

FLASH NOTES

SAVING LIVES & PROTECTING PROPERTY SINCE 1955



Low-Budget Marketing Strategies To Make A High-Impact This Lightning Season

When sales drop and the economy tightens, don't be tempted to cut dollars spent on marketing. Launching a marketing campaign during a tough economy can help generate new leads and invigorate your business. Here are 10 strategies to help boost sales without emptying your pockets:

1. Develop a Marketing Plan or Budget

As a rule of thumb, a large firm should spend between 4-6% of their gross sales on marketing efforts, which might include Yellow Page ads, newspaper advertising, direct mail, truck and work site signage, radio advertising, etc. A smaller company may have fewer funds to budget, so creativity here in terms of in-house promotions, customer mailings, telemarketing or community tie-ins may be the way to go.

2. Visit Customers & Target Markets

Strengthening relationships with your clients can open the door to new business opportunities. Events like "Lunch & Learns" where a company rep visits customers, offers a catered box lunch and then presents a PowerPoint slide show followed by a Q&A session, can be very powerful in promoting customer relations.

3. Promotional Giveaways

Contractors can stay visible with customers during lightning season with giveaway items bearing their company name and/or logo.

Hats, tee-shirts, customized wine bottles, rulers, etc. can be hand-delivered to job sites and offices as tokens of appreciation and reminders of your company and services.

4. Community Involvement

A simple and low-cost way to highlight your company during lightning season is to volunteer for a service club, sponsor an association, or help organize a charity event in your community. Participation in community

events provides excellent exposure and unlimited networking opportunities.

5. Commit to Advertising

Even small companies can run ads in the service directory section of the classifieds without breaking the bank. Commitment is key to gain the desired exposure, so plan to run a small ad for at least 14-26 weeks to really generate name recognition. Ask for



LPI has a variety of promotional literature and support materials available for member use. Contact the LPI office and order the PR pieces your company needs to promote your LPI membership and distinguish your business from the competition!

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Lightning Protection News & Notes



UL Q&A Corner

To update LPI members with regard to UL industry news and issues, Flashnotes will begin displaying a UL column as a regular feature. This issue will highlight answers to some of your questions addressed at the 2008 annual conference in Orlando, Florida.

Q. Our work covers several states, so we have contact with many different UL field inspectors. Some of your inspectors issue Master Labels for additions. There appears to be confusion about when a system is eligible for a Master Label Certificate. Can you please clarify to your inspectors (and to your applicants) what structures are eligible for a Master Label?

A. The Master Label Certificate (MLC) is available for structures that meet the requirements of UL96A 11th or 12th edition, NFPA 780 2008 edition and published US military specifications. The MLC is also available for portions of a structure that have firewall separations. The separated portions must have complete systems installed; the firewall separations are treated like any exterior wall section. The building owner should provide documents that support the location and type of firewall installed.

Q. How does UL intend to provide re-inspections on buildings that have eave heights over 50' and met UL's requirements 5 years ago, but will not meet the requirements now?

A. Installations inspected after September

30, 2008 must meet the requirements in the twelfth edition of UL96A.

Q. Does UL intend to keep the surge protection exemption in effect on future certificates?

A. No. However, we have not established the end date for limited scope inspections relating to surge protection. September 30, 2009 is a date being considered. This coincides with the effective date of UL 1449, Third Edition.

Q. Is UL taking steps to enforce a code of ethics for UL listed installers who cheat the system?

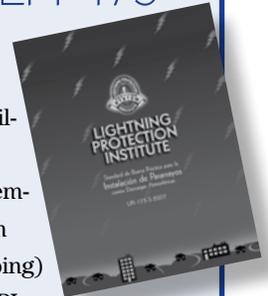
A. UL has a zero tolerance policy for counterfeit UL Marks, including the Master Label Certificate. This is a serious criminal activity and UL seeks to prosecute offenders to the fullest extent of the law. Counterfeiting activity can be reported to UL's Anti-Counterfeiting Operations at Anticounterfeiting@us.ul.com.

Q. How does UL intend to inspect items concealed in the structure? Pictures or blueprints?

A. Digital pictures and drawings may now be attached to the inspection application. If details of a structure are hidden, we advise that installers offer the inspector pictures and drawings. Installers are responsible to give the UL inspector all information necessary to determine compliance.

Coming Soon... 2008 Version of LPI-175

The 2008 version of the LPI-175 Standard of Practice will be available soon through the LPI office. Cost to members is \$30/each which includes freight (shipping) within the U.S. The LPI office accepts payment via check, VISA, MC, or Discover Card.



NFPA Releases Lightning Fires and Lightning Strikes Report



In January, NFPA's Research and Statistics Department released its Lightning Fires and Lightning Strikes report, written by Marty Ahrens, manager of NFPA Fire Analysis Services. The report cites lightning activity during a four year period from 2002 to 2005 and estimates that U.S. fire departments responded annually to an estimated 31,400 fires started by lightning. Data cited in the report was collected by the sources such as the U.S. Fire Administration's National Fire Incident Reporting System, the National Interagency Fire Center, and the National Weather Service. To view the entire report, go to www.nfpa.org.

