

# Advocacy Communications International, Inc.

## Branding, Messaging, Marketing & New Membership Initiative Water Information Sharing And Analysis Center (Waterisac)



WaterISAC is a nonprofit information service. It is the most comprehensive and up-to-the-minute online resource of security information for America's drinking and wastewater utilities. For a nominal subscription fee, waste water systems and drinking water utilities gain access to the WaterISAC's secure Internet-based system for the early warning of potential physical and environmental threats to the public water supply. It offers a long list of services that help utilities complete and continuously improve the security of their facilities.



As a water utility security manager, the lives of your consumers may depend upon how well you do your job.

**Don't you deserve all the help you can get?**



**One of several new member outreach postcards**

## The Challenge

WaterISAC approached Advocacy Communications International, Inc. (ACII) for branding, public relations, and marketing services. They needed to increase their subscriber base significantly. At the time, the number of subscribers to WaterISAC was relatively small and the rate of growth in subscriptions was sluggish. Research revealed there was low awareness among the controllers of drinking water systems about WaterISAC and the vital nature of its services for the water industry. Moreover, a significant number of current subscribers to WaterISAC did not fully utilize the system and logically, could not appreciate its full value.



New membership outreach brochure/mailer

The goals were to raise awareness of WaterISAC among water utilities nationwide, enhance the reputation of the organization, and increase WaterISAC subscribers over a 12-month period.

## Strategies

Conducted a public relations campaign to raise awareness among water utilities of the existence and value of WaterISAC (five years later, in-house staff redesigned the site)

Educated/reminded current subscribers about all the tools and useful information available to them on WaterISAC

Implemented a marketing campaign that specifically targeted the individuals with the greatest power over a utility's decision to subscribe — or not to subscribe — to WaterISAC

## **Key Tactics**

- Distributed to potential new subscribers an existing WaterISAC marketing video via presentations at industry conferences, the public Web site, and direct mail
- Enhanced the organization's contact list of potential subscribers by (1) overseeing the gathering of accurate contact information and (2) creating an efficient database for the subsequent use of that information
- Enhanced the existing WaterISAC Brand — Partnered with a design studio to create a more attractive, sophisticated graphic design and to refine the organization's key messages
- Subsequently, Gisele consistently interpreted the enhanced brand and key messages across WaterISAC's Web site and all printed collateral materials
- Conducted subscriber education campaign via:
- Redesigned Web Site — Revamped both the content and function of the public Web site so it reflected the new WaterISAC brand, attracted potential new subscribers, and more readily drove visitors to sign up at the Web site. (Five years later, in-house staff redesigned the current Web site).
- Direct Mail — A two-tiered effort targeting CEOs at utilities and separately, targeting Managers/Engineers. Three mailings were sent approximately three weeks apart. Each mailing offered more and better content and products to engage the target audience and motivate them to subscribe.
- Direct E-mail — The e-mail campaign mirrored the United States Postal Service direct mail effort. Messages were designed to engage the target audience and drive them to the WaterISAC Web site.
- News Media Outreach — Created and disseminated background information on WaterISAC to key industry news media. Telephone follow up was conducted to place stories in publications read by WaterISAC's target audience.

## **Outcomes**

- Most importantly, new utilities are subscribing to WaterISAC. Within six months, the organization experienced an eight percent increase in subscribers and the establishment of a steady stream of new subscriber inquiries via telephone and e-mail.
- Nearly half of the new subscribers reported they decided to subscribe after receiving one of the direct mail materials.
- Existing WaterISAC subscribers have continued to renew at a consistent high rate.
- Today, the WaterISAC is branded and clearly defined by a strong graphic design and consistent key messages. It has a new public Web site that presents the organization in a much more dynamic, engaging manner. A new list of thousands of potential WaterISAC subscribers has been established. A three-step direct mail campaign was successfully completed.