



TAKE ACTION

July 11–13, 2012
San Francisco, CA

Call for Presentations for Build Business 2012: Call to **ACTION!**

The theme for the 2012 SMPS National Conference—**Build Business: Take Action**—is designed as a call to action for professional services marketers and their firms. What actions do A/E/C professionals and firms need to take NOW to position themselves as leaders in their markets? To capitalize on relationships? To win new work?

Build Business: Take Action will equip attendees with relevant information, innovative strategies, and valuable new knowledge and skills—challenging them to leave San Francisco with solid action items and bold action plans to make an impact on their firms in their roles as marketing and business development professionals. Conference attendees will be empowered to be the change their firm needs to build more business and reach the next level of success in 2012.

Attendees

Typical conference attendees are principals, C-level executives, vice presidents, directors, and managers of business development, marketing, and operations with bottom-line accountability for the success of their professional services firms.

Tracks and Topics

Suggested topics have been provided, but the Conference Planning Committee encourages you to be creative and innovative in proposing program topics in the following tracks:

- **Marketing**
- **Communications**
- **Business Development**

Track 1: Marketing

Success in marketing is based on attention to client needs, solid research, thoughtful strategy, well-executed tactics, and consistent measurement of the return on your marketing investment. **Build Business: Take Action** will explore the latest trends, tools, and technologies from inside and outside the industry to ramp up the A/E/C marketing program for this new decade—and earn marketers a seat at the management table. The marketing track will focus on topics such as engaging your technical staff, new and innovative client presentation strategies, incorporating marketing into the firmwide strategic planning efforts, and many other tactics that marketers can use to help to differentiate their firms from their competitors.

Track 2: Communications

What's hot AND effective in communications in the A/E/C industry and beyond? From the sessions in this track, professional services marketers can glean practical lessons and insights that will result in powerful messages, creative delivery, and stellar communication with clients and media—ultimately enhancing the firm's brand and client relationships. Exploration of multi-channel marketing campaigns, use of social media, public relations and engagement tactics, and creative messaging strategies are all part of this track.

Track 3: Business Development

Effective business development tracks directly to a firm's bottom line. Knowing where to find clients and projects, understanding how to narrow the focus of the opportunities to be pursued, and fostering healthy business relationships are all keys in a well-rounded, robust business development program. Build Business 2012 will explore the strategies and tactics leading A/E/C firms use to dazzle and retain clients—and capture new clients—especially when the competition is intense. This track will help the attendee to discover imaginative ways to win new clients, engage technical staff, manage client relationships, and re-invent a firm's culture to focus on client development and growth.

New in 2012

Speakers are asked to consider the conference theme, **“Take Action,”** as they prepare their proposals. The Conference Planning Committee is specifically looking for topics within the three tracks that encourage and will elicit ACTION from conference participants. As such, presenters are expected to provide (and should include in the submittal) three to five solid takeaways that attendees can implement in their firms, their departments, their lives, etc.—true action items that immediately reinforce the primary learning objectives of the session.

Speakers are asked to include an element of interactivity in their session plan (examples: five minutes of networking at the beginning of the session, Q&A at the conclusion of the session).

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 speaking opportunities with SMPS chapters

Continuous Learning Philosophy

The association's 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 believes learning is a progression, not just the transfer of information from an expert to a learner.

To uphold this philosophy, SMPS actively seeks 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:** Adults 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

In preparing their proposals, presenters are asked to provide learning outcomes for the session they are proposing. 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, and/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	differentiate

Conference Recording

In order to make the valuable information from Build Business accessible to members who cannot attend the conference, Build Business educational 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 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 1,000-word executive summary on his or her topic by April 16, 2012.

Submitting Your Proposal

All proposals for the 2012 National Conference must be submitted electronically via the Build Business Online Abstract Submission System. **Proposals are due by 5 pm ET on September 16, 2011. 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.

Note: If your proposal advances to the second round of session selection, you may be asked to submit a three- to five-minute video that demonstrates your presentation style. The video will be viewed by the Conference Planning Committee as part of the vetting process. You will be contacted with additional directions for submitting a video, if needed.

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.).

After July 6, 2011, please visit this URL to access the Online Abstract Submission System and submit a presentation proposal for Build Business:

<http://www.conferenceabstracts.com/SMPS.htm>

Questions?

Please contact Mark DellaPietra, SMPS National, with any questions about this process.

Phone: 800.292.7677, x228

E-mail: mark@smps.org

DEADLINE

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