

ONE MONTGOMERY PLAZA



[CHALLENGE]

After Montgomery Wards went out of business in 2001, leaving behind its iconic 1928 retail and mail order warehouse, it wasn't long before developers began to see potential in the landmark. In July of 2004, ground was broken for the Montgomery Plaza project. The Marquis Group saw the development as a unique opportunity to create a living option never before seen in Fort Worth – and the Residences at One Montgomery Plaza emerged from dream to reality.

[STRATEGY]

Witherspoon's strategy in announcing the project and the March 8 grand opening party to North Texas media, creating a big news event, hinged on the following key messages:

- The building is a landmark recognizable by all who know Fort Worth well.
- The Residences at One Montgomery Plaza are the most unique, convenient, stylish and luxurious urban living option in Fort Worth.
- Residents can take advantage of living near the Cultural District and downtown, within walking distance of Trinity Park (the river and the hike-and-bike trails).
- The Residences are more spacious for the price than many other downtown living options, starting at 1,000-1,200 square feet.

[SOLUTION]

Witherspoon staged a ribbon cutting at the site of the project, where attendees would later enjoy a tour of the Presentation Center and the eighth floor. A media preview prior to the ribbon cutting enabled news cameras from ABC, NBC, CBS and local cable affiliates to gather tape for later viewings. Witherspoon recruited Bill Thornton, president of the Fort Worth Chamber of Commerce, Mayor Mike Moncrief and Council member Wendy Davis to give remarks about the project's importance to the city.

[RESULTS]

The public relations effort leading up to the event garnered several pre-event news articles as well as broadcast stories. Nearly every local station broadcast a news report about the project the day of the event, and photographs were also published. A business section real-estate column mention appeared the following week, and a selection of photos from the party appeared in the Fort Worth Business Press later in the month. Fort Worth, Texas Magazine and Paper City published photos of the event. The broadcast news coverage generated by the public relations tactics would have equated to \$43,972, if the airtime had been purchased as advertising. Most importantly, 72 of the 240 Residences at One Montgomery Plaza were sold within 72 hours of the party. Nearly half were under contract by the end of April.

