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## **For Immediate Release**

### **Advanced Call Handling Contributes To Success of National Crime Prevention Program**

#### **OVERVIEW**

Advanced call handling technologies have contributed to the National Crime Prevention Council's recognized success in its campaigns to encourage active public involvement in the prevention of crime. After experiencing more than ten years of success, the direct response campaigns continue to increase marketing effectiveness and result in low per call costs.

For over a decade, the National Crime Prevention Council has relied upon the leading edge technologies of ConServIT Integrated Teleservices to service callers responding to advertisements and public service announcements in its crime prevention campaigns. More than two million requests have been generated for information encouraging active involvement in the prevention of crime. The calls come from all parts of the country, in English and Spanish, from people of all ages.

One of the most successful public service advertising campaigns of the 1980s and 1990s, McGruff's "Take a Bit out of Crime" slogan was known by over half the U.S. population and his advice heeded by a sizable portion of that audience. It was through the McGruff campaign that the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) established its roots.

NCPC was created as a nonprofit organization to manage the McGruff campaign and coordinate activities of the Crime Prevention Coalition, an organization that includes such members as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the National Sheriffs' Association and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

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Over the past two decades, NCPC has evolved into the nation's primary resource for crime prevention by implementing youth development programs, overseeing demonstration programs on crime prevention and drug abuse, and circulating information on powerful crime prevention methods to thousands of individuals and organizations every year. Such information is readily available to the general public through the successful execution of three direct response campaigns.

NCPC partnered with The Advertising Council who, with the creative talents of Saatchi & Saatchi, promoted the campaign objectives using advertising placements in various marketing media. Every year, television and radio stations nationwide donate millions of dollars in reserved airtime towards the campaign.

"Ever since its launch in 1980, the NCPC campaign has been one of our most popular and successful," states Peggy Conlon, President of The Advertising Council. "Today, the campaign is more relevant than ever, addressing issues such as school violence prevention and encouraging youth mentoring programs and teen participation in crime prevention. By way of the media's incredible show of support, it seems they agree; in 1998, the NCPC campaign received \$128 million in donated media, ranking it number one of all Ad Council campaigns."

NCPC's 1-800-WE-PREVENT campaign, presently entitled "Invest in Youth," focuses on encouraging callers to carry out crime prevention objectives in their community and contribute monetary donations to the organization. The services provided by ConServIT are the critical link between the successful media efforts and distribution of materials to the public. ConServIT's proprietary technology serves the full spectrum of the public calling to the 1-800-WE-PREVENT number. It handles the calls just as an operator would, but automatically.

"This has been a very successful, long-running campaign," states Judy Kirby, Director of Publication for NCPC. "The cost of using live operators is significant and touch-tone response systems are too impersonal. ConServIT has allowed our campaigns to be cost effective for NCPC and a friendly, pleasant experience for our callers."

Due to the success rate for the 1-800-WE-PREVENT campaign, NCPC has responded to the Spanish-speaking community by breaking the language barrier to create a separate UNETE campaign with 1-800-727-UNETE.

The teen involvement program developed by NCPC is also successful, as evidenced by a significant positive call volume. The current campaign, entitled "Everybody Loves to Trash Teens: Prove Them Wrong," operates similar to the "Invest in Youth" program but utilizes a unique toll-free number. Youth education and involvement programs, such as "Youth as Resources" and "Teens, Crime and the Community," aim to reduce the unacceptable levels of violence by and against young people and to change community influences that cause crime. As a result, over half a million people have implemented the anti-violence movement within their community.

NCPC frequently has controversial advertisements that are intended to evoke emotion and induce an interest in prevention activities. Controversy arises from special interest groups opposing their anti-violence efforts. ConServIT's proprietary technology ensures distribution of information to callers, without risking argumentative, time-consuming live interaction with callers having different reasons for making calls. It avoids the possibility of a legal dispute.

A recent public service announcement featuring President Clinton as an advocate for youth gun prevention generated thousands of calls, many of which were controversial and would have been difficult for operators to handle. The complicated nature of this call activity, coupled with the high volume, could have overwhelmed a live telephone center. ConServIT's advanced capabilities assure that callers wanting information sent are properly served.

While ConServIT obtains accurate information from legitimate callers and helps to protect NCPC from difficult callers, the low cost for each inquiry is an added bonus for NCPC. ConServIT's technology also helps NCPC maintain control over direct response budgets when extreme call volumes are unexpectedly encountered.

#### **About ConServIT, a service of Conversational Voice Technologies**

ConServIT provides automated inbound teleservices using proprietary voice processing, switching, and reporting technologies. ConServIT is a leading provider of automated call handling services and database management of information. More information, including a real telephone call handled by ConServIT, is available at [www.conservit.com](http://www.conservit.com) or 1-800-994-4400. E-mail: [sales@conservit.com](mailto:sales@conservit.com).