

Industry Leaders Can Rehabilitate Less-Lethal Technology's Image by Offering and Aggressively Promoting Safer Stun Guns

(BOSTON, Mass. – Nov. 8, 2005 – StunGun.com) According to a nationally recognized expert, bad press and the attention of human rights groups threaten future buyers' confidence in stun gun technology and may have precipitated a recent plunge in industry profits. Robert Siciliano, president of StunGun.com, urges leaders of this market to reign in what seems like inscrutable investor activities and take major steps to rehabilitate stun guns' image while the window for positive impact remains open.

“The bad rap on stun guns is partially deserved,” said Siciliano. “More important, the perception is the reality. Major companies in this market space have acted in ways that many see as inconsiderate, irresponsible, and legally questionable. Whether these people are correct in their assessments becomes a minor point once a perception sets in.” An expert in personal security and identity theft, Siciliano delivers presentations to Fortune 500 companies across the nation and is author of “The Safety Minute: 01.”

Reuters reported on Oct. 26 that a major stun gun manufacturer had experienced a 95 percent dip in profit during the third quarter. Just two days earlier, *MarketWatch* and others reported that this same manufacturer's stocks rose on news of the company's latest offering, a camera to record users' activities on its existing weapon. This safety-minded feature received renewed coverage almost two weeks later via an *Associated Press* story.

On Nov. 6, *The Indianapolis Star* ran an article adding context to law enforcement cutbacks on orders of stun guns. Meanwhile, Stinger Systems of Florida introduced to the market a stun gun to rival the established leader's weapon.

“To salvage sales, this industry must issue sweeping messages,” said Siciliano. “Someone needs to take concerted actions that are grand and reassuring in scope. And the media need to cover what's said whether the message comes from new or established players.”

“Stock prices and profits have been all over the place,” Siciliano added. “Shareholders and other business stakeholders in the stun gun market space are flying by the seats of their pants and jockeying for the big score. Add new players to the fray, and developments will either mellow or become more frenetic.”

Human rights organizations are beginning to claim victories in their efforts to enforce safe stun gun use. An Oct. 26 Amnesty International press release noted that a recent court case looking at stun guns, Indiana's Monroe County Jail, and the death of James Borden coincided with the largest manufacturer's decision to change its warning labels and the growing movement in law enforcement to curtail use of the weapons.

“Pointing to the questionable safety of current stun gun offerings,” said Siciliano, “organizations like the American Civil Liberties Union and Amnesty International have fanned the flames of the stun gun debate. An embattled industry has responded with carefully orchestrated media blitzes touting new features to create the perception that manufacturers are devoted to safety.”

Siciliano concluded, "With sales suffering such a large hit as of late, the success of efforts, thus far, to quell law enforcement's and the public's concerns remains unclear. But one thing is certain: The maelstrom leaves casual observers blindsided."

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Certified as an instructor of safety and security by dozens of state governing boards, Siciliano teaches people how to avoid and escape assaults. Numerous industry associations have certified his programs to provide their members with security training. In addition to CNN, MSNBC, Fox News, and CNBC, he has been featured on "ABC News with Sam Donaldson," "The Montel Williams Show," "Maury Povich," "Sally Jesse Raphael," "The Howard Stern Show," and other programs.

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