

CNN International Gives Plants at Work Record Exposure

Plants at Work's (PAW) press release distributed in conjunction with Earth Day caught the attention of big-time mainstream media outlet CNN, and has resulted in the industry organization's widest exposure to date.

CNN's story, "Office Foliage for the Feel Good Factor," is featured at the international division of its website, CNN.com International, and airs on its international cable news network, CNN International TV, on May 18, 19, 22 and 23. According to CNN's demographic research, its international television network is viewed in more than 165 million households and hotel rooms worldwide.

Add to that the more than 8.2 million media impressions the online story has generated so far, and you have the makings of the biggest story yet to come out of the PAW camp.

Also on the up for PAW is the possibility of a promotional segment on the CNN Headline News program "Down to Earth," hosted by Sharon Collins. The cable television show highlights environmental issues. PAW Spokesperson M.J. Gilhooley says she has been in contact with Collins about featuring a PAW spokesperson on the show.

PAW has approached several high-profile industry proponents to appear on the show, but has been turned down by every one. As a result, Gilhooley is now considering appearing on the show herself. "When we do these things, we want to make sure we do them right," she says. "I did tell Sharon that since I'm in Los Angeles, I could get to the office studio and do a three-minute thing, and we would just talk about the value of plants in the workplace."

Behind the Story

"Putting plants in the workplace could be one way to celebrate Earth Day, but research

shows that it may also promote staff well being," leads CNN.com International's article. It goes on to point out that research shows indoor plants "improve the atmosphere, reduce stress and sharpen concentration."



In conjunction with the story, a "Quick-vote" poll asks readers, "Is your boss for or against plants in the office?" At press time, of the 124 voters, 85 percent said their boss is in favor of having plants in the office. Gilhooley says she will use the findings to generate another press release. "Obviously, that's a statistic that I'm going to take and do another release on. It's like a built-in survey for me," she says.

Gilhooley says specific information in PAW's Earth Day press release, including a quote from her, made it to CNN's story.

"Our website activity reports verify that we have made huge gains in promoting awareness and interest in the topic of interior plant benefits over the past three years," Gilhooley says. "I think this press release fell on that fertile ground of awareness, precisely at a time when professionals are most concerned about the environment they create in their workplace."



Big news. Check out the story for yourself: <http://edition.cnn.com/2004/BUSINESS/04/22/go.plant.office/>

More to Come

The publicity doesn't stop here. PAW has a number of promotional projects, approaching the public from different angles, ready for the next year. When the program was approved for year four, the organization decided to spend more time on general audiences, something it didn't do very often during the first few years because investors wanted the program to focus on target markets.

"We are always trying to walk the balance," Gilhooley says. "I keep all my target markets always in the loop. At the same time, this year we are going to broaden it out a little bit."

As it has in the past, PAW is making the most of its challenging financial position. The group is moving forward with only \$150,912 pledged for this year's program. "We are planning to run enthusiastic pledge promotions and offer rich marketing tools, tips and training at both the ALCA Inside Symposium, as well as the CalScape Expo," Gilhooley says.