



DEAD ON ARRIVAL

A Global Manufacturer's Mexican Operations Confront Extortion


CLIENT
 An International Conglomerate


SERVICE
 Extortion Investigation in a High-Risk Environment


INDUSTRY
 Manufacturing

UNPLUGGED

A FRANK OPINION
 The Project Manager's Post-Engagement Perspective

"You have to understand, addressing security issues in Mexico can present unique challenges. Nuances matter – in intelligence gathering and interpretation, in networking with in-country authorities and in crafting effective response options.

Down here, most of my time is spent on services designed for Mexico's high-risk environment. Like executive protection and the protection of companies' personnel and assets. Like crisis management planning – for missing or kidnapped executives. Like first-responder services – for kidnappings.

The list goes on. Due diligence and employment pre-screening investigations. Product diversion and cargo hijacking investigations. And C-TPAT Facility Surveys. A lot of those."

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Client's Challenge

Just before sunset on a hot summer day in Mexico in 2011, an SUV roared up to the factory's entrance and dumped the body of a young man with multiple gunshots and signs of torture in the dust.

The occupants fired shots into the air as they drove off. Three days after the factory manager provided information to the police, a letter was delivered to the facility. It threatened the factory manager and his family because he had spoken to the authorities. And it directed him to begin collecting funds to make a payoff.

The Hillard Heintze Solution

The executive team of this international corporation reached out to connections at the highest levels of U.S. federal law enforcement. "We need help. What should we be looking for?" they asked.

The response was quick: a private sector provider with (1) relationships to key resources, (2) access to sources that can uncover hard-to-find intelligence, (3) senior expertise in crafting in-country options highly customized to local circumstances on the ground and (4) command-level experience in executing plans under time pressure and operating constraints quickly and efficiently with minimal impacts to the company's operations.

Five minutes later, the corporation's Chief Risk Officer was on the telephone with Arnette Heintze. "We understand you're the firm that can help us in Mexico."

Impact on the Client

Within hours, Hillard Heintze's Mexico team was in motion, with critical support provided by business intelligence analysts and research experts from the firm's Chicago headquarters and senior security experts in Washington, D.C. in touch with their federal agency counterparts.

Moving with urgency because of the risk of harm to the manager and his family, the highly coordinated international team began its investigation – reviewing the evidence, interviewing the manager and key witnesses, liaising with U.S. and Mexican law enforcement agents and analyzing intelligence.