

STRUCTURAL BUILDING COMPONENTS MAGAZINE (FORMERLY WOODWORDS)

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President's Message



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"Broaden Your Marketing Horizons" by Mary Pat Keller, 2001 WTCA President

"BUY ONE, GET ONE FREE!" "INVENTORY REDUCTION SALE!" "HURRY!!! EVERYTHING MUST GO!" These are phrases that you would never see associated with the component industry, but they are used every day to promote a variety of other products. We are used to seeing these types of attention-getters and thinking that advertising is a waste of money in this business. After all, who is going to come to a truss manufacturer's clearance sale?

While this type of advertising may not be appropriate for our industry, the promotion of our companies and products certainly is. We have been thinking of what it means to "market" or "advertise" in terms that are too narrow. How many truss plants have a line item in their budget for advertising and marketing?

Advertising doesn't have to mean developing television commercials or hiring a PR firm. Marketing is something we seem to be unsure of, despite the fact that we all understand selling. There are some simple ways to market your business that require only some time and attention. In fact, you may be promoting your businesses without even realizing it

- Do you have a web site? A growing number of component manufacturers have web sites and are linked to the sites of other companies and our WTCA site.
- Do you have a logo? Something visual to distinguish you from your competitors can go a long way in name recognition.
- Do you have business cards?
- Do you contract booth space at your local Home Builders Association show?
- Do you participate on the committees of your local Home Builders Association?

If you answered yes to any of these, you are already marketing your business!

TAKE IT A STEP FURTHER

Brainstorm. Be creative. Think outside the box. The concept of marketing is simple—you must get people to remember your name. Put a little effort into it and your company will be the one that people remember. Here are a few low-cost ideas to get you started.

- **Send monthly mailings to current and potential clients.** This need not be complicated. It can be as simple as a post card to inform customers that you provide different services or products than your competition.
- **Enclose an insert with your invoices.** The insert can thank current customers for their business, give advice about using your product or serve as a type of company newsletter.
- **Include jobsite packets with your completed projects.** These packets, which contain WTCA jobsite safety and educational information and any other materials that your company feels are necessary to educate your customers, can easily be personalized regarding your company.
- **Educate Your Customers.** Providing a breakfast or box lunch session or “tool box talk” about your company’s products and services as well as proper use of components can make a lasting positive impression. WTCA’s Truss Technology in Building brochures provide ideal talking points for this kind of educational program.
- **Network at tradeshow.** Make a point of attending industry-related tradeshow to meet suppliers and potential customers. Your personality may be your best sales tool!

You have already helped your company's marketing campaign more than you know by becoming a member of WTCA. Our association is dedicated to promoting the use of our products to our customers. Take advantage of this! Contact WTCA and have them customize a brochure for your company to use in mailings, and meet your peers and suppliers at the BCMC tradeshow this fall in Louisville, Kentucky (www.bcmcshow.com). Talk to them about new marketing ideas.

By using the resources that WTCA makes available to you, you can create a successful marketing program for your business. For the price of membership, you have virtually hired your own marketing team—and you thought that this would be hard!

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