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MANAGING CRISIS CHAOS



Howard LaMunion, president of public relations firm The ConsultUs Group Inc., believes companies need to treat their Web sites as a "personal CNN" during this national crisis.

PR pros advise how to avoid mistakes during attack aftermath

BY SCOTT BOYTER
Staff Writer

We are indeed in dicey times, where the nation is gripped with a combination of unprecedented fear, anger and concern for the future. The last thing many people want to hear about is a company trumpeting a new product, relocating its offices or crowing about a seven-figure donation it made to the American Red Cross or some other relief organization.



PROFESSIONAL
SERVICES

Some local public relations professionals say companies need to step more cautiously than ever when sharing their messages with the public in the coming weeks and months. That caution, however, must be balanced with getting back to conducting business as it was done before Sept. 11, they say.

"My advice is, within reason, companies should continue to do business as usual," said Wendell Watson, general manager of Ackermann Public

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Hacker activity, security awareness heightens

BY STACEY CLOSSER
Staff Writer

Even before the Nimda virus ravaged the Internet a week after the terrorist strikes, service providers and hosting companies noticed a substantial increase in the number of attacks against Web sites since Sept. 11.



INTERNET

Days following the tragedy, the National Infrastructure Protection Center, or NIPC, announced that it expected an upswing in security incidents.

NIPC described two motivating factors for the problems in its statement: "Political hacktivism by self-described

'patriot' hackers targeted at those perceived to be responsible for the attack ... and virus propagation in which old viruses are renamed to appear related to recent events."

Those monitoring Web sites have their own theories for the increase in security incidents.

"There's no question that the attack rate has gone up substantially," said Bill Lowry, director of product marketing at Dallas-based Data Return Corp., which provides Web hosting and Internet services. Two areas stand out as particularly active, he said.



COURTNEY PERRY

Bill Lowry has seen a surge in demand for Data Return's Internet security products and

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