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Project milestones provide steady PR/marketing content - by Susan Shelby

November 01, 2019 - Owners Developers & Managers

Susan Shelby
Rhino Public Relations

Fresh content is important for keeping your firm's name top of mind and for building your brand. Relevant content also draws potential clients to your website and drives SEO.

However, finding consistent topics for your various marketing channels can be a struggle. Project milestones offer a great opportunity to talk about your firm, and can be used to keep a steady stream of content delivered to your target audience. In fact, with a built-in schedule, project milestones create the content calendar for you. Project milestones may include: Project win; groundbreaking; topping off; project completion or grand opening; LEED certification; and other awards.

Tools of the Trade

Strategic content creation involves gathering information and developing it into content that can be repurposed into multiple marketing tools. Successful PR programs support your firm's strategic business goals, with some or all of the following communication tools:

- **Press (or News) Releases:** These short documents communicate information about a newsworthy event or development and are distributed via email or a delivery service to publications that would be interested in the topic.
- **Media Relations:** This is the process of building relationships with relevant reporters and editors, and often includes pitching ideas to present a company as a thought leader.
- **Byline Articles:** The goal of these articles is to present the firm or the author as an expert on a specific topic, and to share useful information and best practices with readers.
- **Speaking Opportunities:** When people attend trade shows and conferences, they often look

forward to learning opportunities such as speaker sessions, roundtable events, and workshops. A company can propose a relevant topic for one of these sessions, and send an experienced employee to present.

- Industry Awards: Awards may recognize a company for excellence in a completed project or collaborative team success, or may recognize an individual for a specific achievement.

Your firm won't complete the project on its own, and it doesn't have to approach PR on its own either. Other project team members want to receive recognition for their role as well.

While a project win will typically be an individual release, and a topping off might be most notable for the construction company, a team approach that includes the key project team members (architect, engineer, construction manager), as well as sub-contractors or consultants, is effective for many project milestones. So, share the love; work together with the key players on the project to create a mutually beneficial media strategy. Draft a joint press release and divvy up the editorial opportunities. The collective effort will broaden your media outreach and increase your chances of PR success.

Long-term strategic planning is about constantly evolving your content to deliver new material and packaging it to be distributed in a timely way to your target audience. As the project develops, so does the content – and the delivery mechanisms will vary as well. Build material around project achievements to maintain a steady flow of content and keep your firm visible. Don't let this source of ongoing material be forgotten.

Susan Shelby, FSMPS, CPSM is the president and CEO of Rhino Public Relations, South Hamilton, Mass.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540