

The Essence of Public Relations



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Media relations is the essence of public relations. Securing thought leadership or having a CEO comment on relevant happenings in the news reinforces brand recognition, impacts credibility and are great for the companies and ambassadors we represent. Yet as communications professionals we should always be pushing for new means to engage larger audiences and work with our clients to help take their brands the next level.

In July, our client of three years, Inspired eLearning asked us for something new for October's Cyber Security Awareness Month. Even though we have secured the *Wall Street Journal*, Good Morning America, CBS This Morning and FOX & Friends and many others, we threw media relations out the window and asked them to take a leap of faith.

The e-learning cyber security training industry is not front page news. When hacks occur, the media usually turns to cyber security professionals who discuss the impact of the hack, but rarely do we learn or get an understanding as to how it happened or better yet, how hacks can be prevented. Americans have a knack for tuning things out or for having a false sense of security... my IT guy just put on some great software that will protect us. Unfortunately, no matter how much money

companies throw at cyber security, it is only as good as the last email opened. There is also an easy scapegoat... it was Russia, it was North Korea, it was ISIS, it was anyone other than the 13 year-old kid who probably hacked them. Given the fact that hacks are a daily occurrence and people refuse to pay attention to the experts trying to teach them how NOT to be a victim, we decided to try a new approach... humor.

SpecOps Communications wrote and produced an eight-part digital series titled: HACKED! And yes, it is a Cyber Comedy (we created that too). Revolving around an office, each episode takes a humorous approach to a company experiencing a hack. The episodes run between 30 and 58 seconds, and are designed to capture peoples attention, drive awareness to a company that can actually teach them how mitigate cyber threats. We shot the series in Austin, Texas and our entire budget was \$10,000 – we completed the production, all crew and the actors, for \$8,500. We did have the help of a friend who provided his office at no charge.

The first four episodes, Too Busy, The IT Guy, The Hacker and The Office Stud are all up and can be viewed on Inspired eLearning's corporate site as well as on Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube and Instagram. We did spend a total of \$3,000 on boosts. In just four weeks, we have secured over 300,000 (75% organic) combined views and dramatically increased traffic to our client's site. The series is also being used by the company's sales team as an "ice-breaker" for new business development, at trade shows and by the executives. If you like these videos, we did save the best for last.

HACKED!

Too Busy

The IT Guy

The Hacker

The Office Stud