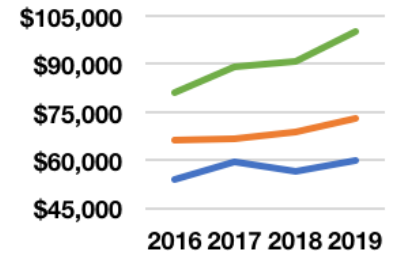


## TRENDLINES

### Base salaries for architects



Zweig Group's 2019 Salary Survey of Architecture, Interior Design & Landscape Architecture Firms contains yearly trends for base salary for technical and administrative staff. For architects, the old saying, "The rich keep getting richer" would apply. The average base salary for **junior architects** have remained mostly stable over the past four years while those for **intermediate architects** and **senior architects** have seen steady increases.

## Gaining acceptance as a newly hired manager

"It's crucial that the individual manager work hard to gain acceptance. Not doing so will almost inevitably lead to getting shot in the back."



Mark Zweig

### EDITORIAL

While it's best if you can promote from within, there are no doubt times AEC firms, and all organizations, really, have to go outside to hire a key manager. When that happens, it's crucial that the individual manager work hard to gain acceptance. Not doing so will almost inevitably lead to getting shot in the back.

Sometimes those who haven't made a lot of job changes don't understand this. And sometimes the newly-hired manager thinks the responsibility for ensuring their acceptance lies with the firm's top management or ownership. While in part it may, no one can force other people to like or respect someone else. So the onus is still on the newly-hired manager to make it work.

Here are some of my suggestions on what to do to gain acceptance:

- **Find the most senior employee in the organization – no matter what their role or status – and win them over.** To do this you need to help them with something. No matter how big or small the task, getting this person on board to tell others that you are a good person is crucial! Don't forget that while there may be a formal organization structure, there is also an informal one. And the most senior person is usually someone others go to for information. If nothing else, this individual is probably a source of gossip.
- **Meet with individuals in all levels and roles to get their input on problems, solutions, and concerns.** Listen more than you talk. Make no promises but be sincere in seeking

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# Good choice: Matt Hoying (part 2)

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## BUSINESS NEWS

### FAULKNER DESIGN GROUP RECOGNIZED BY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HOME BUILDERS

Faulkner Design Group was recognized as a finalist for three prestigious National Association of Home Builders awards. A nationally leading innovative interior architecture and design firm, FDG is delighted to be named for the second consecutive year in the Multifamily Pillars of the Industry Awards and Best in American Living Awards. NAHB has also named FDG as a finalist in the Best of 55+ Housing Awards.

A finalist for both The Multifamily Pillars of the Industry Awards and the Best in American Living Awards, One Uptown in Dallas has also been awarded three other prestigious titles this year including The Gold Nugget and Aurora Awards. NAHB honors those with creative development concepts, innovative financing strategies, and great design. Competing for both Best High Rise Apartment Community and Mixed Use Multi-Family Community, One Uptown is a visionary creation carefully created to capture the lux lifestyle of Uptown Dallas residents. The building boasts a stunning, iconic curvilinear building shape with a full glass exterior, in one of the most dense and walk-able neighborhoods of the city.

The Multifamily Pillars of the Industry Awards has also named The Reserve at Maybrook as a finalist in the Best Low-Rise Apartment Community category. Located in Wynewood, Pennsylvania, the property is built on sprawling grounds full of walking trails and beautiful landscaping. Maybrook uniquely boats an immaculate historic mansion as the resident clubhouse complete with amenities including

a formal ballroom with vaulted ceilings, a fully stocked game-room, and more.

Another finalist in the Best in American Living Awards, Camden North End is nominated in the 4-7 Stories For Rent category. This Phoenix, Arizona, multi-generational community is designed around health, wellness, and nature. Influenced by the neighboring Mayo Clinic Hospital, North End boasts calm, restorative tones throughout, natural woods, and spring greens offering residents a luxury oasis in the desert.

Lastly, Fairview Commons of Costa Mesa, California, was named a finalist in the Best of 55+ Housing Awards in the Repositioned or Repurposed Project category. The Awards honor industry-leading design, construction, and community lifestyle features that appeal to all life stages through innovation and emerging trends that appeal to the mature demographic. FDG extensively renovated this independent senior living community to transform the original 1990 dark and cluttered interiors into a refreshing and vibrant community that is both aesthetically pleasing and functionally tailored for the needs of today's seniors.

Faulkner Design Group, Inc., is a fully integrated national interior architecture and design firm specializing in multifamily housing and senior living environments, completing more than 700,000 units in more than 2,000 communities across 37 states, from Hawaii to New York, and even Canada, working with the largest developers, contractors, real estate investment groups, and management firms in the country for 26 years.

