

SMPS

pipeline

THE LATEST INFORMATION FROM SMPS CHICAGO

Spring 2017



in this issue

Impact Lead Generation pg 4 Member Spotlight pg 6 Sponsor Spotlight pg 7

SMPS



president's letter

Tom Petermann, P.E., President, SMPS Chicago Chapter

Hello and I sincerely hope your 2017 forecast is *sunny* with many successful pursuits.

As winter fades to spring, our society is ready to do a bit of housekeeping and make way for a fresh start. This is a time to sort through what we learned and reflect on our progress. The chapter year has flown by and September's Annual Meeting feels like it was yesterday. We are however not finished with this race, but we are rapidly approaching the finish line.

The intent of this letter is to offer insight into the industry and our Chapter's role in reaching our collective goals. First, our Chicago Chapter has some serious momentum! This was set into motion by Past President Nikki Dvorak, and the board members/chairpersons who mapped the course, developed strategies, and gave the board a vision to follow for higher visibility in the marketplace. Looking to the future, the 2017-2018 President Roshanna Tokh, is already charting a plan to continue these efforts and create opportunities for all our members to receive value from the Chapter.

Once again returning to September's Annual Meeting, you might recall we borrowed a page from the Chicago Blackhawks' playbook (thanks for the idea 'Hawks) and asked our membership to jot down two chapter goals. As a quick reminder, the first was an individual membership goal for the year. The second goal was what your employer was looking for you to achieve through your membership.

A large number of responses focused on polishing business development skills and boosting networking activities. I think our board successfully addressed this with longer designated networking time slots before luncheons, interactive professional development programs, and multiple networking-focused special events.

Other goals centered on improving marketing knowledge specifically tailored to the A/E/C industry. The Board heard this loud and clear. Business Executive Exchange, Marketing Coordinators Connection, and Roundtable programs concentrated on the importance of firm brand identity, building a personal brand, and creating engaging marketing content.

Hopefully we addressed your needs and we will continue to push this agenda into the future. There are upcoming programs and professional development opportunities on the chapter schedule that are focused on growing marketing effectiveness.

In closing, although we know the finish line is approaching, it's time to dig deep for a successful finish. There is plenty of time left to reach professional development and firm goals through involvement with the SMPS Chicago chapter.

See you soon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Petermann". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Tom Petermann, P.E.
Chicago SMPS President
Principal, Eriksson Engineering Associates

CHICAGO CHAPTER
new
members

Welcome to SMPS Chicago!



Laura Baxt

Director of Sales and Marketing, Kelso-Burnett

Cathy Becker

Director of HR, American Institute of Steel Construction (AISC)

Elizabeth Becker

Business Development, Pappageorge Haymes Partners

Jodi Bishop

Marketing Coordinator, Korte & Luitjohan Contractors, Inc.

Craig Carter

Senior Associate, BKV Group

Alli Chapman

Chief Development Officer, Legat Architects

Catherine Duffy

Marketing Coordinator, Cushing

Kelsey Emmert

Marketing Coordinator, Cannon Design

Andrea Gullickson

President, Mary Cook Associates, Inc.

Samantha Hellmuth

Marketing Coordinator, WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff

Katherine Heringhaus

Vice President, Marketing Communications, Collins Engineers, Inc.

Teresa Huemann

Business Development Manager, JENSEN HUGHES

Lauren Jones

Marketing Coordinator, Fehr Graham

Lynn Kessen

Marketing Manager, Knight E/A, Inc.

Crystal Leto

Marketing Coordinator, Neumann Brothers, Inc.

Stephanie Liakopoulos

Marketing Specialist, Reed Construction

Julie Nisan

Marketing Manager, Mortenson Construction

Helen Pavlac

Marketing Manager, HOK

Tammy Pearce

Structural Engineer, GRAEF

Jacki Polancic

Marketing, Cannon Design

Jewell Washington

Marketing Associate, Shen Milsom & Wilke LLC

Tom Wiener

Marketing/Communications Director, Skender

Mark Wildman

Director of Business Development, Walker Parking Consultants

Erin Wyant

Marketing Communications Manager, Russell Construction

FEATURE ARTICLE

high impact lead generation

by Tim Padgett, Founder and Ceo — Pepper Group

I found myself telling my coworker, “Email will lead to the end of civilization.”

I had just gone through my inbox after being away for two days. There were over 400 emails waiting for me, and of those, about 30 were actually important. The rest? Mostly countless unwanted solicitations. Many of which were follow-ups on previous unwanted solicitations—checking if I got them. Sound familiar?

How about voicemails that are uninspired inquiries as to whether I would like to call them back and spend ten minutes learning about the best printer, IT outsourcing, Web development, etc.? I probably get five or six of those a day. I can almost hear the salesperson's soul escaping them as they end the call.

