



already in place and achieving effective results in acquiring contracts.

SM: What about the residential division?

JS: The Residential Development Group is solidified, and achieved success through many returning clients over the years. Our firm has always marketed work in the resort area, with most of this continued work for private resort developers in the Lake George Region and the Adirondacks. We had, over the years, developed a large network of developers, land use attorneys, investment groups, and architects/engineers who were deeply involved in this type of work.

SM: What other services do you provide?

JS: We provide educational and institutional work where our firm had a long-established practice. To strengthen and expand this market segment we dedicated key staff members, including one of our new principals as director, to work exclusively in this market.

SM: What was the result of your conversion to a market-driven plan?

JS: For our firm, since we were partially operating under this format, the transition was not too difficult. Once the structure was in place, and a formal marketing plan was solidified, it was important to evaluate results. Some of the results of our efforts included: positive feedback from staff, positive feedback from clients, and increased revenues.

Success Magazine: When was The LA Group formed?

Joe Sporko: The LA Group's roots are based in a small landscape architecture firm founded by Jeff Anthony and the late Robert Leaver in 1974. After the economic recession of the early eighties, and with new partners Joe Sporko and Mike Ingersoll, the firm re-organized under a new corporate structure as The LA Group, P.C.

SM: The LA Group has achieved great success through the years. How have you sustained your growth?

JS: The firm realized after it reached its first plateau that it was at a crossroads. It needed to solidify a plan to continue its existence beyond the three owners, and it needed to be focused on a market-driven model, rather than a traditional discipline based organization. The firm created a plan to re-organize itself based on its clients, and primary market areas: residential, resort, educational/institutional, public spaces, government, and environmental projects. At the same time, the firm promoted four senior professionals to principal, each taking

charge of one of the market sectors. The plan has been in place for six years and has greatly added to the firm's position in the marketplace, its long-term continuity and ability to service its strong client base. Most importantly, it has allowed The LA Group to keep a strong position in the industry because of its diverse market segments. As the economic downturn has affected so many design firms, The LA Group actually posted a record performance year in 2009 adding some staff. While this has leveled off in 2010, the firm has not reduced staff size and has kept to conservative principles and reduced expenditures.

SM: How will the firm reach the next level?

JS: The market-driven model for our firm was the solution. Our firm easily fit this model because certain segments of the firm were already doing it.

SM: In what areas were you developed?

JS: The core group within the office which marketed and provided services to the federal government, in particular, the Department of Veterans Affairs, was

the LA group
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