

FROM IIDA

Few businesses find success without the key ingredient of passion. The Googles, Starbucks, Nikes and Apples of the world all improve their bottom lines and create loyal fans by firmly believing in their products and services, maintaining a can-do attitude from the bottom ranks to the top and becoming staples in their communities.

Think, for a moment, of Southwest Airlines. For the past few years, many airlines have had a difficult time even staying afloat. But Southwest has managed to remain profitable — for 70 consecutive quarters as of third-quarter 2008 — even in the worst of economic conditions, by cultivating employees who seem to genuinely enjoy their jobs, by focusing on friendly customer service and by remaining devoted to the communities it serves. Need more proof? The company has even named its blog, “Nuts About Southwest.”

As interior designers, it's vital that we, too, continuously maintain the passion for our profession and ignite it for those outside our world of design. There's no doubt that tough economic situations and tight client budgets make it difficult to maintain that cheerleader attitude. Even when we feel emotionally defeated by an unrealistic budget or a lack of work, we as designers must keep the passion alive and spreading.

REINVENT YOURSELF. Try something new like a project in a less-familiar segment. In this issue, we've spotlighted interior designers who've done just that. They've gone outside the box to find work in the airline, theme park and fashion industries (see “Design Rebels,” pg. 30).

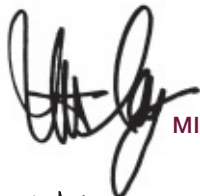
VOLUNTEER YOUR TIME. There are countless ways to give back to the profession and your local community. Mentor a student or young designer to offer your expertise and spread your passion to others (see “Mentoring 2.0,” pg. 6).

GO BACK TO SCHOOL. That could mean enrolling in a class to refresh your skills and learn a few new ones. Or consider volunteering your time as an adjunct professor or guest lecturer at a local university. Not enough time? Pick up a book or industry white paper, and learn about the latest design research, management tactic or business strategy.

GET INSPIRED FOR THE FUTURE. The future looks bright for Interior Design. Worldwide, new markets for our services emerge all the time. It's up to us, as passionate designers, to recognize where our talents are most in demand (see “Around the World,” pg. 16).

REFUSE TO BE INDIFFERENT. As designers, we are creative, passionate people by nature. Love something or hate it, but when we're indifferent, we risk losing that spark.

Regardless of what shakes out, we'll all survive and the world will go on. But it will be those designers with a passion for their clients, their firms and the profession who will come out ahead. It's easy to put off, but don't lose this opportunity to stay enthusiastic about what you do. As Members of IIDA, the resources are at your fingertips to keep the flames of creativity burning.



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