

# **BUILD BUSINESS.**

## **Reinvent—Retool—Rebound**

### **Call for Presentations**

The National Conference of the  
Society for Marketing Professional Services  
Boston, MA  
July 14-16, 2010

Over the last 12 months, the plummeting U.S. and world economies have created serious challenges for the design and building industry. This is the most severe of several recessions our industry has faced over the last two decades. Some firms have fared better during these recessions, and others have emerged on the other side smaller but with enhanced prospects.

Estimates of when an economic rebound will take hold vary from the end of 2009 to some time in 2010. By July 2010, the United States may be several months into a recovery or on the cusp of one. Build Business 2010 would like to explore the lessons learned and strategies and programs firms put in place to respond to and overcome the current challenges in the A/E/C industry.

Did firms retool their business development, marketing, management, or human resources practices to weather the storm, minimize the damage, and prepare for a rebound? How did companies reinvent themselves, adapt their message, or alter their brand? Which firms have fared recessions better than others and why? How have markets and clients altered their procurement practices to survive? What does this mean for future business development practices? We are interested in best practices, concepts and case histories, techniques and technologies, management and human resource strategies that helped firms survive and that will better position firms in future market and economic disruptions.

A secondary focus of the educational program is to thoroughly explore the impact and potential that social media offers marketers and business developers as we enter the 3.0 world. How do firms protect their reputation and reinforce their brand identity in the social media world? How do you track your online reputation? Can social media be a force in A/E/C marketing and promotion? Can social media revitalize employee communications? What experiences have firms had using blogs, Twitter, and other

social media in their marketing and business development? Are there success stories in related industries from which A/E/C firms can learn?

Typical conference attendees are principals, C-level executives, vice presidents, directors, and managers of business development, marketing, and management with bottom-line accountability for the success of their professional services firms. A strong contingent of upper- and mid-level business developers participate in the conference. Through exposure to experts, practitioners, and peers, participants will examine the latest economic data; explore trends in business development, marketing, and management; learn how to work smarter and better to deliver extraordinary service to clients; gain knowledge to become more effective leaders in their firms; gather information to guide their firms to thrive in existing markets and gain footholds in new areas; expand their networks of valuable business contacts; and reinvigorate their thinking.

SMPS is now accepting proposals for presentations on the following subject areas for **Build Business: Reinvent—Retool—Rebound:**

1. Impact of Intelligence Gathering and Marketing Research Before, During, and After a Recession (Planning)
2. Client Retention and Development Strategies (Business Development)
3. Value and Use of Social Media Tools in Business Development (Promotion)
4. Retooling to Meet the New Client Landscape (Management)
5. Success Stories from the Trenches (Case Studies)

### **Track 1: Impact of Intelligence Gathering and Marketing Research Before, During, and After a Recession**

A firm's foundation for success is built on market research and planning. The information gained through research and planning leads to innovations in services, targets, and delivery that enable a firm to thrive.

We are looking for sessions that explore the impact of research and planning during tough economic times. The sessions in this track will explore new data collecting techniques, information sources, methodologies, and tools, providing attendees with critical knowledge to elevate their firms in a changing marketplace. Of particular interest are firm case histories where data and intelligence gathering was a critical element of success.

### **Track 2: Client Retention and Development Strategies**

Success in business development tracks directly to the bottom line. Knowing where to find clients and work, understanding how to narrow the focus of the opportunities to be pursued, and being able to foster and maintain healthy business relationships are all key components of a well-rounded and robust business development effort. Build Business 2010 will explore the tactics that A/E/C firms used to hold onto existing

clients and work, as well as obtain new work, at a time of intense and increased competition for projects.

This track in particular is designed to expand the attendees' ability to foster a business development culture in their firm, help structure their business development efforts, and demonstrate how to measure performance. Sessions selected for this track will define sales processes, demonstrate successful BD tools, and illustrate proven metrics that draw a clear line between business development and the bottom line, particularly in tough economic times. We are interested in case studies that illustrate how firms turned adversity into opportunity and implemented strategies to position themselves to grow in an existing market or successfully enter a new one during this recession.

### **Track 3: Value and Use of Social Media Tools in Business Development**

This track will explore the emergence of, approaches to, and examples of social media marketing as a formidable force in marketing and business development, as well as in firm management and employee relations.

We are seeking case histories of demonstrated A/E/C firm use of and success with these tools. In addition, we are looking for presentations from social media experts that provide an overview of tools, tactics, applications, measurements, and results. The impact on brand and identity is of particular interest, as is how social media tactics were incorporated into a broader promotional program.

### **Track 4: Retooling to Meet the New Client Landscape**

The recession has led to major changes in the client landscape—the economy has reconfigured client priorities and companies, organizations, and institutions have altered their procurement practices.