MARK ZWEIG, from page 1

input. People like being asked for their opinions and being part of the solution to problems.

- **Show you are willing to work.** Everyone likes someone who **DOES** things and doesn't just tell other people **HOW** to do things. So, the new manager needs to be a doer and help put out the work that is required by whatever work group, team, department, or office over which he or she is the leader. Being a good worker is always an important element of gaining respect from the troops.
- **Be very conscious of symbolism.** Even if your role entitles you to the biggest office or the closest-to-the-door parking space, or a bigger desk, don't take them (if you can avoid doing so). Those signs and symbols of superiority will do nothing but create jealousy and animosity from others who may feel more entitled due to their longer tenure with the firm.
- **Be careful who you associate with.** For example, being seen too often with someone who is not well thought of by the rest of the team could taint you. Don't show favoritism and be sure you aren't betting on the wrong horses too early in the game.
- **Promote your accomplishments.** Of course, this has to be done appropriately. But there is nothing wrong with some sort of weekly or monthly reporting of facts and tasks accomplished that show, without a doubt, that you are contributing. Don't assume everyone else thinks you are contributing just because you were hired in as a manager.

None of these are magic potions for acceptance, but each of them, if done, will increase your odds for success! ▀

MARK ZWEIG is Zweig Group's chairman and founder. Contact him at [mzweig@zweiggroup.com](mailto:mzweig@zweiggroup.com).

## ENGINEERING DRONE VIDEO OF THE YEAR

Price value of  
**\$4,750!**

Accepting entries NOW through March 14th

- Videos must be between 1:00 and 5:00 minutes in length.
- Contest is open to anyone who owns the rights to a drone video of original, legally obtained footage, focused on an engineering or construction project.
- Three finalists will be selected by the readers of Civil + Structural Engineer between March 15<sup>th</sup> and March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2019 via online voting.
- Only 3 videos may be submitted per applicant.
- The final winner will be decided by the attendees of AUVSI Xponential in Chicago, Illinois, April 29<sup>th</sup> - May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019.
- Your video will be used in Civil + Structural Engineer marketing with attribution.



## THE ZWEIG LETTER

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## Professional help

The words ‘difficult’ and ‘uncomfortable’ are synonymous with ownership transition. If you try to execute one on your own, it might come out half-baked.



**Will Swearingen**

**GUEST  
SPEAKER**

**L**ast fall we had our annual awards event, the Hot Firm & A/E Industry Awards Conference, in Dallas. As always, the gathering was full of energy and was a true celebration of the accomplishments of many of the top AEC firms across the United States.

As a testament to the incredible people in attendance, the vibe of the conference is one that feels as if you are being drawn forward. Through breakout sessions and keynote speakers, many are pushing the envelope of what it means to be successful in today’s industry.

I was fortunate enough to be asked to lead a panel on one of the most important topics in the industry today – ownership transition. They come in many different forms, starting with the simple dichotomy of internal or external. As Zweig Group’s director of ownership transition, I focus more on the internal transitions and have seen a wide variety of options, offerings, and methods of execution. Going into the panel I was excited to have three panelists representing the three most prevalent forms of a transition for professional

“The vibe of the conference is one that feels as if you are being drawn forward. Through breakout sessions and keynote speakers, many are pushing the envelope of what it means to be successful in today’s industry.”

services firm: Bo Sutton from Bow River Capital (private equity); James Swabowski from Wintrust (ESOP); and Don Alford, executive vice president of strategic growth for NV5 (M&A).

From traditional internal transitions to private

See WILL SWEARINGEN, page 4







**ELEVATE AEC CONFERENCE** Zweig Group's Hot Firm & A/E Industry Awards Conference is now the Elevate AEC Conference. Join us for an elevated experience filled with fun, inspiration, and education, with the most successful firms in the AEC industry.

This event will be held in Las Vegas on October 2-5, 2019 at Green Valley Ranch.

2019 Conference Full Registration includes:

- All Keynotes and breakout sessions
- Breakfast/Lunch Thursday & Friday
- Thursday Reception
- Friday Red Carpet Reception & Black Tie Awards Gala

2019 Conference VIP Registration includes:

- All Keynotes and breakout sessions
- Special VIP reception Wednesday
- Breakfast/Lunch Thursday & Friday
- Thursday Reception
- Other special VIP only activities and perks
- Friday Red Carpet Reception & Black Tie Awards Gala

2019 Guest Registration of \$495 includes:

- Thursday Reception
- Friday Red Carpet Reception & Black Tie Awards Gala
- Guest program and activities Thursday & Friday

To learn more or to register, visit [bit.ly/1280CON](http://bit.ly/1280CON).

