



How Concrete Producers Can Make Sustainability Branding Work for Them

How leveraging a sustainability brand can help you become a community leader, retain employees and grow your business.

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For many business owners, branding is a mysterious concept. Though it might seem intangible, and be tempting to relegate it to the bottom of your to-do list, branding can create real value for your concrete business.

Your brand is the perception stakeholders have of your company. It's the impression that pops into their minds when they hear your company's name or the feeling they get while experiencing some aspect of your business.

Branding is more than a beautifully designed logo. While your company's visual identity is one way to express it, a strong brand flows throughout the overall customer experience – from social media, to pre-sales, to onboarding, to customer service and more.

Why branding matters

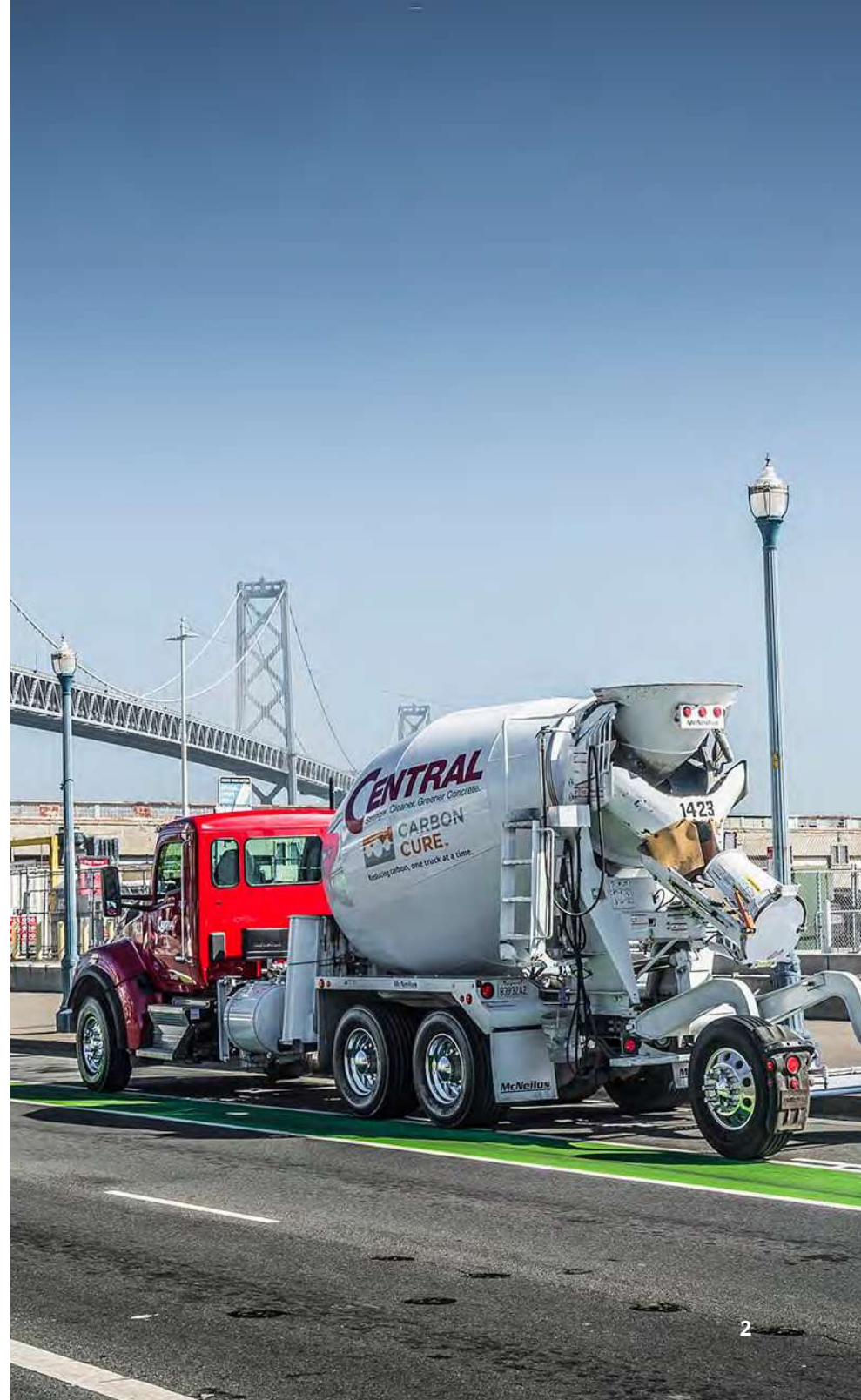
Branding helps your company make a lasting impression. By defining your competitive advantage, and then building a brand around it, you help customers understand what you offer and why they should choose your company over a competitor.

