

## ***Looking to the Future Focus Group: Strategic Plan Brainstorming NRMCA ConcreteWorks***

### ***Background***

*The below documents the input of the focus group discussions that took place at ConcreteWorks. These are a collection of input from a variety of discussions presented in a summary format. The information collected here identifies challenges, opportunities and shares tactics raised by the participants. The Association's Goals and Objectives will ultimately reflect much of this input, though input here was not shared in goal format.*

*Feedback IS NOT presented in the order in which it was received. Rather, it is grouped here in topic areas to assist in review. Note, some input could have been noted in a variety of topic areas. Though many of the notes presented here were heard in several of conversations, those in italic text were repeated often throughout the various discussions.*

### ***Promoting Our Product, Promoting Our Industry***

- Keep a Focus on Promotion of the Industry!
- *Reinforce the Benefits of Concrete!*
- *Leverage Climate Change as an Opportunity by Reinforcing the Value of Concrete and the Product's Role in Advancing Sustainability and Resiliency.*
- *Use Concrete Sustainability as an Opportunity.*
- Resiliency is an Opportunity --- Particularly as it Pertains to Housing.
- Residential Construction Opportunities Should be Promoted.
- Communicate the Energy Savings Potential of Concrete.
- *Improve the Quality of Concrete AND Communicate these Improvements.*
- *The Industry IS Making a Better, Stronger Product...Share that!*
- Focus on an Eternal Product ... Ongoing...Durable...Ever Lasting.
- *Promote Residential as an Opportunity for the Future.*
- Share the Performance Differences between Timber and Concrete.
- *Remember, Members Participate in the Industry to be Profitable. We are Businesspeople First.*
- *Educate the Public, the End Consumer, Regarding the Benefits of Concrete as a Product.*
- Create a Regulatory and Code Environment that Supports (even Promotes) the Use of Concrete.

***Promoting Our Product, Promoting Our Industry (cont.)***

- Explore a Broader Focus for Build With Strength (BWS) – National Promotion of Concrete as a Product. *Engage the Public.*
- Exploring other Non-Traditional Uses of Concrete Products.
- *EXPAND THE CONCRETE MARKET.*
- Be More Aspirational when Promoting the Benefits of Concrete.
- Engage the Grassroots in Promoting the Value of the Product. Provide the Tools to Support Grassroots Activities
- *Reinforce the Long History and Staying Power of the Industry and Concrete as Product.*
- *Concrete = Resiliency.*
- Reinforce a Long-Term View of Building Materials, Rather than Short-term Immediate Cost Limitations.
- *Address Concrete's Resiliency in the Face of Climate Change...Pursue Design Modifications and Share How Such Modifications Address Growing Climate Change and Natural Disaster Concerns.*
- National Promotion Campaign – Getting into Education more completely – promotion of the public through change...Is this a focused priority.
- Focus on National/International Issues Speaking on Concrete in a Very Focused Fashion.
- Design with Concrete – Get to the Decision Makers.
- *Create Easy to Use Promotion Tools to Assist in Spreading the Word on Concrete – Single Sheet Documentation, Toolkits, Etc.*
- *Focus the Industry on "How to" Market the Product and Benefits of the Product.*
- *Resiliency must be an Ongoing Focus for the Future.*
- Engage Stakeholders at the Community Level – Help Members Create Strategy to Address Designers and Government Stakeholders at the Community Level.

### ***Promote the Value of the Association***

- Communicate the Value of the Association, Provide People a Glimpse of the Opportunities the Association has.
- Explore Sample/Trial Memberships.
- *Take Heart in What NRMCA Does Right and Communicate this Broadly ... Communicate Value.*

