

MARKETER



THE JOURNAL OF THE SOCIETY FOR MARKETING PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

VOLUME 33, ISSUE 5, OCTOBER 2014

BRINGING IN THE BUSINESS

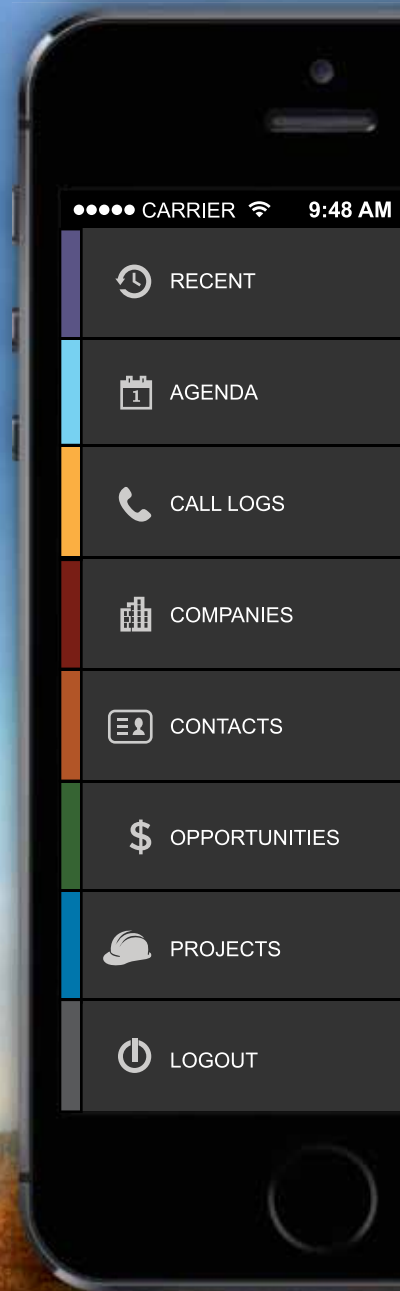
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VOLUME 33, ISSUE 5, OCTOBER 2014

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ABOUT THE SOCIETY PRESIDENT

Barbara Shuck, FSMPS, CPSM, shares her energy, passion, and 30+ years of experience to teach, challenge, motivate, and inspire marketers on their individual journeys. She has worked for general contracting, engineering, construction management, and architectural firms, and is currently firm-wide marketing communications manager at Wilson & Company, Inc., Engineers & Architects in Omaha, NE. She was a contributing author for *A/E/C Business Development: The Decade Ahead*, published by the SMPS Foundation, and has written and presented extensively at A/E/C industry events.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

BE FIRM, YET FLEXIBLE



*"Be firm in your outcome and be flexible in how you get there."
—Shawna Korgan (wife of Grant Korgan, keynote at Build Business 2014)*

At the business meeting at Build Business in San Antonio, I outlined my vision for SMPS. Many of you heard that I have a strong personal core that sets the direction of my life: A life with purpose ... a career with intention. And just like the core purpose in my life, I envision a long-term plan for SMPS.

Your board of directors met last month to put the finishing touches on a strategic plan for the Society, complete with core purpose, core values, vision (Big Hairy Audacious Goals—BHAGs), and a vivid description of success. We developed goals, objectives, and strategies to complete a robust planning document that provides clarity for members, chapters, staff, peer organizations, and the industry. We also have a mechanism to discuss mega issues, those trends and practices that affect our members and profession now, and in the future.

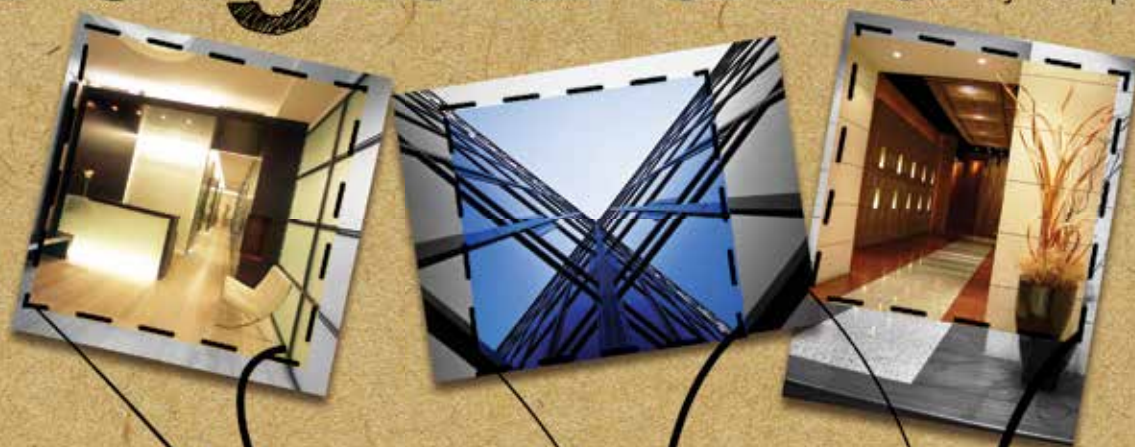
I promise we will share the Strategic Plan in the days and weeks to come. At the business meeting, I also described CORE initiatives that provide continuity and momentum from the past: Content, Outreach, Research, and Every member. SMPS focuses on these areas to deliver excellent member value through educational programs, Webinars, conferences, chapter services, industry events, and more that are designed to build the skill and value of marketers and business developers. I also promised three things for the year ahead:

1. We will enhance marketing and communications for the Society.
2. The Board will communicate, ask questions, listen, and be attentive to your needs.
3. We will always consider "members for life," where we provide value, services, and education for students, newbies, first-time managers, chief marketing officers, seller-doers, principals, and even retirees. SMPS is where you belong for your entire career.

As for the first promise, this issue of *Marketer* unveils a new look that is creative and fresh. The cover features a vivid industry graphic and less text, and provides a streamlined layout and glimpse into the issue. Inside, a new Contributors page introduces all the authors in one place. Departments are gone, and articles instead correlate to the six Domains of Practice to match SMPS's educational focus and programs. We also have a new Marketplace section with mini-ads for vendors and firms.

Your Society is in a strong position to deliver high-quality programs to benefit you, your firms, the industry, and our profession. With a sound Strategic Plan in place, we have a roadmap that sets direction and provides a framework for annual planning. CORE initiatives provide meaningful resources and programs. We are on the roadway to success with our foot on the gas pedal, and we're not coasting. We're in the fast lane with our eyes on the horizon ... to go beyond. I am interested to know about *your* core goals, where you want to go, and how SMPS can help you ... email me at gobeyond@smpls.org. ■

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EDITOR'S DESK

YES, THIS IS STILL *MARKETER*!

ABOUT THE EDITOR

Ed Hannan is principal of HannComm, a firm dedicated to improving the quality of A/E/C marketing communications. He's spent the past decade covering the industry as publishing director with two leading management consulting firms, ZweigWhite and PSMJ Resources.

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When you first glimpsed the cover of this issue, you probably asked yourself, “What happened to *Marketer*?”

Welcome to the new design, and new focus of your SMPS *Marketer* magazine.

We unveiled the look—including images of the cover, sample page spreads, and more—at this year's Build Business conference in San Antonio to rave reviews from the hundreds in attendance, but this is the first issue with the new design.

What do you think?

A few things to keep in mind as you flip through the pages:

- There's a new focus to align the articles with the SMPS Domains of Practice.
- Expect to start seeing more images (photos, charts, infographics) to complement the articles.
- The mission of *Marketer*—to educate SMPS members on trends that affect the A/E/C industry, the marketing profession, and SMPS—has not changed.

As you read through Mark Buckshon's article on the value of association membership, Dianne Frank's latest missive from Turin, Italy, and the other fine articles in this issue, there's something else I'd like you to consider ... **WE WANT YOUR HELP!**

Thus far, the only people (other than those of you who saw the sample images at Build Business) who have seen the new design are those of us who worked on it: a dedicated group of folks from SMPS Headquarters, the graphic designers, and me.

We'd love your feedback, whether it's positive (hopefully), too early to tell (understandable), or negative (we hope not!). Please, please, please shoot me an email at edhannan@gmail.com. While this is the new design, it's still a work in progress.

We also need your input in the form of articles. As you'll see throughout this issue, we're looking for shorter pieces (think 500 to 700 words) that align with the Domains of Practice. The new design allows for more articles in each issue, but that means we need more submissions. Please send along a 150-word abstract with your idea and how it aligns with the Domains.

Thanks and enjoy the new design of *Marketer*! ■

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Back to Growth: Emerging A/E/C Trends An Interview with Dave Burstein, P.E., of PSMJ



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Association Marketing: Tap the Potential of Genuine Relationship-Building Opportunities



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Letter from Turin V: Reflections on Marketing and PR Planning



DIANNE L. FRANK, FSMPS, is a writer and public relations consultant in Turin, Italy, and of Beverly Hills, MI. She is former president of SMPS Boston, a member of national committees, a recipient of MCA awards, and an author. Her "Letters from Turin" have appeared in the April 2010, December 2010, June 2012, and April 2014 issues of the *Marketer*. She can be reached at dianne@dlfrankpr.com.

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What's It Like on 'The Other Side'?



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Make Your Marketing Feel Big Without Spending Big



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Like Your Mother Said: Be Nice!



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Career Paths: An Interview with Bryan Hughes of Black & Veatch



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Bookshelf: *The Architecture of Image: Branding Your Professional Practice*



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My Turn: You Can Make a Big Media Splash with a Small Communications Staff



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Marketer Contributors Wanted

Marketer is undergoing some changes, which you will see debuted in this issue. To transition to the new format for December, February, and April, the Editorial Committee is soliciting articles in the 500-word range that can be matched to the six SMPS Domains of Practice. The domains include marketing research, marketing planning, client/business development, proposals, promotional activity, and management. To pitch an article idea, please send a 150-word description of the story's scope and your approach to Editorial Chair Ed Hannan at edhannan@gmail.com. The December theme is Emerging Markets, and the Editorial Calendar for 2015 will be available soon.

Receiving *Marketer*, SMPS's premier publication, is one of the many benefits of SMPS membership. The printed journal is mailed to members six times per year and is available in a PDF version on MySMPS.

MARKETER

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Back to Growth: Emerging A/E/C Trends

An Interview with Dave Burstein, P.E., of PSMJ

By Kevin Hebblethwaite, FSMPS, CPSM

Kevin Hebblethwaite, FSMPS, CPSM, a past president of SMPS and executive free agent with Hebblethwaite LLC, recently chatted with Dave Burstein, P.E., director of client services with PSMJ Resources, Inc., to discuss the state of the U.S. economy, how it impacts the A/E/C industry, and socioeconomic conditions here and overseas. Here are highlights of their conversation.



Dave Burstein, P.E., director of client services, PSMJ Resources, Inc.

Marketer: *It's an interesting time in the A/E/C industry. How would you describe the overall state of the industry in five words or less?*

Dave Burstein: With five words or less, it would be "back to growth." If I could add a few more words I'd say, "but not yet back to where we were pre-recession."

Marketer: *For existing A/E/C companies, what macroeconomic challenges are you watching most closely?*

Burstein: I think you have to look at each company's market sectors. Each has different macroeconomic drivers. The economic drivers for the energy market are different from those that drive the transportation market. Probably the biggest single factor in the overall industry is what's happening in the housing market. Particularly, single-family housing, and more specifically single-family subdivisions. That drives about 80 percent of the work in the A/E industry—directly or indirectly.

Marketer: *How about for startup firms?*

Burstein: For startups, what they really need to look at is not so much overall segments of the market, but the actual people that they know within client organizations. The new startup firm isn't going to go out and sell a lot of work to clients who've never heard of them before. Their focus has to be on individual clients they already know, assessing how much work they have coming up.

Marketer: *I've heard rumors that a lot of baby boomers are retiring. You don't suppose that's going to affect our industry, do you?*

Burstein: The bad news is that there ARE a very large number of boomers in the industry. They tend to be senior professionals and principals. When they retire, you don't just replace them one-for-one with a new graduate. The amount of knowledge that a firm loses when a senior person leaves is very difficult to replace. Unfortunately, very few firms have done enough to capture that knowledge from people's heads into the company database. That's happening at the same time that the industry is growing and needing more

people. There's going to be a severe labor crunch. One mitigating factor is that the definition of "retirement" is changing a lot, from an event to being a more gradual process. But the overall trend in the next decade is clear: The war for clients will be supplanted by the war for talent.

Marketer: What do you think about the drive for energy independence in the United States?

Burstein: I'm very bullish. All the trends indicate that we are definitely headed for independence in just a few years.

Marketer: Which types of natural resources will drive the most production?