## ON THE MOVE

### **CUHACI & PETERSON ARCHITECTS, ENGINEERS AND PLANNERS PROMOTES BRYON MCCARTHY TO PRINCIPAL**

Bryon McCarthy joined **Cuhaci & Peterson's** Philadelphia office in 2015. Prior to his role of principal, McCarthy held the title of project manager working with one of the firm's largest program clients in the convenience sector.

Chief Development Officer, Jeff Suchan commented, "In the three years that Bryon has been with C&P, he has been an integral component of the growth and client development of the Philadelphia office. Bryon's strong communication and relationship skills made him a solid choice for this role and he will utilize these skills moving forward as principal."

A graduate of Penn State University with a bachelor's degree in landscape architecture and contracting, Bryon has more than 15 years of experience in the

AEC industry working on a variety of project types. He is also a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers.

McCarthy intends to hit the ground running, as he focuses on furthering the firm's strategic plan and expansion of the retail sector in the Philadelphia office with a new national client in 2019.

Cuhaci & Peterson is a national A/E/P firm specializing in commercial design. Headquartered in Orlando, Florida since 1978, the firm also has offices in Philadelphia and Boston and is licensed in 49 states. Cuhaci & Peterson offers architectural, SMEP engineering, fire alarm/protection, lighting design, construction administration, landscape and planning services as well as in-house government relations and interior design on a variety of project types.

WILL SWEARINGEN, from page 3

equity transactions, from ESOPs to mergers and acquisitions, the changing of the guard can take a variety of shapes and forms. This was what we wanted to discuss, and to get input on, with an audience that was invested in the conversation. Being overly analytical, I was worried that our second microphone wasn't going to work, and people would have a difficult time hearing all the input from the room. Well, this turned out to be a non-issue because only 15 people showed up – out of about 300-something conference attendees!

"The AEC industry is notoriously negligent when it comes to real business planning, and that includes preparing for an ownership transition."

Afterwards, I reflected on why the session may not have drawn as many people as the Strategic Planning or Project Management break-outs, and came to this conclusion: Mark Zweig, chairman and founder of Zweig Group, is right. The AEC industry is notoriously negligent when it comes to real business planning, and that includes preparing for an ownership transition.

Sixty-seven percent of owners are over the age of 50, and nearly a quarter of them are over the age of 60. Over the next decade this presents a huge opportunity and plenty of problems for AEC firms as leaders try to cash in on their equity. But nobody is talking about it. Why? Because it's difficult to discuss. Probably

more difficult than explaining sex to your teenager. It folds money, control, repetition, reputation, fear, uncertainty and anxiety into a series of uncomfortable conversations that can reveal issues that may take years to resolve. Who wants to bring that up and ruin a good thing, especially when you are at an awards conference with your co-workers?

To quote the great J.J. Cale, "Money talks, and it says strange things." It is truly baffling to watch people that have worked together for 15 years, on the same team, sit across from one another and talk about millions of dollars. Aside from the money part, it's difficult for leaders to cede control. This is perhaps the most trying part of the process. And though these leaders have every right to run their practice as they wish, they are missing a grand opportunity to build value, enrich their team, and create a legacy that outlives their employment. If done correctly, a properly timed transition can generate far more wealth than a haphazard attempt to salvage value and pull the plug over a two- to three-year time frame, which seems to be the preferred MO of today's leaders.

By bringing in new, young talent that wants to grow the business, outgoing owners can cash in on the growth and take a step back from the business at the same time. Planning is key. After seeing dozens of home-baked plans that fail to address all the issues, I can tell you that some things are better left to the professionals, and that includes sex education and structuring ownership transitions. ▀

WILL SWEARINGEN is Zweig Group's director of ownership transition. He can be reached at [wswearingen@zweiggroup.com](mailto:wswearingen@zweiggroup.com).



<b>MAR</b>	13-15 27	New Orleans, LA Kansas City, MO	<b>Successful Successor Roundtable Excellence in Project Management</b>
<b>APR</b>	10-12 24-25	Scottsdale, AZ Dallas, TX	<b>CEO Roundtable Retreat Race Car Driving Experience The Principals Academy</b>
<b>MAY</b>	22-23	San Diego, CA	<b>Leadership Skills for AEC Professionals</b>
<b>JUN</b>	5-6 20 21	Seattle, WA Chicago, IL Chicago, IL	<b>The Principals Academy Real Marketing &amp; Branding for AEC Firms AEC Business Development Training</b>
<b>JUL</b>	17-18	Minneapolis, MN	<b>The Principals Academy</b>
<b>OCT</b>	2-5 10 11 31-Nov. 1	Las Vegas Houston, TX Houston, TX New York, NY	<b>Elevate AEC Conference Real Marketing &amp; Branding for AEC Firms AEC Business Development Training The Principals Academy</b>
<b>NOV</b>	13-14	Raleigh, NC	<b>Leadership Skills for AEC Professionals</b>

