

# BABEL

*How Babel helped  
TelcoDR change the face  
of Mobile World Congress*



# INTRO

Babel was appointed as TelcoDR's PR agency in September 2020. Immediately, we knew we were onto something special: a newly-formed company that was completely unheard of, yet which had huge ambitions to completely upend the telecoms industry. Better yet, TelcoDR was headed by someone who wasn't afraid to ruffle a few feathers.

The aim for Danielle Royston (DR) - turnaround CEO, former exec at Optiva, computer scientist, and world-ranked tennis amateur - is creating a consultancy that helps telecoms providers move their network infrastructure to the public cloud. But DR's aim - and TelcoDR's raison d'être - is about so much more than that. Her view is that public cloud has to be the number one priority of telco execs across the market. Our job was to make sure that message was heard - it had to garner column inches, it had to be the most talked about topic, and DR and her messaging had to be in demand and seen and heard from screen to podcast to page to stage.

However, when DR approached Babel, she was starting from scratch. No brand, no messaging, no website, no PR, no marketing collateral - no digital footprint at all. She required a specialist telecoms agency that

could act as an extension to her marketing team and develop content, messaging and a programme of activity that would help her communicate her messages to the industry. But she also required more than this. Ultimately, she needed an agency that could create and then elevate her brand, her messaging and herself to become the industry's default 'public cloud evangelist'.

So, why Babel? Our credentials in the telecoms space speak for themselves. In our fifteen years of operation, we've worked with dozens of companies in the telecoms sector: from RAN to core vendors, network assurance and testing suppliers, and wholesale carriers. We typically represent 10-15 of those companies at Mobile World Congress each year, and know the telecoms sector - including the editors, journalists, analysts and the issues driving change within the industry - better than anyone.

Our years of relationship building with telecoms and tech journalists across the globe, and deep sector experience mean that we're already sitting on a wealth of contacts and insider knowledge, that meant we could hit the ground running. TelcoDR needed an agency that could get them from 0 to 60 as quickly as possible, and we can act at speed.

# GETTING STARTED: THE CLOUD'S THE LIMITS

The first six months of the campaign were focussed on building credibility for TelcoDR in the core telecoms sector.

We kicked off with a number of messaging and issues sessions to provide us with collateral for the PR programme and to help shape the company's broader marketing activities. Babel has a lot of experience working with telecoms companies to develop messages that resonate with telco execs and decision makers, the media and the analysts. We've worked with spokespeople who are deep tech engineers, sales supremos, hesitant and media shy, corporate-first, new to their roles (and everything in between), so are well used to adapting our approach with each messaging session we run, to ensure we get the answers and solutions that will help us create messaging that hits the mark.

As such, with TelcoDR we were rapidly able to develop a framework that would allow

the brand to take a metaphorical cleaver to much of the current discussion in the industry around telco public cloud adoption, and to then carve out clear, concise and at times provocative messaging that would get TelcoDR on the media map.

We used this messaging to create a programme of content that would ensure DR's frank, authoritative and outspoken voice was heard and amplified. This included, in the earliest stages of the campaign, helping to develop the company [website](#), the first [whitepaper](#), an ongoing [blog](#) programme, a [weekly newsletter](#) and [podcast and video scripts](#).

This content quickly provided TelcoDR with a unique voice within the industry. But TelcoDR's positioning and activity also had to be validated by the key telecoms media and we needed visibility beyond the company's own channels.



# MEETING THE MEDIA THAT MATTER

Our all-hands-on-deck approach to international media relations and award engagement led to an immediate award nomination with Capacity's '20 Women to Watch' and 'Woman of the Year' in the disruptor category.

To enable DR to build relationships with key telecoms journalists, the Babel team ran two interactive events – a cook-along with a Michelin starred chef, and a Halloween (and public cloud themed) cocktail making class. Although these were informal events, they gave DR the opportunity to build some personal relationships, to educate the important media on the TelcoDR proposition and to debate the role of the public cloud in telecoms.

Babel also secured a raft of PR opportunities for DR, including contributed articles and commentary which was picked up by international business and trade titles. This was a result of Babel's ever-watchful eye on breaking news, as well as speaking to journalists and influencers

to anticipate the upcoming news agenda. As such, we were able to draft, pitch, distribute comment in response to major industry news, such as big telco cloud deals and the earnings of the public cloud providers: AWS, Microsoft and Google.

Within three months of our engagement, DR was featured in all top-tier telecoms media, including Light Reading, Telecoms.com, Fierce Wireless, RCR Wireless, Vanilla Plus and The Mobile Network, and business press including Reuters and Fast Company. DR quickly became one of the most widely quoted executives in the telecoms industry.