Burstein: Shale is obviously the big one, not only generating natural gas, but also more recently a lot of oil as well. Some of the deposits have just natural gas, called "Dry Shale." Others have both, called "Wet Shale." Natural gas prices are still pretty depressed—there's so much supply on the market. Most of the activity is in wet shale, getting oil AND natural gas. On a per BTU basis, oil is selling for a lot more right now than natural gas. That may change as the federal government issues more natural gas export licenses and the U.S. price for natural gas moves closer to the world price. Renewables are coming on, too. We're seeing an increasing share of wind and solar.

Marketer: The U.S. population doesn't always reside where energy production is located. How does this affect design and construction work?

Burstein: In two ways. Number one, if you look at where energy is produced like North Dakota, West Texas, and North Central

Pennsylvania, there are not a lot of people there. You have to get that energy to where the people are. That means pipelines. There's a lot of pipeline work and there's going to be a lot more. The second thing is that because of the sparse populations in some of those natural resource locations, the high demand for labor is driving more people to move there.

Marketer: Almost like a modern-day Gold Rush, it seems.

Burstein: During the recession, mobility was greatly depressed because people couldn't sell their houses and move. Fortunately, the housing recovery has allowed people to regain the traditional mobility of the American workforce. We're definitely seeing lots of movement in the work force now. That means more work for A/E/C firms in those areas.

Marketer: What are the primary sources of capital for this expanded pipeline infrastructure?

Burstein: It's mostly private money that's being invested in the actual pipelines. But there is secondary work that comes in the form of environmental assessments, new roads, etc., and that's often public money. But the most immediate work is for the pipeline companies.

Marketer: Shifting to housing, portions of that sector are getting back on track, right?

Burstein: Actually, according to our research, they're not just getting back on track, they ARE on track. The long-term average demand for housing in the United States is about 1 million new homes per year, and that's about what's being produced. We're actually back to the long-

term average. Any more than that is going to be a bubble, so the current rate is pretty much what we want.

Marketer: What areas of the country are hottest?

Burstein: There continues to be a move to Sun Belt states for a variety of reasons. But again, you also have movement towards places with very low unemployment—those high labor-demand areas like North Dakota.

Marketer: Do you pay much attention to consumer spending and confidence?

Burstein: The amount of household debt got reduced dramatically during the recession. Most of that decrease came as write off of mortgage debt. Some of that is also decrease of credit card and other types of debt. That doesn't mean anyone is spending wildly all of a sudden—people are being quite frugal with their money. But overall, consumer spending isn't as big of a direct driver for A/E work as housing.

Marketer: While discussing the manufacturing sector, I've heard you and others use the word "Renaissance." That sounds pretty positive.

Burstein: I think it is VERY positive. There are all kinds of signs, statistically and anecdotally, that manufacturing is coming back to the United States.

Marketer: What are some key factors that will affect that growth?

Burstein: Probably the biggest one is that we have become more competitive with manufacturing countries like China. Forecasts have shown that if current trends continue, by next year it will be just as cheap to manufacture something in the



United States as it is in China. There are other issues as well. The length of the supply chain from China and potential disruptions are a problem. Another factor is energy. Our costs are probably half what they are in China, where they import most of their energy. In the United States, we're producing just about all of ours. Theft of intellectual property is also a huge issue for many American companies. As a result of all these factors, there's a lot of "reshoring" going on—making things here instead of overseas.

Apple, for example, announced last year that they'll start making computers in Austin, TX, eventually employing something like 30,000 people in the United States. That's a big deal! Apple currently has about 50,000 employees in California designing stuff and they have about 1 million people in China making that stuff. Bringing that manufacturing work back home, even when adjusted for higher productivity in the states, that's a lot of jobs, just from one company! General Electric and all kinds of other companies are also bringing manufacturing back.

Marketer: What about factors that might negatively affect the manufacturing renaissance?

Burstein: There are corporate tax issues that probably hurt us somewhat, but despite what you read in the headlines, companies don't tend to make capital expenditure decisions on tax issues alone. It's usually more strategic issues, and those tend to favor the United States right now. Manufacturing will still happen in China, but it will be goods that are to be sold in Asia. The products to be sold here will be more regularly made here. Of course, it would help if Congress could pass some tax reform laws.

Marketer: What geographic regions of the United States look most positive for manufacturing?

Burstein: In general, manufacturers prefer states that don't have strong labor unions. We're seeing labor unions continue to weaken all over the country. The states that have traditionally not been very friendly to industry are becoming much friendlier. New York recently started a program with a 10-year tax holiday for anybody who opens up shop there. That's 10 years with no sales taxes, no property taxes, no corporate income tax—it's pretty attractive. Not even the Southern states are doing that, so we'll see how those kinds of things work out.

Marketer: What are your thoughts about A/E/C firms looking for international work?

Burstein: There's a tendency to oversimplify what it takes to do work overseas. People who have been domestically-oriented for a long time look at the "international market" as a single market. It's not. It's a whole bunch of very different markets. It's very risky to go overseas without knowing the ropes—very different from domestic work. People have been seriously burned—some companies have even gone bankrupt as a result.

Marketer: If you want to go after international work, how can you do so with the least risk?

Burstein: In Canada, for example, the differences in how they do business are not as dramatic as they are in other places. Another low-risk strategy is to take a client you work for in the United States and get them to take you over there. A great example of that years ago was Callison Architects in Seattle. They had a couple of local clients—a shoe store that became

Nordstrom and a software company that became Microsoft. Callison had long-term relationships with those clients, who took the firm everywhere. I like that strategy because it gives firms the chance to get to know the situation, understand the lay of the land, and strategically expand without taking on all the risk.

Marketer: What thoughts do you have about Latin America?

Burstein: Mexico is an obvious consideration. There's lots of turmoil, but if the new administration can get the drug issue under control and continue other improvements, they can become competitive internationally and make their economy grow. I really think Mexico offers a great opportunity if you're interested in Latin America—it's closer to home, with better cultural connections than the rest of Latin America. And I'm very impressed with what the new president is doing to make Mexico more successful.

Marketer: Where can readers find additional information on your industry research?

Burstein: One of the best ways to keep up with industry trends is to participate in our quarterly market surveys. We look at the 53 biggest market sectors in the A/E/C industry. It's free to participate and free to get results. Our annual conference, the A/E/C Industry Summit, will be held in Orlando, FL, December 3–5. Information about all of these resources is available at psmj.com. You can reach me at dburstein@psmj.com. ■

Association Marketing: Tap the Potential of Genuine Relationship-Building Opportunities

By Mark P. Buckshon, CPSM

How effective is association participation and leadership for architectural, engineering, and construction business development? How can you be more effective at association marketing? These two questions have simple, yet nuanced (and sometimes contradictory) answers because the rulebooks for metrics and determining return on investment need to give way to sincerity, commitment, and perhaps a fair bit of luck.

Association-related marketing represents a significant, if not the most important, focus for many A/E/C industry practitioners, beyond cultivating repeat and referral business (and associations help out in these most important priorities).

The evidence of association-related marketing power may be more anecdotal than statistical. Nevertheless, when I surveyed a cross-section of 100 A/E/C businesses asking them to confirm marketing methodologies that resulted in success beyond repeat/referral initiatives in the past year, the highest number—35 percent—said “trade/community association participation and relationships” have resulted in profitable business.

Of course, association engagement also encourages and facilitates repeat and referral success, especially when you become involved and connected enough to assume multi-year leadership responsibilities. Yet the story is more complex, and we can learn something from the failures as well as successes—the seemingly ideal associations often prove to be less-than-valuable, or the perhaps obscure “sleeper” groups spin off revenue year after year. Success can be accidental, as Susan Murphy discovered when she received a call out of the blue to provide a presentation seminar for an SMPS conference. Success can also be strategic, as Tim Klabunde describes in explaining how the Timmons Group makes sure company principals are ready to assume relevant association leadership roles in a multi-year succession planning strategy.

Association relationships have saved and created careers for many industry practitioners, but they have also consumed incredible amounts of time. Committee and executive leadership roles require hours of meetings over several years and sometimes much travel, and this work generally cannot be immediately converted to billable hours. (In addition to the time cost—which includes lost opportunity risk—you need to add the membership dues and, in many cases, additional sponsorship investments.) The question is, how do you do it right? How do you figure out the associations where you should invest your time, energy, and effectiveness? Once there, how do you make the most of your opportunities?

Start at the End

Klabunde, director of marketing at the Timmons Group, a multi-disciplined engineering and technology firm based in Richmond, VA, says he starts off with his goals.



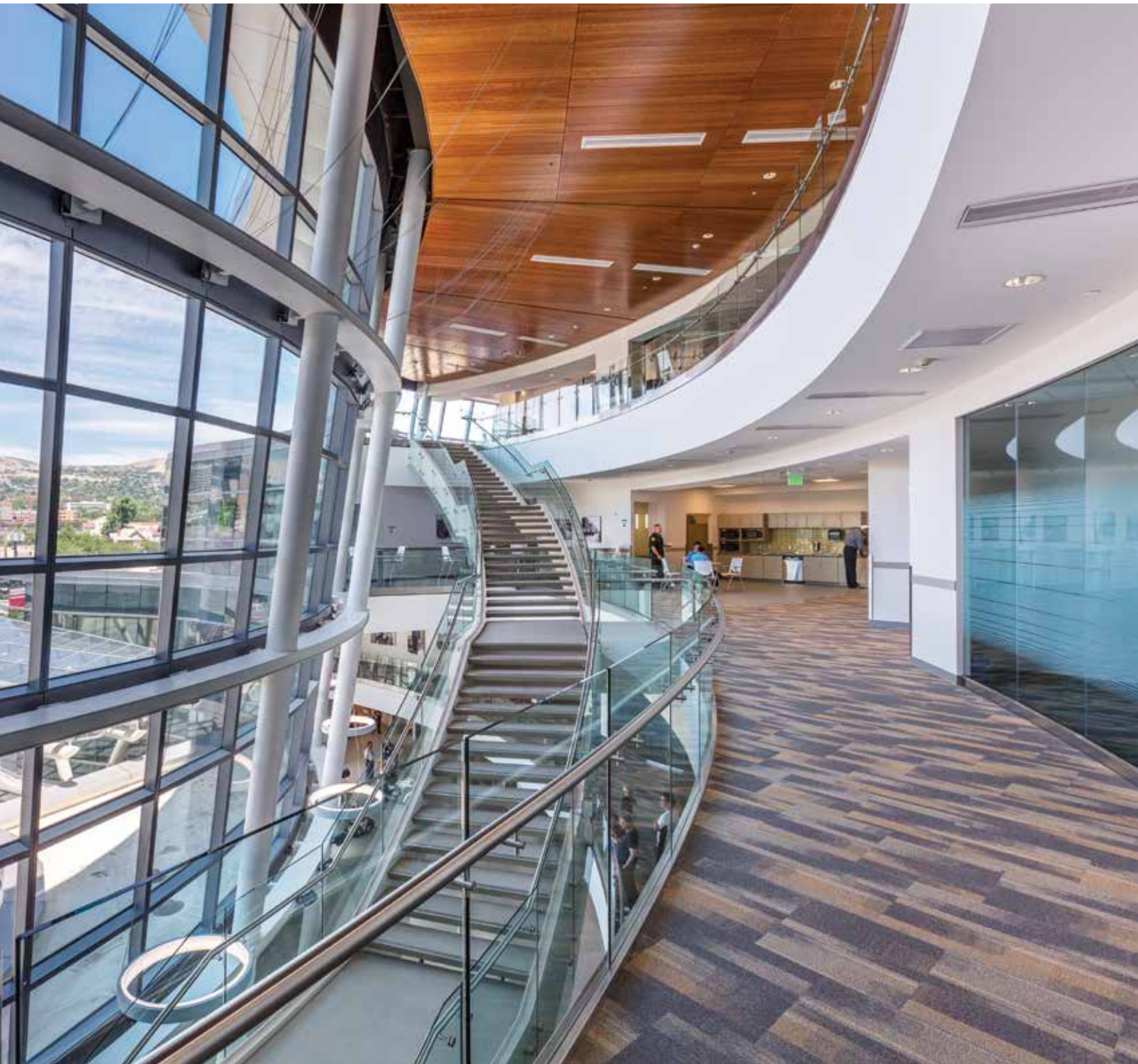


Photo of Salt Lake Public Safety Building by Dana Sohm, Sohm Photographx, sohmphoto.com.

"Who am I trying to reach?" he asks. "What is my objective? Do people in the industry know my firm, or am I trying to target in on specific opportunities and jobs?"

Then he checks the association out by attending a few events or meetings. "Some associations you think you would like to be very actively engaged in are not always where the decision-makers are," he says. "Oftentimes, you will find associations, such as developer groups, where three-quarters of the people work for (businesses trying to sell to) the developers. The association has been taken over by consultants, and there are no decision-makers in the room."

Klabunde's observation relates to one of the paradoxes of association participation. If you join a group with business development relationships in mind, and virtually everyone else does the same thing, can you really connect with the people you want to know (who might tend to run for the hills to avoid the sales pressure they encounter at association functions)?