For more information

[www.zweiggroup.com/seminars/](http://www.zweiggroup.com/seminars/)



## PROFILE



## Good choice: Matt Hoying (part 2)

President, Choice One Engineering Corp. (Best Firm Civil #2 for 2018), a 45-person firm based in Dayton, Ohio.

By RICHARD MASSEY  
Managing Editor

“**W**ork-life balance is a phrase thrown around a lot, but we believe more in work-life satisfaction,” Hoying says. “Regardless of anyone’s best intentions, we all bring work home and home to work, so do we really have balance? What is happening in one area of our life affects other parts of our life, so we focus on making Choice One an enjoyable place to live.”

### A CONVERSATION WITH MATT HOYING.

**The Zweig Letter:** There is no substitute for experience, but there is pressure to give responsibility to younger staff. What are you doing to address the risk while pursuing the opportunity to develop your team?

**Matt Hoying:** We identified our lack of experience in younger employees as an obstacle for us to overcome several years ago in our strategic planning sessions and have been working on this ever since. We have one of our engineers whose responsibility it is to help our designers and engineers to shorten the traditional experience gap. He has developed training programs for our people that include both on-site

and in-house training as well as leading discussions in our monthly production meetings to make sure knowledge is being shared within the company. We also make sure that we have our more experienced people taking the roles of plan and design reviewers.

“If we can be super clear on what our culture is and make it clear to our employees and potential employees, then they will know whether they will enjoy being a part of our company.”

**TZL:** Engineers love being engineers, but what are you doing to instill a business culture in your firm?

**MH:** Transparency, education, and hiring with intention. Not only do we share the financial numbers, we take time to educate our employees on what the numbers mean, how



they can affect the numbers, and why the numbers are important. We also educate around our professional management model to the point where these are part of the daily conversation. With that culture in mind, we are intentionally hiring people who have an interest in being involved in the business side of the business.

“With more diversity comes more creativity and progressive thought, so we do believe it is in the industry’s best interest to get a more diverse, qualified employee pool.”

**TZL: If the worker shortage continues, do you see wages increasing to encourage more talent to enter the AEC space, or will technology be used to counter the reduced work force?**

**MH:** I think as in all industries, wages will have to increase to keep up with demand, but I also believe technology will be utilized to improve efficiencies. I see the rate of change in technological advances outpacing the rate of change in wages.

**TZL: The seller-doer model is very successful, but with growth you need to adapt to new models. What is your program?**

**MH:** Rather than a new model, I think of it more as a modified version of the same model. We talk frequently within the company that our most important business development comes from the people doing the work, not the people with a specific business development role. If it wasn’t for the surveyors, designers, and front office staff excelling at what they do and having a client relationship focus, those clients wouldn’t keep coming back, and we all know how much easier it is to keep a client than to develop a new client. Additionally, if we are performing what our business development people are sharing to our prospective clients, eventually our ability to walk the walk will be apparent, and word of that will spread. So, are our doers the sellers? In many ways I would say yes, they are selling the experience that turns clients into repeat clients, and repeat clients into long-term relationships.

**TZL: Diversity and inclusion is lacking. What steps are you taking to address the issue?**

**MH:** This is an interesting question, partic-

ularly in today’s social climate. We believe strongly in hiring the best candidates regardless of their backgrounds, as we believe that is our responsibility to our clients and the industry. The dangerous thing about quotas is that this model runs the risk of cheapening the product in an effort to achieve a metric. For the same reason, we don’t chase a revenue number every year. We want the relationship to be more important than just getting another project to achieve a goal. With more diversity comes more creativity and progressive thought, so we do believe it is in the industry’s best interest to get a more diverse, qualified employee pool. That being said, we are doing much more public outreach than we have in the past, attempting to educate younger and younger people about what engineering and surveying are, what types of careers there are in those fields, and why they make a difference, all in the hopes of appealing to a broader range of individuals and get them interested in engineering and surveying sooner in life, before they form harmful stereotypes of the profession.

“Some important aspects of continually evolving that culture is listening to our employees and doing everything we can to provide them a place to work that satisfies their needs across all aspects of life.”

