



by Laura Krebs

How a situation is perceived often determines its outcome. David Neff of Neff Associates perceives every challenge as an opportunity to prevail, every mistake as a lesson well learned and every success as a tool for the future.

Perhaps this is the reason Neff Associates is growing and is busier than ever, despite a down economy. Neff perceives the current state of the economy as an opportunity for businesses to gain market share and stand out against their competition by marketing its brand at a time when others are cutting back. Perhaps Neff's perception of the market is a reason why many companies are turning to Neff Associates to market their brand during a time when many need a fighter, or better yet—an optimist.

Against the Grain

Neff knows what he wants and he also knows what he doesn't want. When he created Neff Associates 22 years ago in 1987, he knew the importance of starting a full-service PR, Advertising and Branding agency. He also knew that he didn't want to risk the success of his future clients by involving multiple parties, which he feels is a recipe for miscommunication and a foggy concept of a vision. "I wanted to be able to control my own destiny," said Neff. "If I come up with a great strategy and turn it over to company one, two or three that doesn't see the same vision, then we've got nothing."

Over the past few years, a trend in the Philadelphia marketing scene has been to "unbundle" services, where agencies choose one service to specialize in. Neff is one of the few that provides full-service marketing, or a 'one-stop-shop', for local, regional and national businesses. Neff believes that this is a major reason for the company's success. "The media department and the PR department work hand in hand, we strategize and feed off of each other," said Media Director Lisa Kinchella, "and this eliminates any disconnect between our media strategy and how PR is handled."

Fight, Not Flight

In 2005, Neff told Philly Ad Club that he wanted to strengthen the agency and start landing some larger accounts. He informed them of his plan to roll along and pick up a ton of new business and new talent in 2006 and beyond. Here we are, 2009, and Neff has done just that.

As the economy continues to challenge the marketing industry, Neff continues to fight back. Neff believes that the recessionary economy offers brands a once in a lifetime opportunity to significantly increase their market share. Many businesses have turned to Neff as their "trusted advisor" to help them to achieve this.

"Many businesses have shied away from advertising or PR as they are looking to spend less, but there are also plenty out there looking to increase or sustain their spending in order maintain consistency and differentiate themselves," said Neff, "and I feel fortunate to have encountered those kinds of clients."

A positive attitude yields a positive outcome. In the past six months, Neff has gained more than ten clients, both national and local, and has increased the staff by more than 30 percent.

"Luckily, we have come across clients who understand the power of marketing during a recessionary economy and these businesses are still spending in order to positively position themselves in the future," said Neff.

Ra-Ra Philadelphia

Big wins for Neff Associates mean wins for the city of Philadelphia and the surrounding region. Many large Philadelphia-based brands have chosen to outsource their advertising and PR needs to agencies in different cities, instead of using award-winning outlets right in their backyard.

The Dallas-based Del Frisco's Restaurant Group, which owns and operates Del Frisco's Steakhouse and Sullivan's Steakhouse, saw something in Philadelphia's Neff Associates and made Neff Associates their official agency of record in January.

This example not only enhances Philadelphia's reputation in the marketing industry, but also creates business for Philadelphia-based businesses, such as television and radio production companies, printers, photographers and modeling agencies.

"Philadelphia marketing firms are often neglected by large national companies and it's great to be able to help put Philadelphia on the map," said Neff.

Neff has played an integral



Charlotte
Dallas
Denver
Fort Worth
Houston
Las Vegas
New York
Philadelphia

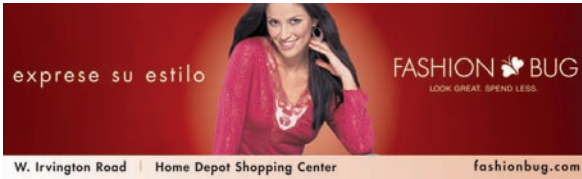
ESDA
PRIME
Del Frisco's
Double Eagle Steak House

Delfriscos.com



role in making Philadelphia visible on the marketing map. He has launched several national campaigns, including Fashion Bug, BG Automotive

(Letitia Lofts, Hoopskirt Lofts and Lofts@209). The agency also has handled all national television and radio for Charming Shoppes' Fashion Bug, Cathe-



Group and Kimco Realty with plans to continue representing companies throughout the country.

Neff's Niche

Neff Associates specializes in retail, hospitality/tourism and real estate. Neff also doesn't shy away from involvement in innovative projects. In fact, the agency helped launch and continues to handle national marketing for BG Automotive Group and is in the process of making it the first mass-produced Neighborhood Electric Vehicle (NEV). Neff also involves the company with pro-bono events and clients such as Alex's Great Chefs Event and The American Heart Association.

The agency launched Les Richards Menswear during the height of the economic slump and the store's success has enabled Les Richards to open a third store next month in Cherry Hill, NJ. Neff knew launching a men's retail store at that time was a risk, but nonetheless he was excited for the challenge and to overcome all of the negative factors the client was faced with.

"You have to work with what you're given. Although timing may not always be perfect, you can still have a successful launch. You just have to be smart about your strategies and apply everything that the past has taught you," said Neff.

Along with a down retail market, the suffering real estate market brought additional challenges. However, last year the

agency sold out Grasso Holding's The Lofts at Bella Vista and achieved full occupancy of other Center City real estate projects including the Packard Grande and OldCityLofts.net



rine's and Petite Sophisticate brands over the last four years.

Neff Associates has garnered more than 40 awards both nationally and regionally since 2000 for excellence in advertising and public relations. neffassociates.com

Alex's Lemonade Great Chef's Event TV Spot

Marc Summers: No matter what your contribution, it can make difference

Marc Summers: Join us for the Great Chef's Event

nbcphiladelphia.com

the 10! show

nbc at the pump

nbc 10 news

studio ten creative group

The driving force of local tv.