



DESIGNING STRATEGIES®

Business Strategies for the Design Industry

A Maurer Consulting Group Publication

Volume 4 • Issue 17 •

July/August 2007



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Have you heard the news? Courts in the UK are finally giving up the powdered wigs and colored robes that have been the attire of judges and barristers for hundreds of years. While some judges in criminal cases will still be required

to wear the wigs, others will no longer be faced with the high costs of this traditional garb or the discomfort it causes.

What are you doing in your company to bring it up to modern times, poised for the future? Do you have antiquated processes, forms or procedures in place that no one even recalls why they became a part of everyday operations? Maybe it's time to investigate your business operations and why you're in that mode. Is there a better, cheaper or faster way to do things? Has technology developed something that can make your operation run more smoothly and efficiently? Often small changes can make a big difference in your operations and your bottom line.

Visualize - Analyze - Strategize Plan for success!

Maurer Consulting Group

Maurer Consulting Group is a strategies group focused on helping clients plan for, and implement, their unique vision of success. We follow a logical path of discovery and development to create a road map to that success.

Consulting services include:

- Situational assessment of your firm's past, present and future
- Strategic Planning
- Future visioning and scenario planning
- Market identity & segmentation studies
- Brand development
- Leadership development
- Business coaching

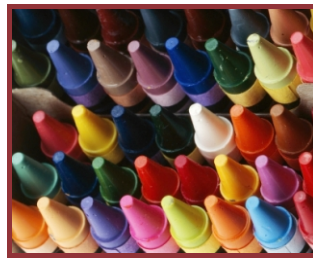
For more information, call 330.666.0802 or email tlmaurer@juno.com.

Something To Think About...

"You don't drown by falling in water.
You only drown if you stay there."

Zig Ziglar

One of the brightest innovations I've seen lately comes from the people who brought me my first box of crayons...Crayola. To be more precise, it was Binney-Smith, Inc. Once they gave the world a box of eight colors, increased color choices to 16, then 24 and 64, and beyond, where could they go from there? How many are too many color choices? Those of us in the design community believe there can never be too many colors. I'd guess most mothers follow the 'Less is More' theory when it comes to finding any number of broken crayons ground into their carpet.



Binney-Smith has done a great job of offering new products surrounding their classic crayons. First, color choices increased, then sizes went from skinny crayons to thicker ones for younger, chubbier hands. Then came markers: thin ones, thick ones, and even washable ones. Today, there is a plethora of art kits with crayons, other art media, and pictures to color on a wide array of topics.

Visualize

But, where did they go from there? Instead of limiting their product line to the confines of the quiet *inside* world: homes, schools and art classes, the Crayola brand has now declared the entire *outside* world their palette. A new line of *outside* art materials has been developed. The new line embraces larger canvases to be filled with creative childhood fantasies and expression: your sidewalk, the driveway, or the parking lot down the street. Even if budding artists mess up your property (or your neighbor's), a bucket of water, the garden hose or Mother Nature can wash it all away in minutes, creating yet another blank canvas on which to use even more of these new, exciting products. Could there be a better product innovation? How better to market it than on colorful television commercials showing a group of children at play...outside with friends...having the time of their life?

Analyze



What is your company doing that is innovative? Is it just more of the 'same old, same old' or are you stretching yourself and your staff to move in new, exciting directions, creating new products and services? If the only things new are a few color choices, are you reaching the end of your ability to innovate, expand and grow your company? What's your 'next' best idea to keep your product line fresh and desirable to your customer base?

To ensure a continuous flow of bright, creative ideas, it is imperative to have a company culture and environment that supports creativity. Do you? If not, develop strategies to change from a static, staid workplace to one where creative minds are nurtured. Does that mean physically changing your work environment? Perhaps. Does it mean holding brainstorming meetings off site in a causal, fun environment? Maybe. Review your 'Creativity Quotient' during your planning to see where your strengths and weaknesses lie, then plan to make necessary changes to ensure you are in a position to creatively and innovatively move into the future.

Strategize



Like many of you, Terri recently traveled to Chicago to attend NeoCon where she presented two of her most popular programs, "*Managing An Age Diverse Workforce*" and "*The Changing Marketplace: Selling To The Generations.*" We're excited to report that both sessions were **SOLD OUT** to standing room only crowds.

If you're interested in bringing one or both of these programs to your region or company, please contact Maurer Consulting Group at 330.666.0802 or tlmaurer@juno.com.