CENSYS CASE STUDY

Program Evolution and Solidifying Research Expertise



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this case study, we present the successful journey of Censys, its role in providing the most accurate internet intelligence data available and how W2 Communications shifted the PR program to uplevel their research to land meaningful coverage in business and tier one press. Through a strategic and collaborative approach to research storytelling, we outline how we executed a successful launch of their annual State of the Internet Report, how the approach differed from previous launches, and why this launch was the catalyst for Censys' global expansion.

INTRODUCTION

Censys is the one place to understand everything on the internet, providing internet-wide scanning data and intelligence that powers organizations to secure their digital infrastructure. The company sought to distinguish its proven products, services and data from its competitors in a very crowded industry. Since January 2022, W2 Communications has served as the public relations, content development and research agency for Censys.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Over three years ago, the company needed a cybersecurity PR partner who could elevate its brand awareness primarily through its unique research. As part of the program, W2 Communications worked with Censys to establish its annual State of the Internet Report, which would ultimately become a trusted resource and asset, enabling the researchers to build relationships with key reporters.

In both 2022 and 2023, W2 Communications took a broad outreach approach for the annual report, focusing on familiarizing reporters with Censys, taking advantage of team members' long-time, close relationships with tier-1 news organizations. Since day one, Censys' PR program centered around research and establishing Censys' brand identity. The first year of the program was highly successful and set Censys' research foundation and opened the door for future business-level opportunities. For 2024's State of the Internet Report, the W2 Communications team set goals centered specifically around business-level coverage. These goals came at a pivotal time for the team - Censys expanded W2 Communications' services to include public sector support in early 2024, extending media opportunities for research projects and strategic insights.

DECISION CRITERIA AND CHOICE

W2 Communications used research as a powerful entry point to build relationships with business publications, laying the foundation for future commentary and sourcing opportunities. When planning for the 2024 State of the Internet Report launch, W2 Communications engaged Bloomberg's Jake Bleiberg four months prior to the report launch to offer him an exclusive conversation with researchers. Through several rounds of sourcing and research-driven discussions, Jake's interest and excitement for Censys' research made him the ideal storyteller for Censys' latest data. This proactive engagement ensured that when the report launched, we had a business-level advocate for Censys' research.

ALTERNATE COURSES OF ACTION

EXPLORING SOLUTIONS

What began as a cybersecurity-focused media program has evolved into a global research and thought leadership partnership, eliminating the need to engage with other International agencies.

IMPACT AND RESULTS

Specifically for 2024's State of the Internet Report launch, W2 Communications landed an exclusive overview on the report including Censys' analysis on critical infrastructure security with Bloomberg. However, the impact of the teams' strategic approach extends beyond a single report launch – which alone saw 30+ pieces of coverage across business, trade and international publications. W2 Communications continues to exceed quality coverage expectations – both at the commercial research and federal level, making them Censys' agency of choice year after year.

In 2024, Censys saw an unmatched level of reporter inbounds, demonstrating widespread recognition of Censys' research credibility. Censys' elevated media presence in top-tier publications directly influenced the company's decision to expand its communications strategy globally – all with W2 Communications at the center.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Public relations teams play a tremendous role in shaping and elevating a brand's identity, ensuring that company messaging aligns with industry trends, business priorities and market changes. Data-driven storytelling is one of the most meaningful ways to break into top-tier business and policy-focused press. W2 Communications' collaboration with Censys at the beginning of each research cycle to ensure strategic storytelling is a perfect example of growing our communications program alongside an evolving brand.