There are hundreds of successful companies around the world that have used visual elements as their key branding to help them stand out as market leaders.

Ben Knight, President of FASTSIGNS, shared with HCAC the keys to effective visual communication.

**HCAC:** As an HCAC professional partner, what can you tell us about FASTSIGNS?

**BK:** At FASTSIGNS, we help companies attract new business through our visual communication solutions. These solutions are messages and graphics that can help contractors capture the attention of their target customers.

**HCAC:** What services and support can FASTSIGNS offer to HCAC contractor members?

**BK:** We design, produce, and install eye-catching signs and graphics that help people learn more about the products and services the business offers, and this applies to construction
Developing your corporate brand, the key to business growth

companies. Our ads and graphics are really an inexpensive selling tool, since they promote your business 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. We listen to the needs of our customers and then create designs to help promote your business. I think the Latino contractors could benefit from this service by improving the image of their business.

**HCAC:** How can a good corporate image increase sales?

**BK:** The corporate image of a business is your logo or brand, and it is a great tool if the company knows how to use it properly. If when you think of a company, their logo comes automatically to mind, then that is a strong brand. And if you associate the company with the logo, then many others can too. It is those companies with a strong brand image that are growing because people know about them and consider them to do business in the future.

The key is to developing your logo and brand is to consistently promote it with advertisements, vehicles, equipment, uniforms, letterhead, etc. If you keep your brand visible in a variety of ways, then more people will learn about your company.

**HCAC:** When it comes to marketing, what are the most common mistakes for small contractors? How can they avoid them?

**BK:** The biggest mistake that small business owners make, in general, is that they do not know how to properly market their business. Usually, they are very good at what they do but are not sure how to communicate it effectively to their potential customers. That's where we come in. We can help them develop signs for their office to promote who they are and what they do. We also design and install vehicle wraps, which according to the American Trucking Association receives 600 exposures per kilometer. For a service vehicle driving 100 miles per day, that's equivalent to 15 million visits per year. That's a lot of exposure to potential customers for a company.

We also create ads for construction sites, where companies are working on a specific project.
These ads sold on behalf of your company 24 hours a day 365 days a year. For example, if ABC construction has a sign posted outside its office or construction worksites, the sign continues advertising even when no one is working and on weekends. This may be the time when a new potential customer passes by and coincidentally is looking for a contractor for a project. This can be a business opportunity, which would not happen if the sign was not there.

**HCAC:** How does visual marketing impact a business?

**BK:** According to the Chamber of Commerce, 50% of people hear about a company by its notices. This is more than 33% of those who use references, and compares to 6% coming from the yellow pages ads. So it's very important to have notifications in your business!

**HCAC:** Are there any messages that you want to share with our readers?

**BK:** We have helped many companies develop their brand image in order to grow their businesses. Our teams in each of our three centers (South Tryon, Ballantyne and Rock Hill) are ready to help you have a successful 2015!

The information for this article was provided by Ben Knight.

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