"The real end users don't really want to come out to some events because they get pounced on (by salespeople)," said Vern Solomon, president of the Central Canada Chapter of the International Society of Pharmaceutical Engineers (ISPE). Solomon's business, Environmental Services Corporation (ESC), designs and builds cleanrooms for aerospace, research, electronics, pharmaceutical, and biological containment.

Clearly, many of ESC's clients would belong to the ISPE and these relationships provide a huge part of the company's business. Yet you need to know when and why to cool the aggressive business development processes, Solomon says.

"I've worked hard to understand (and try to show salespeople) that we're here for the education. Please, don't sell. People show up without business cards because they don't want to be contacted by three people they have absolutely no use to know in the next week. You can try too hard. If you know the customer isn't going to buy a product, why bother them?"

In other words, if you go to association functions looking to discover business right away, you will probably fail. If the association turns out to be full of people attempting the same business development objectives, the organization may not be a great fit.

And, yet serendipity can correlate with sincerity. Presentation skills consultant Murphy says she changed her career direction when she received an invitation to fill in for a colleague in 1998 to give a presentation skills workshop at SMPS Boston. "I had no idea what SMPS was," she said. Now, she says "my entire career is a gift from SMPS."

At that first presentation, she collected five clients—two of whom are still doing business with her today. She received invitations to speak at other SMPS gatherings, adding to her referral and contact network. "After that one speech, I have totally specialized in A/E/C without doing any marketing other than speaking at SMPS events."

Don't Expect Overnight Success

Most likely, you won't experience this sort of instant success. In fact, association leadership and participation can be a multi-year (even decade) process, where the benefits are gradual, indirect, and often quite subtle.

Consider Claude Giguere, Construction Specification Canada's (CSC) past president, and vice president of Montreal-based engineering consulting firm Pageau Morel. (CSC is the Canadian counterpart of the Construction Specifications Institute (CSI)—and both organizations have special relevance to building products manufacturers, as well as designers and contractors, because the specifications determine a project's characteristics well before shovels hit the ground.)

Giguere volunteered for Montreal chapter activities, became the chapter vice chair, started attending national directors' meetings and, after four years, was invited to join the national executive track—requiring more than a decade of commitment before he became the association's national leader. He says the association leadership has "benefits for the business and career. The first point is the visibility for myself and the company. We're more a Quebec-based company and this has helped us achieve better business across the country."

The association has provided "lots of opportunity to talk with peers and learn things," Giguere said. "I bring things I learn about specifications writing back to the office so people learn about standard practices and all that."

*“I had no idea what SMPS was, now,
my entire career is a gift from SMPS.”*

—Susan Murphy



Photo of Salt Lake Public Safety Building (drone shot) by Dana Sohm, Sohm Photographx, sohmphoto.com.

You need to be able to commit time and energy—often requiring years—and you need to build relationships without worrying about immediate business development results or selling opportunities. Yet, you can discover opportunities, sometimes under your nose, by moving great distances or by discovering an untapped group that has the decision-makers you really want to reach.

But how much business has Pageau Morel received from Giguere's CSC leadership? "We have not measured that," he acknowledges. "I know we have received some business that is not necessarily the big projects. We get some business. People who already know you meet around CSC. You get a better relationship, and more business. Is it because of your CSC involvement or because of you? It's not easy to say." In other words, the association relationships may support your branding (trust) but you may not always be able to track specific work from your association connections.

However, the association networks can help you transcend geography and, when you become involved at a national level, open some seemingly surprising doors.

Mary Jo Mrochinski, senior proposal manager, business development at CH2M Hill's Anchorage, AK, office, says she was able to check with SMPS colleagues to verify that the move to Alaska from Los Angeles would be a wise one when she received a call from a recruiting headhunter.

She has made it her business to belong to relevant client-focused associations, as well, such as the Society of American Military Engineers.

"In deciding to participate in a professional organization, I tend to assess worth based on the colleagues I know who are already members and the educational/networking opportunities," she says. "I also weigh the costs of membership, events, participation, and sponsorships in prioritizing because I may have reimbursement options available, particularly if [my firm supports] personal professional development or business development for the firm. Thirdly, if it is an association that caters to a market sector that I am actively mining for business, I want to at least have the option of networking with their members and making valuable connections for my firm."

There are some related risks and costs, Mrochinski acknowledges. "There is always a trade-off in time and energy if you make a real effort to be in a professional association. Sometimes it can be very demanding, and require outreach to get assistance in committees, volunteerism, and giving back to the organization."

"But I think the benefits outweigh the demands considerably, because I am surrounded by admirable men and women that I learn from every day, who cheer me on in my victories and console me in my losses, and contribute to my overall growth as a professional and a friend with a wide (range of) acquaintances all over the country."

Meanwhile, Klabunde, Solomon, and others encourage colleagues, employees, and principals to become involved in relevant associations. Solomon says he is happy to pay the association dues for any of his company's employees "as long as there is a commitment to be active." Klabunde says, as Timmons Group's leaders move through association executive ranks, the company strategically encourages other employees to volunteer, ultimately to become part of the association's executive track, thus ensuring continuity in the relationships between the relevant associations and the engineering/design practice.

Sometimes you want to travel the less-common paths. "You want to be where other people are not," Klabunde says. "Some of our best successes have happened when we have been able to get on boards or join associations where we have no competitors."

These are the paradoxes of association marketing. You need to be able to commit time and energy—often requiring years—and you need to build relationships without worrying about immediate business development results or selling opportunities. Yet, you can discover opportunities, sometimes under your nose, by moving great distances or by discovering an untapped group that has the decision-makers you really want to reach. You may even, as Murphy discovered, redefine your career and business through your association marketing. The opportunities are there when you focus your energies and prepare for long-term, sincere commitments. ■



Photo of Frank L. Lippert, FSMPS, CPSM, and Carla D. Thompson, FSMPS, at 2012 Build Business: Take Action, San Francisco. Photo by Dana Sohm, Sohm Photographx, sohmphoto.com.

The Ground Rules for Effective Association Marketing

Determine If the Association Makes Sense for You

You should attend a few association events and functions to find out for yourself. Matt Handal at Trauner Consulting Services in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, says, "The litmus test I use is: Is this an audience that can say 'Yes' to our services or an audience that could introduce me to someone who can say 'Yes'?"

Don't Go Looking to Sell (Though Many May Buy)

If you are insincere, or fail to give your best efforts to the association without worrying about return, you'll likely encounter a less-than-positive reception. The goal is to build your relationships and reputation first. Of course, you can have some luck and develop new business right away, as presentation coach Susan Murphy experienced.

Look Where Others Aren't Going

Your ideal association will have plenty of potential client decision-makers, and not too many direct business development competitors. However, even if you cannot escape the competition, you can (through effort and commitment) be accepted for an association directorship, executive or other leadership role, and thus outplay your competitors. But if the competitors are already in these positions, you may find they are well-entrenched with a succession plan of their own.

Contribute, Speak, "Do," Rather than Just Attend Meetings

If you passively attend some association functions, you'll probably achieve limited results. One idea: Volunteer for committees or activities that reflect your interests, passions, and values. You may be able to suggest programs and ideas that both appeal to you personally and allow you to make many new association friends. For example, one of my colleagues doesn't golf, but he volunteers to help out with the registration and after-golf programs at the association's golf tournaments, which allows him to meet and connect with all of the participants in the process.

Think Long Term

If you are satisfied, the association will connect you with the right people, prepare for a long-term relationship. In this regard, successful association marketing reflects your overall business. Associations, in fact, provide the ideal environment to develop and maintain lasting relationships, even between projects. ■



Letter from Turin V: Reflections on Marketing and PR Planning

By Dianne L. Frank, FSMPS

One of my family's favorite activities in our travels throughout Italy is climbing to the tops of towers. Clock and bell towers are key landmarks in the historic centers of cities and towns, many dating back to the Middle Ages, and built for religious, defensive, political, and civic purposes. These towers offer some of the finest views of the cities below and to the landscapes beyond. This makes the going up worth the effort. *Vale la pena.*

The effort we as marketers devote to achieving our goals through strategic planning shares common aspects with that of climbing towers. Often, the end results may not be apparent or appreciated at the beginning of the ascent. However, when we reach the top, on a sound and strategic course, we have achieved a worthy goal, and have a big-picture view essential to our business. Much has already been written on the how-tos of preparing a marketing and PR/communication plan. I offer these reflections as insights and a perspective on how we can make the process more effective, rewarding, and even more enjoyable along the way.

Steps help us ascend to the top. They allow us to tackle a wall or constraint that we would not otherwise be able to scale and resolve in a single attempt. Arriving at a goal often requires an upward climb, a deliberate and consciously planned effort of each of the tasks needed to achieve the objective.



Planning is Step by Step

When we were first settling in to our new life in Turin, we often heard the advice: *piano, piano*, Italian for “slowly, slowly,” meaning “step by step.” We understood that our adjustment would take time and patience, and would build up slowly and consistently.

A commonly used word for “plan” is *progetto*, similar to our word “project.” Another Italian word for “planning” is *pianificazione*, derived from the word *piano*, meaning “floor” or “level.” The notion of going step by step, level by level, *piano by piano*, is thus built into the concept of planning.

Steps help us ascend to the top. They allow us to tackle a wall or constraint that we would not otherwise be able to scale and resolve in a single attempt. Arriving at a goal often requires an upward climb, a deliberate and consciously planned effort of each of the tasks needed to achieve the objective. As each task is completed, it provides the basis to surmount the next. As in all types of climbing, each step and foothold builds on the previous and leads to the next; we are able to reach the target due to the cumulative results of the strategic actions moving us forward.

Marketing and PR planning involves not only mapping out the individual steps and detailed actions, but also the bases, connections, and dependencies necessary to form the solid foundation for the future.

Stairway to Heaven

Capping the Neo-Gothic Cattedrale di Santa Maria del Fiore, Filippo Brunelleschi designed two concentric shells containing a series of continuous rings as the solution to spanning the 143-foot opening. Brunelleschi’s dome in Florence is one of the world’s most famous architectural landmarks, a work of Renaissance genius and an engineering marvel. Ross King’s *Brunelleschi’s Dome* is a superb account of the design and construction of this marvel. In his book, King cites the Florentine poet Strozzi who described the dome as being built *di giro in giro*, “circle by circle,” a reference not only to its herringbone bricklaying technique, but also to Brunelleschi’s evocation of Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, and the nine concentric circles/rings leading to paradise, and, likewise, the descent to hell. (King, Ross, *Brunelleschi’s Dome*, New York: Penguin Books, 2001, pp. 102–107).

The climb of the 463 steps in the interior of Brunelleschi’s Duomo is dizzying as the steps spiral upward and become increasingly narrow and precarious. For those with vertigo or fear of heights, the climb up is indeed more like a descent to hell.



But as we all know, a good marketing plan accounts for the challenges that lie ahead, providing an honest assessment of strengths and weaknesses, opportunities, constraints, and risks. Status quo implies horizontality; without planning, we fall into repeated patterns and a lack of coordinated focus to our efforts. To reach our goals, we need proper preparation; we set our sights high and align a course to overcome obstacles along the way.

As we proceed upward in the Duomo, we have an unparalleled appreciation of the immense achievement of the architecture, as well as the painting that adorns the inside of the dome, *The Last Judgment*, by Giorgio Vasari and Federico Zuccari. Arriving at the top, the views are heavenly.

Measures and Milestones Along the Way

Many of the towers we have climbed have openings in the walls along the way. Small punctures in the masonry, they serve as tiny windows or lookouts. Taking a welcome pause on the stairs to catch our breath, we also relish these peepholes as a preview to the main vista to come. The glimpse of views, framed as details, builds the excitement for the climax at the top of the roof, where the expansive panorama unfolds in front of us.

In planning, it is important to build in measures and milestones. Looking back helps us move forward. The Italian, *per vedere quanto si è percorso e quanto manca alla cima* is translated “to see how far you have gone and how much is missing to the top.”

Milestones not only allow us to reflect on what has been achieved, but also provide insights and information that may be helpful to adjust the course. Periodic and quantifiable measures can offer perspective as to the effectiveness of the achievements and the realistic expectations of the goals. These points along the course also help keep the momentum going, the enthusiasm high, and the perseverance fortified.

The world’s longest portico is in Bologna, Italy, where arches lead to the 18th century Basilica Santuario della Madonna di San Luca, connecting the city to the top of Monte della Guardia. The arches are each numbered; when we climbed the steps, we counted and measured our progress. Interestingly, the number of arches along the portico is 666, a number symbolically associated with the devil—yet another reminder to avoid temptations and stay on course, to overcome challenges and continue stalwart to reach a worthy goal.



Page 19:
Ascending the Duomo in Florence enhances the experience of Brunelleschi's *capolavoro*, a masterpiece of the Renaissance.