**TZL: A firm’s longevity is valuable. What are you doing to encourage your staff to stick around?**

**MH:** It’s hard to list one or even a couple of things to answer this question. The answer is our culture, but to break it down more than that is difficult. I would say some important aspects of continually evolving that culture is listening to our employees and doing everything we can to provide them a place to work that satisfies their needs across all aspects of life. Work-life balance is a phrase thrown around a lot, but we believe more in work-life satisfaction. Regardless of anyone’s best intentions, we all bring work home and home to work, so do we really have balance? What is happening in one area of our life affects other parts of our life, so we focus on making Choice One an enjoyable place to live. We provide opportunities for our employees to grow and take on more responsibilities at work, and

See GOOD CHOICE, page 8



**YEAR FOUNDED:** 1994

**HEADQUARTERS:** Sidney, Ohio, and offices in Loveland, Ohio and Portland, Indiana.

**NO. OF EMPLOYEES:** 45

**CLIENTS:**

Public sector:

- Municipalities
- Townships
- Park districts
- DOTs

Private sector:

- Residential, commercial, and industrial developers
- Architects
- Contractors

**SERVICES:**

Public sector:

- Transportation
- Underground utilities
- Traffic
- Bridges

Private sector:

- Site plans
- Land development
- Storm water management
- Surveying

**MISSION STATEMENT:** Make

lives better with an enjoyable experience.

## BUSINESS NEWS

### **NATIONAL NUCLEAR SECURITY ADMINISTRATION AWARDS DESIGN SERVICES CONTRACT TO BURNS & MCDONNELL**

Lawrence Livermore National Security Administration, on behalf of the National Nuclear Security Administration, selected **Burns & McDonnell** to provide design services for the Exascale Computing Facility Modernization project. Located at the LCC B453 building (formerly known as the Terascale Computing Facility) at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, the project will modify the facility to accommodate increased infrastructure demands for exascale, one of the world's fastest computing platforms.

The scope for the Exascale Computing Facility Modernization project includes design upgrades to the facility's electrical, mechanical, and structural capabilities, altering approximately 50,000 square feet of the data center floor space. This includes adding 15,100 tons of cooling capacity and an additional 40 megawatts of power through parallel 115 kV transmission lines. An accelerated schedule will prepare the facility for the first exascale machine in 2022 and the second in 2028.

"At a quintillion (a billion billion) calculations each second, exascale computing has potential to drive discoveries across the spectrum of scientific fields and have a profound impact on everyday life," says Anna Maria Bailey, high performance computing chief engineer, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. "The exascale supercomputers will surpass the fastest computers in today's world, analyze massive volumes of data and simulate complex processes and relationships."

Burns & McDonnell is teaming with members of the original Terascale Computing Facility design team for the facility, including **RMW Architecture**, **Forell/Elsesser Engineers**, and **BKF Engineers**. The team also includes RHAAS Landscape Architects and Leland Saylor Associates.

"Exascale is the next era of computing and our team is ready and committed to successfully deliver the project to help make it possible," says Dave Barr, vice president and federal practice leader, Burns & McDonnell. "The team will use our extensive experience with the National Nuclear Security Administration

and Department of Energy, in-depth knowledge of the regional transmission and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory electrical distribution system, critical HVAC requirements and existing computing facility to help the client solve complex issues for this mission-critical project."

The Exascale Computing Facility Modernization project is expected to be completed in 2022.

Burns & McDonnell works on diverse projects and provides services for federal and military clients worldwide.

Burns & McDonnell is a family of companies made up of more than 6,000 engineers, architects, construction professionals, scientists, consultants, and entrepreneurs with offices across the country and throughout the world. Burns & McDonnell strives to create amazing success for its clients and amazing careers for its employee-owners. Burns & McDonnell is 100 percent employee-owned and is proud to be on *Fortune's* 2018 list of 100 Best Companies to Work For.

GOOD CHOICE, from page 7

we also provide life coaching for our employees during work that often involves more personal life conversations than work-life conversations. Our ability to keep staff around is tied a lot to being clear about our culture, hiring around our culture, and spending time developing our employees.

"Our experience is that if people can see a purpose in their work and enjoy what they do, then that is what's most important to them. The other more traditional benefits are nice, but are an afterthought as long as they are reasonable compared to those of other organizations."

**TZL: Benefits are evolving. Are you offering any new ones due to the changing demographic?**

**MH:** We aren't really offering new benefits in the traditional sense of benefits. We do spend a lot of focus on evolving our culture and getting clearer about our culture, which we believe is the biggest benefit we can offer to employees. If we can be super clear on what our culture is and make it clear to our employees and potential employees, then they will know whether they will enjoy being a part of our company. We review our benefits every year and make sure they are in line with those of other organizations. But our experience is that if people can see a purpose in their work and enjoy what they do, then that is what's most important to them. The other more traditional benefits are nice, but are

an afterthought as long as they are reasonable compared to those of other organizations.

