Advertising doesn’t cost. It pays. Given the current economic status, it may be hard to be convinced. After all, we have been in business more than 35 years. Everyone knows who we are. Everyone knows we do quality work. Everyone knows we give good service. Right? Why should we spend money on advertising when we are looking at ways to cut costs? In the current LOW BID ONLY market, we don’t have a line item for advertising. We are not aware that we ever received a contract directly because of our ad in the StoryPole, now MasonryEdge/the StoryPole.

So, why do we believe in advertising? When readers see that we are a unified industry, supporting the publication, they understand the quality that represents. When they see the variety of projects we build, they are impressed and inspired. When we address how we eliminated obstacles and improved the schedule by using masonry, they take notice. That builds trust. Well, I believe advertising is more than an ad in a magazine or a spot on a billboard. I believe its real value is when it becomes an education process. Use your ad space effectively to educate readers on the benefits of masonry and how we as contractors are cost effective solution providers dedicated to strengthening this industry.

We all want to promote our individual companies, but we need to look beyond to our industry. As individual contractors, we may have sat on our hands thinking there would always be plenty of work around. Well, that attitude didn’t work for the Big Three. Or masonry. To increase market share, we begin by educating owners, architects, engineers and CMs on what masonry can do for them. This must be a corporate effort. There is strength in numbers. We can do that first of all by being members of MIM, MAC and other respective masonry organizations around the country. They have all the tools, are ready and willing to help us. We need to provide the opportunities.

As contractors, we need to address issues on the job. Helms Masonry was recently waiting (again) for steel lintels for louver and door openings. We suggested to the superintendent that we could use masonry lintels (bond beams, rerod and grout), which we have on the job ready to go. He was concerned that they would not be strong enough. We are talking about openings of 6’ 4” and less. We encouraged him to talk to the engineer. He did and the masonry lintels were approved. Unfamiliar with this option, the superintendent was more comfortable with his previous experiences. It took more than suggesting; this required educating. We pointed out that materials for masonry lintels were on site, ready to go. We could avoid weeks of delay. They would be better looking, stronger and more cost effective. And the painter would not have to maintain them with metal paint over and over again. Schedule was paramount. He agreed and we were able to continue construction. This was all about educating him on the potential of reinforced masonry. Examples like this are many and they are good for the masonry industry.

Being able to point to articles in MasonryEdge/the StoryPole on masonry lintels and other topics strengthens our credibility and cause. We all need to be proactive by supporting, educating and advertising any way we can. Advertising does pay when it strengthens our industry. The industry is strengthened by the educational articles published in MasonryEdge/the StoryPole. Our industry needs this magazine and it needs our support.

When properly designed, detailed and installed, masonry is a great investment for the owner and a greater value to the user. Spread the word!