

Winning in 2008—ACEC's Annual Convention and Legislative Summit

April 27–30, Grand Hyatt Hotel, Washington, D.C.

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Conference Program

SUNDAY, APRIL 27

7 am – 8:30 am

Leadership Breakfasts

8 am – 3 pm

Sales & Marketing Forum

9 am – 1:30 pm

Board of Directors Meeting & Lunch

2 pm – 5:30 pm

CEO Roundtables

2:30 pm – 4:30 pm

NAECE Meeting

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

NAECE Reception

6:30 pm – 10 pm

“Primary Season” Reception and Dinner

MONDAY, APRIL 28

7 am – 8 am

Breakfast with Exhibitors

8 am – 9 am

Opening General Session: Fox News' Chris Wallace Looks at Presidential Politics (PIC)

The 2008 presidential election is shaping up as one of the most exciting in recent history. Join veteran broadcast journalist Chris Wallace, host of Fox News Sunday with Chris Wallace, as he handicaps the presidential race, from party nomination through the general election.

MONDAY, APRIL 28

9 am – 12 noon

Congressional Insight: Think Like a Member of Congress

Candice M. Daniels, National Association of Manufacturers

Congressional Insight is a non-partisan computer simulation that allows you to experience the range of issues and choices that face a member of Congress over a two-year period. This fast-paced political education tool immerses you in a real-world experience of the legislative process and will allow participants the chance to develop an understanding of “a day in the life” of a legislator.

9 am – 10:15 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Getting It Right the First Time—Why Designers and Construction Managers Should Collaborate... and Early!

Joshua Lawrence, Blake Peck, Mairav Mintz, Chris Payne, and John Koplaski, McDonough Bolyard Peck, Inc.

Design professionals can “ensure a quality deliverable” and this session will “challenge your assumptions about what designers and construction managers do, and more importantly, what they can do together.” Presenters will demonstrate through eight case studies the services of a constructability review, cost estimating and review, CPM scheduling, change order evaluation and management, construction quality assurance and quality control, total project commissioning, proactive disputes resolution, and project and contract closeout.

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MONDAY, APRIL 28 *(cont'd)*

9 am – 10:15 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Future Leaders Focus: A Study of the Needs and Priorities of Young Design Professionals

Barbara H. Irwin, HR Advisors Group, LLC and Cara Bobchek, Management Consultant

What attracts young engineers to a company? What keeps them loyal? How do they view their careers in comparison to older generations? This session presents the combined voices of young engineers through their responses to an original 2007 survey in over 50 firms nationwide. Results of this survey provide insight into the minds of a firm's younger staff, as well as ideas, direction, and guidance to firms focusing on overall retention and development of the workforce of today and tomorrow.

Never Be Undercompensated Again: Crafting Favorable Contractual Agreements

Terrence McShane, Lee & McShane, P.C.

In the current litigious business world, it is critical to understand the value of written agreements and know how to craft agreements with terms favorable to the engineer. This session will explore common standard contractual provisions that can be modified to increase compensation for engineers while reducing the risk of being subject to legal action.

Navigating Building Information Modeling (BIM) with the Federal Government

A Panel of Federal Agency Officials and Firm Principals

Different federal agencies take different approaches to BIM. Get guidance on sorting them out from this expert panel.

9 am – 11:45 am

NAECE Meeting

10:15 am – 10:45 am

Networking Break with Exhibitors

MONDAY, APRIL 28

10:45 am – 12 noon

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Crafting a Successful Deal: An Overview of M&A Activity in the A/E/C Industry

Steve Gido, ZweigWhite

What factors drive M&A activity in our industry? What motivates buyers and sellers? Why are only half of all merger or acquisition deals generally considered successful? According to Gido, the past three years have been a strong period for merger and acquisition activity in the industry as a result of “a willingness to buy rather than build as a means of strategic growth.” This session looks at the current M&A environment, the outlook for 2008, and the challenges in putting successful transactions together.

Risk Mapping Workshop

Douglas C. Green, Marsh USA

First, consider what risks to manage. Organizations too often look at risk management solely in terms of insurance, but many risks are not insurable. In addition to avoidance and transfer, the prudent acceptance, management and mitigation of risk is critically important. This session will engage attendees in an interactive discussion of business risk, selection of the most significant risks to organizations in the industry, and plotting them on a “Risk Map” as an informal industry profile.

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MONDAY, APRIL 28

10:45 am – 12 noon

CONCURRENT SESSIONS *(cont.)*

A/E Negotiations: The View from Federal Contracting Officers and Project Managers

June Wohlbach and Ralph Barrett, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Want to understand the processes and procedures for better negotiations with federal agencies? This session will offer new insights.