Page 20, left to right:
Climbing the spiraling and tilting stairway of the leaning Tower of Pisa requires balance to overcome vertigo; a reward is the view of the *Campo dei Miracoli*, the Field of Miracles.

Walled ramparts and layers of history encircle Lucca and its famous towers, once homes of wealthy mercantile families.

Page 21, top to bottom:
The skyline of San Gimignano in Tuscany is noted by its 14 medieval towers, still remaining from the original 72 built in the 1300s to boast the wealth of their noble family owners.

There are 666 arches along the world's longest portico in Bologna, making the climb up to the Basilica Santuario della Madonna di San Luca devilishly challenging but ultimately rewarding.



Smaller Steps and Shorter Bursts

In Italian, a *scala* is a staircase, a *scalata* a climb. There are a number of different ways to scale a ladder, steps, or wall, depending on the strategy, energy, and the plans we set. For the small firm, in particular, the scale of the planning endeavor is important. While long-term growth and brand development are important for any firm, a small practice can benefit from an agile and nimble model of marketing and PR planning. This model thinks big picture but acts in short spurts; gets to the finish but stays on target to the goal.

Setting smaller and more manageable steps accounts for the demands on the fewer staff members who, by necessity, must fill many roles. It can also utilize extra staff such as interns that might be available for briefer periods. Shorter bursts of energy, quick spurts, and short-term strategies can allow a small firm to achieve manageable and specific goals realistically.

Taking an additive approach, scheduling an easily doable projection of just a few months, and keeping objectives simple, direct, and pared down can all help get the tasks done and bring immediate results. Rather than being overwhelmed by long-term complex planning, the staff of the small firm can stay focused and motivated, with a "heads-down" approach aligned to leadership's "focus-up" vision. The cumulative result is a small firm becoming more adept and successful with each small step it takes.

Keep the End—and Rewards—in Sight

The word for "target" or "finish line" in Italian is *traguardo*, compound of *tra-* "between," and "*guardo*" – "look," or "sight." Key to the effectiveness of marketing and PR planning is not only setting strategic and realistic goals, but also always keeping the "bull's eye" in sight. The goals need to be out in front as we determine actions, decide go/no-go, and allocate resources to achieve objectives.

Commitment to agreed-upon strategies and process is essential to the effectiveness of the plan. Without leadership, consensus, and resolution, a marketing or communications plan, regardless how well devised, is ineffective. The towers of Italy that mark the piazzas and crest the hilltowns are points of civic pride; some are the legacies of noble and ruling families, others the assembly and meeting points for the populace. Like our marketing plans, their purpose brings together stakeholders to invest in and work towards common goals.

As our family prepares for each tower climb, we exchange our rallying cry, "no-guilt gelato!"—the additional reward we promise ourselves after we achieve our goal. As in any team endeavor, it is always important to set aside time to celebrate performance and success. We have found that a scoop of creamy Italian gelato is one of the best ways to savor the achievement of having made it to the top. ■



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What's It Like on 'The Other Side'?

Explore how the marketing of construction firms compares and contrasts with that of architecture and engineering firms.

By Stacy L. Robben, CPSM, LEED® AP BD+C

We've all been there, slogging it out on the front lines of A/E/C marketing and business development. Some of us have endured endless hours of sleuthing for pursuits, making countless calls, and answering mind-numbing RFQ and RFP questions (*what do they do with all that information anyway?*).

Sometimes you can't help but wonder if it might be easier on "the other side." Do architects really track every single RFI? And why aren't they responsible for schedule delays? Do construction managers have a "construction philosophy"? Do all engineering firms get a free ride by sending their information to four separate architects for the same pursuit?

Having spent 14 years of my career marketing on the construction side and the remaining eight on the design side, I certainly have my own perspective of the unique benefits and challenges of working in each discipline.

Black and White—and Gray All Over

While it may seem obvious, my experience is that working with engineers in the construction arena is mostly what-you-see-is-what-you-get. They can make a decision and move ahead in a linear fashion. Architects, on the other hand, may not always take the most direct route to their destination, often looking at a variety of creative options.

"I've found a big difference in coworker personality types—construction and engineering are similar, while architecture is at the opposite end of the spectrum," says David Werking, FSMPS, CPSM, a business development manager at ERMCO, Inc., in Indianapolis, Indiana, whose previous experience includes marketing architecture and construction services. "The creative process is totally different. Builders attend a meeting and like to get things done. They want to get out of a meeting as quickly as possible. In the same scenario, the architect might take more time to explore opportunities."

Who's the Client?

A client I pursued at my previous job is probably not the same one I track today, even if it is for the same project. When I worked in construction, my client was typically a facilities director, director of design and construction, or chief operating officer. I wanted to connect with the person responsible for financial resources, who was also familiar with facilities. My construction clients understood the benefits and risks associated with having qualified and experienced construction teams on board.

While design teams may market to that group as well, I often find the person hiring the architect may have a higher role in the same client organization. That person may have financial responsibilities, but they also have their finger on the pulse of what type of building design and amenities will help recruit and retain staff while promoting organizational values and aspirations.

"You're talking to different levels within an owner's company," adds Werking. "Instead of getting to know the campus architect, when you're in construction, maybe you're talking with the plant or maintenance manager. As a subcontractor, it can be considerably more difficult to get an audience with the owner, because the owner typically contracts with a construction manager or general contractor."

Christine King, FSMPS, CPSM, marketing department manager at Martin/Martin, Inc., in Lakewood, CO, says her client contacts shifted primarily from owners to architects when she made the move from construction to engineering in 2013. "At least 60 to 70 percent of our current pursuits are to architects, not owners, like it was in construction. But we still have to do quite a bit of owner development to maintain the high respect of architects."

Some owners, including Lockheed Martin, award engineering services as a subconsultant through an A/E prime contract. "But we consistently market to the owner to maintain the relationship and be the recommended engineer," King says.

As important as knowing who makes the decisions, Werking believes that understanding how they buy services is even more valuable. "Most often in construction, you rely on pricing. You can position yourself to get the 'last look,'

but at the end of the day, it could come down to cost—which is less typical when choosing an architect."

Company resources required to close the deal change as well. Werking adds, "Many times, in construction, a bid is included. While this relieves that BD pressure, you need to have best price, which means you better have a good estimating team."

Linda Hollingsworth, CPSM, director of business development–healthcare for Barton Malow in Orlando, FL, has a slightly different take on what it takes to win projects in architecture vs. construction.

After experiencing the disappointment of not winning a large project pursuit, the same client later awarded her firm other work. "We won the next two jobs on our proposal alone, with no interviews. This probably wouldn't happen with architecture because this owner generally wants to see what the architect has in mind for each specific project."

While Hollingsworth believes the process for securing work is essentially the same in architecture and construction, she feels it's easier to develop relationships and gather intelligence on the construction side.

"We usually have a little more time to get in, learn, and work with the selected architect to get more information," she says. In pursuits where the architect has

already been selected, she likes to talk to all the architects who were invited to compete, a strategy that typically yields a well-rounded perspective on the client and the particular opportunity.

The Pesky Proposal

In my own experience, I saw a marked difference in the more text-heavy and technical proposals in construction compared to the more graphic and sometimes philosophic proposals in architecture.

Julia Meade, CPSM, agrees. Having previously worked in both architecture and construction, she now serves as proposal development manager for Hazen and Sawyer, a water engineering firm in Dallas, TX. During her four years at a construction firm, she recalls meeting with resistance when she suggested translating a four-page scheduling narrative into an infographic. "Our preconstruction approach ran anywhere from four to nine pages long, mostly boilerplate with edits from the project manager. My excitement came from getting to create tables or graphs to supplement the proposal copy."

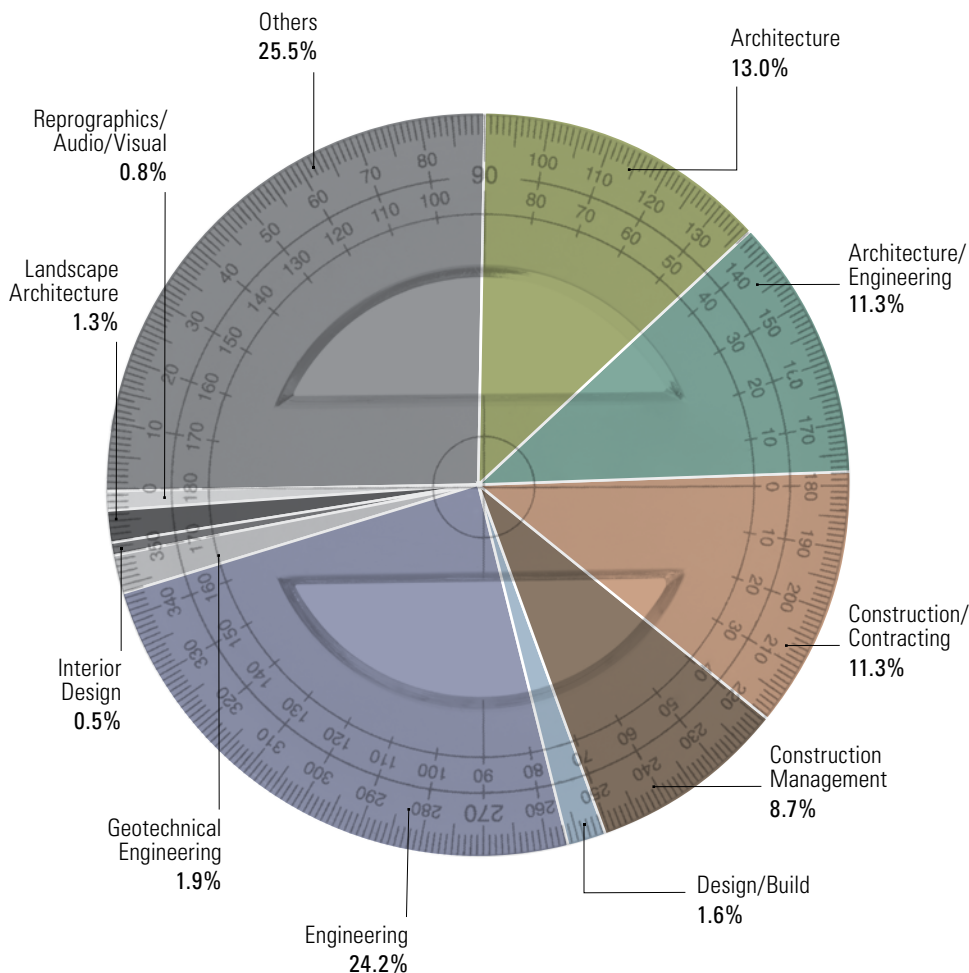
Today, Meade enjoys working with a talented graphic design staff to inject creativity into proposals while meeting stringent page limitations. "This puts even greater emphasis on top-notch graphics to tell our story succinctly."

“We won the next two jobs on our proposal alone, with no interviews. This probably wouldn’t happen with architecture because this owner generally wants to see what the architect has in mind for each specific project.”

—Linda Hollingsworth, CPSM

SMPS by the Numbers

A COMPARISON OF MEMBERS BY FIELD TYPE (Credit: SMPS Headquarters)



And what if you’re a subconsultant and on the often-perceived “free ride” proposal with the architect? You still need to keep relationships in place to be afforded the opportunity to be on the prime consultant team. King says that continuous sharing of leads helps her firm foster relationships with the primes. “Even if we have a lead on an opportunity that might not be right for us, we still share that information with our architectural firm clients, which helps build rapport.”

Are We Really All That Different?

At the end of the day, there are consistencies in marketing for all of the disciplines, and that is why many of us have taken the opportunity to work on both sides of the fence. Strategic planning, gathering customer intelligence, building relationships, communicating your strengths—whether it be through a bid, via a prime consultant, or telling your story in an interview—is what makes each of us unique and valued professional services marketers. ■



MAKE YOUR MARKETING

By Patricia Cox, CPSM

No matter what size your business, effective marketing can increase sales and boost profits. Finding a perfect balance between marketing efforts and budget constraints can present a challenge. Many small firms struggle with the ability to be competitive against larger firms that have unlimited budgets. As a small firm, how can you maximize your marketing effectiveness without having to break the bank? Here are some ideas to focus on the client, and on creative, yet cost-effective marketing tactics.

FEEL BIG

WITHOUT SPENDING BIG

FOCUS ON THE CLIENT

The first question you should ask when embarking on a marketing strategy isn't "how much will that cost" but "will that target the right market?" Marketing can be expensive especially if it is not effective marketing.

Define Your Client

Who are your customers? Who will buy your product or service? Often, savvy business people have no idea, or they assume that everyone will buy their products or services. Assumptions can lead to wrong decisions, wrong pricing, wrong marketing strategy, and ultimately, be extremely costly and move you on the road to failure.

