

Annual Report 2012

signage foundation, inc.

Building a Brighter Future
for Signage

Through Education and Research

Greetings!

Dear SFI Donor:

Over the past five years, the Signage Foundation Inc. has successfully implemented numerous research and education initiatives. This has been with an intent of providing resources to a diverse group: academia, the sign industry, the small-business community, planners, marketing professionals and sign users.

We could not do this important work alone. Your support has enabled us to provide strong research that will benefit business and communities for years to come.

We've made tremendous strides in building a base of comprehensive knowledge related to on-premise signage. Together, we will only continue to grow the understanding of this importance to businesses and communities. On behalf of the SFI Board of Directors, I extend my deepest appreciation.

Sincerely,

Ken Von Wald

Chairman, Board of Directors



signage foundation, inc.

www.thesignagefoundation.org

PO Box 14392
Washington, DC 20044
336-260-3197

SFI's 2012 Accomplishments

SFI's main mission is to analyze and communicate the benefits of on-premise signage to businesses and communities. This happens through research and education with a focus on four main topic areas: science, technology, art/advertising and regulation (STAR).

Key accomplishments in 2012 included:

Groundbreaking Research

Sign industry products are of extreme importance to businesses, and by extension the communities they serve. SFI-sponsored research furthered understanding of both points in 2012.

- Signage and sign changes benefit businesses in measurable and significant ways.
- There is no direct correlation between the installation of an electronic message center and traffic accidents ("Statistical Analysis of the Relationship between On-Premise Digital Signage and Traffic Safety," conducted by Texas A&M University).
- The annual National Signage Research & Education Conference (NSREC) unveiled comprehensive data about signage from numerous perspectives to an impressive audience of planners, academia and sign industry leaders. In addition to the studies mentioned above, academic researchers presented an evidence-based sign code; an examination of signage in urban centers and metropolitan areas; and a national survey of shoppers.

Planner Education

The planning community and code officials tremendously influence on the on-premise sign industry. By connecting with this key group, SFI hopes to encourage better codes and planning decisions related to signage. SFI outreach to this community included:

- Working with local sign associations and the International Sign Association to educate planners. In 2012, 1,500 copies of *A Framework for On-Premise Sign Regulations* were distributed and approximately 600 planners representing 27 states attended these workshops.
- Connecting with hundreds of planners during the annual 2012 American Planning Association Conference.
- Providing certification maintenance units through the American Institute for Certified Planners for NSREC and the planner workshops.

Collaborations with Academicians

SFI serves as a key bridge between the on-premise sign industry and the academic world. SFI's efforts with the academic community include working with the following organizations to encourage signage-related curriculum development:

- Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning
- University of Cincinnati (UC)'s Departments of Planning, Business, Engineering, Applied Science, Entrepreneurship & Family Business
- University of Oklahoma
- Villanova
- Texas A&M

Influence on Future Planners and Designers

SFI believes that the next generation of planners, marketers and designers can better understand the importance of signage by working in a sign business. An annual internship program places a college planning student at a sign industry business for an academic quarter.



RESEARCH OVERVIEW

The Economic Value of Signs

Nearly all businesses require effective on-premise signs to help them succeed. While such signs serve an important function for these buyers and sellers, the economic considerations of on-premise signs also extend beyond their value to business owners. To the extent that signs and sign regulations promote or hinder business activity, there is an impact on the vitality of commercial areas and the tax collections of local governments.

Two pivotal studies on the economic value of signs showed that:

- Signs have a direct and measurable effect on businesses, which lead to greater employment and a stronger tax base.
- Sign changes can significantly impact sales, transactions and profits. In a national survey of businesses, six in 10 reported increases averaging 10 percent when signs were changed or added.
- There is a direct correlation between the number of signs and the growth of the business. This was shown in several case studies, including a national lodging chain, which reported greater occupancy rates when using digital electronic signs to display rates, and a national retail banking business that showed 15 percent more transactions for banks that included a pylon sign.

EMCs and Traffic Safety

There is no statistical relationship between the installation of electronic message centers (EMCs) and a subsequent increase in traffic accidents, according to a new study conducted by the Texas Engineering Extension Service at Texas A&M University, which included 135 signs in four states. This conclusion is based on an analysis of crash/accident data from the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Highway Safety Information System (HSIS) database, an extensive crash/accident set of data for selective states.

The SFI-sponsored study, "Statistical Analysis of the Relationship between On-Premise Digital Signage and Traffic Safety," examined data related to signs erected in 2006 and 2007, and concluded that:

- EMCs do NOT constitute a safety hazard;
- The installation of on-premise digital signage did not result in a statistically significant change in crashes;
- There were no statistically significant differences when comparing single vehicle crashes and those involving multiple vehicles.