12 noon – 2 pm

Luncheon and Election Debate

Paul Begala and Tucker Carlson

Conservative pundit and television personality Tucker Carlson takes on political analyst and former Clinton Administration Advisor Paul Begala on the 2008 national elections. Join us for a spirited debate about politics, the road to the White House, and much more!

2:15 pm – 5:15 pm

Congressional Insight: Think Like a Member of Congress

Colleen Vivori, National Association of Manufacturers

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MONDAY, APRIL 28

2:15 pm – 3:30 pm

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Work-Family Conflicts: Where Is the Line on “Caregiver” Employees?

Joseph “Trey” Wood, III, Alaniz & Schraeder, LLP

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has announced that it will begin a concerted effort to target companies that illegally discriminate against applicants or employees who are also caregivers. What constitutes illegal discrimination? This session will offer insight into how EEO laws apply to caregivers so that employment-related decisions such as hiring, promotion, transfer or termination can be made in a non-discriminatory manner.

Designing A Sustainable Firm for the Future

Ray Kogan, Kogan & Company and Cara Bobchek, Management Consultant

Design your firm for success. Your organizational structure determines how you win work, the expertise you bring to clients, your efficiency and profitability, employees’ growth, and your contribution to your community. Organizational structure can facilitate—or impede—your ability to achieve your vision. This session will explore different organizational structures for firms, organizing for value, organizing your message and identity in the marketplace, and when and how to change your firm’s organizational structure.

Opportunities for Small Firms: Trends, How to Secure Business, and What Do Selection Committees Look For

A Panel of Federal Agency Officials and Firm Principals

Smaller firms sometimes have to approach getting federal agency work differently from larger firms. This expert panel will offer ideas on how small firms can capitalize on federal business.

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MONDAY, APRIL 28

Association Management Session Negotiating Hotel Contracts: Creating the Win-Win Solution

Mary E. Giger, Hilton Hotels National Sales; Andrea N. McFadden, Greater Phoenix Convention & Visitors Bureau; Sherry Romello, The Association for Convenience & Petroleum Retailing

A panel of hotel and meeting industry experts will provide insight on how to negotiate hotel, event venue and vendor contracts for a win-win in planning state-wide meetings and events. Tips and important legal considerations will be discussed. Target Audience: Member Organizations who plan their own conferences, meetings and events.

3:30 pm – 4 pm

Networking Break with Exhibitors

4 pm – 5:15 pm

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Unlocking the Secrets of the Generational Engineering Workforce

Jim Kissane, RedVector.com, Inc.

For the first time, four distinct generations are thrust together in the workplace, all too often fueling inter-generational conflicts. Misreading the unique dynamics, design firms are at risk for miscommunication, resentment or hostility, and finger-pointing...and all parties lose. Failing to understand this issue increases business risks and related costs from loss of key employees to damaged customer relationships. This timely session looks into interpreting the “generation factor” and its bottom-line impacts on your firm, and identifying “friction points” and their effects.

Joint Ventures and Other Structures for Doing Business with the Federal Government

Jerry Boyle, CH2MHill

This session will explore new ways to win and perform federal agency projects.

MONDAY, APRIL 28

4 pm – 5:15 pm

CONCURRENT SESSIONS (cont.)

Association Management Roundtable

Robert Van Hook and Jackie Eder-Van Hook, Transition Management Consulting (TMC)

Following a survey of executive directors' challenges conducted by the facilitators, Bob Van Hook and Jackie Eder-Van Hook will lead the participants in a discussion that touches upon the issues the MO executive directors had identified.

5:15 pm – 6:15 pm

SEI Reception

Join us for a unique networking opportunity, engage with SEI graduates and other industry executives, and learn about the SEI program from the participants themselves.

6 pm – 10 pm

PAC Reception and Dinner—Spy Museum

Guests will find themselves surrounded by intrigue and espionage as the Spy Museum is opened exclusively to ACEC members. Enjoy a self-guided tour of some of the most secret spy missions in the world, where you never know who may be lurking around the corner. After the tour, guests will be taken to a secret room where they will enjoy cocktails and gourmet food.

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TUESDAY, APRIL 29

7 am – 8:30 am

Breakfast with Exhibitors

8 am – 9:30 am

Congressional Issues Briefing

Steve Hall, ACEC

Come hear about the critical issues currently facing Congress and how they may affect your business, community, and industry.

8 am – 5 pm

Legal Counsels Forum I

The Legal Counsels Forum was established to meet the needs of in-house and outside legal counsel who advise ACEC member firms on a regular basis. The Forum hosts discussions on a wide range of current legal issues important to member firms, including the Economic Loss Doctrine, contracting issues for engineering firms, alternative dispute resolution, and professional liability insurance trends. Participants in the Forum are generally attorneys representing ACEC member firms. Others with an interest in attending should send an email to ckim@acec.org requesting an invitation from the Chair of the Forum. Separate fee required.