You don't need and you certainly don't want every client. Don't be afraid to determine if a certain client isn't a good fit for you. The more specifically you define your ideal clients, the more likely they will recognize themselves as potential clients for you.

Understand Your Client's Needs

Find out what the client is looking for. Most clients are looking to you to help them and protect their interest. Don't try to sell them something they do not need. You will lose your credibility when they discover you have unnecessarily sold them a product or service that does not have value to them. Become a problem-solver on the client's behalf.

Secure Your Position

Differentiate yourself from the others. Bring a "can do" attitude and give the client what they want (preferably before they need it). Be different enough that your prospects, customers, clients will take notice. Do not try to be all things to all people ... become a specialist!

FOCUS ON CREATIVE MARKETING TACTICS

When attempting to market on a tight budget, you can find multiple opportunities that are at little or no cost to you. This is an excellent way to stretch your marketing budget. The toughest marketing challenge facing small businesses today is not the cost, but finding a strategy to get your message heard over the din of a noisy Internet. This means getting creative.

When you struggle with a creative roadblock, having a suggestion list handy is a great way to help you over the hurdle or to open the avenue for more creativity. To help you in the development of ideas, keep a running list of marketing possibilities. As you think of new ideas, jot them down, send yourself an email or text message, leave yourself a voicemail, or a voice memo from your smart phone. Use your list of ideas as a foundation and build on it every time you think of another avenue to pursue. Then when you are searching for ideas, you can determine if they will fit into your current needs. The next page contains a list of ideas to get you started in building your own.



Social Networking & Social Media

Utilize social media to enhance your marketing strategy. For example:

Twitter

Forum Discussion Boards

Sponsor an Event

Join/Attend Industry Organizations

Blogging. Expand your reach and audience. Use a service like **MyGuestBlog** to find blogs looking for guest articles.

Ning is an online service to create, customize, and share a social network.

Visit **Meetup.com** for a list of events/groups in your area or the area you are wanting to market to find a wealth of networking or sponsorship opportunities. Scout out free networking events in your area; think of every networking event as a mini-marketing campaign.

Internet

Create a content-rich, visually pleasing and easily navigable web site. Make certain your site is keyword-search optimized and develop the site to be highly target market-oriented. Offering a free newsletter can help to generate leads and keep you in touch with potential clients and share best practices in your industry.

Google Local. Google has been offering businesses a chance to register their business address and phone number in its local listings for some time.

Google Merchant. Another helpful and free service from the search giant, Google Merchant is a place for businesses to upload a data feed that includes products or services.

Hold a Webinar. Creating live, online seminars or Webinars is relatively easy these days. Why not hold a Webinar relating to your expertise, and then promote it as a freebie or special benefit to current customers or to attract new ones?

Become an Expert on a Q&A site. Jump on a Q&A site, be helpful, and answer questions related to what you do. Let the public know you are a trusted expert in your field. These should get you going:

- Yahoo Answers
- Mahalo Answers
- Wiki Answers

Review and rating sites. If your company is already listed on rating sites, add more details to the listing such as your company's URL, a map, phone number or other useful information. Add your business to review sites like:

- Merchant Circle
- Angie's List

Yelp is also a great site for local business reviews, and user reviews and recommendations.

Build Your Network

LinkedIn offers a perfect opportunity to build your network and see what your competition is doing. Join as many LinkedIn groups as you can that are related to your services. Post a question or tip on a regular basis. If you have a blog or e-newsletter, post an announcement to your LinkedIn groups with a link. You will be recognized as a leader and you may reach thousands of interested parties.

Network with media contacts. Maintain solid relationships with media contacts that cover your industry. Check in with them every month or two and ask how you can help them as an expert in your field. Better yet, send them tips and insider news they might not otherwise have access to. Become a resource. Take time to read the reporter's stories, and be better equipped to know how to communicate with them more effectively.

Check out **Biznik**, a local, independent entrepreneurial community that encourages collaboration.

The most effective way to market a small business is to create a well-rounded program that combines sales activities with your marketing tactics.

StartupNation provides real-world business advice to people who want to start a business and who want to grow their small businesses.

Non Tangibles

The number one non-tangible recommendation is to provide excellent customer service. Providing excellent customer service really doesn't cost you anything, but bad customer service can cost you everything.

Upspring is a site for business networking, local Internet marketing, local advertising, product promotion, and online marketing services.

Submit your press releases not only to the media but send them to your prospect list through mass distribution like **Constant Contact**.

Business Alliances

Form alliances with other service companies that complement your business. Build relationships with other industry partners that will recommend you to people who need your services. Word-of-mouth advertising can create a level of trust that can lead to new business.

Develop or join a small business marketing group and meet regularly to discuss ways to market economically and share low-cost ideas.

Co-op advertising is an effective way to get your advertisement out there and align yourself with other industry leaders. Share the ad space and cut your cost!

Talkbiznow is a comprehensive interactive business networking site for business professionals.

Meet the Boss is a business networking tool for business executives around the world, across all vertical industries.

PartnerUp is an online networking community that entrepreneurs and small business owners use to find the expertise and resources they need to start and grow a business. Members can connect with potential partners, advisers, and business resources.

Charitable Activities

When venturing into charitable work, it is important to fulfill your own passion but more importantly, fulfill a need. Research charitable organizations in your area and determine which organization can benefit from your involvement and talent the most. Charitable work is viewed upon by society as heartfelt and with integrity. Honesty and integrity are the foundations of building your reputation, which will lead you to building your business.

Sponsorships

Although sponsorships generally are more costly, this form of advertising will get your name in front of a large number of potential buyers. But, the key is to select the event that best aligns with your business.

Do Something Different!

Post an informational video on **YouTube** or exchange web site links with other businesses.

Send a monthly postcard instead of a hard copy or email newsletter. Make it fun and interesting with a "call to action" title like: "100 reasons to call us." Include an incentive if they pick up the phone and call to learn more (could be a discount, a promotional item, etc.).

No matter which route you take, marketing is everything you and your firm do or say, and it's how your field representatives represent your firm. Marketing isn't a plan. It isn't a department in your firm or a line item in your budget. Marketing is every point of contact with existing or potential clients. When you are selling a service, you are establishing and cultivating a relationship.

If you are like the majority of small businesses, your marketing budget is limited. The most effective way to market a small business is to create a well-rounded program that combines sales activities with your marketing tactics. ■



Like Your Mother Said: Be Nice!

Bad manners are more than disrespectful ... they can make the difference between winning and losing a project.

By Peter J. Kienle, FSMPS, CPSM, MBA, and Judith K. Kienle, CPSM, MPH

Is being nice a lost art? Growing up, we didn't have a choice. We learned how to treat people and used good manners wherever we went. It was reinforced in school as well. Now, however, many would agree etiquette often is absent in our interactions. We may complain about it, but most of us don't do more than that. After all, it is impolite to correct someone!

A recent *USA Today* article titled, "Be more polite, Beijing residents told ... Chinese officials urge for nicer behavior ahead of fall APEC Summit," discussed how the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Summit (APEC), scheduled for this November, has pushed China to want to make a good impression on the world stage.

The government is mounting a campaign to encourage Beijing's 20 million residents "to behave better." It seems the residents have some nasty habits, including spitting in public, drivers not yielding to pedestrians and frequently running red lights, drinking while driving, and dressing inappropriately. Sound familiar? China isn't the only nation struggling with these issues.

Etiquette is defined by Merriam-Webster as the rules indicating the proper and polite way to behave. Hilka Klinkenberg with Etiquette International says your guiding principle should be to treat people with consideration and respect. The *USA Today*

article prompted us to reflect on etiquette in the business environment, and call out some situations as a good review of how to interact in the office, with prospects and clients, and while attending events.

Office Etiquette Basics

- **Always arrive on time.** Arriving late sends the message that you don't respect your employer or others. Being late wastes everyone's time and productivity nosesdives. A professor once told us, "If you are on time, you are late!" His message was if you plan to arrive early—10 to 15 minutes early—you will have time to get better prepared and start on time.
- **Play nice in the "cube farm."** Shouting over the cube wall or sending your cube neighbor an email may seem convenient, but it is unnecessary and again wastes time. Get up and go talk with them quietly.
- **Keep your area neat and presentable.** You can never tell when a client or prospect is being shown through the office. Sloppy desks and work areas leave the impression that the work product may be sloppy too. During a tour of one A/E firm, we were told the top project manager's office looked bad but we were reassured he knew where everything was. That may be true, but perception rules—and in this case, the PM did not leave a good impression.
- **Limit personal calls.** Everyone has them, but where you take the call is important. Go into a conference room, private area, or outside with your cell phone to discuss personal business. Most people don't want to be distracted with extraneous noise (your conversation) when concentrating on work.
- **Keep emails brief.** If what you need to say is longer than a sentence or two, a phone call or meeting might be more appropriate. People use emails to document their position or often vent their thoughts—sometimes negatively. One accounting employee for a large engineering firm sent an email to another employee she was trying to "set straight" with these words at the top in caps "LOOK, LADY!" Emotions including anger, frustration, blame, or justification have no place in an email.
- **Use "Please" and "Thank you."** Mr. Rogers was a television personality in the 60s who taught children how to behave by using examples during his show, *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood*. He stressed how we needed to behave with our neighbors and friends, and urged his viewers to always use the magic words "please and thank you"—the polite way to behave. Use them often and notice the response.

Consistently using good etiquette with a prospect or client is often noted and can become a differentiator for your firm.

Interacting with Clients and Prospects

■ Give a warm and inviting greeting.

When meeting someone, you will make a good first impression if you use a firm handshake, smile, have good posture, and make eye contact while introducing yourself in a warm and friendly tone. This seems intuitive; however, remember not everyone knows how to make an introduction—especially someone new to the workplace. Regarding handshakes, neither a testosterone-filled grip nor a half-hearted limp fish handshake is appropriate. Try to return the same amount of pressure in your handshake as that of the person you are meeting.

■ Follow phone etiquette.

A phone call is thought to be a one-on-one conversation unless noted otherwise. If you need to use a speaker phone, you should ask for permission. If others are on the call with you, introduce those individuals.

■ Be considerate of others' time.

When starting a meeting, ask what time the prospect/client has available and address what they want to accomplish during that time, and be flexible. We had an hour visit scheduled with a hospital facility director, and when we got there, she said she had only 20 minutes. We finished in 18 minutes. We made a friend.

■ Follow up as you say you will.

For example, a client had a question about his project that an engineer needed to research. The engineer said he would call the client on Wednesday of that week with the answer. Wednesday came and the engineer did not have the answer yet so he did not call back. The owner called the next day and asked for the promised information. The engineer explained he was not able to get the information and would call when he receives it. The courteous approach would have been to call the client on Wednesday with an update and explanation about the delay, avoiding any possible ill feelings.

■ Buying anything for a public servant.

There are different rules for different agencies—some designate a dollar value to keep items under a certain amount—\$25 has often been used as a benchmark. If you want to buy lunch for a public servant, it is best to ask first if you may buy his lunch. This gesture should preclude any awkward situation and allows the public servant to make the decision.

especially if food and refreshments will be served. Hosts appreciate the response—another way to show you are considerate.

■ Put the device away.

It is rude to be checking or responding to emails during a presentation. It shows disrespect and sends the message that you are not interested in what is being said. At a recent conference, we noticed eight attendees at one table on their devices at the same time. They sent a very bad message to the presenter.

Etiquette can be a good topic for an in-house training program. Choose the top 10 items you think would be appropriate for your group and cover them in a lunch-and-learn program. Here are a few resources to check out before your in-house training:

- etiquetteinternational.com
- emilypost.com
- businessmanagementdaily.com/glp/28411/14-Tips-on-Business-Etiquette.html

There are many other situations in the business world where good etiquette is appreciated. Today, consistently using good etiquette with a prospect or client is often noted and can become a differentiator for your firm, maybe being the difference in a close competition for a new project. ■

Event Best Practices

■ RSVP.

Repondez s'il vous plait (RSVP), the French acronym, means to respond to the sender whether you will attend or not—unless the invitation says “regrets only.” Many people do not respond if they will not attend. However, the host is usually trying to get a head count,



Now is the time to take the next step in **ADVANCING YOUR CAREER.**

As a professional services marketer or business developer, you are vital to the success of your firm. Every day you help your company grow by identifying new project opportunities, developing smart business relationships, crafting outstanding proposals, and getting your company's name in front of prospective clients. Your job is to build profitable business.

The Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS) offers a credential that recognizes your experience and validates your marketing and business development skills in the industry: Certified Professional Services Marketer (CPSM).

Gain the recognition you deserve and differentiate yourself in this competitive employment market by becoming a CPSM.

For more information, visit Certification at www.smps.org or call 800.292.7677, x232.

