

A Capital Idea: Take Time to Invest In Pro Bono Contributions

Shane Inman, ASID, IIDA

Practicing interior design allows us the ability to positively transform how others think, feel and behave while inside the environments we create. Our moral responsibility to inspire and motivate starts with individuals, but we can also use our talents on a greater scale to impact entire communities.

Giving back to your local community not only fulfills a greater good, it also promotes the diversity of your talents and demonstrates that your chosen career is not motivated by money, but rather by passion! When you love what you do, the money will follow, and that mindset is apparent to those around you. Be mindful, of course: don't get in the race if you don't intend to go the distance. But when you are sincerely committed to pitching in unselfishly for something you believe in, like-minded professionals will appreciate and acknowledge your impeccable time management and organizational skills by giving you full creative control that will place you front and center.

For my company's first pro bono contribution, I designed a formal sit-down dinner and event for 500 for the [Traverse Symphony Orchestra](#), which led to my acquiring the president of the organization as a private client. The second design contribution was for an organized community competition that awarded a [free \\$35,000 kitchen](#). My participation in this event led to successfully establishing my corporate identity and branding through radio and television. The third design contribution was part of a highly visible event for Michael Moore's [Traverse City Film Festival](#), which resulted in increased recognition for my work, with the secondary benefit of getting all my phone calls and emails returned much more quickly from that time on.

Nobly place your name next to projects you support without thought of personal gain; enthusiastically bite off more than you can chew for worthy causes. In the end, the rewards that come back to you from your dedication and ability to deliver what you promise will be better than capital—this is portfolio building at its best!

Read the [related article](#) about how other [ASID members](#) are making a commitment to their communities.

What sorts of pro bono projects have had an impact on you, personally and professionally? Any great stories to tell? Please share your comments below!

Shane Inman, ASID, IIDA, is president and principal interior designer of [The Inman Company](#), a residential and commercial design firm with offices in Chicago and Traverse City, Mich. He frequently blogs for the Chicago Tribune [ChicagoNow](#) website and his work is featured on [HGTV.com](#).

Leave a Reply

Name (required)
 Mail (will not be published) (required)
 Website

Submit Comment

blog

Greenbuild for Interior Designers (at last!)
by Penny Bonda, FASID It's a daunting task finding one's way around Greenbuild. I should know, [learn more>](#)
published September 21, 2011 (2 weeks ago)

The Cost of Interior Design
by Bridget McMullin, ASID, CID, CAPS I am constantly asked by friends, family and relatively new acquaintances [learn more>](#)
published August 22, 2011

How to Avoid an Interior Design Business Emergency
by Gail Doby, ASID, Design Success

icon ASID ICON
asidicon

ASID Business Library (new!). Get answers to your business questions, concerns from business professionals. <http://t.co/fRlorXE>
33 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

The Design Triangle – a handy tool for talking with clients about budgets. Simplifies choices. <http://t.co/6f8yvHd>
33 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

HGTV's Design Star is casting in Las Vegas, LA, Austin, Charlotte, Boston, Miami and NYC. More information: <http://t.co/xgEPvVw>
41 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

Growth in #interiordesign billings slows but stays positive in Q2: <http://t.co/KchliG>
41 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

Want more? Some designers are doing well in spite of the dismal economy. Learn what you can do differently: <http://t.co/4TQ7v02>
57 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

Does your design business bio sell you up or sell you out? Maybe it's time for an overhaul. Start here: <http://t.co/9lfvoP4>
70 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

Get organized. Best #interiordesign

twitter  Join the conversation