

National Cyber Security Awareness Month, October 2005

For the second year in a row, the public and private sectors joined forces to organize National Cyber Security Awareness Month, a national collaborative effort to educate Internet users of all ages about safe online practices. The National Cyber Security Alliance (NCSA) is pleased to report that **National Cyber Security Awareness Month 2005 was a solid success**. Through a combination of media relations and state and local events, we estimate that we reached more than **70 million consumers** with NCSA messages throughout the month of October. Moreover, to date, the NCSA's TV Public Service Announcement has aired over **4,000 times on Cable and Local TV in major markets**, totaling an estimated value of **\$1,469,145**. As a result of these media events, traffic to the NCSA website increased **by over 300% from September to October**, which translates to hundred of thousands of visits to the StaySafeOnline website.

The summary results noted above are demonstrable progress against our objectives for the month, specifically:

- To increase awareness of computer security issues and the National Cyber Security Alliance across designated key audiences – home users, small businesses and the education community
- To encourage the adoption of safe online behaviors among key audiences during National Cyber Security Awareness month and beyond

To achieve results against these goals, the NCSA and our partners embarked upon a multi-faceted consumer education campaign, which included the following elements:

- A media relations campaign highlighting National Cyber Security Awareness Month, which emphasized TV coverage as a means by which to create a “domino effect” of media momentum which would trickle down to all target audiences during October
- A television PSA, audio PSA, web banners and matte columns, which would augment media relations efforts and provide an additional level of awareness for the NCSA
- Multiple state and local-market events, which provided a grassroots forum for explaining computer security issues and educating the public about safe online behaviors
- All activities culminated in a call-to-action to visit www.staysafeonline.org for more information, including tips for maximizing online security. To ensure a positive consumer experience, the website was re-designed for greater ease of use, visual appeal and comprehensiveness, including providing links to additional sites beyond the NCSA's site.

The cumulative media impact of National Cyber Security Awareness Month was impressive. Specific highlights included:

- **4,269 placements** of the PSA on major network affiliates, including ABC, NBC, CBS and Fox. The PSA aired in markets ranging from New York to San Francisco, and to date, the equivalent ad value of the PSA airings totals **\$1,469,145**.

- **243 TV placements** as the result of a satellite media tour and B-roll distribution, which featured co-spokespeople, Ron Teixeira from NCSA, and Andy Purdy from The Department of Homeland Security. Some these placements were shown in major TV markets like Washington D.C., Dallas and Cincinnati.
- **645 radio placements** from a Radio Public Service Announcement, reaching an estimated **18.5 million consumers**, and an additional 17 radio interviews as the result of a joint radio tour between NCSA and The National Consumers League that reached over **18 million consumers**.
- Several high-profile print placements announcing National Cyber Security Awareness Month, including a nationally-syndicated article by the ***Scripps-Howard News Service***, which was picked up by more than a dozen newspapers nationwide, as well as key placements on ***cnn.com***, all reaching an estimated readership of **10 million consumers**.
- Additionally, **36 governors** signed proclamations supporting their states' participation in National Cyber Security Awareness Month, most of those governors issued individual press releases, resulting in additional print articles in newspapers.
- Moreover, **41 academic institutions all over the country**, ranging from community colleges to major universities, held events and participated in various National Cyber Security Awareness Month activities. This played a key part in our grassroots efforts to deliver cyber security messages to key audiences like college professors, students and employees.
- Microsoft, an NCSA sponsor, developed and placed advertorials supporting National Cyber Security Awareness Month in high-profile media such as ***Wall Street Journal, New York Times, and Roll Call***.
- Additionally, a number of NCSA sponsors and partners placed web banners on their sites advocating support for National Cyber Security Awareness Month, including AOL, whose ad banner generated a total of **57,507,361 impressions with a CTR (click through rate) of 0.17%**.

Equally as important as the number of media impressions, however, was the number of state and local grassroots events that allowed for greater explanation and hands-on instruction advocating safe online behavior. Sample highlights included:

- NCSA, DHS and FTC kick-off press conference for National Cyber Security Awareness Month
- Cornell University "Cyber Security Awareness Day"
- Center for Democracy and Technology: Anti-Spyware Coalition Press Event
- Arizona State Cyber Security Awareness Week
- Microsoft, FTC and Consumer Action Press Event: "Don't Get Tricked On Halloween"
- New York City Mass Transit Authority Cyber Security Fair
- University of Maryland "C3 Conference" and "October" is National Cyber Security Awareness Month

The results for National Cyber Security Awareness Month were indeed impressive, and certainly represent a marked improvement over those attained in the inaugural year of 2004. Nonetheless, there are many ways in which we can improve our efforts for 2006. Preliminary recommendations include:

- **Secure approval of all stakeholders and grassroots events early.** Last NCSAM, spokespeople, stakeholders and local market/grassroots events were not finalized until mid-September. Even though staff turnover and changes within NCSA's organization caused a delay in finalizing many of these events, we hope to work with all stakeholders this year to develop a plan for next NCSAM that is approved and ready for execution by mid-August.
- **Craft a more compelling message.** Since computer security is frequently covered in the media, it is difficult for the NCSA's awareness and education messages to break through the already existing cyber security/safety clutter. Although this year's campaign focusing on identity theft generated good results, we feel we could have accomplished more by taking a fresh and bold new approach. We hope by planning early for NCSAM this year, will give NCSA the opportunity to execute a campaign that takes a more aggressive approach and has a point of view that is unique to NCSA.
- **Have necessary media tools in place to be able to respond quickly to media opportunities as they arise.** National Cyber Security Awareness Month is a manufactured news event -- *not news in and of itself*. Therefore, it is critical to release new information in the form of a study during NCSAM, or sponsor a program that has a news hook that will pique reporters' interest.
- **Increase private and public sector involvement in NCSAM.** Although we had more companies and public institutions involved in NCSAM this past year than the year before, we need to continue to recruit new participants and organizations to participate in NCSAM 2006. Increasing private and public sector participants will help us widen our reach and maximize our grassroots efforts. In preparation for this October, we will ask NCSA Stakeholders to help recruit organizations that have not traditionally taken part in NCSAM in the past.
- **Make the NCSAM Tools available well in advance of NCSAM.** The NCSA needs to make NCSAM Tools like ad banners, supporting organization documents and guidelines on what organizations can do for NCSAM available in Spring 2006. Providing organizations with information early on NCSAM will hopefully increase the amount of events that take place during October.

We welcome your thoughts on these recommendations and would be happy to discuss them with you at greater length. In fact, this report, along with the 2005 NCSA Survey sent to members will be used during the 2006 planning session, which will form the basis for an annual plan for 2006 National Cyber Security Awareness Month. We look forward to continuing our partnership with you, and to working together towards the common goal of educating all key stakeholders about safe and secure online behaviors.