In small or competitive markets, this becomes even more important. With a commodity product like ready mix concrete – where producers might only compete with a small number of other suppliers in their region – a strong brand elevates your company and gives it an edge over competitors.

A strong brand can help you:

- Close deals more easily
- Charge a premium price
- Increase the effectiveness of marketing initiatives
- Position your company as an industry leader
- Build trust and loyalty with key stakeholders

A [recent survey by Google and BCG](#) reported that B2B companies with a mature brand marketing strategy had higher returns on their marketing investments, as well as improvements in areas such as customer acquisition, cross-selling to existing customers and overall sales growth.



Three Ways Sustainability Branding Can Help Your Concrete Business

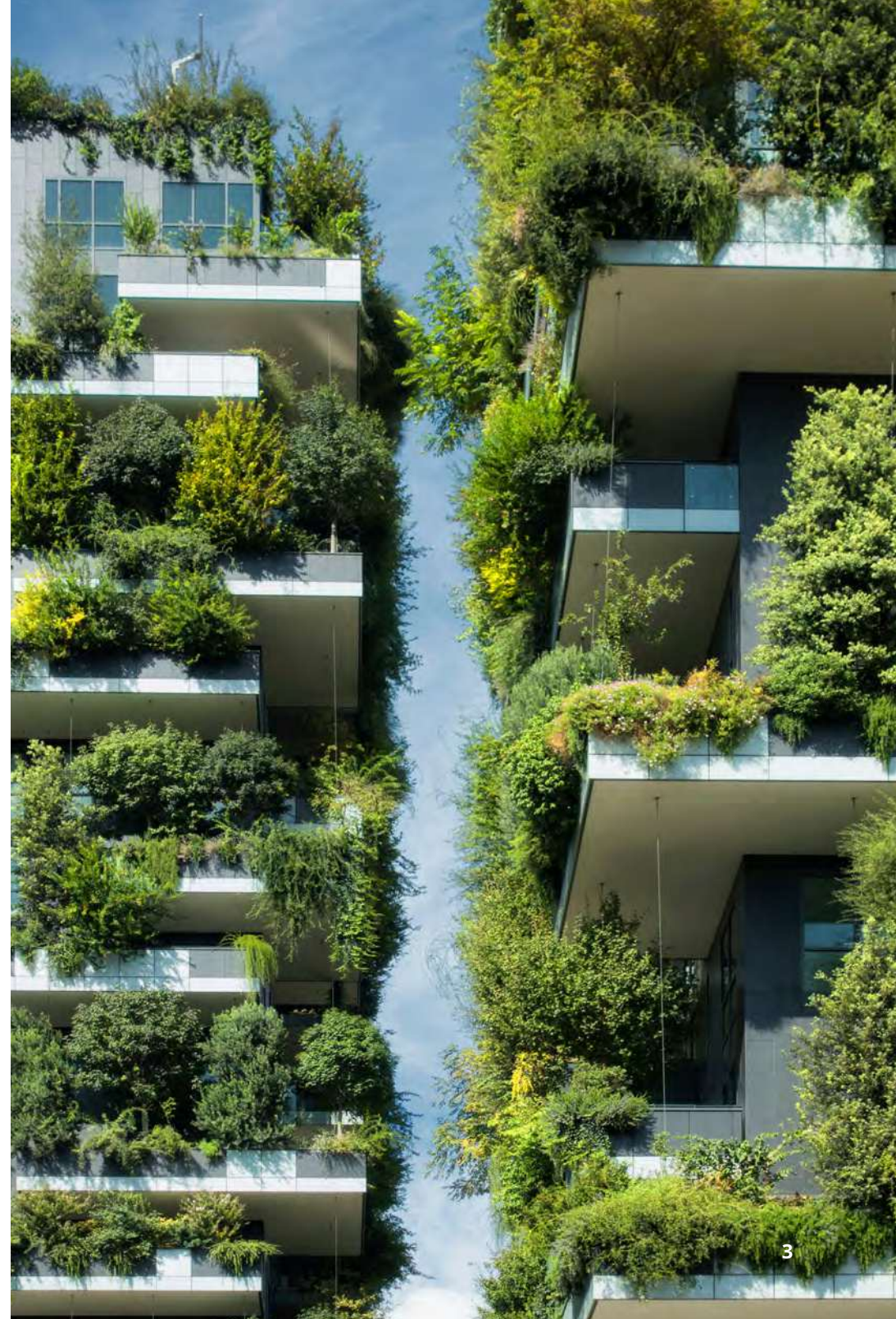
1. Access new markets

The call for sustainability and low carbon solutions in the building sector continues, and with good reason: cement production **creates about 7%** of the world's CO₂ emissions and is the largest contributor to embodied carbon in the built environment.

Government, industry bodies and companies of all sizes are aligning on a mission of decarbonization. **U.S. government bodies** are passing Buy Clean legislation and creating policies to reduce embodied carbon. Industry initiatives, such as **SE 2050** and NRMCA's **Build With Strength**, are championing low carbon practices within the architectural, engineering and construction community. Large corporations are making ambitious climate commitments and are looking across their supply chain for partners to help them reduce their carbon footprint.

The door to this growing market is wide open to producers offering low carbon concrete. Globally, the green concrete market is predicted to be valued at **USD 44.65 billion** during the forecast period of 2021-2028. This push for sustainable materials is set to continue as the demand for climate solutions intensifies.

