles:

**1. Start with an understanding of the marketing and sales goals of the brand or company.**

Before any strategic planning or activity begins, we form a consensus on the real business goals for our program, so all of our efforts are focused on moving the needle and not just on making our voice heard. Our goal could be to build awareness of or interest in a new brand or product, drive activity around an industry show, or to shift the market's perceptions of an existing brand or product. In any case, we identify the tactics that will drive relevant and interested traffic to brand assets that will help build that awareness or perception we're trying to achieve and produce actual results.

**2. Balance content agenda with publication agendas.**

Because the success of our editorial programs is contingent on the success of our placements, we build an understanding of what our target audience is interested in learning about and what relevant publications are interested in publishing. Once we identify specific points where audience and publication interests intersect, we focus on what makes our perspective unique. Every piece of content we create for an editorial program aligns our brand or product differentiators with the needs of our audience and of the publication.

**3. Bring in thought leader voice and personality in a consistent and authentic way.**

Every brand has a personality that makes it unique and memorable in the minds of the marketplace. When readers consume content that helps them characterize a brand, they're more likely to trust it, share it and remember it. We often begin the content development process with an interview with your thought leader, to pull the right threads that could turn a simple idea into a compelling article, or a single article into a series piece. This not only makes the process easier for your experts and executives, but allows us to produce more content faster.

**4. Support content with research or buyer-supported proof points for additional credibility when possible.**

While each of your thought leaders will bring a unique and personal perspective to your content, the market will still see them as representatives of your brand. So to build additional trust and credibility, we support ideas with third-party research stats and / or buyer-supported proof points wherever appropriate and possible.

# Strategy & Tactics

The Mx Group will manage an aggressive PR and editorial strategy to drive the brand awareness campaign. Activities will include:

## **Strategy #1 – Develop initial editorial effort to secure positive media coverage in the water utility industry based on branding focus.**

- Tactics:
  - Identify/ finalize water utility editorial trade sources and publication contacts
    - Publications/journals
    - Online sources
    - Social media outlets
    - Bloggers
    - Broadcast
  - Determine / finalize priority tiers for editorial contacts and pitch sequencing
  - Develop initial pitch
    - Utilize the “Who runs the water that runs America” video and associated tools as evidence of how and why Grundfos is an emerging industry leader. Focus on how Grundfos provides support for water utility professionals by telling a story that until now has gone untold.
      - Utility professionals will be able to make their own video by inputting their details into a tool. They can then post the video on social media which is huge as most utility organizations don't have the staff or knowledge on how to leverage social more effectively.
    - Preliminary themes:
      - Why water utility providers are unsung heroes
      - What no one notices until it's tapped out
      - Water utilities and the end user – a new relationship
  - Create editorial pitch calendar for select media sources based on:
    - Editorial calendar
    - Industry trade shows

- Modify initial pitch for relevancy based on desired editorial content
- Utilize paid newswire distribution service to reinforce and support personal pitching
- Develop materials to support initial pitch
  - Company backgrounder
  - Product spotlight pages
  - “Who runs the water” support materials
  - Update U.S. website for news and background information
- Deliverables:
  - Contact lists
  - Editorial calendars
  - Published samples
  - Activity and coverage report
  - PR support materials
- Potential target editorial sources:
  - Tier 1

Name	Profile	Type	Freq.	Circ./Visitors	Important Issue(s)	Other info
Waterworld	Established in 1985 and serves engineers, managers, consultants and operations people in the municipal water and wastewater industries with information about products and services, technology, equipment, applications, legislation and regulations to help them in planning, designing, operating and maintaining their systems.	Print, online	Monthly	61,004	May, June, Sept, Nov.	Case studies, product highlight, showcase technology stories considered in all other issues
OpFlow	Written and read by the people who read it and is the water community's primary network for operator-level workers.	Print, online	Monthly	48,144	April, Oct.	Case studies, detailed how-to articles that take readers step by step through new and tried-and-true processes
Water Environment & Technology	Established in 1928 to serve local, state and federal governments involved in watershed, water treatment plants and wastewater treatment.	Print, online	Monthly	40,627	Aug., Sept., Oct.	Covers water quality issues, along with wastewater operations, management, environmental concerns and government policy and practice.
Stormwater	Established in 2000 and written for employees of engineering consulting	Print, online	Monthly	26,154	Sept.	Covers the latest technological and