Then there is the generic brochure and cover letter combo, or the dreaded cheap postcard. Not happening these days, especially in the world of business-to-business relationships. This is not to say that there haven't been amazingly creative attempts at each of these prospecting techniques, but they're so rare that I can't even remember the last one that made me take action.

How do you effectively reach out?

I'm suggesting you consider developing an awareness or lead generation campaign using 3-dimensional mail—a package that is purpose-built to charm the recipient. “Oh, but those are so expensive!” Sometimes, but not as much as you might think, and even more important, compared to what?

No matter what little amount you spend on an email, it's like the

Contact: tim@peppergroup.com

proverbial tree that falls in the forest if someone automatically deletes it or tosses it in the round file. What is the cost to have lackluster voicemails left that encourage nobody to call back, and actually degrade your brand? And then what about what you're paying a business development person to leave said voicemails?

Let's back up a minute. “Expensive” is a word we can leave behind. Instead, let's talk “investment.” The average professional service-based business is selling a package of value—design, consulting, labor. And they're hoping for a long-term relationship that will be built on trust and collaboration. This isn't like buying a candy bar, there is real risk involved and you want to hedge your bet with a professional partner.

What is the lifetime value of your average client, or what is the average project size? Do they spend thousands with you? Millions? Do they average a two-year, five-year, ten-year relationship with you? If you examine these metrics, we can move on to what you're willing to invest in landing them—and don't be embarrassed if you can't provide these numbers off the top of your head—very few are able to. Guess the best you can and hold that thought for a minute.

Impact and results

Put yourself in the position of the prospect. You get a package delivered (let's assume it's not another impulse buy from Amazon), does your sense of curiosity awaken? Of course. Your body actually stimulates a chemical release that causes that. Do you become eager to find out what it is? Holding it in your hands, you're already deducing the size, weight, balance of the package. The suspense is intoxicating.



Hopefully, it's not another squeeze ball, pen, or wall calendar—that would be bad. It's got to be something creative and novel. Upon opening it, you begin the path of discovery and it dominates your attention. It's interactive and you explore the contents with a continuing desire to uncover the total experience.

Is it something that you find interesting? Is it educational in nature? Does it provide an emotional reaction; make you laugh, feel empathy, cause excitement? Does it challenge your existing biases or give you a new perspective on a subject you're familiar with?

If you think about it, each of these things will likely evoke a sense of sincere engagement. And what company did this for you? "If they make this effort, they are different and I want to know what makes them so."

If well done, it seems like a gift. And if you think so, then it's logical to want to say, "thank you!" In a business situation, that comes in the form of, "Congratulations, I'll give you an hour since you made a unique effort to gain my attention." Bingo. That's what the sender was shooting for, a chance to pitch. And that's what the sales representatives yearn for—not leaving countless, mumbling, and "engageless" voicemails.

Great 3-dimensional packages also have a unique ability to create what is called a "Hey Joe Moment." That's when it's a cool enough package that elicits a, "Hey Joe, come here and check out what I just got." If you had the name of only one contact to send to, it has now been leveraged into impacting another person who might also be in a position to buy from you, exponentially improving your original investment in reaching out to that company.

Getting back to the investment side of things. If you count the concept creation, design, production, buying/assembling the mailing list, shipping, etc., let's say that package cost you \$100 all-in for each targeted prospect. Now, let's say you get 1-out-of-4 recipients to agree to a meeting (this happens regularly). That's a \$400 cost for the meeting.

On the conservative side, let's estimate that 1-out-of-10 meetings results in an eventual purchase. Your cost for client/project acquisition is \$4,000. If that engagement is worth a project that sold for \$40,000, it's a 10 percent cost—a very reasonable investment. If it's a \$400,000 lifetime relationship – you get the idea.

The gift that keeps on giving

The investment is not over. Those other prospects who weren't ready to take a meeting right away because they didn't have an immediate need, or were too busy. You've left them with a really nice impression of you. Keep nudging them over the course of time as they are already warmed up. Trust me, they're wanting to keep in touch with an innovative firm such as yours.

Whatever your metrics add up to, try a reasonable investment in using a 3-dimensional direct mail campaign. If you make it creative, relevant, and targeted to the right audience, they will engage with it—and with you!



MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

steve carroll

Regional Director, Sensory Technologies

What are your main responsibilities at Sensory Technologies?

I am the Regional Director for Sensory Technologies, an audio-visual communication and collaboration provider. In my position I am responsible for the leadership, growth, and profitability of our Chicago office. At Sensory Technologies, we work with clients to infuse their culture with emergent visual technology to amplify collaboration and simplify their work life.

Why did you become involved with SMPS? How has SMPS changed for you over the years?

