

C O L U M N S

VOLUME 19, NUMBER 1 PITTSBURGH, A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS JUNE 2005

Architects' Sketches



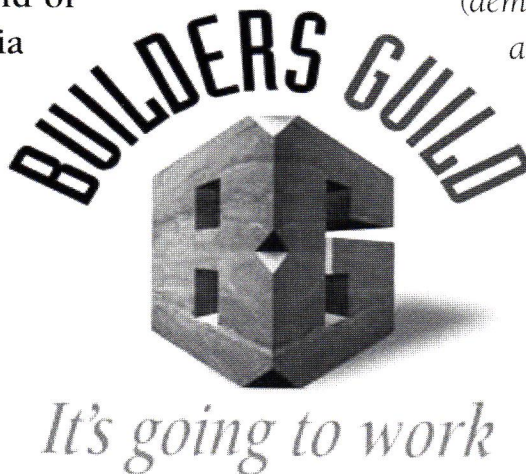
3 mm
Reference to Tower Old Ben
London

The Pride of Craftsmanship, the Power of Partnership.

A new way of doing business,
The Builders Guild of
Western Pennsylvania

The VALUE of Union Construction ...
(demonstrated, signed, sealed
and delivered ...)

It's a first – The Builders Guild is an industry-wide initiative bringing management and labor unions together with a single goal; to move every construction project smoothly from concept to completion by working collaboratively as the premier providers of construction services in the region.



Customer Bill of Rights is our promise that customers receive:

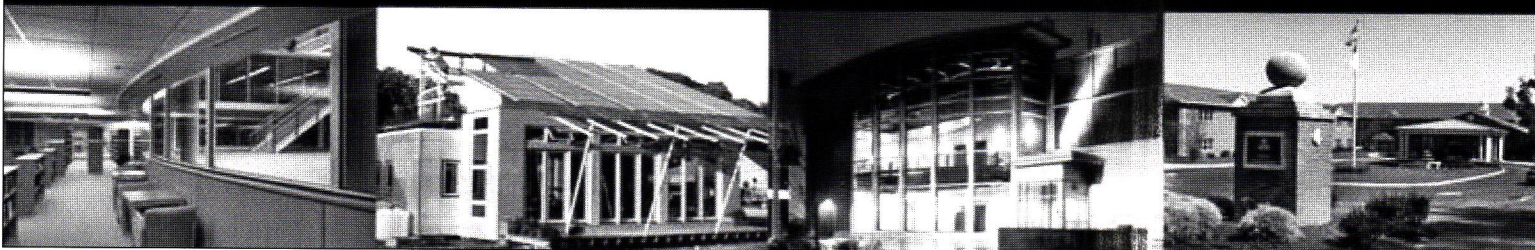
- Professional, cost-conscious project management team
- Smart Business know-how
- The best trained most capable work force
- Pre-job planning through completion
- A diverse, drug-free work force
- Safe workers, safe job sites, quality performance
- Service you can count on
- Bottom line dollar-for-dollar value

The Builders Guild of Western Pennsylvania, ... representing a unified construction industry of building trades unions, 33,000 skilled craftsmen, union contractors, contractor associations and industry professionals working together to deliver **value** at every phase of the construction project.

Building quality projects on time and on budget.

Find out how this new and unique labor/management partnership can help you get the best return on your construction investment.

Visit www.buildersguild.org to learn more, obtain a comprehensive list of contacts and see projects and testimonials from satisfied customers



The Magic of Marketing

By Tracy Certo



The encouraging news is, when you do your marketing well, you truly stand out.

Marketing is everything,

my friend Maureen said to me recently. You can have the best product in town but if you don't have good marketing, what's it worth? Conversely, you can have a not-so-great product with an outstanding marketing effort that makes the product successful. My friend is not in marketing; she's just smart with enough experience to know what a difference it makes. And in the organization where she now works, she pushed for a marketing pro who was finally hired and has made a big difference.

As editor of this magazine for architects and related professions, I'm in the position to notice marketing efforts—good and bad—by local architect firms. And I've been on the other side of the fence as well, working in an advertising/marketing agency for several years and then in sales. So while reading the book, *Communication by Design* which I review and highly recommend here, I considered numerous examples of marketing done well, or not so well.

Author Joan Capelin outlines 29 marketing principles, such as *It's not the problem itself but how you handle the problem that will be remembered*. In *Get the right picture*, she insists on the importance of quality photos that effectively showcase your work. A photo really can speak a thousand words, good or bad, and how you can put a good marketing presentation—or a Design Awards board—together without great photos is a mystery. And yet. Time and again in *Columns* we request photos only to be disappointed by the quality or low resolution. More times than I can count we wanted to feature a project on the cover but the firm didn't have a photo that was up to snuff. Large firm? Small firm? Shouldn't matter. We loved the photos of True Café and Bartini, photographed by Ed Massery, that Peter Margittai, AIA gave us and one made the cover.

In another example of good marketing, I know a very savvy marketing director who invited me to lunch when I was new on the job and then gave me a tour of the firm while introducing me to everyone—who knows we prefer vertical to horizontal shots for the cover and knows the minimum requirements of size and dpi, etc. When I call her for a photo, I know I don't have to call back again. Another

example: recently, I called a project manager for information on a major project in Pittsburgh. He gave me a wealth of information and presented it so well I quoted him at length. As project manager obviously you have to know your stuff—but not everyone is able to communicate it so effectively.

The encouraging news is, when you do your marketing well, you truly stand out. Sadly, expectations are low out there and I count myself in that crowd. Once, for a cover story I featured one architectural firm prominently and then was treated to a phone call thanking me for the coverage. "We were thrilled!" said the marketing director. Journalists never count on praise but we do expect to hear when things go wrong and you learn to take it like a pro. Eventually. It makes sense, really, since you learn from your mistakes and get the chance to correct them in print. But notes of thanks are rare in this business which is why they're appreciated all the more. And they're not forgotten.

In an interesting example of effective marketing, Michael Singer of Joan Capelin's public relations firm initially contacted me by email to review this book. He did a good job presenting the pitch with quotes and testimony and, knowing the value of this material, I was already hooked. Within days the book arrived and then an exceptionally polite letter was emailed as a follow-up. Did I receive the book and have a chance to start reading it yet? Was there anything else he could do? As a result, I wanted to read the book more since I knew he had followed the principles within. That's good marketing.

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Although this issue was supposed to feature a roundtable on starting your own firm, we held off until July due to late scheduling of the event. The good news is, we have more space to feature architects' sketches, a wonderful addition to *Columns* that we will now offer on a semi-regular basis. So if you haven't submitted your sketches, we welcome you to do so. Think of it as a good way to market your talents—and your firm. And thanks in advance.

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On the cover: Dahlen Ritchey sketch from his Europe trip, 1934.