	firms, watershed protection agencies and government agencies involved in the planning, development, construction and operation of stormwater management projects and programs. Covers the latest technological and regulatory developments related to surface-water quality programs and regulations.					regulatory developments related to surface-water quality programs and regulations.
Water & Wastes Digest	Established in 1961 and written for professionals in the municipal and the industrial water and wastewater market responsible for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of related systems.	Print, online	Monthly	80,650		Editorial content consists of case studies, application stories, technical papers, as well as relevant product information.
Journal AWWA	Serves as the official publication of the American Water Works Association with the goal of being the internationally acknowledged authority on drinking water.	Print, online	Monthly	42,346	August, November	Both a professional and a scholarly journal, the publication offers peer-reviewed articles and information about all aspects of the drinking water profession.
Treatment Plant Operator	Established in January 2009 and aims to help operating staff and management of municipal wastewater plants meet their permit obligations and achieve performance excellence.	Print, online	Monthly	75,025	July	Covers team building, training and education, regulatory issues, process improvement, technology, methods, equipment and maintenance.
Municipal Sewer & Water	For more than 10 years Municipal Sewer & Water™ has served municipal decision-makers, sewer and water directors, technicians and private water and waste water contractors who install, inspect, maintain and rehabilitate sewer, water and storm water infrastructures.	Print, online	Monthly	35,850	June	Accepts pitch ideas for all issues
Informed Infrastructure	Informed Infrastructure addresses the markets of water/wastewater, storm water, transportation, energy, structures, erosion control and land development.	Print, online	Bimonthly	45,000	July/August	Accepts pitch ideas for all issues
Water Online	Serves the water, wastewater and storm water industries by providing a comprehensive platform where buyers and suppliers can connect, interact and share information. Provides information that helps municipal and industrial professionals to source products and services, identify prospective vendors and learn new strategies they can apply to current projects.	Online	Daily	144,630	N/A	New Products, Industry News, Calendar of Events, By-Lined Articles, Staff-Written Articles, Uses Case Studies
Utility Dive	Covers the utility industry. Offers the latest news, information on new projects, smart meters, upcoming	Online	Daily	156,000	N/A	Accepts pitches for daily posting

	events, jobs and more.					
Water Utilities Blog	The site covers information to improve design and performance of buildings. Also covers the markets of water/wastewater, storm water, transportation, energy, structures, erosion control and land development. The news source delivers actionable information for improving infrastructure.	Online	Daily	16,808	N/A	Accepts pitches for daily posting.

○ Tier 2

Name	Profile	Type	Freq.	Circ./Visitors	Important Issue(s)	Other info
Source	Official publication of The American Water Works Association and dedicated to the improvement of drinking water quality and supply. Represents the full spectrum of the drinking water community that includes treatment plant operators and managers, scientists, environmentalists, manufacturers, academicians, regulators and others who hold genuine interest in water supply and public health.	Print, online	Quarterly	2,193	TBD	Advances public health, safety and welfare by uniting the efforts of the full spectrum of the drinking water community.
Land and Water	Written and read by the people who read it and is the water community's primary network for operator-level workers.	Print, online	Bimonthly	20,000	TBD	Case studies, detailed how-to articles that take readers step by step through new and tried-and-true processes
Rural Water	Targeted to professionals at rural water systems and government agencies, including operators, scientists, lab technicians, researchers, managers and boards of directors of rural water systems. Content addresses timely topics and important concerns of the rural water industry such as regulatory issues, water quality, affordability and profit.	Print, online	Quarterly	27,523	2 <sup>nd</sup> quarter, 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	Accepts pitches every issue
Waste & Wastewater International	Serves managers, engineers, operators, consultants and other decision makers responsible for the water supply, wastewater, groundwater and drilling activities around the world. Content provides information on projects, market trends, technology, and products and services, and includes updates on current developments in the global water industry.	Print, online	Bimonthly	24,501	October/November	Limited to this issue covering Americas
Water Efficiency	Launched in August 2006 and written for water conservation professionals, including municipal/city/county officials, district/regional authority officials, state, federal and government agency professionals, and executives at private water companies, water utilities, wastewater entities, as well as engineers, contractors, developers, dealers distributors, manufacturers	Print, online	Bimonthly	26,289	July/August	Covers water-loss concerns of business, commercial, agricultural, municipal and industrial facilities. Includes information on water

