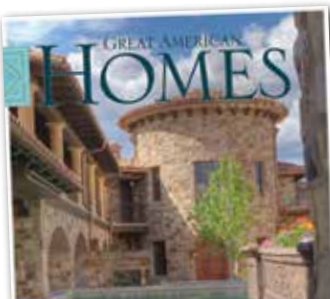


General Shale Marketing Efforts Winning Awards



General Shale's new website recently received the prestigious honor of being named "Best in Class" by the Interactive Media Awards. The Interactive Media Awards recognize the highest standards of excellence in website development, honoring individuals and organizations for their outstanding achievement. Sponsored by the Interactive Media Council, Inc., a nonprofit organization of leading

web design and development professionals, the judging was based on various criteria, including design, usability and innovation in technical features, standards compliance, and content. To be judged Best in Class, the site had to meet strict guidelines in each area—an achievement only a fraction of sites in the IMA competition can claim each year.



General Shale's Director of Marketing and Retail Sales Dawn Henning partnered with Johnson City-based full-service marketing agency Creative Energy to develop the site. Creative Energy created the site structure and the overall design, then teamed with Stellar Studios for programming and database development.



Two printed marketing pieces developed by Creative Energy under the direction of Henning won gold ADDYs at the recent Northeast Tennessee ADDY Awards. Sponsored by the American Advertising Federation, the ADDY Awards is the nation's oldest creative competition.

General Shale's outdoor living brochure won gold in the four-color brochure category, and the "Great American Homes" magazine won gold for publication design. Both pieces will now be entered in the district ADDY competition.



NEW YEAR, NEW YOU

If your New Year's resolution is to get in better shape, why not try walking? Walking is one of the easiest and least expensive forms of exercise. All you need are a good pair of shoes, comfortable clothing and desire. It is great for those who may be a little intimidated by workout programs.

Here are some tips to make your walking program a success:

- Before you start walking regularly, talk to your doctor—especially if you have a health condition or have not exercised for some time.
- Choose comfortable, supportive shoes—such as running, walking or cross-training shoes or light hiking boots.
- Start out slow and easy. Walk for 10 minutes per day for one week. Then add five minutes per walk per week until you reach your desired goal.
- Incorporate stretching into your daily walk. Before you stretch, walk briskly for 10 minutes to warm up your muscles and prepare them for stretching.
- Maintain a brisk pace that gets your heart rate going but still allows you to talk comfortably.
- Practice correct posture—head upright, arms bent and swinging as you stride.
- Drink plenty of water before, during and after walking to cool your muscles and hydrate your body.
- If you're going for a long walk, include a cooldown period to reduce stress on your heart and muscles.

Add more steps to your day:

- Take stairs instead of elevators, or get off below your destination and walk up a few flights.
- Park a few blocks from your destination or at the far end of the parking lot.
- Walk the last few blocks instead of riding the bus all the way to work.
- Walk around the field at your children's ball games.
- Have a walking buddy at lunchtime or before or after work, or walk with your family after dinner.



Use a pedometer to monitor the number of steps you take. Each 2,000 to 2,500 steps equals one mile. Ten thousand steps equate to approximately five miles. The cost of a pedometer ranges from \$10 to \$50, and pedometers may be purchased at retailers that sell fitness items or online.



MESSAGE FROM MR. GREEN

Reaching an 85th anniversary is quite an achievement that most companies never enjoy. Yet 2013 is a year of celebration for everyone who has been part of General Shale's success since its formation back in 1928.

While many of us at General Shale are veterans of the business, a quick look back at our origins gives us some insight into how our company has maintained its solid position as a market leader in North America.

The founders, through smart business decisions and a focus on quality, weathered the Great Depression and World War II in a solid position to help build the American dream for returning veterans, businesses and industry. Through the years, General Shale also overcame numerous recessionary periods and rebounded each time by emerging with new, innovative products and smart manufacturing efficiencies.

It's a unique privilege for all those who have been a part of General Shale over the years to be able to see the fruits of our labor in so many places. General Shale's mark on the infrastructure of this country is not hard to find; just look to one of the homes, hospitals, higher educational buildings or sports arenas that have been built with our brick to see a lasting monument to the success of General Shale.

There is much about our heritage that remains the common thread of our shared success. Resourcefulness, efficiency and customer-focused innovation are the path that was set by everyone involved in General Shale's history. It is the path that we will continue to follow as we head toward our 100th anniversary in 2028. To our retirees, business partners, customers and employees, congratulations from me on helping General Shale attain its own American dream.