### ***Association Operations Considerations***

- Stay Away from Combining Associations.
- *Leverage what NRMCA Does Well ... Education, Industry Communications*
- Build on the Success of NRMCA Training – Partner with State Associations to Further this Success.
- Run the Association Professionally.
- Partner with the State Associations to Operate All Industry Elements Professionally.
- *Build Closer Relationships with the State Associations, Building a More Substantial Network with these Industry Resources.*
- Share Best Practices and Tool Kits with State Association Partners.
- Collaborate on the Development of How-To Documentation Addressing Industry Challenges.
- Share Operational Insights and Practices.
- *Continue to Advance Strong Association and Industry Communications.*
- *Answer this Key Question: What is the Core Focus of the Association?*
- Make Certain the NRMCA Organizational Structure Matches the Priorities of the Industry.
- *Industry Data is a Key to Future Association Operational Success.*
- Leverage Tools Like the Performance Benchmarking Survey. Work to Monetize Summary Data from Such Tools to Support Operations.
- Identify Revenue Streams that ARE NOT Exclusively Dependent Upon Members. Create Non-Dues, Non-Member Revenue Streams.

### ***Association Tools & Services***

- *Create Tools to Assist Members in Maneuvering through the Regulatory Challenges before the Industry.*
- *Know What the Customer Base of the Industry is Truly Interested in Receiving.*
- Create Protections for the Industry and Operational Processes and Educate the Membership on How to Take Advantage of these Protections/Tools.
- *Provide Advocacy Support Addressing Labor Needs.*
- Engage in the National Labor Board.
- Develop Data and Information to Assist in Confronting NIMBYism.
- Create Further Survey and Education Tools for use by State Associations and Members.
- *Advocacy and Government Relations is a Strength – Further these Efforts.*
- *Integrated Advocacy would Provide Support to Legislative, Legal and Regulatory Compliance Efforts.*
- *Remained Focused on Training Track and Professional Development for the Industry ...This is critical.*
- Brief Members on Industry Innovations and Latest Production Techniques and Developments.
- EPDs is a Potential Area of Growth for the Membership. EPDs Need to Move to Addressing Full Product Life Cycle.
- *Further Education Opportunities for Member Employees such as Plant Manager. Offer More of these Opportunities.*
- Exploring Regional ConcreteWorks or Other Targeted Services Which Could Advance Engagement – Perhaps Coordinated with State Associations Other Industry Partners.
- *Addressing Codes and Regulatory Environment a Must Service to Advance the Industry.*
- *Commit to a Regular Review of Education - Make Materials for the Future – Create Digital Tools with Responsive Design – Engage Stakeholders on Cell Phones, etc.*
- NRMCA to Provide regular “Sustainability Burb” for Insertion into Newsletters, Member Publications, State Affiliate Outreach, etc.
- Regional Strategic Planning Efforts and Engagement Could be Explored.
- *Explore Value in Regional Offerings.*

### ***Association Tools & Services (cont.)***

- *Continue/Grow Think Like an Owner Offerings. Clear Impact on Profitability. profitability*
- *Create Small Networking Opportunities which Support Mentoring.*
- *Networking VALUABLE – at all age levels for the industry.*
- *Create “Bite-Size” Education Offerings for NRMCA Members.*
- *Codes & Standards Efforts a HUGE Positive for the Industry.*
- *Lend Out NRMCA Staff as Facilitators to Assist at the State Board Level*
- *Show Members HOW to Use the Resources of the Association.*
- *Powerful tool in Concrete Credentials Podcast – Explore Expanded Distribution.*
- *Create a Selection of Wellness Tools/Programming for Members.*
- *Tracks Meeting Sales Needs and a Dedicated Young Leaders Track at ConcreteWorks would be of Benefit.*

### ***The Association of the Future***

- *Our Membership is Aging. How Do We Engage of the Future?*
- *What Does NRMCA Want ...More Members? More Engaged Members? Both?*
- *The Membership Make-Up is Changing. Modify the Association to Address the Industry of the Future. The Future NRMCA MUST Consider Industry Consolidation, a Growing Role for Associate Members, and the Consumers of the Industry.*
- *The Association of the Future Must Reflect Multiple Perspectives.*
- *Clearly Construct Validated Member Personas and Explore the Products and Services Members Need.*
- *Provide Guidance and Targeted Participation Goals to Younger Member Participants.*
- *Continue to Engage and Grow CIM Participants in the Industry throughout their Careers.*
- *Create a Culture that Young Industry Participants Want to Be a Part of.*
- *Grow the Markets of the Members – Explore a Broader Group of Associate Members.*
- *Analyze and Communicate Increased Company Performance to NRMCA Engagement.*