NEW RESEARCH FROM THE SMPS FOUNDATION



A/E/C BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT—The Decade Ahead

How are professional services firms selling themselves in this new economy? How are the buyers of design and construction services making purchasing decisions? The SMPS Foundation recently conducted primary research to probe the behaviors of both buyers and sellers of A/E/C services. A team of 30 marketing and business development professionals completed a year-long effort to research and analyze the current state of buying and selling and to identify key forces that will impact BD in the A/E/C industry in the future.

A/E/C BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT—The Decade Ahead documents the findings of this comprehensive research initiative. The recommendations in this book will aid professional services firms in enhancing competitive advantage, deepening BD knowledge and skills, and planning strategically for the future. Order your copy today!

A/E/C BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT—The Decade Ahead
Published by the SMPS Foundation

Available on Amazon.com

Print: \$49.99 plus shipping and handling

Available in the SMPS Shop on SMPS.org

PDF: \$39.99

An Interview with Bryan Hughes of Black & Veatch

Bryan Hughes' A/E/C career began in sales, but he leveraged that valuable skill—building relationships—into business development. Now, as regional manager at 10,000-person, employee-owned infrastructure engineering and construction firm Black & Veatch, Hughes works to build opportunities for the global company's Power Delivery business line. *Marketer* sat down with Hughes to talk about his career path and some of the significant accomplishments and lessons learned.



Bryan Hughes, regional manager, Black & Veatch.

Marketer: Can you tell us about how you ended up doing business development in the A/E/C industry?

Hughes: I've taken the long path to this industry, having graduated college with a degree in aquatic biology. (I started school in mechanical engineering, but was quickly bored by the lack of practical learning—I should have stuck it out!) Teaching was about the only sustainable career I saw myself doing with my education, so a teaching credential and master's degree in education soon followed. I enjoyed the classroom time, but I quickly became weary of the politics and various other impediments to my ability to make a positive impact.

Following the 1999–2000 school year, I determined that it was time for a change. A fishing trip to Oregon led to relocation to Portland, and new friends introduced me to a sales opportunity with a steel water-pipe manufacturing company. I interviewed over a couple beers and, before I knew it, I had a new career. I'd like to say this was always my target industry, but honestly I just fell into it.

Marketer: What was your first job in the industry? Why did you take this job and make this career change?

Hughes: Teaching was rewarding in many ways, but it was difficult financially, and I needed to create a new opportunity and environment for myself. Although this was a big jump, selling in the construction business turned out to be an outstanding fit. Selling an engineered product was all about educating customers, while building relationships based on confidence and trust. It was quite similar to teaching high school from that standpoint.

I was tasked with helping engineers design the pipeline system in a manner that resulted in a competitive (or preferential, ideally) specification for my product. Once this was accomplished, I supported contractors as they built a bid strategy around the different pipe material options allowed by specification. I had a fine line to walk—each of my three core customer groups (owner, engineer, contractor) needed to understand and believe I had their best interest as my top priority. Better said, the project came first. The relationships came as my customers saw substance in my arguments and that my

actions tracked with my words. In time, those relationships and the standing I had earned in the market led to opportunity on the consulting/engineering side of the equation.

I was hired to do business development (BD) for a very small (eight-person) firm that focused on corrosion control and condition assessment of water and wastewater infrastructure. The position was ideal for me, having worked with the firm as a pipe salesman and contractor. I knew its clientele and enough about its services to hit the ground running. The marketing efforts were directed by an SMPS fellow who provided strategy and direction. I immediately felt confident that I could make an impact. I was excited about the role of BD for an engineering firm because I perceived my success would be more about qualifications and less about price on bid day.

Marketer: Can you tell me about your current position?

Hughes: I am currently a regional manager for Black & Veatch (B&V). As a member of B&V's Energy Division, I am responsible for developing business opportunities (engineering and/or construction) in California, Arizona, and Nevada for its Power Delivery business line. Representing a firm that is both an engineer and builder of transmission and substation infrastructure, I am deeply engaged with many different departments (planning, permitting, engineering, project execution, construction) within the larger electric utilities.

These projects are extremely challenging to develop due to permitting and regional coordination requirements, and clients utilize a number of different delivery mechanisms. B&V supports the early studies that determine or qualify project need, engineering to support the permitting process, final engineering, construction,

and construction management, depending on the delivery method. We're rarely involved in all phases for various reasons, but I engage with client personnel throughout each phase of the project (often through other business lines). This means a complex sales environment, flush with potential misalignments with other clients (we also support developers connecting to the grid, potentially putting us on both sides of the same table) or B&V interests. Communication and collaboration are the keys to success.

Marketer: What is a typical day like for you?

Hughes: There's no such thing, and that's what I like about it. Some days are on the road, packed with client meetings and job site visits. Others are spent on the computer corresponding with clients or partners, reviewing contracts, and researching opportunities and regulation. Still, others involve proposal support, interview preparation, and debriefs. Then, it's time to set up meetings and plan travel.

The daily constants include client-relationship building, keeping up with industry news or regulation, and collaborating with other B&V professionals working to develop business within my region or client base. I also support supplier diversity events, industry shows, and technical conferences, as well as various networking activities.

Marketer: What have been some of your biggest challenges within your career and how did you overcome them?

Hughes: Getting up to speed technically has been and will continue to be a challenge. I spent 12 years in water/wastewater before making the transition into the energy sector, and now I'm focused on power transmission infrastructure. This

transition took place over a very short timeframe while at Burns & McDonnell, as I was a "generalist" in support of multiple business lines in the Southwest. The power transmission industry was part of my work then, and became my entire focus when I was invited to join B&V.

Learning the engineering behind my product or service has always been a strength for me, but engaging with technical experts after only brief exposure to their business is really challenging. How do you propose to add value unless you understand the issues and technical challenges? As a non-engineer, I faced a steep learning curve, and it still hasn't flattened out.

Marketer: How is BD structured within the group and how large is it? How, if at all, has this changed since you first joined?

Hughes: There is a lot of change, which is a major reason why I have this role. The Energy Division had employed generalist BD professionals responsible for selling all services offered by the division (power generation, power delivery, renewables, etc.), until I was hired as the first of a team of power delivery specialists. The tremendous power-generation market demanded significant attention, and while still strong in its own right, left little time for the smaller power delivery market. In response, this business line elected to build a team of specialists to focus on this market segment. We're still developing our organization, sorting geographic and client responsibilities, and working with the existing generalists to collaborate and transition.

The power delivery business line consists of about 550 professionals, and continues to grow in response to a healthy market

of both large transmission projects and programs to replace aging infrastructure. As we offer a multitude of services to this industry, the role requires an immense amount of coordination with our other business lines within Energy, as well as with the Telecommunications, Management Consulting, and Water Divisions.

Marketer: What are some of the biggest changes both in terms of B&V and BD since you first joined?

Hughes: I've only been on board for a year, so things are changing much faster for me on a personal level than they are on a firm-wide basis. One of the biggest changes is the increasing collaboration with other internal teams. Our clients are large, complex organizations, and to the extent we can leverage existing relationships and find efficiencies in our BD efforts, it makes sense to work together. Intelligence I pick up about a client might impact or benefit another part of my company providing different services to the client. We're building those bridges and working together to be more effective. As well, I'm gaining position in my market, and competitors are responding by seeking and hiring BD resources of their own.

As we have success, I expect this trend to continue. While some firms effectively utilize technical professionals in BD roles, my firm can be more effective in this area due to our ability to focus on growing our business with specific clients. It could be said that we have an advantage of having begun the process of building a business line-specific BD team before our competitors, but we have very high-quality competition (including my former employer) in this market segment. Some of their models have been very effective, and, as we all know, it still comes down to relationships.

“Take advantage of every opportunity to learn, especially from respected professionals who have been there and done that.” —Bryan Hughes

Marketer: *Since joining B&V, what are some examples of initiatives that have been implemented that have contributed to the firm's growth?*

Hughes: *One B&V* is an initiative that encourages cross-divisional BD cooperation with the goal of providing broader service portfolios to our strategic clients. As I mentioned before, we are trying to work more collaboratively to support one another, particularly in our BD activities. Many of our clients can benefit from a multitude of services offered by B&V, and, historically, we have failed to fully reap the benefits of our diversity. Whether it's because we were without the proper incentive or motivation or just the process and structure to support the success of others, this has become a big focus.

One B&V has been integrated fully into our performance evaluation and compensation structure, and while not without challenge, this approach is yielding incremental results. We're breaking down our internal silos, one brick at a time. As an example, I recently supported the successful pursuit (proposal and interview) of a management consulting opportunity with one of my key clients. The knowledge I brought to our team relative to the regulatory, political, and economic realities faced by this client allowed us to tailor our approach to show understanding of their challenges.

Marketer: *Are there any other changes that have occurred within B&V that can be attributed to BD or would not have occurred if a BD position wasn't a part of the firm?*

Hughes: There's no doubt the presence of specialist BD is having an impact, as seen by recent successes with new clients. The available BD resource has allowed the business line to focus energy in places that just weren't on the menu previously. Recent

success at a major municipal client as an example, we can now afford to expand client reach to ones that may have smaller budgets and/or projects. Where previously we could only put BD energy into the larger pursuits, we can now pre-position and win on-call and smaller contracts, as well as increase our penetration into individual clients and the market as a whole.

According to recent feedback, our people feel more supported by the sales organization. I think that's to be expected since we work so closely with the team to discuss, evaluate, and understand our clients (down to the level of each individual we work with) and their needs or opportunities. There's no way I could commit this level of service to my internal clients if I had multiple business lines to support.

The B&V culture embraced pure BD professionals prior to my arriving, but having focused people in a given market has made a measurable difference. The support with B&V has been outstanding. I've rarely experienced such support from a technical team. Everyone makes sales support a priority.

Marketer: *If you could go back in time to the BD person just starting out in the A/E/C industry, what would you say to him or her?*

Hughes: Learn deliberately. Don't rely on osmosis. Not only should you be an expert of the skills associated with networking,

positioning, proposing, and negotiating, but also, if you want to add real value to the business, you need to learn it. Learn as much as you can about the technical expertise your firm brings to the market to the point of being able to engage in technical debate on the subject. Learn the business of utilization, overhead structures, and multipliers. Learn about design, project management, and construction techniques. Take advantage of every opportunity to learn, especially from respected professionals who have been there and done that.

Also, don't accept any limitations imposed on you by others. In an industry dominated by technical professionals, marketing and BD people are often limited, marginalized, and/or diminished. Like water off a duck's back, shake off the "no's" and look to work with people and firms that are open to your ideas, perspective, and expertise. And remember—give the credit to others when you win and they'll have your back when you lose. ■

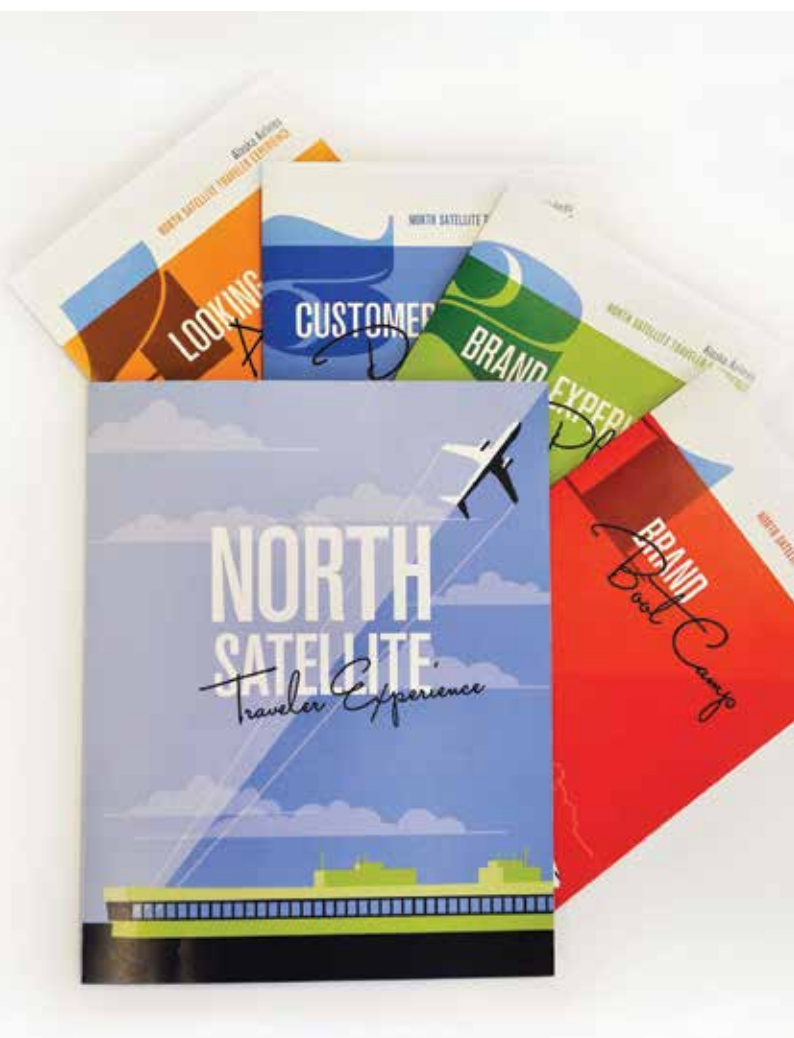


The 2014 Best of Show and People's Choice Awards

The winners of this year's Marketing Communications Awards (MCAs) for Best of Show and People's Choice both created customer-focused entries that put a new twist on well-recognized tools.

