Parking lots represent the largest market opportunity for expanding ready-mix production in Wisconsin and Michigan’s UP, with an annual total potential of more than 575,000 additional cubic yards (if 100% of both new construction and reconstruction projects went concrete), according to PCA statistics tweaked by long-time industry observer Phill Domask.

Based on the design standards and guidelines as documented in ACI 330 - Guide for Design and Construction of Parking Lots – and utilizing the latest version of NRMCA’s Concrete Pavement Analyst (CPA) software, the success of the Initiative rests on the following assumptions:

- Persuasion engages both logical and emotional drivers
- Inspired contractors drive emerging concrete markets
- Energized R/M producers can inspire contractors
- Focused associates can energize R/M producers
- Relevant, strategic programs can focus associate members and help energize producer members.

The goal of the Initiative is to systematically develop, over a 5-year period, 80 inspired concrete parking lot contractors in Wisconsin and Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (UP).

Initiative elements include recruitment, tool-making, education, and promotion support and will be implemented in five phases, as detailed below.

**Phase I – Associate Member Recruitment and Training:**
The Initiative requires the recruitment and training of focused Associate Parking Lot Ambassadors, a group of WRMCA associate members committed to expanding concrete parking lot market share and willing to energize their ready-mix producer member customers and prospects to participate in the Parking Lot Initiative.

**Phase II – Producer Member Recruitment and Training:**
The Strategy requires the recruitment and training of energized WRMCA producer members, who will be asked to commit to a five-year program of annually attending – with at least one of their contractor customers or prospects – the WRMCA Parking Lot Promotion Academy.

**Phase III – Annual Recruitment of the Vital Few:**
The Strategy requires an energized ready-mix producer from each WRMCA-member company to annually identify five contractor customers or prospects with the ability or potential to provide parking lot construction services in Wisconsin and/or Michigan’s UP ... and to convince one of the five to attend, with the ready-mix producer and at the producer’s expense, the WRMCA Parking Lot Promotion Academy.
Based on the 80/20 Rule, one of the five contractors identified by the ready-mix producer will have no interest in attending the Parking Lot Promotion Academy; three of the five contractors identified by the ready-mix producer will have varying levels of interest in attending the Academy; and one of the five will have a strong interest in attending the Academy. Because some members will be able to identify more than one contractor annually who has a strong interest in attending the Academy, provisions have been made to accommodate up to 80 contractors and 80 WRMCA members in each Parking Lot Promotion Academy class. Based on the 80/20 Rule, 20% of contractors attending the Parking Lot Promotion Academy will totally embrace the concept, resulting in the creation of 16 inspired concrete parking lot contractors annually. Over the five years of the program, WRMCA-member efforts will create 80 inspired concrete parking lot contractors, 320 informed concrete contractors, and at least one energized ready-mix producer a each producer-member company.

Phase IV – Creation of the WRMCA Parking Lot Promotion Academy: The Initiative requires the creation of a WRMCA Parking Lot Promotion Academy, which will provide an annual, day-long program of concrete parking lot promotion training for contractors and ready-mix producers.

In years two through five of the Initiative, the WRMCA Parking Lot Promotion Academy could also provide workshops for architects, engineers, and building owners.

Phase V – Help Contractors Create Demand for Concrete Parking Lots: In addition to identifying and educating inspired concrete parking lot contractors, the Initiative includes components for helping Wisconsin and UP construction professionals create demand for concrete parking areas, building on parking lot promotion efforts already underway in various WRMCA regions.

Statewide and UP parking lot promotion strategies will be developed for implementation beginning in 2008.

Next Steps ...

Recruitment tools for associates, producers, and concrete contractors have been designed and will be ready for distribution once focused Associate Parking Lot Ambassadors are identified and trained. First call (Phase I) for focused Associate Parking Lot Ambassadors was included in the April 9th edition of In the Mix. Producer Recruitment (Phase II) will begin in late April. Madison Area Technical College has agreed to play host to the first Parking Lot Promotion Academy (Phase IV) on December 6, 2007. An initial agenda for the Academy has been developed and Cherish Schwenn is working with Jon Hansen at NRMCA to incorporate beta versions of new parking lot promotion and technical tools into the program (the tools are expected to be available to the rest of the industry beginning January, 2008). Producer members will begin contractor recruitment on or after May 1 (Phase III). The Statewide Promotion Committee has begun its 2008 Parking Lot Promotion Planning (Phase V).

Conclusion ...

Overnight success stories are inspiring. But most often, sustained markets shifts require ongoing, strategic action. With record oil prices and growing enthusiasm for sustainable development, now is the time for WRMCA members to embark on a 5-year program to gain significant parking lot market share.