Sincerely,

Richard "Dick" Green
CEO—North America
General Shale



Impressions

THE GENERAL SHALE EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

spring 2013

Check out the new General Shale



Smartphones surpassed one billion users just a few months ago, and General Shale is once again staying on trend with its launch of a new app to assist construction professionals and homeowners with designing buildings, selecting products and calculating costs of materials for their projects.

The General Shale smartphone app has several features, including an easy and convenient user interface that allows the user to:

- Browse the full product line for product colors and sizes
- Choose brick size and enter the price per thousand
- Calculate total bricks needed plus bags of mortar, sand and more
- Preview product color in landscape mode on the job site
- Send favorite products or final cost calculations via e-mail
- Locate, call or map the nearest General Shale retail location

"Contractors and customers utilizing this new app will find it helpful in moving their project along easily and quickly," says Dawn Duncan Henning, director of marketing and retail sales. "This essentially gives users a virtual General Shale showroom in the palm of their hand. While there's no substitute for human interaction with our sales staff, I think customers will be more educated about our products when they do come in, thus ensuring that they are making the right choice for their project."

It's predicted that the number of smartphones will reach two billion in just two years. The General Shale smartphone app is available now on the App Store.



1-800-414-4661

P.O. Box 3547
Johnson City, TN 37602
www.GeneralShale.com

GS-BRO-0001-0313

Share Site a Valuable Resource for Marketing Tools and More

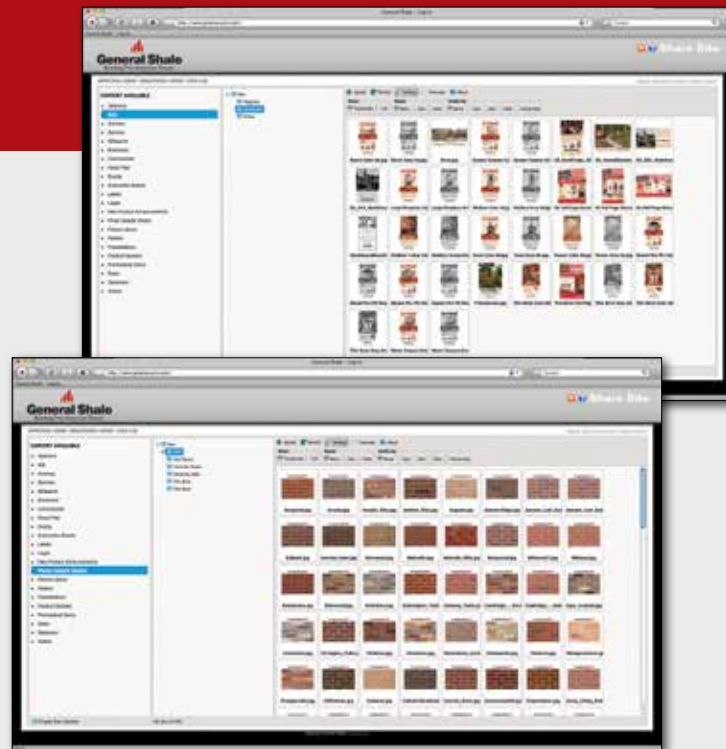
As part of General Shale's effort to become modern and future-oriented, the company's online share site is continually being updated with the latest marketing and promotional materials for authorized viewing and downloading.

The secure share site is being used primarily by managers and retail showrooms for reordering marketing material and has been recently updated with the following new templates: business card, PowerPoint, letterhead, stationery, even the latest General Shale Christmas cards.

"Even though we've been using this format for months, I don't think everyone recognizes this for the incredible resource it is," says Dawn Henning, director of marketing and retail sales. "This is a much more efficient way for us to access and order literature and marketing tools than we had in the past.

The downloadable files on this site are not print quality; they are low-resolution files for viewing and ordering purposes only. High-resolution files need to be requested using a submission form found in a folder labeled Order Forms.

Those who have used the share site say that once you read the instructions and understand how it works, it's an easy process and a great resource. "I've used it several times and have found it to be very simple to use, and the response has been excellent. Generally I get my brochures within three to five working days. And if it's something I need to create, I see a PDF to proof within two to three days," says General Shale District Sales Manager Don Ballard.



Only those who have registered are allowed access, and the program keeps track of who has logged in and for how long and what material was accessed.

If you have not experienced this site, visit www.gssharesite.com and register. Once you receive your password, you will find tons of valuable tools that will help you.

HEALTH and Safety

CARBON MONOXIDE



Although most are hoping for an early spring, there may be several weeks of cold weather yet to endure. When the temperature is low, don't make the deadly mistake of exposing yourself or your family to carbon monoxide, an all too common danger in colder months.