On July 31 in San Antonio, during the SMPS annual conference, Build Business power:play, national industry trade magazine editors and publishers gathered at a media luncheon to select the Best of Show from among MCA's first-place-winning entries. They awarded Best of Show to MulvannyG2 of Bellevue, WA, for its first-place entry in the Specific Project Marketing category. MulvannyG2 created a travel itinerary to help improve the customer experience for Alaska Airlines' passengers.

Meanwhile, conference attendees voted on their favorite entry by viewing the MCA boards that were on display. WB Engineers+Consultants of New York, NY, won People's Choice Award for its Honorable Mention Holiday Piece entry, "Thanksgiving Card." The company created a holiday card that looked like a turkey with a fanned out tail that resembled a Pantone Matching System swatch book. Here's a closer look at the two winning projects.



MulvannyG2's 2014 Best of Show winning entry.

2014 BEST OF SHOW: "Alaska Airlines North Satellite Traveler Experience," MulvannyG2, 1st Place Specific Project Marketing Category

GOALS. MulvannyG2's task was to create a qualifications package that would serve as a platform for a unique, innovative process to reinvigorate Alaska Airlines' (AA) customer experience within the North Satellite terminal at Seattle-Tacoma International Airport (Sea-Tac Airport). They had to get the message across in an appealing way that demonstrated their expertise while making it simple for a non-A/E/C client to understand.

- MulvannyG2 wanted to bring back the excitement of flying when it was a luxury in the 1950s and '60s, but with a modern-day twist. Since the project was about improving the customer journey, they wanted the proposal and presentation to be a compelling experience as well.
- They planned to measure results based on the client's understanding of the intended design direction proposed within the package, and whether they would move forward with MulvannyG2 to the final stage of the proposal process. Their goal was to create a piece they could relate to and that demonstrated enthusiasm for the project.

AUDIENCE. This piece was presented in person at AA offices by MulvannyG2 team leaders to the AA group, which included the Director of Customer Innovation and Airport Experience, a branding specialist, and a behavior analyst.

RESEARCH, PLANNING, AND IMPLEMENTATION. At the outset of the pursuit, AA provided the project team with research on the AA brand and company history. These findings, along with research into what once made travel a luxury, helped form the overall tone of the piece and better portray how it related to the audience. Modern airport design and technology currently being integrated into the travel experience were also researched for inspiration.

A charrette was conducted to evaluate the research and brainstorm ideas around the design of the package. A typical spiral-bound SOQ was too ordinary and would not deliver the intended message of nostalgia mixed with design innovation.

MulvannyG2 decided to present their qualifications as an itinerary—which AA deals with every day—because it was in the client’s “language.” They created a custom folder branded with a specially designed “North Satellite Traveler Experience” logo. Within this folder, they produced pamphlets for each of the three phases that they were proposing for the project. To maintain that momentum and continue the “flight path” analogy, they took the package a step further by including a fourth pamphlet: Looking Ahead. This suggested the idea of potentially rolling out solutions to other AA hubs across the country. The entire production was completed by MulvannyG2 in house.

MESSAGE. The MulvannyG2 team’s extensive background in creating innovative retail spaces, their understanding of customer flow within a space, and their visual merchandising expertise provided a great opportunity to bring that spirit of retail into a new application with this project. Understanding the fundamental values and attributes of AA’s brand was a critical part of the proposed process to lay the groundwork for creating an interactive and enjoyable experience traveling through the North Satellite terminal. The package used integrating language—including phrases like “Packing Our Bags” and “Taking Off”—to really make reading about the project a fun, relatable experience.

DISTINCTION. The idea of proposing a unique customer experience throughout the North Satellite terminal had to be experienced by reading the package. The MulvannyG2 project team met with AA a month prior to this stage and presented a more typical SOQ that provided basic information about the firm’s experience. By gaining a better understanding of AA’s needs and the project, MulvannyG2 developed a new customer experience around nostalgic travel and contemporary conveniences. By printing the package as though it were a travel itinerary, MulvannyG2 made the experience of reading the package like a travel experience in itself. Unique fonts and key phrases were carried through each pamphlet to ensure consistency in overall message and tone. Retro-styled graphics were mixed with hard lines and modern colors to emphasize the message of mixing nostalgia with modern day travel.

RESULTS

- The AA target audience was extremely excited about the presentation and eager to learn about the process; it was a journey in itself to explore the package.
- MulvannyG2 was invited to provide a formal proposal for their services, and subsequently won the \$100,000 project.
- The cost of producing the package was approximately 9% of the project fee, and was kept at a reasonable amount by completing all printing and production in-house. MulvannyG2 saw this as an investment in a best-in-class client with vast growth opportunities.
- This project added a new vertical to the firm’s retail sector, and built MulvannyG2’s experience in the design and branding of unique customer experiences.



WB Engineers+Consultant's winning People's Choice entry for 2014.

2014 PEOPLE'S CHOICE: "Thanksgiving Card," WB Engineers+Consultants of New York, NY, Honorable Mention, Holiday Piece Category

GOALS. WB Engineers+Consultants differentiates their company from the competition by highlighting that they are engineers who communicate. Their goal for the annual, custom Thanksgiving card was to communicate with clients in a fun and memorable way, specifically to:

- Thank clients and 'WB friends' for a great 2013 and wish them a Happy Thanksgiving.
- Reflect growth over the course of the year (adding 28 people to the team in 2013).
- Show teamwork, and beyond that, to demonstrate the team enjoys working together, and to imply it is fun to work with them.
- Do something different than what people have seen before—and really stand out in the stack of holiday cards that people receive.

WB Engineers+Consultants' measurement of success for this campaign was less about tangible results (i.e., new projects) and more about feedback they'd received in response to the card. The feedback was overwhelming. Months after sending the card, people still commented on it, using words like “fun,” “clever,” and “memorable.”

AUDIENCE. WB Engineers+Consultants sent the card to 1,590 people. The mailing list included potential and existing clients, as well as office and some family members. The majority of the recipients were in local markets (New York, Boston, and Washington, DC), with approximately 5% of cards sent nationally. The potential and existing clients included corporate end users, architects, developers, brokers, and project managers.

RESEARCH, PLANNING, AND IMPLEMENTATION. Once WB Engineers+Consultants came up with the idea for the card, they began the implementation. WB Engineers+Consultants photographed all 100 people on the team (in three different offices), designed the card, and produced it in approximately five weeks. Here is how they did it:

- They hired one photographer so that the images were consistent across all offices.
- To showcase individual personalities, they asked the staff to bring props that reflected who they are, and provided props for those who did not bring their own (things like hats, boas, masks).
- They had the marketing coordinators/director in each office stay with the photographer all day to direct and expedite the photography process.
- They took pictures with and without props, and decided that they could use the non-prop pictures in other marketing materials.
- For the photo shoots, they had music and food to encourage people to feel comfortable and have fun. They also had a lot of samples of photo booth-type images on display so that people could visualize what they wanted out of the photos.
- Once the photos were back from the photographer, WB Engineers+Consultants selected the ones they liked, then created photo booth-type strips to create the turkey's tail feathers.
- They designed an orange turkey and chose a gray background for the photos based on new corporate colors.

MESSAGE. The design of the card was playful and fun, so the thank-you message matched that tone, and included the headline: "We love working together." This was meant to be read two ways. First, that the WB team loves working together. Second, that the team loves working with its clients. Another important part of the message was the notion of 'being who they are,' which was demonstrated by the props and reflected individual personalities and their brand (personality). They were also thoughtful about how to list the people who were not available for the photo.

DISTINCTION. As WB Engineers+Consultants were brainstorming, they talked about the intrigue of Pantone books and how marketers love looking through them. This notion of creating something that people would leave on their desk and look through or fan out over and over was part of the goal of their design (and the fan-out approach was a perfect illustration of a turkey's tail feathers). Once WB Engineers+Consultants decided on this design, they immediately contacted the printer to find out if this concept could be made into a reality. The printer was excited to produce this card and, though never done anything like this before, figured out how to make it happen. The production was labor intensive—each card had to be hand assembled.

RESULTS. WB Engineers+Consultants didn't measure results for this card in terms of gaining new clients or expecting the recipients to take a specific action when they received the card. They measured success in the feedback received, as they believed it directly related to brand awareness and word of mouth marketing approach. Below are a few of the comments received:

- "This is literally the best thing ever! I showed to my whole group—everyone loves it. Nice work!"
- "I love the Thanksgiving card, very creative!"
- "You are the first engineer to send me a photo of himself as an actual turkey. Memorable and amusing."
- A partner at a large client firm said, "I wish my firm's marketing team could be this creative!"

The project was also a very successful internal marketing campaign, as well as a great way to boost morale and reinforce the team culture. During the shoot, people lingered so that they could watch other groups. They asked if they could be in multiple photos (the answer was no, but one gentleman did sneak in to a couple of extra photos). Many wanted to know when they could do a project like this again. And when the final card arrived, the staff was excited to get copies. They spent a lot of time laughing at themselves and each other. WB Engineers+Consultants learned some valuable lessons from their experience. They learned that if the printer says something will take two weeks, it will probably take four. They learned that people like having their photos taken more than they will admit. And, they learned that entirely entertaining and fun, and successful are not mutually exclusive (but they knew that already). ■

2015 Marketing Communications Awards

DISCOUNTED ENTRY DEADLINE:

March 2, 2015

FINAL ENTRY DEADLINE:

March 16, 2015

Developing details about the 2015 program will be posted on smpls.org/mca.

CORRECTION

In the August 2014 *Marketer* article, "Winners Announced in the 2014 Marketing Communications Awards," the 1st place Feature Writing winner should have been listed as:

FINLEY Engineering Group, Inc., Tallahassee, FL, and On Target Marketing & Communications, LLC, Columbia, CT.

BOOKSHELF

Reviewed by Barbara Shuck,
FSMPS, CPSM



The Architecture of Image: Branding Your Professional Practice

Every professional services book has a place and time, and Craig Park's *The Architecture of Image* miraculously moved to the top of the book stack right when I needed it. This is the second book in a series, *The Architecture of Practice™*, and the first book—*The Architecture of Value*—focused on strategy, story, and delivery. Park's goal with the series is to "provide you with insight and best practices that will lead to the creation of a successful and lasting professional service venture." *The Architecture of Image* does not disappoint.

This book provides a sound foundation in building a brand integrated into a firm's culture, client perceptions, and communication strategies. Park walks the reader through understanding branding from the beginning, to building, and, finally, to becoming, with excellent explanations and practical tactics that leave the reader ready to undertake challenging branding initiatives on his own.

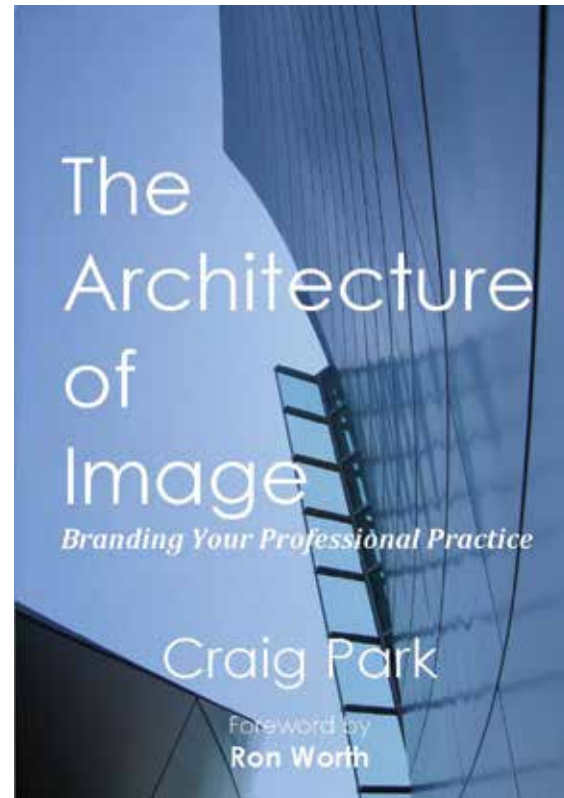
The book is full of case studies and quotes from nine veteran marketers in architectural and engineering firms, with insights and stories that are sure to resonate with readers. The stories are real, and the lessons learned are substantive. It's as if the reader is listening to actual conversations between Park and his wise colleagues, with interesting anecdotes, lessons learned, and sound advice for the reader. For example, from Julie Luers, FSMPS, vice president and director of marketing at HGA Architects and Engineers, "HGA's brand has three organizing principles. First, understand the voice of the customer ... The second is process

improvement ... The third is maximizing value. We bring internal research to the client, aligning expertise with the value that they bring, especially in areas of sustainability and net-zero-plus energy efficiency." A recommended reading list and links to web sites round out this book as an excellent resource.

