

## **New Builders' Success Benefits from a Thoughtful Construction Marketing Strategy**

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***You must know your audience and build a marketing plan before creating a successful brand for your construction company.***

These haven't been the best of times for the construction industry. No news flash there. However, it's fair to say that more weathered contractors- those construction companies with a few more years under their belts-are probably doing better than newer companies. After all, years of experience and the right relationships gives seasoned firms an advantage when they're looking for new business opportunities in any economy.

Too often, newer companies without those inroads choose to jump headfirst into what they believe will enable them to get their message across: snappy 30-second commercials or a public relations blitz. Unfortunately, success rarely happens this way (in any industry). In fact, it quite often backfires. Advertising and public relations activities can and do work well for the construction industry in getting its message heard, but, just like in building, they only work when a strong foundation is already set. Smart businesses take a deep breath and begin preparing long before a new website or ad campaign is unveiled with these five important steps:

### **1. Construction Market Research/Competitive Research**

Know your target audience-those who'll be asking for and buying your services. Know what they like and dislike about your competitors. Know how they like to receive messages (are they TV watchers, social media followers, radio listeners and/or mail or newspaper readers?). Know their price points and know what influences their buying decisions. Market research is a key first step in any business endeavor, and often the most overlooked step. Focus groups, online industry surveys, mail surveys or telephone surveys geared to your particular audience can reveal priceless bits of intelligence for a new construction firm.

Many times, the intelligence a new firm garners from construction market research saves it from making costly mistakes. For instance, when they find out that their target audience rarely watches television, they don't leap into expensive television commercials. Market research can reveal information on the buyer's perception of competitors, which can later be exploited. Market research can and usually is worth its weight in gold (and it is not as expensive as most executives think).

### **2. Strategy/Planning**

Firms don't start to build without a blueprint. Likewise, they shouldn't start an ad or PR campaign without a plan. New construction companies should create a business and construction marketing plan that lists strategic goals and the tactical roadmap toward reaching them. Every manager should be made aware of the plan-or contribute to the plan as appropriate. When everyone is signed on and singing the same song, it's much easier to reach goals within a designated time frame and budget.