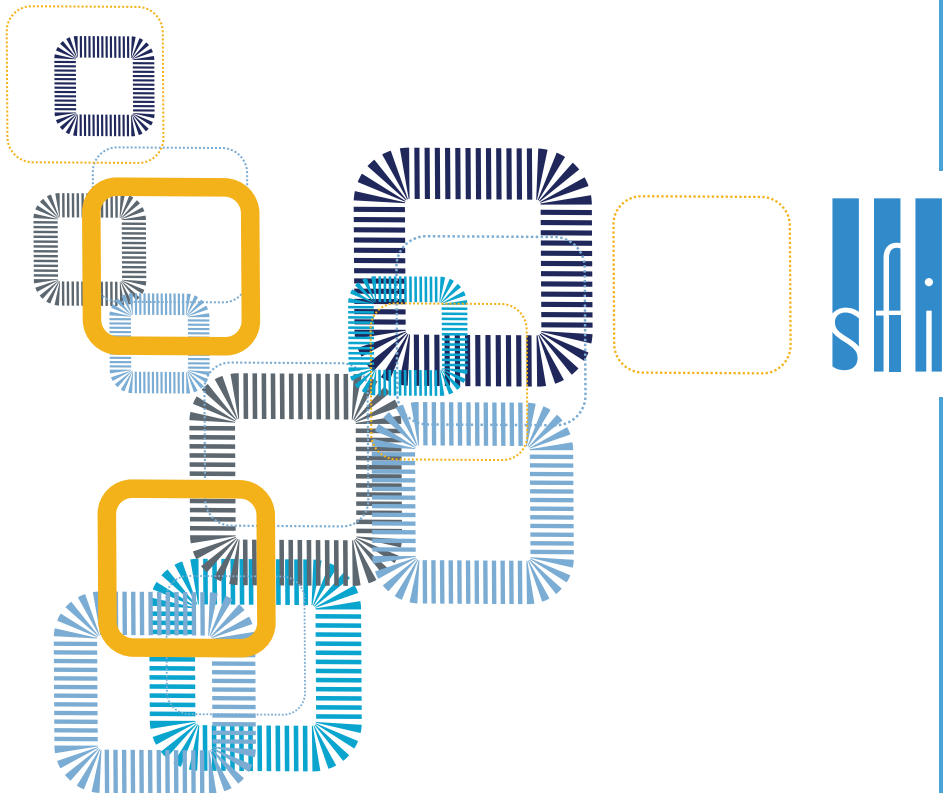
RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Other Articles and Research

Other valuable research and articles published in 2012/2013 include:

- Glossary of Terms – Comprehensive definitions of terms associated with the signage industry;
- Amortization Explained – Case studies detailing the value of signs and the legalities of amortization;
- Arts & Science of Sign Design – Latest research on the science behind artistic design principles;
- Signs and Federal Laws of Protections – An overview of federal laws and legal cases providing protections for on-premise signs.

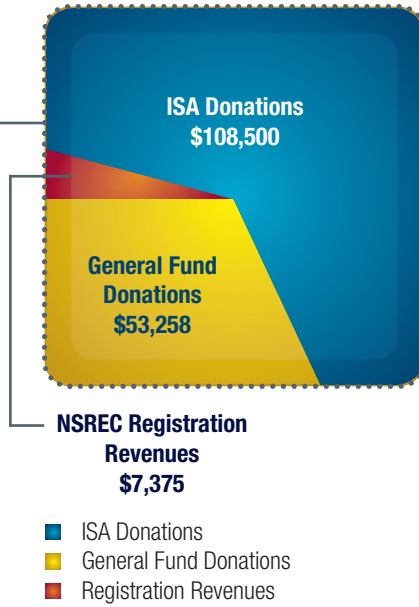
Numerous other studies and articles are available at the Signage Foundation's website, www.thesignagefoundation.org.



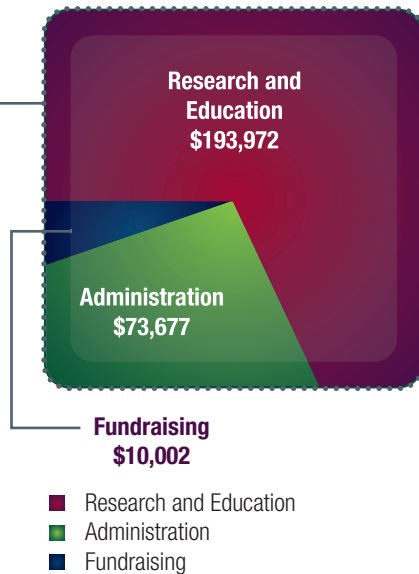
Fundraising

As a 501(c) 3 not-for-profit organization, the Signage Foundation Inc. relies on the support of its partners. Consequently, the SFI Board of Directors ensures that expenses directly relate to the organization's ongoing mission.

Revenues



Expenses



Founding Donors

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GE Matching Gifts
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Max Young



ABOUT THE SIGNAGE FOUNDATION

The Signage Foundation...

- Is a not-for-profit organization, established in 2002, supporting the educational, research and philanthropic purposes of on-premise signage.
- Promotes use of on-premise signage and storefronts to the benefit of every sector of the economy.
- Works to educate the public and regulators about the value of signage.
- Provides research for, and builds relationships with, sign manufacturers, sign users, communications agencies, academia, businesses, planners, regulators and others.

MAKE A DONATION TODAY

The Signage Foundation relies on donations to further its mission. May we suggest one of the following giving levels:

- Founders Society \$ 25,000
- Sustaining Patron \$ 15,000
- Gold Circle \$ 5,000 - \$ 14,999
- Silver Circle \$ 2,500 - \$ 4,999
- Bronze Circle \$ 1,000 - \$ 2,499
- Friend up to \$ 999

The first 100 donors will become members of the Century Club, receiving special briefings and recognition.



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MAKE PLANS TO JOIN US IN 2013

The 2013 National Signage Research & Education Conference (NSREC) will be held at the University of Cincinnati on October 9-10, 2013. The fourth annual conference will focus on "Signage as Advertising."