

Landing the Right Coverage on Homeland Security: VistaScape and Logan Airport

The challenge

When Atlanta-based VistaScape Security Systems asked Birnbach Communications, Inc. to spread the word about a breakthrough security technology being piloted at Boston's Logan International Airport, we were ready to deliver results but also aware of the challenges.

The first challenge was finding a balance between providing information about the system to generate in-depth coverage without revealing details that would compromise security procedures.

VistaScape's software acts as an extra set of eyes to protect Logan's 6-1/2 miles of beach front using real-time, 24x7 data monitoring and analysis of images gathered from infrared cameras provided by FLIR Systems.

The second challenge was setting the media's expectations because this was a limited test phase, because the cameras were located on the control tower (not close to the beach, where the cameras could capture more details) and because the technology was located in tight quarters in the control tower, where airport personnel were working on other tasks. In other words ... seeing this technology in action was going to be tough.

The third challenge was striking the right balance between exposure for our client VistaScape and its high profile customer, the Massachusetts Port Authority (Massport).

As we looked to build the messages and strategy we wanted to highlight that since 9/11, Massport, the organization that runs Logan Airport, has become a leading force in evaluating and implementing new security technologies.

But we did not want to miss the opportunity to build brand recognition for VistaScape and its SDMS product, which had not yet had much mainstream media exposure.

Finally we had just two weeks to pull it all together across a multi-organizational team and be ready for primetime with the media.

Strategic Execution At Work

We moved quickly to develop a plan, create a fine-tuned media list, produce B-roll (shot on the Logan airfield as massive fog rolled in), and write the press materials.

We also developed messaging documents and Q&A that would portray all players in a strong light and secured buy-in from Massport, FLIR Systems, and VistaScape. To get that extra lift for VistaScape's messages we made sure to play up the "cool" factor of the technology and build additional credibility by leveraging VistaScape's recent installation with the U.S. Navy in San Diego.

Due to the confined space in Logan's control tower, we held small briefings with reporters, instead of a single press conference. We conducted media outreach on behalf of all three organizations, and hit local and national media.

Given the tight time frame and the number of organizations involved, and because we thought the story was strong enough, we decided against any exclusives.

FLIR Detection IR



Story Angle Formula

- + a unique business model and/or business strategy
- + a snapshot of an industry
- + an interesting company culture or executive character
- + an interesting corporate or individual customer using the product or service (focusing on benefits, not just features)
- + a new trend and/or timely element that's relevant to readers or viewers

= a good story



Birnbach Communications, Inc.

20 Devereux Street
Marblehead, MA 01945

TEL 781.639.6701

FAX 781.639.6702

EMAIL info@birnbachcom.com

www.birnbachcom.com