**TZL: Tell us about the last time you named a new principal from outside the firm.**

**MH:** This has not happened in the sense of specifically hiring someone and naming him or her a principal. We have, however, hired people that have worked other places and brought them into our culture and organization just as if they were a new hire straight out of college.

**TZL: What scares you about the geopolitical environment today?**

**MH:** From a future of society, this could be an endless conversation. From the perspective of how it relates to our business, the answer is not much. By and large, we are going to have to deal with the hand we are dealt, so to speak, and our clients are feeling much the same way. So for us, we need to be acutely aware of how our clients are being impacted so we can best serve their needs regardless of whether it fits our current services today or not. "Scare" is extreme in my opinion, but today's environment will challenge us to be more nimble and more aware on a regular basis to make sure we are staying relevant.

**TZL: How are the tariffs impacting your business and that of your clients?**

**MH:** Currently, we have not noticed an effect. However, in theory, rising construction costs will affect the ability of our clients to achieve their objectives within their budgets. With fewer potential projects being designed, we will have to rely even more on developing deep relationships and providing value that clients want to bring the less work they may have our way. ▀





## Tech rewind

Being relevant can be powerful, but it will require you to put down your devices and actively engage with those around you.



**Stephen  
Lucy**

### BEST PRACTICES

**N**o doubt you have been in meetings and looked around the room and noticed multiple people with their heads down, staring at their smartphones instead of actively participating. There was a time when this would have been considered just plain rude, but now we take it as a cultural norm.

Statistics indicate that the current average daily usage of smartphones exceeds five hours and that number is only increasing. Of that time, less than 25 percent is related to phone calls and that number is decreasing. And before we blame all this on the millennials, the numbers are not radically different when you consider age.

We are increasingly separating ourselves physically from our clients and relying on non-verbal means to communicate with our clients. What can possibly go wrong? So how can you assure client interaction, satisfaction, and retention when the world is swirling with digital communications that everyone deems more important? In short, how can you stay relevant?

■ **Recognize demographic and cultural differences.** Just like one size does not fit all, you should recognize that the approach to gain and maintain relevance with your clients will vary. What works for a jaded 20-something urbanite who talks in legalese

“How can you assure client interaction, satisfaction, and retention when the world is swirling with digital communications that everyone deems more important? In short, how can you stay relevant?”

may not work for a weathered West Texas rancher who conducts all business based on a handshake.

Being relevant requires being aware of these cultural, social, and professional differences, and focusing on what matters most by being willing to embrace those differences. It requires you to be a bit of a chameleon as you need to adapt to your surroundings. The only way to successfully do that is to be focused on the moment and the people.

See STEPHEN LUCY, page 10



BUSINESS NEWS

**STRATEGIC PROPERTY PARTNERS, LLC HAS BROKEN GROUND ON FIRST RESIDENTIAL BUILDING IN WATER STREET TAMPA NEIGHBORHOOD**

Strategic Property Partners, LLC, a Tampa-based real estate development firm, marked an important milestone for Water Street Tampa, the visionary 50-plus-acre downtown mixed-use development, with the groundbreaking of the project's first residential building, 815 Water Street. The dual-tower building, located at the intersection of Channelside Drive and Water Street, the heart and spine of the neighborhood, will offer future residents an exceptional downtown location with an unmatched walkable, urban lifestyle, and it will offer visitors new food, grocery, and shopping options and an improved gateway to Tampa Riverwalk.

"We are excited to begin construction on the first of many homes in the Water Street Tampa neighborhood, each providing an elevated lifestyle experience and opportunity to live along the waterfront in downtown Tampa," said James Nozar, CEO of SPP. "815 Water Street fills an important need in the neighborhood,

providing a diverse array of rental homes and neighborhood retail amenities designed to foster residents' sense of wellbeing and connection to nature. With building entrances on the Tampa Riverwalk and the tree-lined Water Street, residents will be adjacent to multiple pedestrian-friendly corridors activated by neighborhood shopping, dining and entertainment options, all within steps of their front door."

Designed by **Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates**, 815 Water Street is the world-renowned architecture firm's first-ever project in Tampa and fifth in the state of Florida. Cecconi Simone, an award-winning, Toronto-based interior design firm best known for its exquisite residential and hospitality design, has designed the interiors of 815 Water Street.