Producers with sustainability as part of their brand are natural partners for customers with sustainability goals. By incorporating sustainability into your business and gaining exposure as a company committed to low carbon solutions, you make it easier for potential customers to find the sustainability partner they're looking for – you.



2. Attract and retain talent

According to the Associated Builders and Contractors, the construction industry will need to attract close to **650,000 additional workers** on top of the normal pace of hiring during 2022, while the Home Builders Institute predicts that **2.2 million new workers** will be needed from 2022 to 2024.

This incredible demand for talent coincides with a challenge to find skilled workers and a labor shortage felt in companies across all industries. Dubbed **The Great Resignation**, employees are quitting in record numbers prompted in part by a desire for a higher quality of life, more meaningful employment opportunities and better working conditions. Since April 2021, more than **19 million American workers** have quit their jobs, leading to intense competition for workers in a job-seeker's market.

Producers who want to attract the best talent need to put their best foot forward and differentiate their company from other employers. While much of the focus on branding relates to customers, a good brand – and specifically one built around sustainability – can also help businesses attract and retain talent.

A multitude of surveys and studies are pointing to employees' desire to work for sustainable companies. In a recent survey of **over 16,000 people**, 67% of respondents reported that they are more willing to apply for and 68% more willing to accept positions from sustainable companies. In another survey, **three-quarters of millennials** said they'd accept a smaller salary to work for a sustainable company.

Not only do employees want to work for companies that are tackling environmental and social issues, but those who do are **more productive and engaged** at work, potentially increasing loyalty and long-term employment, and benefiting your bottom line.



