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## PCI's Strong Partnership With Professionals and Associates

**W**hen I first addressed you as your new chairman in the January-February PCI JOURNAL, I discussed our new strategic plan. Under that plan, I explained that to increase our effectiveness as an organization, we needed to make PCI itself the focal point of our efforts. The new plan suggests that we need first to turn inward if we are to be successful in reaching our many markets.

If we are going to accomplish this, there are two special groups of our members that we need to recognize. They are, quite literally, our partners in expanding this industry. I refer, of course, to our Professional Members and our Associate Members. Often, I fear, we become so caught up in exploring new markets and refining old ones, that we fail to recognize how vital these very professional and very talented partners are to our industry.

It would be simplistic at best to pat ourselves on the back at our many accomplishments as producers, without first recalling the support of our Professional and Associate Members.

The Professional Members make us look good with our customers. As we all know, our products are only as good as the designs we receive from these partners. Many of the most innovative products we produce come from their creative imaginations. Even those products that have become standards of our industry — items like double tees, hollow-core slabs and bulb tees — first had to be conceived, designed and tested to determine their feasibility. Architectural precast spandrels and wall panels need the designer's touch as well, as do countless other products.

We all have competent engineers on our own staffs. Yet, where would we be without the design assistance of our Professional Members — both companies and individuals? They consistently provide us with strong backup in the code arena and in the planning and detailed design of the structures for which we furnish the essential components.

They continually push the envelope to determine whether we can produce better, more efficient components for our customers. The word "can't" never seems to be a part of

their vocabularies. Only "why can't we" seems to enter their thinking.

Let's also remember that among our Professional Members are the many educators who conduct our vital research and prepare our industry's leaders of tomorrow in schools throughout the country.

Similarly, we would have a very difficult time serving our customer's needs were it not for the contributions of our Associate Members. It's easy enough to think of them as mere vendors, when in fact, they too have made numerous contributions to the success of our industry. Think for a moment of all of the different products we sometimes take for granted.

They range from such commodity items as admixtures, formwork, strand, and reinforcing materials, to machinery such as concrete mixers and vibrators, to specialty items such as formliners and inserts. Many of the things we do every day could not be done without their contributions to the improvement of our products and the way we deliver them to our customers.

I suggest that as we continue to turn inward, we stop and think of how strong a partnership we have with these literally hundreds of Professional and Associate Members. They not only contribute to our industry with their knowledge, they also contribute with their time and talent, by serving on numerous committees that make our Institute so strong.

Let's show them all our appreciation by utilizing their products and services at every opportunity. You don't have to go far to find them. Just open up the Membership Directory and turn to page 89 to find the Associate Members and page 109 to find the Professional Members. Together with them, our partners, we can continue to strengthen our organization inwardly, thus strengthening our industry outwardly!

