



# Sightings

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The Longview Group, LLC

INSIGHTS...IN SIGHT

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## UPCOMING SEMINARS

Longview Group and the Society for Marketing Professional Services announce a NEW national seminar:

**Recruit and Retain Great A/E/C Talent: The Business Development Approach**

Washington, DC  
September 21, 2007

Dallas, TX  
October 12, 2007

San Francisco, CA  
November 30, 2007

**Essentials & Proposals**  
Attend just one day or both

DAY 1 - A/E/C Essentials: An Introduction to the Design and Construction Industry  
DAY 2 - Powerful Persuasive Proposals

San Francisco, CA  
October 18 & 19, 2007

Charlotte, NC  
November 15 & 16, 2007

Saint Louis, MO  
December 6 & 7, 2007

For more information, go to:  
[www.longview-group.com/seminars.html](http://www.longview-group.com/seminars.html)

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INSIGHTS...IN SIGHT



## Best Marketing: Word of Mouth

by Dennis Schrag

When it comes to marketing a trust-based business, like a professional service organization, there is no better marketing method than word of mouth. It is simply the BEST. Client opinions drive reputation. When you sell invisible services, reputation is everything.

As a business owner, I can tell you how great my business is all day long. Ho-hum. A client tells you how I helped her make more profit: You listen. YEE-HAAA! It is the power of testimony. We don't use it enough.

So what is word of mouth marketing? Here are some simple but important definitions to begin with:

**Word of mouth:** Consumers providing information to other consumers. One of my favorite websites is Tripadvisor.com. Here you can read reviews of hotels and tour agencies written by their customers. I will believe what three or four recent customers have to say.

**Word of mouth marketing:** Creating reasons to talk about your products and services. Make it easier for the client-to-client conversation to take place. It is the art and a science of building active, mutually beneficial consumer-to-consumer and consumer-to-marketer communications. So how can you get the chatter started?

A recent article in *Fast Company Magazine* explains. Carnegie Deli has been around since 1937. So what? No one will pass that on to a friend. But wait. Carnegie Deli has a seven-inch high corned beef sandwich - that is very share-worthy information. You must spotlight what makes your organization better and different.

**Permission marketing:** Marketing centered on obtaining customer consent to receive information from a company. Seth Godin (his books include: *Purple Cow*, *Free Prize Inside*, *All Marketers Are Liars*) penned the term “permission marketing”. It is the opposite of traditional interruption marketing. Permission marketing is about building an ongoing relationship of increasing depth with clients. In other words, “turning strangers into friends, and friends into customers.” Permission marketing has been hailed as a way for marketers to succeed in a world increasingly cluttered with marketing messages.

Almost 2000 people receive my free monthly newsletter, *SIGHTINGS*. Each asked to receive it. Many tell me they pass it around to others in their office. I like to give them something to talk about.

According to Andy Sernovitz, CEO of Word of Mouth Marketing Association there are three basic word of mouth tools.

1. Ask people to tell a friend.
2. Create a “tell a friend” feature on your website. Andy says put the feature on every page of your website.
3. Use e-mail communications with the same feature - “pass this on to a friend.”

Word of mouth can't be faked or invented. It has to be legitimate and sincere to work.

All word of mouth marketing techniques are based on the concepts of customer satisfaction, two-way dialog, and transparent communications.

**The basic elements are:**

- Educating people about your products and services.
- Identifying people most likely to share their opinions about your service.
- Providing tools that make it easier to share information.
- Studying how, where, and when opinions are being shared.
- Listening and responding to supporters, detractors, and neutrals.

How can you use word of mouth to build your reputation and your business? Give it some thought. When was the last time your organization completed a reputation study? Do you know what clients say about you?

Please circulate this article to a few colleagues.

## Email me right ...Right?



A Fast Company magazine article (August 2007) highlights email efficiencies. Companies are finally dealing with the extensive and growing use of email messages. Capital One estimated that each employee received on average 40-50 email messages per day.

It takes valuable time to read them all. Capital One trained all employees to do a much better job of using the subject field. **BE SPECIFIC.** Instead of “Here’s what you asked for,” use “2008 Plan for Retaining the Top Ten Clients.” Be very specific.

Capital One staff are encouraged to get to the point in emails. Drop unneeded words and use bullet points. Capital One says it can recover about 10 days per year

per employee through more effective emails.

Union Bank has 10,000 employees. It recently moved from broadcast emails all employees to much more selective sub-groups. It uses RSS feeds instead. Send messages to those who need the information only. Seems simple...and brilliant. Estimated cost savings in staff time: \$750,000.

### WHAT IS THE LONGVIEW GROUP, LLC?

Seeking more efficiency and effectiveness in your professional service business? The Longview Group, LLC provides you INSIGHTS through training, on-the-job coaching, expert counsel, and extra-hands services.



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