

7.18.14

'Take a New Look' Storms Out of the Gate

Word's getting out. In just six short weeks, the national campaign launched by the NPCA Marketing Task Force has made a dent in outreach to specifiers. So far, the "Take a New Look at Precast" campaign message has been seen by more than 1.5 million sets of eyes - that's 3 million eyeballs, people! From that group of specifiers, contractors, regulators and other targets, more than 7,000 folks clicked to learn more about precast concrete. Those numbers are just the beginning, so watch for regular updates in this spot and we'll keep piling on the stats.



Have you seen any of the ads? Want to? Here are some examples:

[See the campaign in action:](#)

TIPS & TRICKS

Let's Start from the Very Beginning

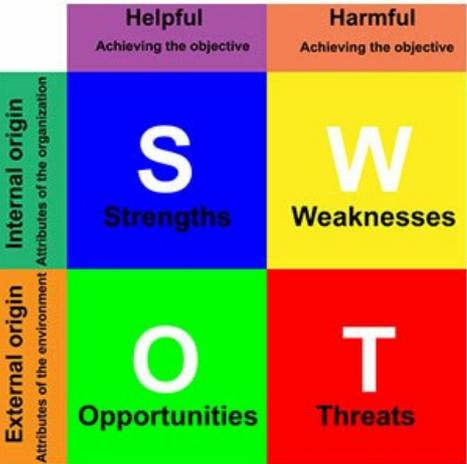
If you receive this email, your company already has a Marketing Toolkit, but if this is your company's first foray into marketing mastery, it may be wise to first take a step back before launching into Toolkit techniques.

If you've ever attended a marketing workshop, one of the first principles you may have learned is the SWOT analysis. SWOT is common in the business world, but it's absolutely gospel in marketing land. A clinical name like SWOT may make you want to tune out right about now, but don't. If you want to truly know where your company is at and where it needs to be, some simple research can aim you in the right direction.

SWOT stands for: **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats**

Any business guru will tell you that every company on earth faces these same four factors. But if you don't take the time to look into them and make decisions based on them, you may as well put potential decisions on a dart board, close your eyes, spin around a few times and throw.

If you've never done a SWOT analysis from the marketing viewpoint, now is a great time to start. Before digging into the Marketing Toolkit resources, gather your leadership team, get everybody in a positive, productive mindset (maybe with coffee and donuts) and look at your company's:



Strengths – What are you really good at? How can you get even better at your core competencies, or better leverage your strengths to earn new business?

Weaknesses – Oh, those dreaded weaknesses. Everybody has them but they are much harder to uncover because we tend to ignore them or compensate for them. Nobody really wants to delve into their weaknesses but this is the first step on the road to improvement. Ask the questions nobody wants to ask of all those who are in tune with your weaknesses -- inside and outside of your company. Hear them out and figure out a plan on how to improve.

Opportunities – Your markets are changing, and mostly for the good. What new opportunities are either out there now or will be soon? What are specifiers jazzed about right now? What do your suppliers see in their long-term forecasts? You can't possibly know

everything, so talk to people who have an inside track on what's coming in the next year, two years, five years. Your goal is to meet today's need, recognizing future needs and being agile enough to adapt.

Threats – You probably have a good idea of who your competitors are now but what else is coming? Do you know what they are saying about you? What are the myriad of factors that affect your business day-to-day? Are there regulations, mandates, new competing materials in your future that could impact your bottom line? Do you review these regularly and analyze how they will affect your company?



A true SWOT analysis takes time. Some companies hire consultants to lead them through the process. But if you create a well-thought out plan, assign a project leader to carry it out and then analyze your results, you will have a really clear picture of how these four factors affect your business. Then you're ready to create your marketing messages and get out there to uncover new opportunities. There are many variations on this theme, and nearly unlimited tools online, ways to graph your SWOTs and how to conduct the analysis. A little Googling will yield an abundance of resources.

ODDS & ENDS

What Do You Want to Learn?

We're happy to address any aspect of marketing in future editions of Marketing Express. Just drop an email to Kirk Stelsel (kstelsel@precast.org) with your great ideas. You can suggest any aspect of marketing that you want to know more about.

Precast Inc. Cover Contest - We Made it Easier!

Do you have a project that you'd like to tell the world about? Well, now all you need to do is fill out our new, simplified online form and we'll do the legwork. Just tell us your name, company and briefly describe the project. We'll follow up with you to provide details on how to submit photos, drawings and anything else needed to complete the entry. It will take you no more than a few minutes to enter. We know you're busy, so we've made it as easy as possible. Did we mention that every single entry will be represented in the Nov./Dec magazine? Did we mention that your entry will be automatically entered into the Creative Use of Precast Awards competition and become eligible for national honors? Even if you don't get the cover, you'll get some free pub for your great project through the cover contest and CUP Awards opportunities. Entry deadline is July 31, so you still have time. Do it today!

[Find out more about the Cover Contest](#)



Please Remember to Send Us Your Work

We've got a good start on our Take a New Look gallery, but we know there are more great examples out there. Be proud of your work! Submit your finished pieces to [Kirk Stelsel](#) today or send them through the [marketing education](#) page. We'll add your submissions to our gallery and show everybody how creative you are!

Are You the Right Person to Get This Email?

If you would rather have us send this email to somebody else in your plant, please let [Catherine Lewis](#) know and we will change the contact or add additional employees.

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