



Marketing Issues

by Jordan Ritenour
Director of Market Development



Measuring Market Share

The economy is slowly turning around, becoming stronger every day, and many of you are starting to see the rewards of the battle you've been waging for the past few years. It has not been easy, as most of you have endured the worst economic downturn seen in a lifetime.

Before the recession, we had a nearly ten-year economic boom. Our business grew, but we gained minimal market-share growth. Today, however, many of our locals are experiencing market-share increase, and not just at a snail's pace, but by substantial amounts. Why is this? There are many factors behind this occurrence.

During the boom of the 1990s and early 2000s, many companies—both union and non-union—were adding to their workforce. It seemed like everyone in the country was building at this time. From major corporations down to mom-and-pop business owners, the money was there for construction and renovation. Many of the mom-and-pop owners were doing small projects, and several roofers who thought they were businessmen started their own companies, became contractors and hired roofers to go to work.

Most of these companies did not sign a union contract with us; many would not even discuss the possibility of being union. They would be awarded these small projects based solely on price, and we are all aware that you usually get what you pay for. Most of these companies were not able

to survive the slow economy, and those that did were no longer able to employ the same number of people. The larger non-union companies that survived the recession have slowed greatly also. On the other hand, while our contractors have also experienced tremendous setbacks, they have continued along steadily, and now they are picking up more work and hiring more roofers.

So why did our members stay with the union and the companies they were working for, instead of leaving and starting new businesses during the boom? We have numerous reasons to be union: our pension (one of, if not the best in the country), health insurance and perhaps most important, a contract that clearly states what we will receive for working for that union contractor. A non-union worker can't boast of a similar commitment from his or her employer.

Measuring your market share is essential to seeing if you are growing or not. Market share is simply a measurement of your local's employed membership compared to the number of roofers in your jurisdiction. It is a vital piece of information in understanding what percentage of the market the local controls. Once you have your market share, you can use it as a tool to help with contact negotiations, as well as for organizing purposes.

Recently I have assisted several locals in determining their market share, and it has raised my interest, as I have seen an increase in market share in many of those locals. I hope this has stirred your curiosity about your market share. Please contact the Marketing Department for instructions on figuring your market share. Thank you for your efforts, as the work you have done is now paying dividends. ■



MOVING?

Make sure we have your new address!



Go to www.unionroofers.com to change your address online, or complete this coupon and mail to: Roofers, Waterproofers & Allied Workers, c/o Circulation Department, 1660 L Street, N.W., Suite 800, Washington, D.C. 20036-5646

Name _____

Membership Number _____

Local Union Number _____

New Address _____

City _____

State/Province _____ Zip Code _____

This application is for the International Office only. You will still need to notify your Local Union of your new address.