

# FORMER FBI AGENT HEADS WESTLAKE SECURITY FIRM

By Daniel Wolowicz  
THE ACORN  
02/09/2006



Scott Nelson

As a captain in the United States Marine Corps during Vietnam, a 26-year veteran of the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the former head of security for Warner Bros. Studios and Time Warner, Scott Nelson knows a thing or two about protecting others.

Nelson, 62, has taken his past experience and his network of relationships with former federal agents and created the Westlake Village-based private security firm, Security and Risk Management Group.

With a client list that includes the FBI, the Marines and the New York Stock Exchange, Nelson's company offers a wide array of protective services for clients such as bank officials, entertainment moguls and high-profile business leaders.

Mild mannered and quick to offer a handshake, Nelson comes off more like a congenial college professor – he teaches at the University of Phoenix – than a decorated Vietnam veteran.

The son of a former Army colonel, Nelson was born in South Carolina and spent most of his life moving due to his father's career. After graduating from Jacksonville University, Nelson joined the Marines in 1965.

“(My dad) wasn't too happy I'd gone into the Marines,” Nelson chuckled. “He was hoping I'd join the Army.”

A true leatherneck, Nelson enlisted as a second lieutenant in the Infantry. In 1968, he was a company commander during the Battle for Hue, a bloody, month-long battle for the heavily-fortified city.

Like many of his fellow Marines, Nelson was injured in the fight and was awarded the Purple Heart.

The Hue conflict was the subject of Nicolas Warr's book “Phase Line Green: the Battle for Hue, 1968.” Warr was an officer who served under Nelson during the battle.

When Warr's account of the battle for Hue differed from government reports, his publisher, Naval Institute Press, said they would not release the book without an officer's corroboration of the course of events, Warr said.

Warr turned to Nelson to confirm the book's accuracy, and it was Nelson's approval that eventually led the Naval Institute Press to release the book.

“(Scott) is somebody you want to spend time around,” Warr said. “I served with and under many great leaders in the Marine Corp., but none was a more natural leader than Scott Nelson.”

Nelson went on to serve at the U.S. Army Special Forces Jungle School in Panama, Cuba and San Juan before retiring as a captain.

During his military career, Nelson earned the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star and the Presidential Unit Citation for combat action.

Nelson became a special agent for the FBI in 1970 and was sworn in under J. Edgar Hoover. His time in the Bureau was spent at four major field offices, including San Francisco, where he served as the head of criminal investigations.

Nelson later worked at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Va. and FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C. before he retired in 1995 as a deputy assistant director-inspector

Nelson was hired to head security at Warner Bros, and was working in New York for then AOL/Time Warner when terrorists struck the World Trade Center on 9/11.

“The nature of security changed that day,” Nelson said. “It hasn’t been the same since.”

He said the biggest change in national security has been the realization that America’s infrastructure is vulnerable to outside attack.

“The American infrastructure includes transportation, power, water, energy . . . financial systems . . . the New York Stock Exchange,” Nelson said.

With the signing of the U.S. Patriot Act by President George W. Bush in late 2001, the FBI began focusing more on protecting America against future terrorist attacks.

Although the post-9/11 zeitgeist sparked unprecedented growth in the security industry, Nelson didn’t start his own security firm until 2002 when he left Time Warner.

Nelson said his company uses a network of retired FBI and CIA agents to help businesses protect their assets.

“Our focus is on protecting people, property and information,” Nelson said.

As a consultant, he assesses a company’s current security system, helps the company devise an effective deterrence, and then offers training for security personnel.

Nelson said his firm also provides background checks, personal bodyguards and in-house investigations.

Nelson also specializes in helping high-level executives manage personal and financial information available on the Internet. Known as “Web Scrub,” the service protects business owners against identity fraud and misinformation.

Nelson said his firm is selective when choosing clients. Currently, his company is carrying out nearly a dozen operations throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Due to the nature of his job, Nelson remained private about his family.

For more information about Nelson and his company, Security and Risk Management Group, visit <http://www.srmg-link.com> on the Internet or call (818) 482-0540.