



**Spoken  
Impact**  
Creating presentations  
that mean business



# GEPHART ELECTRIC

## C A S E S T U D Y

### Engaging and Creative Format Helps Contractor Win Major Ballpark Award

#### BUSINESS PROFILE

Established in 1977, Gephart Electric is the third largest electrical contracting company in the Twin City metro area with \$48 million in revenue and more than 200 employees. Gephart specializes in commercial and industrial electrical construction focusing on design/build and design/assist delivery methods.

#### CHALLENGES

Gephart had just received word that they were on the "short list" of contractors being asked to bid on the Minnesota Twins ballpark project. The next step in the bidding process was to make a presentation to a panel made of up representatives from a number of organizations involved in the project.

Many of the major contracts in the electric business are awarded based on RFPs and formal presentations. The group at Gephart Electric had delivered many of these presentations in the past with mixed results. They had received feedback recently that this wasn't their strongest asset, and in some cases, may have even cost them new business. Larry and Greg Heinsch, principals and Vice Presidents, wanted to reverse that trend. Based on a referral, they engaged Spoken Impact who has a strong track record in helping clients develop winning business pitches.

#### OPPORTUNITIES

As with many of these situations, there wasn't a lot of time to pull the final 30-minute presentation together. With less than two weeks, the group gathered to talk about issues and opportunities. "We look at a lot of factors in our initial discussion. Who is the competition? How will they position themselves? What is their presentation style? And then we move on to how can we differentiate in a memorable and engaging way," explained, Joan Moser, President of Spoken Impact. "What we realized very quickly, is that in order for Gephart to win the business, we needed to come up with a creative concept that enabled Larry and the team to be engaging and authentic."

#### STRATEGIES AND TACTICS

The creative concept Moser, and her business partner, Susan Stoen suggested, was to leverage what the selection committee already knew: baseball and team work.

Moser worked with Larry Heinsch to develop a light-hearted and engaging opener that relayed his earlier experiences playing T-ball and learning the value of a team. "They liked the T-ball story and I saw a lot of smiles at the table. It really got their attention,"



*"The biggest difference for us was in developing the personal connection (to the audience.)"*

*When the payback is in the \$millions, most companies can't afford to be in the zone of boring, forgettable presentations.*

shared Larry Heinsch. Building on the theme of identifying each player's value, Greg Heinsch then handed out a one-of-a-kind deck of Gephart Electric "trading cards." Each card was designed with the traditional baseball format, but in place of baseball players, there were Gephart Electric team members. And in place of baseball jerseys and bats there were drawing boards and safety equipment. The back of each card listed the team member's stats and the experience they would bring to the stadium project.

"The cards were a great ice breaker and a big hit. Many of the people on the selection committee laid out the cards or referred to them during the discussion," recalled Larry Heinsch. The deck covered the 17 "players" Gephart was committing to the project, including eight All Star Players, who had participated in the Xcel Energy Center contract a few years earlier.

### REALIZED VALUE

"Larry and his team were willing to get out of the safe zone with this presentation and take a chance and move into the impact zone, commented Moser. "It's a philosophy we preach regularly to business executives. If you don't make that leap you will forever languish in the zone of boring, forgettable presentations. And when the payback is in the millions, it's a zone most companies can't afford to be in."

"When we walked out of the room," recalled Larry Heinsch, "they said to us, 'Wow that was great. You covered everything we needed and you gave a superb presentation.' The biggest difference for us was in developing the personal connection. In the past our presentations always referred back to our written response. This really showed us how important the preparation is and how critical it is that we create a connection with the committee."

Gephart was awarded a contract worth more than \$25 million.



### GEPHART "TRADING CARDS"



A card was created for each Gephart team "player" who would be involved in the project.



The back of each card listed the team member's stats and the experience they would bring to the stadium project, including eight "All Star" players who had worked on the Xcel Energy Center a few years earlier.

Gephart was awarded a contract worth more than \$25 million.