

MARKETING A PROFESSION

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How do you market a profession--not the work of the profession, but the profession itself?

In reality this may be a new venture since professions such as medicine, law, and the like really do not market themselves. There are no innovative or glitzy ads extolling one to "become a Doctor!", or a dentist, teacher or attorney, etc. Seems professions are divine inspirations, personal inclinations, parental directions, or mysterious "callings", amazingly accurate in their selection (i.e., "getting just the right person").

One is somehow magically drawn to become a.....professional. "It just feels like the right thing to do". We plead guilty of that very thing--some high school courses triggered interest that turned into a profession! Forty-five years a professional, and I still don't know how I got here!

Over the centuries there have been vacillations in the numbers of professionals. Not so long ago, the lack of engineering students, for example, was considered critical since so many new ventures were on the horizon in need of engineering guidance. That has now subsides somewhat, but not entirely.

It is a little disconcerting to think about the various professions and the services they provide in view of the fact that no one makes an effort to recruit, solicit or huckster the professions. The professional schools of the most part are populated by some manner mainly just the number of young minds that "choose" to go that route. Amazing!

Interesting too is the fact that more and more young ladies are choosing a profession in lieu of the more "traditional" work. This fact has swelled the school populations, no doubt, but also speaks to the change in culture and the talent that has too long gone unrecognized. Although I don't recall it ever being said that being in a profession is not a ladylike thing!

But wait! Hold on here!

There IS a profession that is seeking; is close to advertising for; and is moving toward some kind of marketing effort. The profession? Writing construction specifications!

We recognize that spec writing can be considered "part" of the design professions, but then there is a large cadre of folks who are not registered design professionals. Many trained but unregistered; others from far different backgrounds--but all successful and astute.

But within the profession, there is recognition that the future of specification writing is murky and most unclear--where are the future writers coming from? Indeed, will there still be specification writing, per se, as a function much less a profession?

We discuss, often and widely, the virtues of specifications writers--their mind set; their backgrounds; their attributes; their needs, etc. We "divine" what the ideal writer should be, and try to find what reasonable path they should follow, from square one to new but fairly accomplished writer.

All well and good--but how do we get them to square one?

MARKETING!!

OK, now how do we do that, and what is our target audience, and places of distribution?

In a bad metaphor--we know we have a "pond", now where do we find the "horse" and how do we lead to it there and entice it to take a drink?

Two recent note worthy efforts--CSI involvement with student affiliates, chapters and convention activities, and the St. Louis chapter seminar for the new and part-time writers.

Is there more coming? What sort of efforts? If not, why not?