With a new website, a bulging book of journalist contacts, and well-attended sessions at virtual trade events, DR had rapidly risen to become the voice on public cloud and telco, with media coverage and a rich catalogue of content to evidence her experience and drive. She now wanted to capitalise on the visibility we'd created for her personal brand, to make TelcoDR the most talked about company in telecoms.



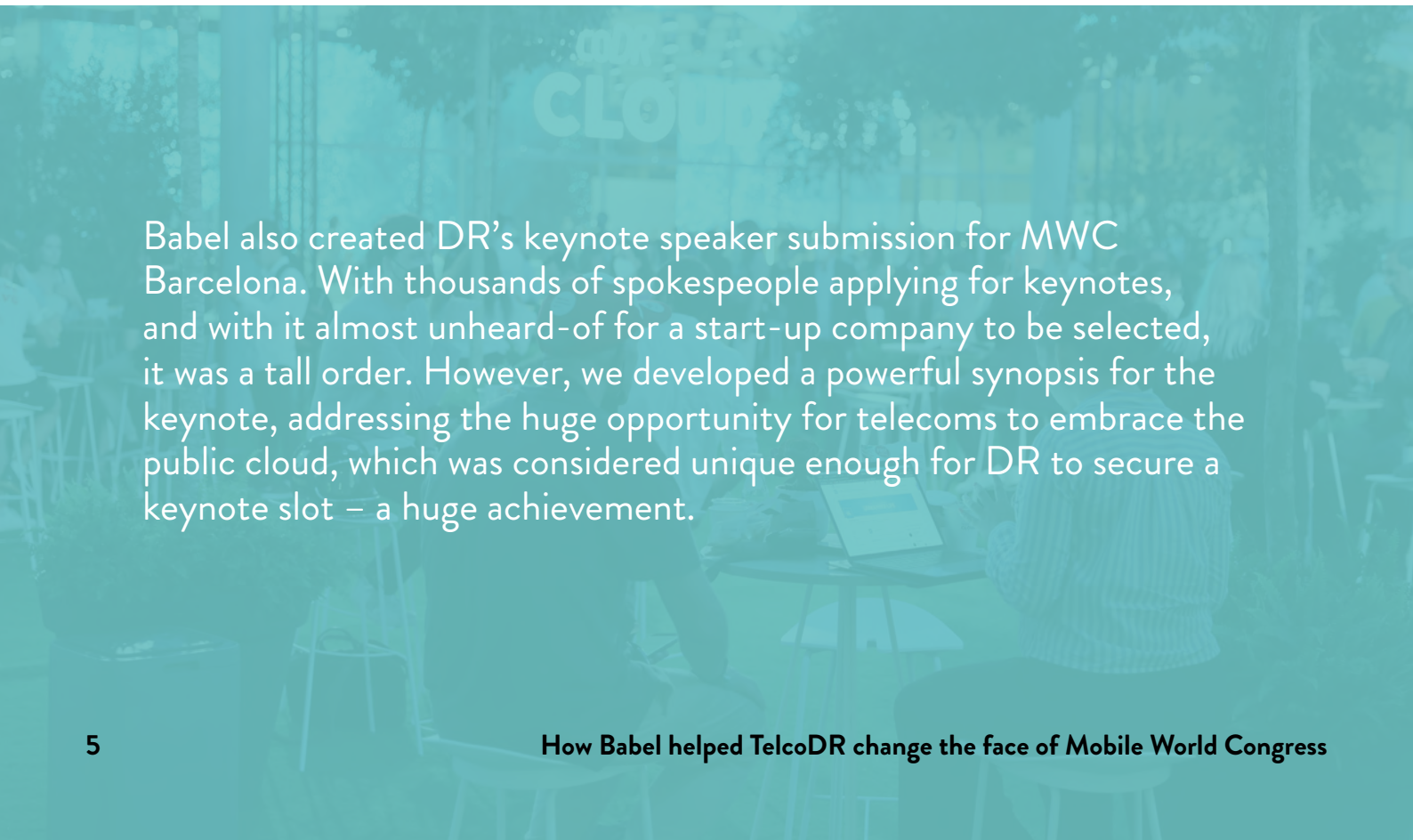
## CREATING A SPLASH AT MWC 2021

MWC Barcelona is the melting pot for the telecoms industry. However, its postponement from February to June 2021 caused much-publicised disruption in the months leading up to the event. Undeterred, TelcoDR remained keen to cement its position by making a splash during its first appearance. Coronavirus led to the majority of telco's biggest players (including Ericsson) pulling out of the June show, each accompanied by doomsayers in the media forecasting the next name to fall and predicting the GSMA show's demise.