***The Association of the Future (cont.)***

- Create and Readily Share Member Engagement Scores. Correlate Engagement to Performance Benchmarking Data.
- Reassess the Structure of the Association and Make Certain it Matches the Priorities of the Membership and the Industry.
- Be Prepared to Capitalize on the Opportunities Presented by Industry Change/Advancements and Environment (Legislative, Regulatory, Economic) Confronting the Industry.
- *Stewardship of the Members Money is KEY – whether Dues Dollars or Company Profits.*
- *Developing Industry Leaders (DIL) and Concrete Industry Management (CIM) Students are Key to Securing the Future Association Leadership. Engage these Stakeholders Early!*
- *Need to Grow and Mentor the Leaders of the Future.*
- Should NRMCA Review Governance with an Eye Towards Broader Participation, Particularly with Younger People?
- *Investing Time and Resources in the Younger Participants in the Association Organization is Essential -- Exploring Mentorship.*
- *Small Networking Sessions Opportunities would Secure Engagement.*
- *Invite Younger Team Members into Meetings – Introduce them, Help them Leverage the Benefits of the Association.*
- Older Leadership Making Opportunities for Growing Leadership
- Do We Match the Needs of Our Members as Individual?
- *Create Specialized Programs for the Younger People Coming Up.*
- *Ask Younger Members/Participants What they Want to Experience the Association. Help them Answer the Question, “How do I find a place where I fit?”*
- Connect Alumni with Students – DIL, CIM, Other Programs.
- Sponsor a Young Concrete Professional Mixer to Support/Teach Networking.
- *Perpetuate a Friendly and Welcoming Environment. Charge Staff and Member Leadership with Engaging New Members and New Participants both at Meetings and through Virtual Networking Events.*
- Development of Soft skills available through the Association and Engagement in Meetings like ConcreteWorks.

### ***The Association of the Future (cont.)***

- Determine What would Inspire Participation of Younger Members Interested in Growing in the Industry.
- *Create More Professional Development Opportunities – Reinforcing Member Value.*
- *The Leadership NEEDS to Make Engaging Younger Individuals in the Association, Particularly at Leadership Meetings.*
- Keep a Focus on Change!
- Continue to Share/Celebrate the Things Members Do Well! Both from a Learning Perspective as Well as Providing Professional Recognition.
- Create Peer Group Opportunities --- Sharing in Smaller Groups is Effective, More Comfortable, Easier.
- *Combat the Perception that this is the Blue Sport Coat Group – Particularly at Meetings. Be More Welcoming to All.*
- *Making NRMCA accessible to the Younger People.*

### ***Securing the Workforce of the Future***

- *Emphasize Concrete as a CAREER...NOT Simply a Job.*
- *Remember to be Inclusive. Explore Engaging Non-traditional Workers.*
- Workforce Development is a Huge Challenge. *Explore How AI can Address Some Workforce Concerns.*
- Explore How Workforce Opportunities Other than Headcount.
- *Continue to Engage and Celebrate the Workforce of the Future through the Driver Championship and Driver Rodeos.*
- Identify and Engage in High School Opportunities to Recruit Drivers and Other Industry Roles.
- Start Promotion of the Industry to EVEN YOUNGER People – Look to Middle and Elementary School Programming.
- Address Insurance Challenges Which Impact the Age of Engaging Entry Level Employees
- Develop Opportunities Which Bridge the Gap Between 18 to 21 – Keep these Stakeholders in the Industry.
- *Continue to Grow and Leverage CIM Graduates.*
- *Engagement with More Universities – Seek More Support.*

