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Donald Powers Architects changes name to Union Studio

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After ten years doing business as Donald Powers Architects, Inc. the firm has formally changed the name to Union Studio. The name change is accompanied by a new logo and a new website.

"It was time for our firm's name to more accurately reflect our mission as architects and urban planners," said founding principal Donald Powers, "as Union Studio, DPA can grow more easily and effectively into what it was always meant to be, a different kind of architecture firm whose expertise lies in the union of all the varied aspects of community design and the architecture which fulfills it. We design places that bring communities together, and the name Union Studio conveys that skill set better than an individual architect's name ever can."

The firm's two principals, Powers and Douglas Kallfelz, agreed to the name change over a year ago, and the firm actively began the rebranding process in January 2011.

"This was a strategic decision to position the firm for the future," Kallfelz said, "we wanted to acknowledge the contributions of all of our staff members, because every project we undertake comes to fruition through our combined efforts and talents."

The new visual identity, designed by graphic designer Robert Troutman, endeavors to 'freshen the classical' by referencing a traditional pattern combined with bright colors and updated typefaces. "Understanding the accumulated wisdom of history as it is expressed in traditional architecture and urban design is part of our firm's mission," said Emily Hall, director of marketing & new business development, "and we also value simplicity and economy. All of those things needed to be communicated in our new look."

The firm also added various, atypical sort functions to the portfolio section of the website, so that visitors can 'sort by location' and 'sort by transect' (the transect is a model used in New Urbanism that divides the built environment in "zones" categorized from rural to the urban core.) "We wanted people to explore and learn about New Urbanism through our portfolio," said Powers, "and we wanted to show the geographic breadth of our practice through the 'projects by location' map. These are fun alternatives to the standard project categories. We even had one of our designers draw a 'Rhode Island transect' using her artistic license - this is used for the navigation." The firm has projects in Arkansas, New York, Washington State, Texas, California, and Virginia - in addition to those in the northeast. About 50% of Union Studio's projects are outside of Rhode Island.

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