Yet amidst all this DR (and Babel) believed we had a unique opportunity. The decision was made to take over the floorspace traditionally (and as of a few weeks prior) occupied by Ericsson. This 'hallowed ground' was the largest area for a single exhibitor of the entire show.

With less than 90 days until MWC opened, we took the plunge, with TelcoDR signing a deal to take over the space. Together, we worked to create the idea for CLOUD CITY: a transformational reimagining of the traditional tradeshow stand and a place for telcos invested in the public cloud to come together to share their vision.

Babel worked with the GSMA, the telecoms industry body and organiser of MWC, on a joint press release detailing TelcoDR's acquisition of the 6,000 square feet of space at MWC and the company's ambitions to create CLOUD CITY. The announcement generated positive news about MWC at a time when major companies were pulling out and it looked like the show was on its knees. TelcoDR is accredited by many as saving MWC 21, motivating many other companies to attend the show.



Babel also created DR's keynote speaker submission for MWC Barcelona. With thousands of spokespeople applying for keynotes, and with it almost unheard-of for a start-up company to be selected, it was a tall order. However, we developed a powerful synopsis for the keynote, addressing the huge opportunity for telecoms to embrace the public cloud, which was considered unique enough for DR to secure a keynote slot – a huge achievement.

## BUILDING AND LAUNCHING TOTOGI

With all eyes on TelcoDR at MWC, TelcoDR saw an opportunity to launch a second brand under the TelcoDR umbrella: Totogi, a charging and billing platform for telecoms operators, that leverages the AWS cloud. Babel developed website copy for the new brand, as well as messaging that would be used by the company – again, with only a few months until the show, all of this was achieved at rapid speed. We also created a wider package of content to promote CLOUD CITY and TelcoDR's messaging, the CLOUD CITY LIVE

programme (a show-within-a-show with a full programme of content broadcast live and available on-demand) and subtly hint at the benefits of cloud native charging solutions, all in anticipation of the at-show activity.

Babel also media trained the Totogi executives to ensure that they could speak confidently with media and analysts at MWC. Totogi was one of the 20 start-ups featured in CLOUD CITY that Babel supported during the show.



## ROCKIN' CLOUD CITY

By the time MWC came around there was a huge amount of buzz around TelcoDR. It was no surprise that CLOUD CITY was the most popular space at the entire event. TelcoDR spokespeople were completely booked up for the whole week with customer, media and analyst meetings. During the days of the show, Babel managed the TelcoDR press office within its CLOUD CITY stand. This included engaging with key influencers who were using the press office space to work, as well as managing multiple requests for press accreditation for three nights of concerts within the booth – headlined by Bon Jovi – all while working with the GSMA to adhere to COVID-19 restrictions.

The media turn-out at MWC was not huge this year due to the obvious restrictions imposed by COVID-19. However, TelcoDR spoke with every key journalist and important influencer at the show. Company spokespeople briefed 15 journalists from international business media and television across North America, Europe and APAC, as well as tier-one telecoms trade media. The Babel team also managed press accreditation for over 30 journalists during the concert series.

The results: over 700 pieces of coverage in the week before, during and after MWC, including 76 in tier one business or trade media. The launch of Totogi was also a huge success, generating widespread trade coverage and stirring anticipation and media appetite for what's coming down the line for the company.

TelcoDR had successfully turned the focus of MWC Barcelona to the public cloud, a topic that hadn't previously been on the GSMA's agenda for the show. In fact, it wasn't long after CLOUD CITY had proven such a storming success in Barcelona, that the GSMA released details of its themes for MWC LA...one of which, interestingly, was telco cloud.

With Babel's counsel, 24/7 support, innovative and punchy messaging, dedicated content support and ongoing PR drumbeat, TelcoDR has quickly risen through the industry ranks to become one of the most discussed companies in the telecoms industry this year.

It's been a fun and interesting challenge. We have been introduced to a very wide and changing team of additional marketing and third-party stakeholders located across the globe. The activity has had us targeting European, US and APAC, media, and we still ran a really tightly coordinated campaign on time and to budget.

If you're attending MWC22 Barcelona and want help creating messages and communications activities that will help you stand out from the crowd, please do get in touch. And it's not just trade shows we specialise in. We currently work with a wide range of telecoms companies – including Amdocs, Ciena, BICS, Orange Cyberdefense, Cohere Technologies and VIAVI – all year round to boost the visibility of these brands and create PR and marketing campaigns that provide them with a competitive edge.

UNDERSTAND  
CREATE  
DELIVER



**BABEL**

[WWW.BABELPR.COM](http://WWW.BABELPR.COM) | [ENQUIRIES@BABELPR.COM](mailto:ENQUIRIES@BABELPR.COM) | +44 (0) 20 7434 5550