



# ICR, Affinion partner for data breach response services

March 9, 2011

By Danielle Drolet

STAMFORD, CT: Affinion Security Center has teamed up with ICR, an international corporate communications and IR firm, to support companies with preparation and management of data breach incidents.

The partnership will provide companies with both Affinion's BreachShield comprehensive logistics, disclosure, identity theft protection, and customer care services, as well as ICR's counsel and support in managing communications with stakeholders, including employees, customers, partners, investors, and the media.

"We happen to work with a number of retail and restaurant companies, clients that are public national chains that handle a lot of consumer data and credit card information, and don't necessarily have as sophisticated IT and security systems as a large financial institution, so maybe they are a little more susceptible to being hacked and having breaches imposed upon them," said Mike Fox, president of the corporate communications group at ICR. "Working with Affinion, not only from a business standpoint, but I think from a client standpoint, gives the client an integrated and holistic solution."

Affinion provides services such as managing breaches, sending notifications to affected individuals, call center support, and identify theft protection. Unrelated to the partnership, ICR has handled PR work for Affinion Group for the last five years.

"It seemed to be a natural fit to partner up with them to manage the crisis management before, during, and after a security breach," said Mike Morelli, director of Affinion's BreachShield. "A lot of our clients will come to us during the breach situation, so we have to respond right away or we recommend to a lot of clients to contact us ahead of time to map everything out in the event that they have a breach, and this way they know what services they'll have to offer, what are the costs behind it, and what are the benefits behind it."

Last year, there were 662 data breaches reported, an increase of more than 25% in 2009, according to the Identity Theft Resource Center. Morelli said that breaches affect all sectors, including banks, government, corporations, and universities, as well as healthcare.

"Banking in the past year has had less breaches, but larger breaches," he added. "Education seems to be equal in terms of breaches and healthcare seems like they have more breaches, but smaller breaches. The government it seems like they have more breaches, but less affected individuals."