

CASE STUDIES

UNION ISSUES



Federal Investigation into Union Dispute Drives Customer Dissatisfaction

PROBLEM: Retailers frequently face challenges from organized labor unions. One major grocery retailer faced a litany of issues with its primary labor union, including a lengthy strike, service disruptions affecting customers and other employers, and an investigation by the U.S. Attorney's office regarding the retailer's practices during the strike. After the union settled, the company was anxious to put the episode behind it and avoid revisiting the difficult period that employees and customers had endured.

STRATEGY: Revive worked with a New York-based financial communications firm to coordinate media, financial, and grassroots campaigns to preempt civil and criminal charges to be filed by the U.S. Attorney's office. The communication efforts were carefully synchronized to the media announcement, which would occur without advance notice. Communications needed to reach hundreds of locations in a low-tech environment, as well as thousands of elected officials, business leaders, and other influencers.

RESULTS: The initial wave of communications resulted in a two day news cycle, and the media coverage contained the clients' key messages more than 80% of the time. Benchmark research conducted with customers prior to the criminal charges was updated three weeks later, and customer satisfaction and preference had actually improved slightly. Three months later it was even higher.

While the legal issues were significant and caused considerable problems for the companies involved, employee turnover declined and customer preference improved in the year following the lawsuit filing.