I found definitions to be well-developed and clear, especially in a world of many interpretations of branding and image vernacular. I tend to highlight books, and turn down pages with key statements so I can refer to them later. I can usually tell when a book has hit some sweet spots by the number of flat corners, and this book is full of flat-cornered pages. I found its simplicity refreshing and its clarity to be extremely useful as I started on my firm's branding and key messages path.

The Architecture of Image is well-suited for small firms as they get a handle on branding, differentiation, and effective communication strategies. Even though my company has 450 employees, I found the discussion, samples, and resources to be extremely helpful. This is likely to be a good reminder for even the largest firms.

This book is easy to read, and immediately helpful to a marketer's branding tasks. As for strategy, it provides the framework for a well-conceived process that will help the marketer, firm principal, or sole proprietor understand the landscape of branding's best practices. *The Architecture of Image* is certainly one of the top resources in my professional library. ■



THE ARCHITECTURE OF IMAGE: BRANDING YOUR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

By Craig E. Park, Assoc. AIA, FSMPS

Published by: Aquilan Press
254 pages, list price \$24.95 (paperback)
Available from amazon.com and
smpsbooks.com

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- August 3–5, 2016, Philadelphia, PA

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This award-winning bimonthly journal—regularly cited as the top benefit of membership—provides original, knowledge-based content, written by industry experts. Archived issues can be accessed in the members-only Marketing Resource Center on MySMPS.org. An editorial calendar is available online under the Resources>Publications tab.

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GET INVOLVED

Awards and Recognition

For entry details and deadlines, check out the Recognition tab on smps.org.

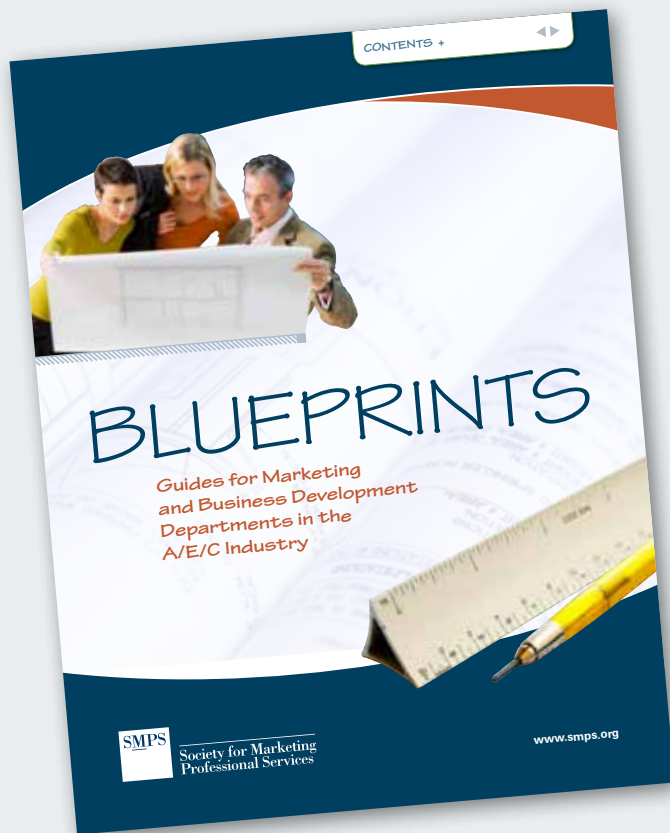
- **Marketing Communications Awards†**
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- **Fellows Recognition Program***
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- **Chapter Awards***
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CALENDAR

OCTOBER 2014	16–17	Session 1 of SMPS University: Leadership Advancement Program, University of Maryland, College Park, MD. Learn more: smps.org/smps_university
	21	SMPS Monthly Webinar, “Hit the Mark: Implementing a Strategic Business Development Program” Learn more: http://bit.ly/1iH5hba
NOVEMBER 2014	12	Lunchtime Learning Lab, Case Study: Developing Team Dynamics in Design Build Teams. (Members Only) Learn more: smps.org/freelearninglabs
	13–14	Session 2 of SMPS University: Leadership Advancement Program, Ronald Reagan Center, Washington, DC. Learn more: smps.org/smps_university
	18	SMPS Monthly Webinar. Learn more: http://bit.ly/1iH5hba
DECEMBER 2014	16	SMPS Monthly Webinar. Learn more: http://bit.ly/1iH5hba
JANUARY 2015	20	SMPS Monthly Webinar. Learn more: http://bit.ly/1iH5hba
	21–23	SMPS Southern Regional Conference: “Marketing Gras,” New Orleans, LA Learn more: smps-src.org
FEBRUARY 2015	11–13	SMPS Pacific Regional Conference: “The WAVE: Rock the Boat,” Seattle, WA Learn more: smps-prc.org
	17	SMPS Monthly Webinar. Learn more: http://bit.ly/1iH5hba
	23–25	Public-Private Partnership Conference & Expo, Dallas, TX Learn more: thep3conference.com

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

You Can Make a Big Media Splash with a Small Communications Staff

I'm living proof that it's possible to make a big media splash with a staff of ONE. For six and a half years, I plowed through issues, problems, and challenges as a one-person PR/communications department for the Frisco, TX, Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB). If you're wondering how CVBs compare to professional services firms, they face many of the same challenges as you do on a daily basis. Here are a few examples: How do we grow? How do we inspire innovation? How do we achieve recognition and respect for extraordinary accomplishments?

Let's begin by putting yourself in the media's shoes. They're operating in a constant state of panic, having to do more with less and the fear of losing their job on any given day. The landscape is constantly shrinking. On top of that, many are inundated with hundreds or even thousands of emails per day. How do you get through the clutter?

Here are a few ways to use media relations to strengthen your market position and play a larger role within your industry. They worked for me and I'll bet they'll work for you!

Build Your Media Campaign and List

Build media campaigns around how you can help others in these three areas: problem solving, educating/sharing information, and entertaining. Start to build a good media list by targeting the publications and industries you want to reach. Once you've built your media list, get to know the reporter, writer, or editor to whom you will be pitching. Blindly sending press releases to media people that you don't know won't get you anywhere. How do you do that with multiple lists? Try getting your target contacts on the phone and asking them to tell you exactly what they're looking for in story ideas.

Become familiar with the media outlets. Learn to value relationships more than your monthly or yearly goals and eventually you will start to hit those goals. If you're not using a paid service, check out Muckrack.com.

Make the Media's Job Easy

The first part is having a story idea that's newsworthy. There will be many times when you will be asked to issue a press release that's *not* newsworthy. Dig deeper to find a story idea or explain to your boss why the release won't work as is.

The second part is do everything for them. This includes offering subject matter experts with lively personalities, asking about deadlines in advance, gathering all pertinent information (particularly high-resolution photos) to support your story, and video if you have any. Have all those materials at your fingertips and be ready to deploy them without the media having to ask for them. In the end, they will love you for it!

Learn the Difference Between a Pitch and a Press Release

When you're on the phone, emailing, or using social media to reach the media, pitch (explain) your story idea in two to three sentences and describe why their audience should care. If your pitch is a mile long, you'll hurt your chances of securing coverage. Journalists just don't have time and will be uninspired sorting through press releases that go on and on. Use Twitter as a guide for coming up with email subject lines in 140 characters or less. For pitching ideas and feedback, learn more from Michael Smart's Inner Circle.

Get Social

It is surprising to see how many A/E/C marketers don't take advantage of social media. If you haven't created accounts on the most important platforms—YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, and Pinterest—you've been missing out. After all, social media is the number one activity of most everyone on the planet! Your audience is there. Your company needs to be there. Hootsuite, Spreadfast, Bit.ly, and Crowdboost will help manage, measure, and schedule your posts.

Start Blogging

Use bloggers to jettison into the stratosphere. You'll have to do some more homework because it's essential that you know the bloggers' audiences before you pitch your story to them. Get it wrong and some of them have no shame in blasting you for doing so. The good news about bloggers is they don't have to answer to editors, they love to share, and there are many who are influential! The right relationship with bloggers can tell and propel your story/message onto a national stage.

Mobilize

Last but not least, get out from behind your desk and become a MoJo—a mobile journalist. Tell stories and get video using your smartphone. All of it can be tied back to your blogs and social media. Use it to sell the experience of working with your company. Don't sell products or services ... ever. Remove the terms B2B and B2C from your psyche and vocabulary. Think of all your conversations as H2H = Human to Human.

The essential tools you need to make a big media splash are knowing to whom you're pitching, being helpful, keeping your pitches short, and always, always saying THANK YOU. ■



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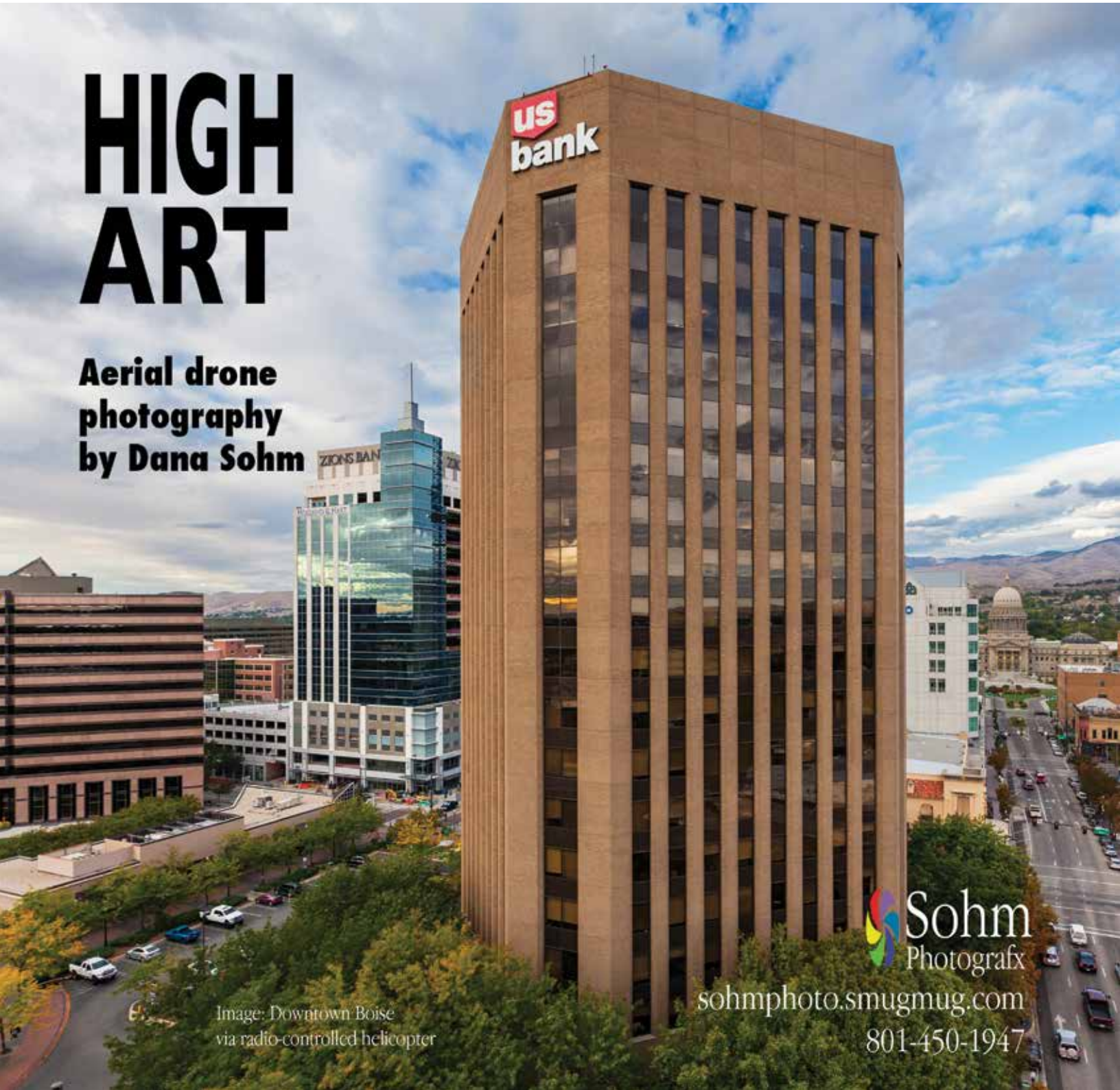


Image: Downtown Boise
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