

Certification Marketing

ASIS Certified Protection Professional (CPP) Program

Background

ASIS International is the leading organization for security professionals providing educational programs, professional certification, publications and conferences for more than 30,000 members worldwide. ASIS International's Certified Protection Professional (CPP) program has been in existence for nearly 20 years and is the only recognized security management certification program. CPP program participation had shrunk steadily, with fewer professionals preparing and taking the exams and even fewer CPPs maintaining the proper participation points to renew their certification.

JDG's Solution

During the initial planning phases, several important factors quickly surfaced: (1) the CPP program was more important to the organization than ever estimated; (2) the materials and process for preparing for, registering for taking and renewing the CPP were confusing; and (3) the certification was not well recognized

or understood by many security professionals or the business community.

Research indicated that those members with the CPP spent more money (\$285 vs. \$168) and had a much higher renewal rate (96% vs. 68%) than non-CPP members. This meant the financial health of the organization was directly dependent on the number of CPPs. This helped the organization understand the value of and commit funds to a virtually break-even process of application and testing fees, as well as marketing and media relations dollars. The financial return would be reflected in higher renewal rates, better attendance at ASIS educational programs and increased publication sales.

JDG designed a logo for the CPP program and produced an easy-to-read informational brochure emphasizing brand, message and benefits and clearly outlining the process and test content. The brochure was distributed to targeted mailing lists and tracked for performance. In addition, reference materials were reviewed with a focus toward using only materials potential participants could obtain easily from local resources or from ASIS International. In addition,

the organization reviewed its application and testing processes, streamlining and simplifying these processes to promote participation.

The integrated marketing plan, including direct mail, the Internet and advertising, was implemented in conjunction with a well-defined and -executed media relations campaign that highlighted the benefits of obtaining the CPP through the success stories of CPPs.

Results

During the first year, participation in the testing process increased from 168 to 394 and renewals increased by 10%. By the end of year two, ASIS was administering nearly 1,000 tests annually, and renewals reached a high of 86%. In addition, the CPP has become increasingly the recognized symbol of excellence and professionalism in the security industry and the general business community. The promotional campaign generated positive publicity for ASIS International and increased participation at educational programs, international conferences and publication sales, impacting revenues positively. During subsequent years, this plan was incorporated in various countries and regions around the world with similar effects.

CPP



"Our certification program couldn't get off the ground . . . thanks to JDG we were able to communicate a complicated, often confusing message, clearly and with a focus on benefits."

Director, Marketing
ASIS International