



Sultans of SAMMYS Strive to



By Amy Jones LeSage

Former Executive Editor (1993-1999)
Security Sales
 secsales@bobit.com

AT A GLANCE

- The 11th Annual *Security Sales & Integration* SAMMY (Sales and Marketing) Awards recognized 2005's top sales/marketing materials and installation innovations and were emceed by Publisher Mike Zawinski
- 12 SAMMYS were presented to 11 companies, with HSM Electronic Protection Services of Jupiter, Fla., taking home two
- Boosting name recognition and creating a brand image are main marketing strategies for winning companies
- Winners site SAMMYS as one reason industry marketing efforts keep improving
- This year's judges were: Tom Brigham of Brigham Scully; John Daum of Daum Weigle Inc.; Richard Hahn of Richard Hahn & Associates; and Beverly Steinberg of GBL Public Relations

Award-winners at the 11th Annual SAMMYS spectacular understand perception is reality. They are driven to create appealing, easily recognizable images for their firms. This is vividly reflected in the professional, inventive submissions that dazzled SAMMYS judges. Pick up some pointers from the security industry's most gifted sales/marketing and installation experts.

SAMMY (Sales and Marketing) Award winners say the competition is getting fierce, as more and more companies step up to the plate and take a swing at creating a brand image, boosting name recognition and increasing sales with consistency in their marketing campaigns. Some thank the SAMMYS program for helping to raise the bar.

While product and service sales have been a main focus with past SAMMY entries, this year's participants appear to be more image-focused. For example, Security Solutions' winning yellow-page entry was a branding ad. It

was not designed to necessarily have people pick up the phone and call. It was created so people would recognize the name and have the image of the company's sign "branded" in their minds when they decide to purchase a security system.

Also, this year's winner for best Promotional Giveaway Item, The Protection Bureau of Exton, Pa., intends to focus on an across-the-board marketing plan in 2006 by giving its marketing materials the same look and feel. "We market for name recognition more than individual sale," says J. Matthew Ladd, president of The Protection Bureau.

Build Their Brands

While branding or image building is not specific criteria for every SAMMY entry, it is part of the requirements for one award: Overall Integrated Marketing Program. The criteria for this category included an overall central marketing theme that's used company-wide and builds name recognition. Originality and innovation were other requirements.

By entering several SAMMYs categories, HSM Electronic Protection Services of Jupiter, Fla., was able to demonstrate its unique, yet consistent themes and appeal. HSM earned two SAMMYs this year, including the overall marketing program and commercial sales brochure, and was a finalist in five other categories.

"While certain design elements — such as logo representation, color schemes, fonts and other components — remain consistent across our marketing, as is apparent from the spread of work produced, at HSM, marketing integration does not mean everything has to appear exactly the same," says Rebecca Covert, HSM's director of marketing. "Although every item of our work is different in some respect, it all comes together to project a strong and cohesive brand image for HSM."

Branding is an especially important marketing element for security and integration companies because these firms need to impart trust, peace of mind, staying power and professionalism. Plus, many sales leads come from word of mouth. Thus, branding is certainly about a solid campaign, but it's also about having the right people out there promoting the company and building the image.

According to Mary Lynn Moriarity, marketing director for Guardian Protection Services of Pittsburgh, "Guardian's overall strategy is to bring

to market cutting-edge products and technology supported not only by outstanding advertising and selling tools, but by knowledgeable sales representatives, a highly skilled installation force and a well-trained customer care team. A great marketing strategy cannot operate or be successful if it's flying without support from every other area in the company."

While word of mouth is a key to increased sales, it's important to have a balance of direct sales. This means a direct sales team needs materials to help support its efforts. Bob Ryan, vice president of sales and marketing for ASG Security in Beltsville, Md., says, "Our overall marketing strategy is to utilize marketing collateral and resource material to increase the effectiveness of our direct sales force. This grass roots level approach is highly targeted, direct and cost effective. Our Web site then serves as reinforcer to our field marketing material and vice versa."

Whatever sales and marketing is done, SAMMY winners agree it's important for company marketers to know their market(s), have a marketing strategy, and track what is done so they know what's working and where to continue spending marketing dollars. According to Dave Merrick, marketing director for Vector Security of Pittsburgh, you should give a campaign at least three months, though six months is better.

"You improve your reach and recognition factors immensely after three months. Chart your progress, lead generation and sales dollars. That begins with the taking of the lead, and continues to the completion of the sale," says Merrick. Vector earned this year's SAMMY for best Company Newsletter. In total, the company has earned this award four out of the five years it has entered the competition.

Most SAMMY winners also reported they've seen noticeable improvements in the quality and content of security and integration marketing. "I'd like to think the SAMMYs have had something to do with marketing improvements," says Moriarity. "They've given us a stage on which to showcase our best work and, thus, have become a motivator."

Ryan agrees, "The SAMMYs have become the hallmark for recognition of our industry's best marketing achievements. It is becoming increasingly competitive each year." Ryan also believes industry consolidation has played a big role in increasing the industry's overall marketing approach.

"The aggressive consolidation within our industry the past few years has resulted in the emergence of a lot of new and original marketing work," says Ryan. "There have been several significant re-branding campaigns with some of the larger companies, including our own. As a result, I think we are seeing a peak in marketing creativity that is very healthy for the business."

Ryan makes a good point. When one company boosts its credibility, it boosts credibility for the whole industry. The 2006 SAMMYs are over. Now it's time to plan for 2007. How will you raise the bar?

For SAMMYs information and entry requirements, including categories, judging criteria, past event coverage, etc., visit www.the-sammy-awards.com.

