

RIGHT | NOW

Get your firm's name in the news

There's no better way to get your firm's name out and make others think of you as the expert.

By DAN NAUMOVICH
Correspondent

Deadlines are looming, clients are clamoring for your attention, and HR wants your staff evaluations, ASAP. So, when a reporter calls or e-mails looking for some professional insight into a story, it's easy to push that one to the back burner, if not off the stove altogether. But at what cost?

According to Susan Shelby and Pauline Harris, two public relations professionals who serve clients in the A/E/P and environmental consulting industries, firms are missing out on a golden opportunity when they don't take the time to respond to media inquiries.



Susan Shelby,
Founder and
Principal,
Rhino PR.

"Positive publicity is very important because it allows a professional services firm to showcase the expertise and experience of its staff. Spreading the word about all of your services allows you to reach potential new clients or perhaps additional work with an existing client," Shelby says. She is the founder and principal of Rhino PR in Hamilton, Massachusetts. Her agency works with A/E firms on both long-

"We evaluate each opportunity that presents itself based on the audience of the publication: Will it reach our client's potential clients? And the focus of the article: Is it appropriate for our client? At the end of the day, it's all about winning new work."

term programs and shorter engagements.

Responding to a reporter, whether it's taking a couple of minutes to answer a few questions or several hours collaborating on a story, will definitely result in unbillable time. That doesn't mean it isn't time well spent.

"Most A/E firms are on a tight budget when it comes to marketing and simply do not have an advertising budget that would support the generation of the type of attention one would like to garner. PR helps to support that effort without a lot of cash outlay," says Harris, owner/principal of SPIN in Baltimore, a marketing and public relations firm specializing in integrated marketing for the built environment.

According to Harris, being highlighted in an industry publication establishes credibility in the marketplace, promotes the firm's culture, attracts potential employees and influences decision makers. What's more, the news format lends an air of objectivity that is often absent in advertisements and marketing materials.

"It's not perceived as a 'chest-pounding' message when received through this

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WHAT'S | WORKING

From codes to brands. **Pages 6-7**



Keeping
Contact



Code
for success



Architecture firm
rebrands itself

We're on Social Media!

twitter.com/zweigwhite
www.facebook.com/ZweigWhite
http://blog.zweigwhite.com/
www.linkedin.com/company/zweigwhite
www.youtube.com/user/ZweigWhite

Short takes on real-world marketing tactics that are producing results

CODE FOR SUCCESS

When Marilyn Deane Mendell decided to broaden her network and attract new, interesting clients for her marketing and public relations firm, *WinSpin CIC, Inc.*, she rolled out her 'Early Adaptor' campaign. Mendell integrated traditional and interactive marketing elements by building the campaign around Quick Response codes.

QR codes are a form of bar code that, when scanned, direct users to a web site. With multiple scanning applications available for smart phone users, QR codes are rapidly appearing everywhere—in print ads, in-store displays, direct mail campaigns, web sites, e-mail marketing, and couponing, Mendell says.

"If the QR code intrigues you, then you're the right client," Mendell states on her promotional postcard, the first component of her campaign. Postcards are sealed in translucent bags with square QR code buttons directing recipients to the 'Early Adaptors' page on the *WinSpin CIC* web site, where users complete a form to receive an invitation to a networking party with other 'Early Adaptors.' The site also provides information about QR codes and shows

examples of their use in advertising.

Mendell expanded the campaign through direct mail, print advertising, and even on the back of her vehicle. Mendell signed on as a sponsor of the 2010 AIA Design DC conference, and distributed her QR code packages as bag inserts for all conference attendees. Following the event, she mailed the packages to packages to 300 contacts.

Utilizing QR code technology has made it easy for Mendell to track response rates, she says. Web hits increased by 4,000 in the month following the postcard package distribution, and by 2,000 in the weeks following the ad.

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Change Management, Branding, Public Relations



This weird looking box is called a Quick Response (QR) code, and it's a form of bar code that will, in this case, bring you directly to my website. They're used all over – find them in ads, articles in the NY Times, and retail product labels. QR codes can immediately direct clients to any website. For Apple people, download NEO Reader or QuickMark, and for Palm, QR deCODEr.

www.winspincic.com 540.207.4045

Boston

New York

Pittsburgh

Washington

ARCHITECTURE FIRM REBRANDS ITSELF

PHX Architecture is experiencing a rebirth. Formerly Peterson Architecture & Associates, the 15-person architecture, design and planning firm in Phoenix, Arizona, is employing traditional and emerging marketing tactics to get the word out on the change.

Besides new logos and a new web site, the firm is also using social media to reflect what is happening with the firm.

"For years, we were known as a residential, custom design firm," says Nikai Conti, principal. "But, about four years ago we started doing more commercial and hospitality work. Some people knew us for that type of work, but commercial people kept thinking of us as residential. Right now, 60-70% of our work is commercial. That clientele was looking for something a little different."

The first view of the new logo was on the company's holiday cards, with an ongoing rollout through other means. A new web site, which mimics the black-and-white logo, will be available within the coming weeks.

The new logo—which can be used in white, gray or black depending on the use—has also found its way to Facebook and Twitter.

"Logos are very important, and in some cases the logo is now the dominant focus, especially as communication shifts to PDAs (and phones) with the smaller screen size," Conti says.

Although the new name might sound fairly simple, Conti said the principals labored with Scottsdale-based Zog Media to come up with a new identity.



"We wanted to ID ourselves to a place, and since we do a majority of work in the Phoenix metro area, we came up with PHX," Conti says. "The mythical thought of a phoenix rising brought the firm to thinking about its own evolution. The economy took a huge hit, and is still recovering. We are also changing and readjusting to where we find ourselves today. We're in a much different place than we were four or five years ago."

"We announced that we were planning the change on Twitter and Facebook two years ago. We also use a web service called MyEmma for e-mail blasts, and put it in our newsletter, *Edifice*," she says.

With help from its media partners, web traffic, blogs, and blasts, Conti says they have amassed a "huge readership—100,000 in our market, each week."

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