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## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

# What's our market share?

How can we improve if we don't know where we currently stand? Some of our members don't feel comfortable releasing sales information to PCI. Obviously we all need to report total sales each year on our sales declarations, but I am talking about more detailed information, broken down by geographic location and market share.

It benefits us as members for PCI to be able to better understand total sales by market segment. PCI can compare these data to national data to estimate market share as well as measure annual increases or decreases. This information can help our industry spot emerging trends, measure the effectiveness of our marketing and quality programs, and track how our competition, building systems other than precast concrete, are doing. Ignoring market data is like throwing a bunch of money into the stock market and never checking on your investments. (There are times when you don't want to look, but you do anyway because you need to know.)

One of the main reasons PCI exists is to grow the precast/prestressed concrete pie so we can all have a bigger slice. This year the Marketing Council is focusing specifically on the parking, institutional, and military market segments. How will we measure the success of these initiatives? Unless we help PCI help us, we may never fully know how effective our marketing programs are or what to tweak.

The Marketing Council has laid the groundwork by conducting a voluntary annual Producer Member marketing survey. The council has also conducted customer research to better understand how architects, engineers, owners, and contractors perceive precast concrete. This helps us align our messaging with the customers' primary concerns and increases our effectiveness. However, to fully understand the value of the investment PCI and its members make each year, we must commit to measuring it.

Yes, filling out forms can be a royal pain in the neck, but it is essential if we are going to move this industry forward. To date, providing this type of information has not been mandatory. As a Producer Member, I think this is a huge mistake. Because PCI producers make more than 90% of the aboveground precast concrete in the United States, we hold the greatest piece to this puzzle, our sales data.

Most other trade groups require their members to report sales and market data. Yet at PCI, we seem afraid to commit to it. We don't have good data because the very people who need it are not willing to provide it. This is crazy. What are we afraid of? All data provided to PCI are kept strictly confidential; no identifying company markers are ever disclosed to anyone.

We can keep floating along in a state of total denial, or we can change things. Here's my suggestion: next time PCI requests market data, please provide it as quickly and accurately as possible. Let's measure ourselves so we know what success looks like! ▮



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