I initially got involved with SMPS as a way to get connected and involved with other professionals and companies in the A/E/C community. Being new to the industry, I saw SMPS as a good avenue to network and learn best practices.

For the first several months, I only attended the luncheons and events. I felt the need to get more involved and join a committee to really get the most out of my chapter involvement. I joined the membership committee as a way to grow and connect with new and current members.

How did you begin your career in the A/E/C industry? Any advice to those just starting out in the industry?

I have only just begun my career in the A/E/C industry when I joined Sensory Technologies a couple years ago. Prior to Sensory, I spent time as a Regional Sales Manager and Account Executive in other industries. From those experiences and my time thus far in the A/E/C industry, I've learned that you only get out what you put into it. For those just starting out, don't be afraid to fail or ask questions. There are plenty of people in SMPS with a wealth of experience and knowledge that are willing to share and teach others. Joining the mentoring program is a great way to connect with an experienced professional and learn from them.

Who is an inspirational person to you or someone that you admire?

I would have to say my dad is an inspiration and someone I truly admire. He has always embodied a strong work ethic and dedication in his work and life. He taught by example and I learned how to work hard while also balancing that with a commitment to family and other activities.

If you were a super hero, what super powers would you like to have?

If I had a super power, I would want to fly! Being able to travel anywhere on a whim and see the world from a bird's eye view would be exhilarating. Also, having the ability to fly and avoid traffic jams sounds fantastic.

What is your favorite bar and/or restaurant in Chicago/suburbs and why?

It's hard to pick just one, so I'll list two. I live in the western suburbs, but am in the city quite often for business. My wife and I love Mexican food and A Toda Madre in Glen Ellyn is top notch. Their tacos and table-side guacamole are delicious. I also enjoy a good old-fashioned cocktail. Gilt Bar on Kinzie has a fantastic bourbon old-fashioned and many other wonderful craft cocktails.

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENT

Details on our **Summer Event** are
Coming Soon — Check smps-chi.org

SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

simpson gumpertz & heger

responses by Andrew J. Weinberg, FSMPS, CPSM,
Regional Business Development Manager

SIMPSON
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Engineering of Structures
and Building Enclosures

sgh.com

Tell us briefly about SGH and what you do.

Simpson Gumpertz & Heger Inc. (SGH) is a national engineering firm that designs, investigates, and rehabilitates structures, building enclosures, and materials. Our award-winning work encompasses building, energy, civil/infrastructure, and science/defense projects in the U.S., Canada, and more than 30 additional countries.

I've been with SGH for nearly four years and my role has expanded to assist with business development efforts for our Chicago, DC, and New York offices, and their surrounding regions. I work closely with the leadership of each office to strategize our activities to nurture and grow our existing clients, as well as open doors to targeted prospects. Our philosophy is to not chase projects, but rather to chase relationships. Lasting, stronger relationships lead to continuous partnerships and collaborations. My motto: How can I help you?

What is the biggest challenge that you are currently facing?

How can I leverage my activities even further? I am continually looking for ways to up my game and meet the challenges of working in multiple regions. I often discuss with colleagues the methods and tools that help efficiency and effectiveness. In striving to make an increasing impact for each of the offices I assist, and for SGH overall, I will often brainstorm and share information with others who have similar goals and objectives for their roles at their firms. Want to talk? Let's help each other succeed.

What value has SMPS brought to SGH and to you?

SMPS has brought value to SGH on multiple fronts. First, to our marketing/business development team of 13, with continuous access to professional development and camaraderie with our peers. With members of our team active with SMPS in multiple chapters, we continue to reap that benefit at all levels. Secondly, I cannot imagine my career having reached the level it has without SMPS. The

marketing and business development skills, the management and leadership skills, and the confidence it ensues, all benefit me and the firm I support. Thirdly, the network is outstanding. I have been active with SMPS for 19 years, and have grown my network to multiple chapters, regions, and nationally. This is a dream for a business developer. My knowledge of the industry, and my connections throughout the country, are a huge value and asset that I bring to SGH.

What is the best part of being an SMPS sponsor and what do you find most valuable?

Sponsoring SMPS is instrumental in SGH's continuing efforts to build awareness and recognition in the industry. We are annual corporate sponsors for three chapters, and sponsors for two regional conferences. The continued exposure allows us to demonstrate SGH as a valued resource in the local and regional AEC community. It is also important to us to give back and support everything that SMPS gives to its members and the AEC community, knowing that it helps to perpetuate the cycle of benefits for all.

What is your hope for the A/E/C industry in 2017 and beyond?

Continuous growth. Leveraged technology. Increased interest in youth to pursue technical careers. Consulting firms that are marketing driven, and provide marketers and business developers with a path to leadership and ownership.

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