8:45 am – 10 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Where Does the Money Go? What Happens Between the Top Line and the Bottom Line?

Robert vanArsdall, XL Design Professional

Too often, engineering firms look at the revenue line on their balance sheets, then the total profit, and wonder where all the money went. The gap between money made and money kept can be a large one. Bob vanArsdall will describe important tools for identifying how and where money disappears inside the firm, on projects and in pricing. He'll focus on price differentiation by client, the elements of activity-based costing and its implications on overhead, and identifying the places where potential profit is being lost and how to stop it.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

8:45 am – 10 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS (cont.)

Rapid Leadership Development in Engineering and Design Firms

Scott W. Braley, Braley Consulting & Training

No matter how hard we try, some of us are unsure where or how to begin, while others can't maintain the momentum to design, implement and sustain high level leadership performance. This session looks at rapid leadership development and deployment—what works and what doesn't as we seek to identify, define, develop, keep, challenge and support up-and-coming professionals and new leaders. Braley will focus on key issues and equip you to address leadership development quickly, effectively and with many of your own in-house resources.

Building Information Modeling (BIM) for Mechanical, Electrical & Plumbing (MEP) Firms: What's in it for ME?

(session sponsored by CAMEE)

Robert E. Middlebrooks, Autodesk, Inc.



Building Information Modeling (BIM) is driving whole new relationships with designers and constructors, not only encouraging better communication, but also promoting meaningful discussions on material selection, fabrication, coordination and clearances. Architects and MEP engineers are starting to develop fully coordinated solutions. But what does this approach involve and what is the value to you? This session will help you understand the current state of BIM, the factors driving its adoption, the values it adds to your practice, the risks you may face, and the ways to succeed with this new technology.

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TUESDAY, APRIL 29

8:45 am – 10 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS *(cont.)*

Future Trends in Health Care

Pat Feyen, ACEC Life/Health Trust

How can we improve the health status of our citizens? This session will help you become more aware of the impact of lifestyle on health and will address the importance of using evidence-based medicine as we deliver care to employees and their families. Examples will include differences in costs based on place of service, generics versus brand name drugs, and using consumer tools to drive volume to providers who demonstrate quality and efficient outcomes.

Shortage of Engineers: There Is No Quick Engineering “Fix”

John D. Jolls, John D. Jolls and Company

Dealing with the shortage of engineers requires a new way of thinking about recruitment, retention, and professional image building and new philosophies about financial capital and people allocation. A few firms have not been troubled by the shortage. This session will explore the business practices that bring that result.

10 am – 10:30 am

Networking Break with Exhibitors

10:30 am – 11:45 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Best Practices: How A/E Firms Are Leveraging Their Human Resources for Competitive Advantage

John Geddie, Martin-Simonds Associates, Inc.

Improved retention of employees has an immediate bottom-line impact on your firm's expenses. The current tight labor market makes it imperative that A/E firms develop and retain a competitive hiring advantage. This session examines how to leverage human capital within the firm to improve productivity, how to win the talent war by employing best practices in human resources, and how to improve the motivation and loyalty of technical professionals.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

8:45 am – 10 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS *(cont.)*

Making Surveying a Profitable Part of Your Business

(session sponsored by COPS)

Tim Cawood, McKim & Creed; Ken Brown, Leading Edge Land Services, Inc.; Edward F. Garrigan, C.T. Male Associates, PC; J. Robert Crawford, RBF Consulting



A panel of leading surveying managers from around the country that have “Been there – Done that” will share with you what they believe are some key factors to making your survey group a profitable part of your business. This session will share some brief case studies and important pointers of a successful survey operation.

The Engineer's Role in Design-Build—Risks and Rewards

(session sponsored by CASE)

Michael Loulakis, Capital Project Strategies, LLC



This session will review where engineers stand in the design-build process, their new relationships with contractors as team members and clients, how to perform successfully, and how to assess and handle risks flowing from the process.

How Economic Indicators Predict Business Sector Performance and Potential

Craig Schwartzhoff, Prudential Retirement

Concerned about having enough money to retire? This session will explore how certain economic indicators can help discern future business sector trends.

12 noon – 1:30 pm

Networking Lunch with Exhibitors

2 pm – 5 pm

Capitol Hill Visits

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TUESDAY, APRIL 29

2 pm – 3:15 pm

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Limiting Liability and Managing Risks Through Contract Provisions: Ceilings, Floor and Trap Doors

Neal J. Sweeney, Kilpatrick Stockton LLP

Engineers regularly risk claims that are out of proportion to their modest design fees and even to their entire net worth. Realistic risk management requires project owners to confront these economic realities and reflect them responsibly in the allocation of design risk and limitations on the engineer's liability. Sweeney will explore the concepts of standard of care and professional negligence in protecting the engineer from liability, marketing efforts and contract language that raise the standard by which performance may be judged, and performance guarantees that increase liability.

