Who We Are

DickinsonGroup is the nation's leading real estate marketing firm, specializing in branding, print and digital communications, and public relations. Fusing strategic thinking and creativity, we help owners, developers and professional service firms build market visibility, asset value and business volume for their companies and properties.

We've had the good fortune to work with many of the smartest and most successful leaders in commercial real estate, multifamily residential, hospitality, and real estate services firms across the United States. We've seen market cycles come and go, weathered the storms and helped our clients do the same. Along the way, we've shown judgment, candor, vision and tenacity. Today, those qualities allow us to work with clients who let us leverage their strengths, use ours effectively and partner with them in achieving their business goals.

How We Work

Before we prescribe solutions, we diagnose the problem. At the first level of our diagnostics, we separate the simple problems from the more complex challenges. When there's an easy fix, we say so. We have a deep tool chest, but we pull out only the tools needed for the job at hand.

When we see larger challenges — or broader opportunities to grow our clients' business — we take the diagnostics to another level with a brand audit. Through proprietary brand research, we define our clients' offerings, audiences, differentiators and competitive positioning. Whether we're marketing office buildings, boutique hotels, condominiums, associations or Fortune 500 companies, we use these research findings to drive our strategic recommendations toward success.

Who Works With Us

DickinsonGroup has a history of long-term client relationships. For us, our ideal clients:

- Have worked with a marketing agency before and understand the relationship
- Seek a significant impact on the performance of their portfolio or services
- Trust our expertise and take our lead in crafting strategies and tactics
- Share information about internal budgets, timelines and expectations
- Commit a budget sufficient to support effective strategies
- Understand the cost and value of our services and pay promptly
- Designate a single point of contact for day-to-day communications
- Help us help them achieve their business goals

What Clients Can Expect From Us

Agency Tours and Agency Working Agreements Rather than submitting lengthy proposals, we begin the process of working with new clients by inviting them to take an agency tour. This face-to-face meeting allows them to get to know us as we learn more about their challenges and opportunities. After this meeting, we draft an Agency Working Agreement covering our general approach, project parameters, timeframe and budget. With the signed agreement, we start work.

Staffing Each of our clients has a designated point of contact at DickinsonGroup. This contact has the support of the firm's principals along with members of our creative team hand-selected for expertise relevant to the client and project.

Budgets For stand-alone projects, we submit a budget proposal in the Agency Working Agreement. For more complex projects, the Agency Working Agreement includes a budget for developing a strategic plan. Budgets for specific projects flow out of this plan.

Fee and Production Estimates Fee estimates for graphic design include two concepts and two rounds of revisions. Production estimates are good for 60 days from the date they are issued. Estimates for editorial projects, such as award nominations and bylined articles, include a draft and two rounds of revisions. Changes affecting the budget are submitted for client authorization. All budgets and budget changes must have client approval before work proceeds.

Out-of-pocket Expenses Unlike most agencies, DickinsonGroup does not mark up out-of-pocket expenses such as printing/production, mailing, photography and reproduction costs. Expenses of more than $500 require client approval and are billed directly to the clients. On advertising buys, we pass along our agency discount to our clients. Clients pay placement costs directly.

Standard Charges For our public relations accounts, we take time each fall to compile the upcoming year's editorial calendars (lists of stories planned by the publications' editors). Because so much of our work involves the same industry publications, we achieve economies of scale, allowing us to charge each public relations client an annual fee of only $350 for this media research.

Schedule of Payment We submit invoices in the first week of each month and request payment within 10 days.

What Clients Can Expect From Us (cont.)

Timeliness At the beginning of any project, we provide key milestone dates and commit to meeting deadlines within our control. We return client calls and e-mails within 24 hours, and ask our clients also to respond promptly to requests for information or decisions.

Review Policy At all critical project milestones, we submit work for client review. Where we believe it will be helpful, we attach a Client Brief describing our project rationale. We review client feedback and incorporate it into our revision. If we have questions about the feedback, we ask. If we have issues with it, we discuss. If we disagree, we explain — but we always respond.

Reporting Clients receive monthly or biweekly Progress Against Goals reports highlighting what we've accomplished during that period. These brief recaps serve as reminders of the efforts in which we are engaged and the strides we have made together. Each quarter, we provide a summary of budgeted vs. actual costs, along with recommendations to reconcile any disparity.

Confidentiality As we partner with our clients, we often gain information about them that is not for public consumption. We recognize the importance of keeping these confidences and have a specific process for securing client permission before releasing such information to the media or through digital communications. At the same time, we ask our clients to trust us with any information likely to affect our choice of strategy or delivery of tactics. We also expect our clients to share information with us before discussing it with the media.

Quarterly Meetings Every quarter, we schedule meetings with our clients to review progress toward goals and expectations for the future. Our meeting schedules are based on the client's fiscal year and the date of our signed Agency Working Agreement. At these meetings, we review budgets against actual expenditures, the quantity and quality of work produced, the level of satisfaction achieved on both sides of the relationship, and opportunities to enhance our future work together. Informal in nature, these meetings also give us a chance to explore new strategies and share updates with members of the client's leadership team who may not have day-to-day involvement in our work.

Performance We focus on results, not activity. As we recommend strategies and tactics, we target the drivers critical to our clients' business. As we commit our time and our clients' money, we invest them prudently. And as we deliver our work, we push ourselves to exceed expectations — because good enough never is.