

president's message

Perceptions can be changed

Who are you? What do you do? Why does it matter? In all too many cases "you" are seen as the guy (or gal) that mows the grass. To the general public, to the news media, to your administrators, mowing the grass may be perceived as your primary role—or even your only role—in athletic field management.

While mowing is important, it's one small segment of sports turf management. To earn the recognition and respect of our employers, our facility owners and administrators, the media, and the public, we need to communicate the true story of who we are, what we do, and why it matters. Only then can we expect to change the current perceptions and take our rightful place on the management team.

Working together, we can make this happen. The STMA Board approved in April some of the most ambitious and important initiatives this organization has undertaken.

Under the direction of Vickie Wallace and Mike Andresen, CSFM, the Marketing Committee presented a comprehensive marketing plan based in part on our own strategic plan and the recommendations of Ackermann Public Relations, Knoxville, which recently completed a Marketing Audit of STMA.

We now have a detailed plan to 1) build awareness of our profession; 2) improve the image of our profession and battle current perceptions or misperceptions; and 3) provide value to membership.

To start, we are:

- Looking at redesigning our logo and tagline for a cohesive, clean look that will represent the image we wish to portray.
- Upgrading our trade show booth to portray that image.
 - Defining trade shows and conferences in which our presence will benefit members, with guidance provided as to who should represent STMA at these and other functions.
 - Improving the website in order to get information more quickly to members.

Re the final point, Boyd Montgomery, CSFM, has generously volunteered to develop ways to accomplish this. We will follow the example of websites such as Ohio State's for which STMA member Pam Sherratt does such a great job. For this to work, however, headquarters needs your correct e-mail address. If we don't have it, please forward via fax at (800-366-0391) or email Rich King at rich@st.omhcoxmail.com. Don't miss out on up-to-date communications!

The Board also approved a proposal that gives structure to Chapter visit requests and also permits Chapters to better influence how Chapter Development money is spent. Abby McNeal, CSFM, and Dave Rulli have had an opportunity to

share the details with all the Chapters by this time and the plan is being implemented.

These are important issues, ones that should be a concern to each of us. We will keep you informed as these projects progress. Once again, I would like to remind you that this is your Association and, if you have any suggestions, comments, or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact any board member or me. I look forward to hearing from you. You can reach me at bcampbell@utk.edu.



BOB CAMPBELL, CSFM

Bob

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