

Case Study

Excel Builders & Renovators Inc

JUNE 2009

EXCEL BUILDERS & RENOVATORS INC.–BEST PRACTICE – MARKETING

As of early 2008 it became clear that the economy was headed for a serious downturn and that the construction sector would be particularly hard hit. In order to combat the shrinking economy, a massive marketing program was designed that would clearly distinguish the unique services offered by Excel and set the company apart from the competition. Prior to this point, Excel had had only a minimal marketing effort.

After reviewing the company web site, business cards, letterhead, construction signage and every other touch point it became clear that the company image was inconsistent with the well thought out and thorough approach to design and construction being offered by Excel. Company President Matthew Goldfine put it best when he said, “After considerable soul searching and some hand wringing, the decision was made to completely let go of the past and reconsider everything we knew regarding how the company was represented in the marketplace. We made a bold decision to cement our image into a brand. We were willing to risk the familiarity our existing customers had with us in order to create something that would capture the imagination of our clients in the same way our work does.”

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The first step was to complete an extensive analysis of customers, competitors, internal practices and the nature of the product. From the understanding gained from that research a stunning, emotionally impactful logo was created. Excel then completely redesigned its business cards, stationery, signage and every other element that represented the company. The next phase was the redevelopment of Excel’s web site and new design was created to be fast loading, easy to navigate, intelligent and visually striking.

The final phase involved finding a way to capture and communicate the unique and exceptional approach Excel takes to both its customers and its work. The philosophy behind that approach was illustrated in a series of Key Phrases and Concepts that embody exactly what makes the company distinct in a way that can be easily conveyed by Excel’s managers and understood by its customers. Among them is something called The Total Approach, a design and build methodology, which takes into consideration the unique living and working patterns of each individual client. Rather than forcing clients to

accommodate the way they work to fit the space, the space is uniquely tailored to the client.

Extending the Total Approach to Excel's working methodology a comprehensive client services manual was developed, containing a series of questionnaires and checklists, to ensure that the company's philosophy would be consistently and thoroughly implemented with every single client. Customer response to the manual has been overwhelmingly positive.

Simultaneously an extensive public relations and media outreach program was begun to communicate Excel's approach and accomplishments to consumers, other businesses and the media at large.

EXCEL BUILDERS & RENOVATORS INC. – RESULTS

Excel Builders & Renovators Inc.'s marketing campaign which combined branding, grass roots marketing, and public relations was, by all measures, a success. Though the construction market as a whole decreased by 14% in the fourth quarter of 2008 compared to the same quarter the previous year, Excel saw a 35% increase in revenue for the same period. The number of sales leads being generated increased by a similar margin, providing additional bidding opportunities. The trend has continued into 2009 despite the market shrinking an additional 15% in the first quarter compared to the same period in 2008.

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The average size of the project being bid during the period also increased, nearly tripling in size and scope compared to projects bid in the prior year. Two additional project managers were hired in addition to several full time trades people increasing the size of Excel's work force by roughly 30%.

Public relations efforts resulted in an appearance on an episode of NBC's popular home renovation television series Open House to the Rescue. The episode was voted best of Open House 2008. Towards the end of the year, Excel began filming another episode that will air in 2009.

In October of 2008 Excel President Matthew Goldfine was interviewed about the credit crunch and subsequent bailout on WNYC Public Radio. A link to the interview can be found

on the Excel web site at: <http://www.excelbuilds.com/news/news.html>. He was also interviewed regarding the credit crunch and its impact on the construction industry in Crain's Business Magazine.

Excel's web site had a greater than six fold increase in traffic compared to the previous year and online press releases have appeared in nearly every major news outlet worldwide.