ThinkSpatial

The UCSB brown-bag forum on spatial thinking

Presents

Rick Wood
President & CEO, CHK America

The Psychology of Wayfinding

12:00 p.m. Tuesday, 30 October 2012
Ellison 5824

Abstract. Avoiding cognitive overload. Communicating complex information in a public environment is a challenging task. Rick Wood will discuss how his company helps tens of thousands of daily transit customers overcome the confusion associated with decision making in cognitively demanding situations. By addressing the need for clear, concise and compelling information in an oftentimes spatially overwhelming environment, CHK America has become the leading U.S. provider of wayfinding strategies to the mass public transportation market and has developed the industry best-practice standard for communicating service information through a variety of map and information products. CHK has conducted extensive research into the psychology of wayfinding and Wood will share the results of the study and the real world applications of the principles outlined in the research.

Rick Wood graduated from UCSB in 1984 with a B.A. in Business Economics. He joined the Los Angeles office of PricewaterhouseCoopers directly out of school and in 1986 earned his CPA certificate. He returned to Santa Barbara in 1990 as a founder of Magellan Geographix, now Maps.com and spent the next 10 years driving the business strategy and development to provide mapping products and solutions for the publishing, education, business, and consumer markets. In 2000, after being approached by Cook, Hammond and Kell, LTD, a UK-based company looking for a U.S. presence, Wood agreed to launch CHK, America as its President and CEO, to develop and advance customer information communication efforts in the public transportation industry. Today, Rick manages the overall daily business, while driving product innovation and seeking new opportunities with public transit agencies across the United States. CHK America clients are some of the largest U.S. transit agencies, including Chicago’s RTA, CTA, Pace and Metra, Dallas Area Rapid Transit, Los Angeles MTA, Phoenix Valley Metro and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, as well as mid-size and smaller agencies such as Austin’s Capital Metro, Hampton Roads Transit, New Orleans RTA, Santa Barbara MTD and Waukesha Metro, among others. Rick is an active member of several industry committees including the American Public Transportation Association (APTA) Marketing and Communications committee and the Customer Information Design Standards committee for the Transportation Research Board (TRB). He also frequently serves on peer review boards for the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR). Rick is former Vice Chair of APTA’s Customer Information Best Practices Committee, a regular speaker at industry conferences, and a frequent contributor to publications such as Mass Transit, Metro Magazine, and Transit Intelligence. Today, CHK America is the largest provider of public transportation wayfinding solutions in the United States.