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This section contains the necessary materials to educate members of the local community about the sustainable benefits of using concrete. Whether talking to a friend on the city council or speaking to members of the Chamber of Commerce, the materials in the Overview Section and the sample speech in this segment offer the tools to deliver consistent, accurate information to your community. Likely audiences for this outreach include business people, architects, builders, real estate agents and residents.

Sample Speech

The enclosed speech is a powerful instrument that presents an opportunity to contact local organizations, address community groups and be positioned as a local resource on the topic of sustainable development. The speech is accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation for visual support and can be presented to a broad audience with limited understanding of the sustainable development.

The speech is intended to educate the audience about the growing demands for sustainable development and how concrete is a viable solution. If local examples and visuals are available, the PowerPoint speech can be customized. This template can also be adapted for different audiences. The speech may be printed and used as a handout and supplements the materials in the Overview Section.

Letter to Request Speaking Opportunity

The enclosed letter can be used to solicit space on an organization's agenda for your representative to deliver the speech and also open the door for additional partnership opportunities.

Release to Promote Speaking Opportunity

Some speaking opportunities are open to the public or the media. Use the enclosed news release to promote the presentation with the local media. The release outlines the content of the speech and can be used as an invitation to attend the speech, or to promote the event after it occurred.

Thank You Letter (After Speaking Opportunity)

After each speaking engagement, a thank you letter should be sent to the leader or organizer of the group or meeting. A sample letter is enclosed. It can be customized or personalized to fit your needs.

Helpful Hints

Actively Search for Speaking Opportunities

There are many opportunities for speakers to talk to a variety of audiences. Take an aggressive approach to finding speaking opportunities in your community. Make a list of groups who would be interested and call one a month. Likely groups include:

- Local chapters of green building organizations
- Local Homebuilder Associations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Architecture firms
- Schools and universities
- Special interest groups
- Real estate development companies
- Libraries
- Local American Institute of Architects chapters
- Civic organization
- Networking groups
- Building management firms
- Political groups
- Engineering firms
- Alumni organizations
- Construction firms

Attract an Audience

If you promote it, they will come. With the rapid growth of sustainable development, there is great interest across all aspects of the design and construction industry. One example is to sponsor an evening meeting of a local green building chapter, often for less than \$1000. Surrounded by some of the most influential green advocates in the community, as the sponsor, you generally have the opportunity to present information to the group. Even a brief 15-minute speech will generate lots of interest, leading them to look to you as a local expert in concrete technology.

To attract the largest audience, seek ways to promote your speech as far as possible in advance. Work closely with the organization to which you are speaking to publicize your presentation in their communications vehicles, such as their Web site, newsletters and e-mail blasts. Leverage your own network by sending a mass e-mail to your business colleagues. Use the enclosed news release to get your speech listed in the community events section of your local newspaper and related Web sites. Consider taking out an ad in a local media outlet or paying the registration fee of key prospects, if applicable.

Find Other Ways to Get Involved

Don't stop at speeches. There are many different ways to get involved in the local community and get your message heard. Sponsorships are paid placements, whether in print or verbally, to associate you with an event, program, or publication. Consider sponsoring a related eco-friendly event, such as a community clean up day, or place an ad in media outlets, such as the special reports sections of local business journals. Direct the audience to contact you and reply with a copy of your speech and an invitation to deliver it. Other ideas include exhibiting at local trade shows and distributing written materials at community events.

Charitable donations also generate visibility. Consider donating time, money, goods or services to related organizations, including affordable housing organizations, local conservations groups, or environmental education programs in your local school district.

Be Realistic About the Outcome

One speech may not be able to win over an audience's perception of concrete and cement as a sustainable building material. A more realistic goal would be to have your audience retain the most important points of the speech.

In making the speech, remember to be objective and professional. If you are confronted by a rude audience member, answer his/her questions as accurately as possible without an emotional outburst. Use the key messages included in this briefing kit as a way to stay on track. The FAQ will be helpful to address some commonly asked questions.

Practice, Practice, Practice

Once you are asked to make a presentation, preparation will ensure a first-rate experience. Get familiar and comfortable with the sample speech and PowerPoint template in this kit. Practice the speech with the visuals, and if possible, to a colleague or spouse.

Target Your Audience

The sample speech is written as a general overview of cement and concrete as a sustainable building material. If you feel that an area of the speech should be covered in greater detail for an audience, feel free to make modifications.

Don't Forget Handouts!

Be sure to reinforce your messages with handouts for the audience after your speech. The fact sheets included in this kit can be copied and used as handouts, or you can leave copies of the PowerPoint slides.