Marketing Strategies for Landscape Architects

ASLA Colorado Spring Conference: “Tools for Change”
May 15, 2009

Presented by: Michelle Francis, Philosophy Communication
Agenda

• Overview
• Easy-to-implement marketing tactics
• Brand management
• Social media
• Become a thought leader
• Advice on where to invest your marketing dollars
• Top marketing mistakes
Develop Your Marketing Tactics
All It Takes Is a Focused Approach

• **Brand Management**
  – Figure out what you’re good at and what you want to do
  – Know your audience
  – Identify your USP
  – Create business collateral, marketing pieces and a website that fit your brand

• **Social Media**
  – Online ads and groups
  – Twittering
  – Blogging

• **Become a Thought Leader**
  – Volunteer
  – Speaking engagements/awards
  – Byline articles
Brand Management

Who Are You and Why Do We Care?

• Figure out what you are good at and what you want to do
  – Get specific: urban projects, upscale residential, green roofs, etc.

• Know your audience
  – Avoid the urge to reach everyone

• Identify your Unique Selling Proposition (USP)
  – Show why you’re different and how you bring value to clients

• Create business collateral, marketing pieces and a website that fits your brand and speaks to your audience.
If you think it, create it, innovate it, finesse it, beautify it, build it, and preserve it, they will come. Practicality meets vision. The art of design meets the considerations of society and sustainability. For five decades, **SWA Group** has been widely recognized as a world design leader in landscape architecture, planning and urban design. Our experience spans virtually every type, scale and location of project. Our job is to go beyond the expected.
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Our design process integrates global considerations with a sensitivity to human engagement, material expression and innovation.
Brand Management

What the Heck’s A Unique Selling Proposition (USP)?

• It should incorporate the following:
  – Your core values
  – How your firm is different
  – How your firm meets the needs of your target audience

• Your USP should identify a unique niche

• Your USP must be realistic and a statement you will be able to fulfill

• Start out broad and narrow it down to one paragraph if written or 60 seconds if verbal

• A good USP doesn’t have to appeal to everyone!
Unique Selling Proposition
Philosophy’s USP

What We Do
Philosophy Communication is a marketing and public relations firm focused on creative campaigns

How We Do It
that drive sales, generate awareness and embrace clients’ reputations

What’s Different
to reach the affluent buyer.
Social Media

It’s Not as Big a Mystery as You Might Think

• Google ads
  • Use the keyword tool

• Implement a business group on professional sites like Facebook and LinkedIn
  • Ask clients, employees and associates to join your group and begin discussions, post photos, etc.

• Twitter about completed projects with links to your website
  • Allows 140 characters, so utilize links to sites for maximum impact

• Post to professional blog sites
  • Position yourself as an expert by submitting blogs or replying to posted blogs
Become a Thought Leader
You’re an Expert, Aren’t You?

• Volunteer
  – Expanding, relevant nonprofits
  – Alliance for Sustainable Colorado, Environment Colorado, JSR Foundation, etc.

• Speaking engagements and awards
  – ASLA Colorado, ASLA National, AIA, ULI, nonprofits listed above, etc.

• Submit byline articles
  – *Exposures* newsletter
  – *Landscape Architecture* magazine
  – Professional trade publications
ASLA Panel of Landscape Architects, Architects, and Planners Endorse Park Service Plan for National Mall

Designers keep NPS aware of Mall’s many meanings and uses

by Zach Whittier
Associate Editor

Summary: The American Society of Landscape Architects voiced strong support for the National Park Service’s (NPS) plan for renovating the National Mall at a press conference in early April. Representatives of a panel assembled by the professional association spoke of the agency’s “heroic” efforts in maintaining the Mall in the midst of a “crisis of maintenance,” and largely supported the measures the Park Service intends to pursue to repair the monumental swath of property stretching from Capitol Hill to the Lincoln Memorial. The most substantive point of discussion between the ASLA panel and the NPS centered on how to ensure that the Park Service is aware of the Mall’s status as a symbolic space of various and shifting meanings, all of primary national importance, and all of which require nuanced and diverse renovation strategies.

*This plan must address the many layers of this place,* said ASLA President and Pano Choir Angeles Gove. *It’s an international symbol, it’s a national stage, it’s an urban civic space, and, of course, it’s a neighborhood park.*

*The Mall isn’t just one thing,* said panel member
Internationally Acclaimed Landscape Architect Speaks in Thessaloniki

Martha Schwartz, world famous landscape architect visited the city of Thessaloniki, invited by the Agriculture School and the Interdisciplinary Program of Landscape Architecture of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She spoke on "Art and Landscape" at the Polytechnic School of Aristotle University. Martha Schwartz has been commissioned, in cooperation with Prof. Ioannis A. Tsaklidis to study and reconstruct the municipal stadium of the city of Edessa. This project is under the Strategic Development Plan of the city of Edessa and aims to upgrade the center of the town by enhancing its ecological, historical and cultural character. This is the first time that a Greek provincial city has invited such a renowned landscape architect to develop such a plan.

For more information please click here: Newspaper Clippings | Makedonia | Aggelopoulo | Eleftherotypia | Simera | More in the Online Press | Kathimerini | Eleftherotypia |
How to Invest Your Marketing Dollars

Grow Your Business Pipeline

• A general formula to follow:
  – Spend 10 percent of the total cost of your ideal project on that year’s marketing efforts

• Follow the “rule of three:”
  – Generate buzz by picking three marketing tactics to follow each year, like direct mail, social media and speaking engagements

• Professional development and networking
  – Set aside a monthly budget and go to lunch, events, cocktails, etc.
  – Support your employees doing so with association membership and an expert account

• It’s not just a matter of dollars, but also of time
  – Devote time up front to ensure your message is focused and well-thought-out – you’ll save money later
Top Marketing Mistakes - And How to Avoid Them

• Spending without rationale
  – Not identifying a marketing budget
  – “Getting it out”, rather than putting thought behind your spending

• Not having a brand
  – Inconsistent messages
  – Changing focus/lack of commitment
  – Not identifying and following your core values

• Relying on one marketing method for success

• Starting and stopping your marketing efforts
  – Clients and leads will wonder what happened if you suddenly stop communicating

• Creating messages based on what you like rather than what you can do for your clients
  – Obtain client testimonials and write case studies

• Not implementing metrics to measure marketing success

• Writing your own marketing copy
  – At a minimum, hire a professional editor

• Not communicating your marketing strategy to employees
  – They are your “piped pipers”
  – Consistent messaging is key
Conclusion

• Marketing is only one part of the equation – take an active role in promoting your business!
• Questions?