Expected to open in late 2020, the building's two towers will rise 21 and 26 stories and comprise 420 rental residences over 35,000 square feet of ground-floor retail. Featuring a striking façade that is punctuated with expansive private apartment terraces, the

building is designed inside and out to maximize natural light and encourage residents to interact with the outdoors. Sweeping views of the Tampa skyline and historic Hillsborough Bay will be enjoyed from every home. Both towers provide distinct amenity spaces for residents, including an outdoor pool, fitness center, community kitchen, bar, and club lounge situated on the roof levels.

"815 Water Street will be distinguished by the level of intentionality that went into its design, from the diversity of homes, including large three-bedroom apartments offering wrap-around, floor-to-ceiling windows and balconies that are uncommon within the Tampa Bay market, to its pair of expansive rooftop amenity terraces overlooking the waterfront. 815 Water Street is truly mixed-use to the extent that while it is ultimately a residential offering, a focus on a strong ground-floor retail experience was a primary consideration, ensuring that it was interwoven into the fabric of the building and the Water Street Tampa neighborhood," said Rebecca Snyder, SVP of residential development at SPP.

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■ **Focus on engagement.** Engagement should be evaluated holistically and include professional, social, or community-based aspects of your client relationship. You need to understand what matters most to your clients, both external and internal, in these different spheres of interaction. The only way to do that is to be involved in some of those same activities. And true involvement rarely occurs through technology. When was the last time you attended a fun "virtual" party?

■ **Choose multiple ways to communicate.** Text messaging may be quick, but does it create a relationship? Does it enable you to enjoy a deeper understanding of your client's expectations and needs? Are these virtual conversations important or a waste of time?

For me, facetime and phone time are the most important in building strong relationships. But these forms of connection require more effort and commitment. However, once you connect, the conversations you have can unearth important feedback and help to create long-term relationships that benefit you and your firm.

■ **Be accessible.** This is probably the hardest but most impactful way to remain relevant. Your peers may seek input because of your experience, your network, or your friendship. You may be asked to be a sounding board for things that matter to others. You may be engaged as a mentor, coach, or volunteer to provide support to your team, your clients, or your community.

Your time is your most valuable personal asset as it is finite, but it can also be the most valuable gift to others. You must decide to what extent you will be accessible. In my experience, the gifts of my time in both personal and business activities have been repaid many times over.

■ **Create a partnership relationship.** I have a healthy ego, but there are times when I need to be a good partner, take a second seat, and actively listen and accept other viewpoints. If

you must always be right, or the center of attention, you will not accomplish anything. Developing meaningful partnerships ensures long-term and satisfying relationships provided you are willing to give and share information which holds value for both parties. Of course, this must be a two-way street because reciprocal effort is at the heart of good partnerships.

■ **Do not retreat.** Whatever you do, do not use technology as a shield. If you have an issue in the office, on a project, or with an employee, do not hide behind voicemail, an email, or a text message to avoid the issue at hand. In times of crisis, those who are remembered and lauded are those who run toward the problem, not those who run away.

"Being relevant can be powerful, but it will require you to put down your technology and actively engage with those around you. Those who see you as willing to help and support them will also find a way to reciprocate."

To sum it up: Being relevant can be powerful, but it will require you to put down your technology and actively engage with those around you. Those who see you as willing to help and support them will also find a way to reciprocate. By setting the example of recognizing and engaging others within your firm, you can help elevate your entire firm to bring greater relevance to your client base. And if you find this article meaningful, please set up a client lunch to discuss it instead of just clicking "forward" on your email. ▀

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## Marketing and business development

AEC firms struggle with it, but if a firm is to thrive in the good times and the bad, a quantifiable plan of attack is essential.



Lindsay  
Young

### GUEST SPEAKER

**M**arketing, business development, and sales aren't usually the top priorities for an AEC firm. Most firms simply don't have the expertise or know where to start. Many principals don't even think they need to market themselves, because clients and prospects will just call for their exceptional design, right? These scenarios, as you might have guessed, are few and far between. Think about how many firms are out there to choose from – if you aren't reaching out to prospects in multiple ways, someone else is!

With the current market conditions, it's difficult for people to understand why they need to invest in marketing and business development right now. They are so busy that they don't think they need it. I often hear, "I'm so swamped right now, I can't keep my head above water." I understand their pain. But as a principal, you must have the foresight to realize the fire hydrant is going to close – probably sooner than you think. By investing in marketing and business development now, it allows you to select the clients you want to work with and the ones that align with your company's core values. It gives you the ability to work with the clients you want, request higher fees, and design projects your team wants to work on. By the time the market does slow down,

you have already set up your pipeline and your company for success.