***Securing the Workforce of the Future (cont.)***

- *Get Even Closer to the CIM Program.*
- Recognition of Education as the Key to Securing the Future Workforce.
- Customize Education and Information Session Opportunities – Grow these by Working through the State Associations.
- Engage Local Technical Schools and Universities. NRMCA to Support this by Creating Tool Kits and Other Promotional Materials Designed to Market the Benefits of the Industry as a Career. – Tool Kit – video that could be used to market the industry
- Partnering with Community Colleges for the Workforce of the Future. Targeting Curriculum Opportunities Here.
- *Educating the Public on the Value and Opportunities of the Industry.*
- *Illustrate the Variety of Jobs Available which Support the Industry (Research, Engineering, Sales, Management, Drivers, Technicians, Testing, etc.).*
- Raise the Stature, Professionalism and Opportunity in the Industry – Sharing the Faces of Concrete.
- Meeting the Workforce of the Future Requires Creating a Career Pathway (Promotions, Raises, etc.) that is Well Understood.
- *Meet the Goals of Younger People Regarding Professional Growth and Work Life Balance.*
- Support Younger People in the Industry as Disrupters/Innovators.
- Explore Creating Accelerated CIM Programs – Allowing Such Individuals to Secure Additional Industry Education More Quickly and Get to Work More Quickly.
- Support Further Growth/Education in the Industry through Scholarships and Programming
- Engage Further with Skills USA --- Insert Concrete Into this Program.
- How to: Conduct a High School Tour Program, Support a Career Day Booth, Conduct a High School Interest Session. Look to Create Ongoing Relationships Early.
- *Help Young People Experience the Industry*
- Looking at other Tools to inspire people – Beyond Raises and Promotions.
- *Allow Participants to Be Heard, Make an Impact.*



- ***Securing the Workforce of the Future (cont.)***
- *Lifestyle and Commitment to Work is Different – Employers Must Recognize that Fact.*
- *Explore Lifestyle Opportunities – Perhaps Changing it.*
- Succession Planning is Critical.
- Sustainability is Motivating – Rally the Future Workforce Around this Issue/Priority

### ***Industry Professionalism***

- *Support MEMBERS in Developing Professionally.*
- Engage a Wide Cross Section of Members and their Employees in Programming Designed to Assist them in Growing Professionally.
- *Promote NRMCA Education as a Tool to Raise Professional of the Industry.*

### ***The Industry of the Future***

- Create a Vision for What the Concrete INDUSTRY Structure/Make-up Looks Like in the Next 25 Years... Trends of the Future...Impact of Acquisitions...Changing Product Make-Up...Changing Consumer Demands.
- *Engage a Broader, More Inclusive Group of Industry Stakeholders in the Associations.*
- Leverage End of Life Opportunities through Recycling.

### ***Embrace Technology***

- *Identify How AI will Further the Industry.*
- How will Concrete be Advanced by Robotics?
- What is the Future of 3-D Printing?
- Exposure the Membership to Vendors and the Technologies they Offer.

### ***Gather Lessons Learned from NRMCA Partners***

- *Look to the State Affiliates for Emerging Trends.*
- *Share Operational Challenges and Opportunities with State Affiliates and Other Related Industry Partners.*
- Engage ACI More Completely – Explore Shared Challenges and Shared Solutions.

***Gather Lessons Learned from NRMCA Partners (cont.)***

- Continue Building Relationships...A foundational element of NRMCA.
- Leverage Lessons Learned from Industry Partners in Other Countries.
- Engage with Construction Education Efforts (Such as SkillsUSA, Future Builders of America, etc.).

***Remember the Challenges/Threats***

- *Growing Regulatory Challenges.*
- Threats from Steel and Wood.
- *NRMCA Trying to be EVERYTHING to EVERYONE.*
- Perceived Lack of Association Core Priorities.
- *Lack of Accountability in Segments of the Industry (Testing).*
- *Member Apathy – Lack of Engagement.*
- *Remember – ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL.*

***Leverage Opportunities***

- Concrete Advancement Foundation (CAF) Relationship should be Leveraged Further. Assist in Spreading the Word on the Findings of CAF Funded Research.
- *Create Further Alignment Between NRMCA and State Affiliates. Develop Unified Messaging and Strategies.*
- *Keep Focused on TEAM – Producers, Associates, Staff, State Affiliates, Policy Makers, Prospective Members, etc.*
- Collaborate Across Industry Groups Regarding Messaging – Go Together into the Future.
- Engaged and Excited Members.
- *Engaging Contractors More Broadly. Addressing Changing Industry Practices, Resources, and Products.*