Every winter, examples of deadly carbon monoxide poisoning can be found, and sadly this winter is no different. Just weeks ago an 11-year-old boy in Boston went into sudden cardiac arrest waiting in a running car while his father was digging the car out from the snow. The exhaust pipe was under the snow, which blocked the exhaust, causing it to enter the car, where the little boy was overcome.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas created by incomplete combustion of fossil fuels. From a physiological standpoint, carbon monoxide is more deadly than other toxins because your body is unaware that it is slowly suffering the effects of poisoning. The presence of carbon monoxide in your body means your body begins to suffer from an oxygen deficiency.

Symptoms of overexposure include headache, nausea, loss of appetite, dizziness, etc. Extended exposure to carbon monoxide can lead to dementia-like symptoms, unconsciousness and death. A person who has been exposed for long periods of time must have oxygenated air introduced into his or her body; simply breathing fresh air will not displace carbon monoxide in the bloodstream.

You should take precautions anytime you use gas-powered equipment such as generators, heaters or pressure washers inside closed areas, and homes that have or use natural gas appliances such as hot water heaters, fireplaces (especially ventless gas logs), ranges, etc., should have at least one carbon monoxide detector on each floor of the home. As with any detection device, make sure you change out the batteries routinely. You should also have an escape plan in place for your family in the event that an alarm is triggered.

Make the cold months safer for yourself and your family by educating yourself about the carbon monoxide dangers in your home.

Building the American Dream for 85 Years



Photos requested from current and former employees

We are in the midst of planning events to celebrate 85 years in operation. Current plans include publishing a history of the company in our "Great American Homes" magazine, producing a video to be shown in the lobby of our headquarters and at trade shows, and interviewing a third-generation General Shale family.

If you have any historic photos of General Shale employees in the office or brickyard or at special General Shale events, we would like to borrow them! If you have photos and you're willing to share, you may submit them at your earliest convenience to

General Shale Marketing
Attn: Dawn Henning
P.O. Box 3547
Johnson City, TN 37602

Photos will be scanned, added to the General Shale archives and returned to you within 10 business days. Please be sure to include your name and mailing address so we can return your photos to you. Thanks in advance for your help in building our history and our collection of historic photographs!

COMPARING APPLES to APPLES

As part of the Success Profile initiative, it's important to stress the value customers receive from investing in brick. But even when considering value, some customers still want to talk price—and that's okay. But let's make sure we are using the same price cost calculations as other alternative exterior claddings do, which is normally price per square foot.

"The misconception that brick is too expensive is perpetuated when alternative sidings present their product in price per square foot and we do not," says John Hammett, vice president of sales. "If we also price per square foot, which is very easy with our new General Shale smartphone app, customers can see that the price difference is only a few cents per square foot. Plus they're getting all the added benefits brick provides."

One example of how comparing apples to apples has led to increased sales of brick is a story out of Knoxville, Tennessee. A large builder there had traditionally built homes with brick only on the front and skirts of the home and vinyl on the other three sides. He was shown how brick is just a few cents more per square foot and decided that he could afford to build four-sided brick homes. In January he sold 30 homes! He said he's absolutely convinced that the increase in home sales was due to the quality of all-brick homes.

The builder made more money because he was selling a more valuable home, and General Shale made more money because more brick was sold. Convincing customers, whether they are contractors or individual homeowners, that there's value in brick is good for business.

As with all Success Profile initiatives, General Shale is looking for suggestions on how to be better in this area. "One thing we've got to try to do is to get our employees to think about themselves as a consumer. What is it that creates value for you and makes you feel you made a good purchase? These are the things we want to know about and hear as suggestions," says Hammett.

DID YOU KNOW?

Money you contribute to your 401(k) plan is deducted from your income **before** taxes are withheld. By reducing your taxable income, the amount of federal income tax you will need to pay may also be reduced.

For example, someone with an average annual salary of \$35,000 and a marginal tax rate of 25% would save \$88 per year **for each 1%** contributed to the 401(k) account. In this situation, an employee who contributes 4% (\$1,400 per year) will save \$352 per year in federal income tax.

Employees who contribute to the 401(k) plan will also receive company contributions in accordance with the current match schedule. In the example above, an employee who contributes \$1,400 per year also would receive \$1,050 from the company per year. This would total \$2,450 per year, or \$73,500 over 30 years! That amount doesn't even include investment income you would also accumulate during this time.

For more information, please contact T. Rowe Price at **1-800-922-9945** or visit T. Rowe Price online at <https://www3.troweprice.com/rws/public/v/home.jsp>.