Principals are also challenged with knowing what works and what doesn't work as it pertains to marketing and business development. As a result, they do nothing. Putting together a marketing and business development plan helps firms see where and what is getting them results. By implementing a plan, they can see where their time and money is being spent. Once it's determined where your investments are seeing results, then you can invest more in those things and eliminate the things that aren't producing results.

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BUSINESS NEWS

JACOBS SELECTED FOR DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES AT GEORGE R. BROWN CONVENTION CENTER IN HOUSTON Houston First Corporation selected Jacobs Engineering Group Inc. as its architect and engineer to lead a multi-discipline design team for planned improvements at the city's downtown George R. Brown Convention Center. The contract will address opportunities offered by an ambitious 10-year highway project adjacent to the convention center and surrounding area.

An iconic Houston fixture, the George R. Brown Convention Center hosts more than 400 events and approximately 600,000 visitors annually. Its eastern portion currently backs up to the elevated freeway, and the vision is to connect both sides of downtown Houston via a potential deck park. Jacobs will assist Houston First in modifications while ensuring that the convention center remains fully operational during construction and responds appropriately to this challenge.

"We have an opportunity to be part of a project that will embrace a new gateway to East Downtown and make the convention center and its connections to this newly

created space unique and versatile, while maintaining operational functionality," said Jacobs Global Director of Built Environment and Vice President Brad Simmons. "Our efforts will focus on helping Houston First continue delivering a positive experience for the community that results in repeat visits in both the business and leisure markets – both during construction of the North Houston Highway Improvement Project and for years to come."

The Jacobs team – which includes convention and exhibition facility design firm Populous, and landscape and architecture firm OJB – will plan, design, and deliver visionary and technical solutions for the convention center, which is one of the nation's 10 largest convention centers in a major city that ranks as one of the top 25 cities for convention, conference, and seminar travelers.

They will focus their design and engineering services on maximizing the facility's operational efficiencies, maintaining continuous business operations, and coordinating efforts with the Texas Department of Transportation, the City of Houston, and other entities involved in the North Houston Highway Improvement Project.

"Houston First is very excited about this once in a lifetime opportunity to improve the connection and accessibility between Downtown and Eado. Joining these two areas will be a game changer, providing a more enriching experience not only for visitors to the George R. Brown Convention Center in the heart of Avenida Houston, but for all of Houston," said President and CEO of Houston First Brenda Bazan. "We look forward to partnering with the Jacobs team and have every confidence in their expertise to make certain the GRB is able to continue attracting and delivering superior services to its clients during the transformation of an elevated freeway into a multi-use green space for everyone to enjoy."

Jacobs leads the global professional services sector delivering solutions for a more connected, sustainable world. With \$15 billion in fiscal 2017 revenue when combined with full-year CH2M revenues and a talent force of more than 77,000, Jacobs provides a full spectrum of services including scientific, technical, professional and construction- and program-management for business, industrial, commercial, government and infrastructure sectors.

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Success in marketing and business development is almost always due to a combination of things occurring over time. It's sponsoring a chamber event, attending networking events with your prospects, following up with an email requesting a one-on-one meeting, building that relationship, seeing them at a community event, submitting a project proposal, interviewing for the project, and then getting the signed contract. It takes months, and many times years, for these investments to create a return, but it's always worth it. There are so many touch points, and all of them make a positive (hopefully) impact on your prospect. It's hard to decide which one to cut because they all helped you land that project! That's what marketing and business development is all about – building a relationship.

It's also about education. AEC firms often struggle to understand the difference between marketing, business development, and sales. Most principals just lump them all together, but that's a mistake. Let's clear up the confusion:

- 1) Marketing is everything that happens before you have a personal connection with someone. This includes your branding, website, word of mouth, content marketing, social media, marketing collateral, advertising, and sponsorships.
- 2) Business development is when you start to build that relationship, face-to-face, with a prospect. This includes trade shows, association involvement, community and civic organizations, networking events, and presenting at conferences and workshops.
- 3) Sales is when you get you and your team interview for that

project, and the prospect signs your contract to work with your firm on their project.

These three areas each require a unique set of skills to achieve success. If you can find someone who possesses knowledge of all three, then they are a rare gem! Understanding these pieces of the puzzle is instrumental in identifying where and how to invest time and money into marketing and business development. Once you understand the difference between the three, your life will become much easier.

"Firms that invest in marketing and business development are more profitable, get to work with clients who align with their company values, and recruit and retain great talent."

Firms that invest in marketing and business development are more profitable, get to work with clients who align with their company values, and recruit and retain great talent. Every firm desires these things, so investing in marketing and business development just makes sense for your firm. If you struggle with the first step of putting together a marketing plan, contact us today. One of our talented employees would be happy to assist you with this process. ▀

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