	and construction firms.					
Public Utilities Fortnightly	Written for industry management and regulators with independent coverage of the electric, gas, telecommunications and water sectors. Reports on energy and power markets, restructuring, emerging trends, prices, rates, mergers, technology and news of companies and commissions. Also discusses current problems and explore discernible trends within the utility industry.	Print, online	Monthly	2,228	All issues	If it is important to the utility business model, we cover it.
New England Water Works Association Journal	Provides education and information for water works professionals.	Print, online	Quarterly	3,000	4 <sup>th</sup> quarter	Contains information about public water supplies, their usage, water works equipment and industry trends in New England.
POLITICO Pro	Designed for political and policy professionals. Covers the politics of energy, technology and healthcare reform and offers jargon-free breaking news.	Online	Daily	150,568	N/A	Open to pitches daily
Utility Strategist	WS with its team of natural resource economists, policy experts, and researchers to analyze water markets and policy issues affecting the allocation of water resources and the market value of water rights	Online	Monthly	Monthly	N/A	Open to water-related, public utility pitches
Utility Horizons	Covers utility automation and information technology for global electric, water and gas utility industries.	Online	Daily	144,630	N/A	Features industry news and expert commentary on topical issues.

- Additional editorial considerations
  - Many sources have long lead times
    - Early year issues may already be closed
  - Highly relevant issues noted above for each tier
  - Most sources will consider additional pitches on a monthly basis
  - Many sources have multiple methods of distribution/driving content to utilize:
    - Print
    - Online
    - Social Media
    - Newsletters
    - Webcasts

## **Strategy #2: Expand editorial effort to include additional water utility pitches and wider editorial audience.**

- Tactics:
  - Identify additional editorial contacts in business, water conservation, government and environmental concerns including:

- Print – including magazines and newspaper
  - Online sources
  - Social media outlets
  - Bloggers
  - Broadcast
- Create editorial pitch calendar for new water conservation and environmental sources based on:
  - Editorial calendar
- Modify initial pitch for relevancy for new editorial sources
  - Focus on how public utility companies are pushing out the environmental and conservation message, supported by Grundfos
  - Evidence message of need to inform consumers/end-users of importance of fresh water is good business
  - Explore taking story right to consumers – knowledge of water situation gaining momentum
  - A new way of public utilities doing business – gaining public support
- Develop new pitches for water utility editorial sources based on existing editorial content calendars
  - Case studies of utility providers utilizing Grundfos marketing
  - By-line articles
  - Source quotes (topic experts contribute to multi-source article)
- Deliverables:
  - Contact lists – new for business, water conservation, government and environment only
  - Editorial calendars– new for business, water conservation, government and environment only
  - Published samples
  - Activity and coverage report
- Potential target editorial sources:
  - Daily newspaper - editorial conservation/public health/business editors
  - Business publications, online sources, cable network shows

- Environmental publications, online sources

**Strategy #3: Initiate and maintain a meaningful integrated social media presence.**

- Tactics:
  - Identify and/or update social media platforms
    - Create social media platforms specific to U.S. operation
      - Twitter
      - Facebook
      - YouTube
      - Instagram
      - LinkedIn
    - Develop advanced content and posting schedule
  - Explore a TED talk opportunity on water education and conservation
  - Integrate all social media exposure by cross posting between platforms and media posts
  - Develop and maintain a relevant company blog
    - Encourage traffic on social media sites on all Grundfos marketing materials
    - Secure employee participation
    - Monitor social sites for any opportunities or negative issues that develop
- Deliverables:
  - Social media content calendar
  - Social media content
  - Posting schedule
  - Blog parameters and editorial content calendar

**Strategy #4: Participate in targeted industry trade events/conferences.**

- Tactics:
  - Identify relevant trade shows/events/conference to consider for participation/sponsorship
  - Explore methods of engaging water utility professionals at events
    - Event booth
      - Demonstration of video/marketing support

- Event sponsorship package
  - Marketing presence
- Event speaker/presenter
- Deliverables:
  - Trade event/conference recommendations
  - Trade event calendar/deadlines
  - Event booth design
  - Event marketing collateral, including presentations
- Possible Trade Conferences to consider:

Conference Name	Dates
New England Water Environment Association (NEWEA)	Jan-17
Utility Management Conference AWWA/WEF	Feb-17
Pacific Water Conference	Feb-17
ESRI	Feb-17
Global Infrastructure Leadership Forum	Mar-17
Design-Build For Water Conference	March 2-3, 2017
Sustainable Water Management	March 19-22, 2017
Texas Water Conference	April 10-13, 2017
IL Waste Water Professionals Conference	April 24-26 2017
Water Leader Journal Summit	May 23-24, 2017
ACE 17	June 11-16, 2017
One Water Summit	June 27-29, 2017
Water Pro Conference	September 18, 20, 2017
WEFTEC 17	September 30-October 4, 2017
Water Infrastructure Conference	October 30-November 2, 2017

# Working with Mx Group

The Mx Group is a full-service digital and demand generation agency. We bring together everything business-to-business companies need to drive business in a complex selling environment. We serve clients across a wide range of industries and company profiles. Our clients include everything from venture-backed startups to large multinational corporations.