The sessions offered in this track will help attendees develop a strategic long-term view, develop practices and strategies, and create management structures to be better positioned for the new economy and future market downturns. How have A/E/C firms retooled themselves, adjusted their skills matrix, or pursued new clients? In particular, we are pursuing a client panel and an A/E/C firm panel that underscore and offer valuable advice on how to win work in the new client world.

### **Track 5: Success Stories from the Trenches**

Few firms have been immune to the negative impact of recent economic conditions. We are looking for compelling case studies and stories that illustrate how firms have reinvented, retooled, and repositioned themselves to rebound in the new economy. The stories selected for this track will prepare attendees and their firms to design their own business models for survival and success.

## Speaker Benefits

Speakers who are selected to present during Build Business enjoy:

- The reputation as an industry expert in their respective specialty areas
- Exposure to a prospective audience of 1,000 A/E/C leaders
- The opportunity to build new business for their companies
- A full-conference registration (worth approximately \$1,000)
- Invitations to special VIP receptions to network with association leaders, industry media, sponsors, and peers
- Potential invitation to join the SMPS Speaker Database (based on attendee evaluations)
- Potential speaking opportunities with SMPS chapters

## Continuous Learning Philosophy

The associations' programs enable the membership and the A/E/C community-at-large to engage in a life-long learning process in which they are challenged, stimulated, and respected for their professional and personal experiences. SMPS believe learning is a progression, not just the transfer of information from an expert to another individual.

To uphold this philosophy, SMPS actively seek speakers who possess these key qualities:

- **Command of Subject Matter:** Each speaker is chosen based on his or her expertise in a specific content area.
- **Willingness to Teach:** While command of the subject matter is essential, it is not the entire picture. Speakers should enjoy teaching and be willing to put forth effort to create a memorable learning experience for the participants.
- **Effective Interpersonal Skills:** The ability to read and react to audiences is a prerequisite for a good communicator. Effective speakers and moderators are most concerned with what the audience is learning.
- **Effective Listening Skills:** Good listeners use reflective listening techniques before responding to a question from the audience. This ensures that the speaker or moderator understands what is being asked and is validating to the learners that they are being heard.
- **Use of Sound Instructional Methods:** People learn more when they are actively involved. SMPS asks that all speakers and instructors find ways to increase learner involvement.
- **Willingness to Improve:** Speakers will receive feedback based on evaluations from the participants, audience comments, and observation.

## Writing Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are statements that specify what learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity. These encompass knowledge, skills, or attitudes. Learning outcomes accomplish the following:

- Focus on behavior that needs to be changed.
- Serve as guidelines for content, instruction, and evaluation.
- Identify specifically what needs to be learned.
- Convey to the learner exactly what needs to be accomplished.

Learning outcomes are truly learner-centered, observable, measurable actions by the learner. Learning outcomes contain three elements: 1) who is to perform, 2) what actions they are to take, and 3) a result to be achieved.

A sample learning outcome would be:

**Attendees will identify the elements of an effective press release.**

(who)            (action)            (result)

It is important to use action verbs when writing learning outcomes. Some of the most common verbs used are:

define	summarize	create
describe	demonstrate	explain
identify	examine	generate
write	interpret	develop
distinguish	use	discuss
analyze	prepare	explain
differentiate	interpret	

## Conference Recording

In order to make the valuable information from Build Business accessible to members who cannot attend the conference, Build Business education sessions may be audio recorded and made available for purchase on CD-ROM and/or via the Web after the conference. This is an excellent opportunity for our presenters as it expands their exposure to a greater audience.

**Submission of a proposal in response to this RFP requires your acceptance of this requirement and conveys your permission to record your session if the Conference Committee selects it.**

## **Executive Summary**

The executive summary contributes to the body of knowledge on professional services marketing and management and assists conference attendees in applying the information learned during Build Business. It also provides attendees with additional information when they are creating their conference itineraries.

Executive summaries may be published in SMPS publications with prior notification of and credit to the author.

**Each speaker selected is required to submit a 1,500-word executive summary on his or her topic by April 5, 2010.**

## **Submitting Your Proposal**

All proposals for the 2010 National Conference must be submitted electronically via the Build Business Online Abstract Submission System. **Proposals are due by 5:00 pm ET on September 10, 2009. Proposals will NOT be accepted after this date.**

The submission process is managed entirely in an online environment. Upon accessing the system, you will be guided through each step of the submission process. You may exit and enter the abstract submission system as many times as needed to edit and complete your proposal.

Participation as a presenter in Build Business is voluntary. In recognition of a presenter's contribution of time and effort, a complimentary full-conference registration is awarded to presenters whose proposals are accepted. However, each presenter remains responsible for his or her own expenses (travel, lodging, etc.).

Please visit this URL to access the Online Abstract Submission System and submit a presentation proposal for Build Business:

<http://www.softconference.com/submissions/smps/2008/>

## **Questions?**

Please contact Education Director Mark DellaPietra with any questions about this process.

Phone: 800.292.7677, x228

E-mail: [Mark@smps.org](mailto:Mark@smps.org)

## **Deadline**

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