



Staff Executive/Editor's Comments

Image and Reputation are Inseparable

Webster's New World Dictionary of the American language defines image as "the concept of a person, product, (organization), etc." The same publication defines reputation as " (the) estimation in which a person or thing is commonly held."

So what image are you and your company projecting? And what is your current reputation as a result of that image? Is it favorable? Do people happily greet you or do they find a reason to quickly move on? Do former customers offer you a chance for repeat business and recommend your company to others?

Many things combine to create an image. Among them are personal appearance, cleanliness of equipment, an orderly office, shop and yard. Even to the appearance of your business cards, stationary and invoices are important as well as checks being produced via computer or typewriter rather than being written by hand.

Do you return phone calls? And if so, are they returned in a timely manner? [This office hears this complaint about movers more than you would want to know.] Do you provide a response to questions from customers, prospects or government entities? Do you pay your invoices promptly or do you delay paying a vendor who provided the product or service you requested? Answer these questions truthfully and you will discover the reputation others may have about you and your company. It may help to explain the success or struggle your company is experiencing.

In 2001 directors of IASM made the decision to bring in professional management to analyze, recommend and enact direction and programs to improve policies, education and benefits for the association and its membership. The primary goal was to improve the image and reputation of the organization

Six years later the image is significantly different. Today 10 of the 16 directors were not there six year ago and the median age has dropped significantly. The association's graphics have been improved. Four new products have been produced. A professional directory of members is now in its fourth issue. The Awards Program has been made relevant to the skill of the members. The association's official publication, **Structural Mover**, is the flagship of the industry. Education presentations are pertinent and all encompassing for the benefit of the membership. The association's mission statement is on target and workable.

The association has worked with two filming companies to produce a series of Mega Mover presentations on the History and Learning Channels that have significantly elevated the public's awareness to the structural moving industry. The annual conferences are now seen as the educational and social event of the year. The committee structure has been revamped and is now developing standards for the industry. This item alone will gain the association more stature and recognition with the U.S. Department of Labor through OSHA than anything the association has done in its existence.

The organization's website has been redesigned twice in the past six years and is more functional. A movie of the benefits of membership in the association is now the centerpiece of the homepage on the website. Membership has increased. Finances are now open to the membership through budgets not present before professional management arrived. And, the finances are stronger than ever before. Every governor and state DOT secretary receive copies of **Structural Mover** magazine in an effort to inform them of the existence and benefits of professional structural movers.

So what has this litany of improvements had to do with the association's image? OSHA now calls IASM for information when it is investigating an accident. Increasingly, news media representatives and college professors are contacting IASM for information, verification or, leads. Other associations are now adopting procedures established by IASM for their conferences. Other magazines are changing their format to resemble **Structural Mover**. Non-members now contact IASM regularly for information about the industry or to secure the services of a structural mover. More companies have become first time members based on the reputation of the association.

Granted, there may be some that will not speak well of these or any improvements that have benefited the association. But take an honest look at the functionality and image of the association today and decide for yourself if its reputation has improved. And while you're at it do the same for your own company. A positive image and reputation can improve your bottom line. Isn't that your purpose for being in business?

If you wish to share your viewpoint my email and mailing address are shown on page two. Let me hear from you.

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