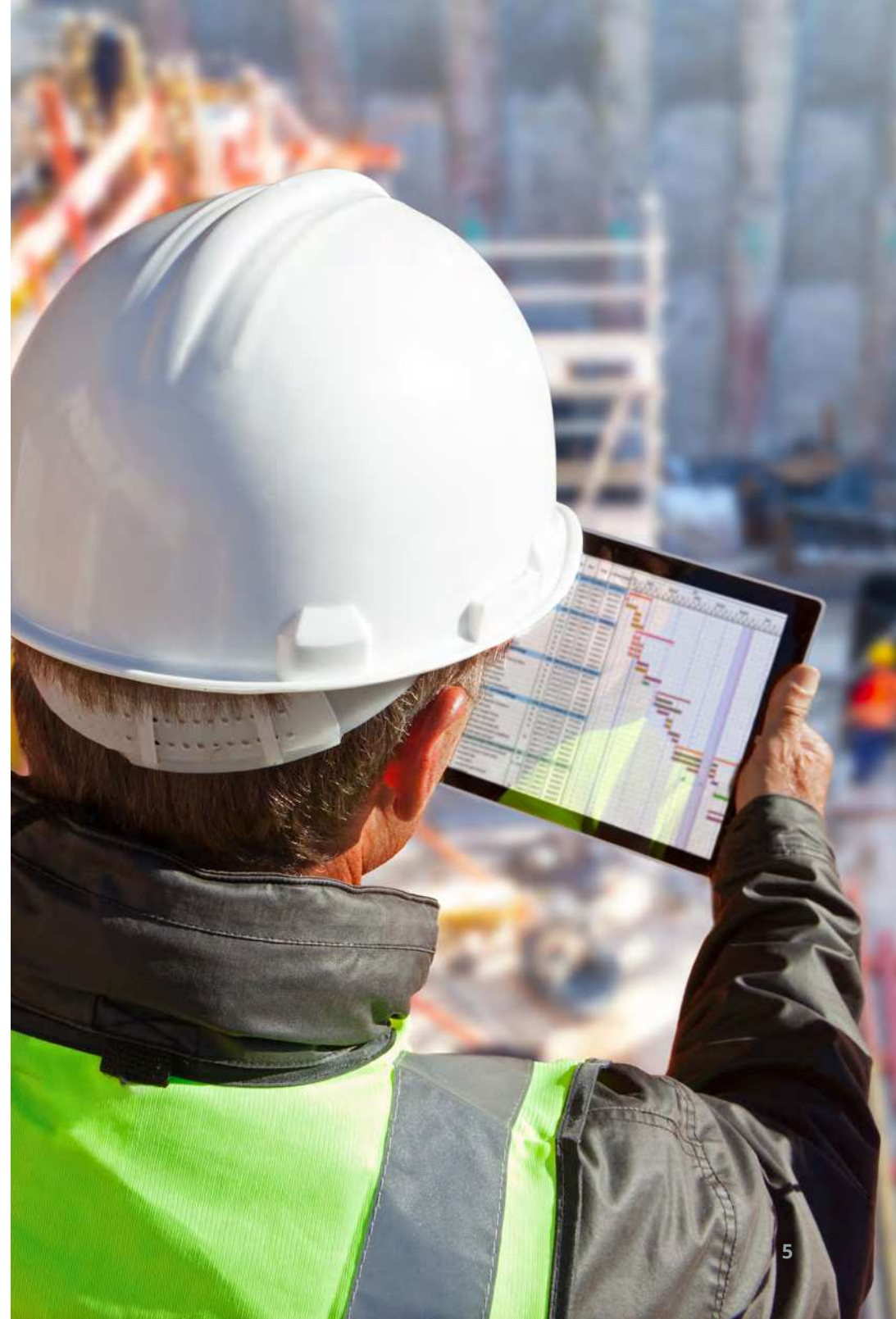
3. Future-proof your business

If your concrete business is booming right now, investing time and money into building a brand might feel like an unnecessary luxury. But the recent years of COVID-19, natural disasters, social unrest and geopolitical issues have taught us all that change is the new normal. Producers who take proactive action now in developing a sustainability brand will be better equipped to succeed in a competitive market and handle whatever the future might bring.