Media Report:

Recent PR Highlights

LPI marketing and communication efforts continue to increase exposure for the industry and its members.

Lightning Protection Article Wins Recognition

LPI's nine page article, "Lightning Protection at Ground Level, the Importance of Safety Standards for Lightning Protection" (July 2007 issue, *Construction Specifier magazine*), has received special

recognition. The article, authored by Kim Loehr received a first place award in the category of Special Article – science, ecology, environment and energy at the Virginia Press Women (VPW) 2008 Spring Conference and Awards Luncheon on March 29. Contest judges included journalists and representatives from notable media and organizations, including: *National Geographic Magazine*, National Public Radio, *The St. Petersburg Times*, *The Charlotte Observer*, The Society of Exploration Geophysicists and Long Island University Writing Center. As a first place winner, the article qualifies to compete for national award recognition at the National Federation of Press Women (NFPW) conference in Idaho in September.



Lightning Safety Awareness Week Reminder

The seventh annual Lightning Safety Awareness Week is scheduled for June 22-28, 2008. This campaign is a great opportunity for LPI members to capitalize on publicity. LPI is promoting LSA week with press releases, news articles, radio interviews and our Leon the Lightning Lion PSA campaign. To view LPI articles and media alerts in conjunction with LSA week, visit our website at www.lightning.org and click on the LSA week button on the home page, or email LPI at LPI@lightning.org for news release copies for your local media.

Insurance Industry Reveals Increase Support for Lightning Protection

LPI continues to experience success with insurance industry publications printing our feature stories and news articles on lightning protection. Our lightning protection news has been spotlighted recently in insurance industry publications and news outlets, including:

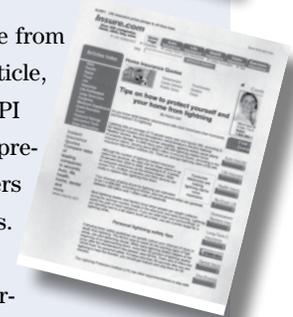
Claims Adviser Magazine -Spring 2008 issue

"Don't Get Zapped, Mitigation and Risk Assessment Strategies for Reducing Lightning Losses" -- a six page article on lightning protection. The magazine is published four times a year and is targeted to insurance personnel, property loss professionals, claims adjusters and claims managers.



Insure.com – March 2008

"Tips on how to protect yourself and your home from lightning" references the LPI throughout the article, as well as the importance of contracting with LPI certified installers. Insure.com provides a comprehensive consumer information service that caters to the needs of self-directed insurance shoppers. The site plays home to over 2,000 articles on various insurance topics and provides free insurance decision-making tools that are not available from any other single source.



Insurance Information Institute (III)

"Lightning Safety" – Spring 2008 Press Release
The mission of the III is to improve public understanding of insurance—what it does and how it works. For more than 40 years, the I.I.I. has provided definitive insurance information. Today, the I.I.I. is recognized by the media, governments, regulatory organizations, universities and the public as a primary source of information, analysis and referral concerning insurance. (Jeanne Salvatore, senior vice president for public affairs with the I.I.I. was a presenter at the 2008 LPI/ULPA Conference in Orlando, Florida.)



volume rates with your newspaper when running the ad. Community papers with wide circulations are other affordable options.

6. Contact local Homeowner's Associations

Inquire during lightning season and ask to make a presentation at the next neighborhood meeting. Leave behind your literature and information to share with attendees and offer neighborhood discounts if two or more parties contract with your services.

7. Design a Company Newsletter

Lightning protection contractors can retain existing customers and procure new ones by mailing company newsletters. Create your own newsletter to update customers on industry news and trends, or highlight your company products, news or personnel.

8. Create Company PR

Do you have company policies, employees, products or projects that are newsworthy?

Put this information into a press release and send to your newspapers' Business Section. Sometimes the information will run, and sometimes it won't, but it's a good chance to take because it's free.

9. Donate Your Services

Offer to provide a free or discounted installation for a development's "model home" or donate a system or product to a local silent or live auction held in conjunction with a charity event. Make sure your company literature and name is on view to advertise your services.

10. Remember Existing Customers

Existing customers can mean repeat work and referrals. Contractors who stay in touch with thank you notes, newsletters and phone calls will foster a continuing relationship with their customers, while staying ahead of the competition.

LPI Reminders...

Certification Renewal

"It's LPI policy to include a renewal test with re-certifications whenever an updated version of a Standard is released to the industry. Please note that LPI will be re-certifying to the newest edition of NFPA 780 (2008), to maintain credentials of certified individuals. Watch for your re-certification notices, which are currently being mailed.

Engineering Seminars

For those who couldn't attend the seminars in Orlando, plans are underway to schedule two more sessions in 2008: July 2008 in Denver, CO and October 2008 in Washington, D.C.

Visit the LPI website at www.lightning.org for details and registration.



The Lightning Protection Institute

Saving Lives & Protecting Property Since 1955

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