Some quick facts about us:

- We are located just outside of Chicago.
- We are 100% dedicated to B2B clients.
- We are privately held and have been in business for over 25 years.
- We have built a unique set of services around the needs of business-to-business companies, and we believe this mix is a true differentiator for us.
- We are very proud of our client relationships. Many of our clients have been with us for 10, 15, 20 years or more. We believe this is a strong testament to the value we bring to them every day, week, month and year.
- We are recognized as one of the top B2B agencies in the country.

We help  
companies  
**excite** markets,  
**engage** customers,  
**effect** sales &  
**embed** value.

We crafted this statement over 25 years of working exclusively with B2B clients — across a tremendous range of companies, industries, products, solutions and market dynamics. In that time, we have helped clients build their businesses and brands from start-ups to success stories. We have helped established brands reinvent their approaches and reinvigorate their results. We have brought new insights to break through persistent barriers. Then and now, The Mx Group

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always aligns marketing strategies with business objectives to drive the results that matter.

B2B companies and marketers face different challenges than their B2C counterparts. Purchases are complex and considered. Sales cycles are longer and involve multiple stakeholders and influencers. Solutions and value propositions are nuanced. Customer needs are varied. Competition is intense. It's a difficult environment to break through and capture the attention and interest of your target markets.

The Mx Group has a proven track record of creating resonant and impactful marketing that speaks to your audience in their voice — marketing that takes the critical first steps toward building awareness, understanding and preference for your brand. We have produced innovative and award-winning work that excites markets in virtually every media and modality ... including PR, advertising, branding, experiential, mobile, public relations, video, trade shows, web and more.

#### **Pricing:**

Mx will craft a media list that will allow you to effectively reach your target markets (primarily focused on trade media, supplementing with local and mainstream media where appropriate), develop editorial themes that will be mapped back to editorial calendars, pitch the themes to target media and create the content needed to support media interest and needs.

The budget proposed below represents pricing in support of the four strategies outlined in the document above over an estimated 6 months.

<b>Tactic</b>	<b>Mx Labor</b>	<b>Mx Pass-thru</b>	<b>Total</b>
Editorial Strategy Development	\$7,200	\$0	\$7200
Ongoing Outreach & Pitching (14 hours per week)	\$40,320	\$0	\$40,320
Monitoring and Reporting (1 hour per week)	\$2,400	\$0	\$2,400
Feature Article Development (@ 6)	\$21,138.00	\$0	\$21,138.00
Press Release Development and Distribution (@ 6)	\$9075.00	\$6,048.00	\$15,123.00
Cision Utilization	\$0	\$3000	\$3,000
Press Kit Creation	\$2,345.00	\$0	\$2,345.00
<b>Total:</b>			<b>\$91,526</b>

In addition, as ad hoc requests arise and content / marketing materials are needed to support PR interest and requests - please see general pricing table below.



<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Estimate Labor</b>
Press Release	1,512.20
Press Kit	2,347.90
Feature Article Copy	3,523.05
Infographic	9,342.20
Presentation / Webinar Development	11,600.15
Whitepaper	13,093.90
Video: Motion Graphics	26,293.45
Video: Live Action Interview Style	5,448.45
Podcast	2,350.00

*Note: all expenses to be quoted separately*

### **Agency billing policy and terms:**

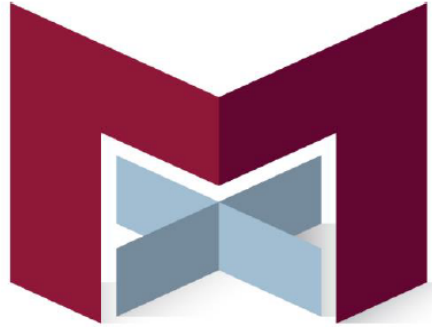
#### *Time & Materials*

Our estimation and billing process are time and materials-based. We typically do not enter into retainer-based relationships with our clients as we have found that most of the clients that we work with don't like them. We can discuss a retainer-based relationship if that is your preference.

We work with clients to develop estimates for work that aligns with a client's needs and scope. This can look like anything from a comprehensive annual program across all of our services, a larger initiative across a single service (such as a website), or a campaign across time.

Estimates are developed from (1) anticipated number of labor hours and (2) any outside costs required for any give project or initiative. We typically include a small markup on outside materials costs, based on our ability to negotiate costs that are below market rate with our vendors. Any travel costs incurred by The Mx Group are billed through to the client. All such travel costs are presented for approval before they are incurred.

**Thank you for considering us!**



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