A resilient company knows how to adapt and realign to the changing needs of its customers. With the pressure growing for the building industry to reduce embodied carbon, architects, designers and owners need sustainable solutions. All signs are pointing to a future where sustainable concrete will be the norm for most or all construction projects.

By adopting low carbon concrete now, [producers can get ahead of their competitors](#) and forthcoming regulations on sustainable materials – such as the U.S. federal government Buy Clean initiative which will mandate environmental product declarations for all concrete products supplied to public projects starting January 1, 2023. By developing a sustainability brand and establishing yourself as a sustainable leader, you will have branded yourself with a differentiator based on something that matters to the market, helping you weather future economic downturns.

As well, demonstrating your commitment to sustainability by being at the forefront of the shift to a low carbon society helps your company leave a legacy for future generations, strengthening your role in your local community.



CarbonCure and Riv/Crete: Staying ahead of the curve

Riv/Crete Ready Mix is a family-owned producer with three batch plants in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The company was started by Nicholas Rivecca and his brother Mike Rivecca after they bought out their father and a former business partner, creating an innovative new company backed up by decades of experience in the concrete and construction industry.

Despite Milwaukee being a conservative and cautious market, Riv/Crete recognized the growing trend of green building and saw an opportunity to position their company as a market leader in sustainable concrete. "If we could be ahead of the curve, understand how the technology works and have experience with it, then when it came more to fruition, we would be prepared to deliver it," said Nicholas. "We'd rather be a market leader than chase competition."

In 2021, Riv/Crete became a CarbonCure producer partner, and as of early 2022, had used CarbonCure on two projects. The company started cautiously, but are excited to see where sustainable concrete takes them in the future. "We've gotten to the point where the training wheels are off," he said. "I feel like we're really going to have a positive big year using CarbonCure's technology."

To prepare for this big year, Riv/Crete is capitalizing on their sustainable branding, using a **video collaboration** with CarbonCure and the ticker on their website in their marketing as they position themselves as a local leader in low carbon concrete.



How to Leverage a Sustainability Brand

How can you develop a sustainability brand that benefits your business?

First, think about what you want your brand to convey to stakeholders. What matters the most to your company? Not only can your brand stand for a number of complementary ideas, true sustainability goes beyond being green.

To be sustainable, a business must consider environmental, social and economic issues – the triple bottom line of people, planet and profit. When incorporating sustainability into your branding, look at your company as a whole to find the sustainability stories that are already part of your business.

As a concrete producer, you are building communities. For many, being a responsible employer and community leader is how you've always done business. Your company's financial sustainability matters to you, your employees and your community.

Environmental practices like reusing water make good business sense and cement your position as a steward of your community. These are all part of sustainability and can be infused into your branding.

Here are some other factors to consider when developing and leveraging a sustainability brand:

- 1. Be unique.** Your company's brand should be its own – no other producer has the same values, expertise and qualities that make your company what it is. Capturing that uniqueness and expressing it as part of your brand is a core strength of branding. Think about what sets your business apart from others and what stories are uniquely yours.
- 2. Understand your market.** In order to effectively build trust and awareness, your brand needs to resonate with your stakeholders. What do they care about? What are their needs and challenges? Increasingly in the building industry, these are sustainable solutions. As well, by understanding who you're speaking to, you can better understand how to speak to them.
- 3. Live your values.** Your brand should be an honest representation of your company's actions and values, enhancing its positive characteristics. This means that a company that wants to be known as a sustainability brand needs to implement a sustainability program or offer sustainable products. Be authentic and transparent. Don't exaggerate your contribution, but remember that sustainability is about more than your carbon footprint.
- 4. Build your internal culture.** Once you know what your company stands for, make sure to spread that message within it. Internalizing sustainability into your company culture reinforces its authenticity and helps your employees be effective ambassadors and salespeople. Internal communications or company events can help create an authentic brand from the inside out.
- 5. Showcase your credentials and impact.** There are a number of ways you can demonstrate how you're walking the talk when it comes to your values and sustainability. CarbonCure offers a [CO₂ savings ticker](#) that producer partners can add to their website – in real time, visitors can see how much carbon you're saving by using CarbonCure. Content such as ebooks and case studies elevate your expertise, as can a reference project catalog that shares how your low carbon solutions can be applied to different projects.
- 6. Seek out media and conference opportunities.** You can raise your company's profile by capitalizing on the ongoing media interest in sustainability. Create media assets and messaging and build relationships with local and industry publications. Also consider conference speaking or sponsorship opportunities as other ways to get your brand in front of people looking for sustainable solutions.

CarbonCure and imi: Spreading the sustainability message

Irving Materials, Inc. (imi) has been delivering quality concrete throughout the midwestern and southern U.S. for almost 75 years. The company has a vision: to create safe, solid structures for its community and to become a more sustainable enterprise that leaves behind a better world for future generations.

Partnering with CarbonCure is one way that imi demonstrates its commitment to sustainability. The company also prides itself on being involved in its community – for example, sponsoring local sports teams, offering in-class learning experiences for elementary students and providing college scholarships.

In 2019, CarbonCure worked with imi on a promotional blitz among leading specifiers and contractors in the Indianapolis area. Jeff McPherson, Vice President of Customer Development at imi, remembers being shocked by the

results: “Once we decided to go all in, the enthusiasm level in the marketplace was surprising. It was phenomenal – it blew my mind.”

Almost immediately, imi began to secure projects because of CarbonCure’s value to end users. The company has continued leveraging its sustainability brand by attending industry events and trade shows, and was even featured in a **three-minute video** on **Bill Gates’ blog** about CarbonCure. “It was a great marketing piece for us,” said Jeff. “It really made us feel like we’re doing the right thing. It was a very humbling experience.”

CarbonCure Ready Mix has now been installed in 60 of imi’s plants, saving over 255,000 metric tons of CO₂ from entering the atmosphere, the equivalent of almost 30,000 acres (12,141 hectares) of forest absorbing CO₂ for a year.



CarbonCure and You: Sustainable Partners for a Strong Future

A strong brand is the foundation for a strong business.

With the increasing demand to reduce embodied carbon in the built environment, concrete producers who make the move to developing a sustainability brand can unlock value for their business – opening up new opportunities, attracting talent and future-proofing their business.

CarbonCure's carbon utilization technology, which enables producers to lower the carbon footprint of their concrete without compromising quality or performance, is a natural fit for producers building a sustainability brand.

As a CarbonCure producer partner, we'll help you craft your story and elevate your brand. Our Market Development team acts as an extension of your company, helping to train and empower your team so you can maximize new business opportunities.

Some of the ways we help our partners include internal communications, external announcements, and sales and marketing materials targeted at local contractor and specifier customers. We also have a lead sharing program for regional architecture, engineering, and construction prospects interested in specifying CarbonCure concrete.

"I was skeptical about whether a lower carbon footprint would help us generate business in our region, but CarbonCure's sustainability messaging has yielded results. We are seeing a lot of success with CarbonCure, not only commercially, but also with residential home builders across the Midwest. It has exceeded my expectations."

Jeff McPherson
Vice President of Sales at Irving Materials, Inc.





Build for the Future. Build with CarbonCure.

CarbonCure has been used on thousands of projects ranging from healthcare to higher education, residential developments and corporate campuses.

For more information about building with CarbonCure concrete, visit [carboncure.com](https://www.carboncure.com). To get in touch with a CarbonCure representative, send us an email at info@carboncure.com or give us a call at **+1 (902) 448-4100** (Worldwide) or **+1 (844) 407-0032** (North America).