Leveraging Collaborative Technology

Jonathan Knowles, Autodesk, Inc.

Collaboration technology can maximize resources, reduce costs and ensure access to the right information when and where it is needed, without compromising accuracy, security or intent of the original data. Gain insights on how information can be kept current and how to reduce information loss in the sharing process among numerous internal and external stakeholders. Knowles will describe how digital technology streamlines workflows and reduces planning costs by eliminating paper-based processes that led to inefficiencies and delays.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29

2 pm – 3:15 pm

Town Hall Meeting

Who Should Own America's Infrastructure—Government or Private Firms?

The recent purchase of the Chicago Skyway by a private consortium sent ripples through the industry. With increasing infrastructure needs and declining tax revenues, governments must explore new ways to fund the nation's public works. Some traditionalists insist that creative financing can lead to trouble; others say that without it, the "bricks and mortar" will continue to crumble. Join us for a lively debate on alternative strategies for maintaining and repairing our nation's infrastructure.

3:15pm – 3:45 pm

Networking Break with Exhibitors

3:45 pm – 5 pm

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Power & Influence: Presentations that Move Decision-Makers to Action!

Joanne G. Linowes, Linowes Executive Development International

When you need to make the impression that encourages others to make decisions helping you move forward, it's crucial to go beyond good presentation skills. This session focuses on the subtle, sophisticated strategies that help you get the right results. Linowes looks at five specific, ready-to-use techniques for presenting ideas effectively and influentially, demonstrates how to change regular content into a more persuasive discourse, and provides targeted techniques to strengthen staff presentations.

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TUESDAY, APRIL 29

3:45 pm – 5 pm

CONCURRENT SESSIONS *(cont.)*

Offshoring Goes Mainstream: Panel Discussion of Design Firms

Paul T. Bryant, and Chandra Weiss, Pivotal Management Consulting, LLC; Jacob Lipa, PSOMAS; Jim Lyon, Lyon Associates; Dudley Lace, O'Brien Atkins; Matt Kulhanek of Neilsoft, Inc.

Firms experimenting with offshoring of design services have had mixed results. There are currently no standards for creating the business case, implementing an offshoring plan, and managing the resulting changes within their firms. This session offers a unique forum to increase the success ratio and fully realize the benefits from offshoring.

6 pm – 10 pm

Engineering Excellence Awards

Gala

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

8 am – 9 am

PAC Sweepstakes Breakfast

8 am – 12 noon

Legal Counsels Forum II

9 am – 5 pm

Capitol Hill Visits

9 am – 10:15 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Contracts, Coverage and Jury Interpretation: A Peek Behind the Insurance Curtain

Albert J. Rabasca, XL Design Professional

Improved awareness of the claim process can influence decisions and behaviors during design and construction that can afford the design professional added protection in the event of a claim. Rabasca takes attendees behind the insurance curtain to explore pitfalls in contract language from the perspective of A/E professional liability coverage, examining allegations from actual lawsuits in comparison to insurance contract coverage. The importance of clear and concise language will also be examined, understanding that the ultimate interpreter would not be a jury of your peers.

Marketing Judgment Day

Mark Goodale and Mick Morrissey, Morrissey Goodale LLC

All will rise as “Judge” Goodale enters to hear several “cases” involving marketing strategies of various fictitious engineering firms. This highly interactive and clever session will leave attendees with the knowledge to build a marketing and business development “machine,” target resources and maximize return on marketing investment (ROMI) and build a high-impact brand name. Goodale’s “strategies that actually work” are aimed at helping firms build “a robust marketing machine to insulate them from market volatility.”

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

9 am – 10:15 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS *(cont.)*

E-Signatures, E-Seals, E-Mail, Electronic Drawing Exchange: Legal and Practical Tips to Protect Your Designs and Data

Michelle F. Kantor, Schwartz Cooper Chartered

The real world of electronic information transfer presents real legal and learning challenges—on liability risks with electronic drawings transfer; enforceability of e-seals, e-signatures and e-mails; and the kinds of agreements needed to protect all project participants. This session will address these critical issues, as well as copyright protection in transmitting documents over the internet, and provide tips on protecting your designs from unauthorized use. Kantor will introduce you to electronic trading partner agreements and e-mail disclaimers for doing business electronically.

10:30 am – 11:45 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS

Professional Ethics: A Preventive Maintenance Approach

Christopher Bauer, Bauer Ethics Seminars

This unique program is designed to demonstrate the ethics risks you never knew you had, and how to make sure those risks don't turn into ethics problems—in an entertaining and engaging way. Bauer will lead you through a re-thinking of your definition of ethics and ways to help yourself, colleagues, and co-workers keep ethical principles constantly in mind during day-to-day decision-making. He'll look at the do's and don'ts of confronting others on ethics issues, how to significantly build your bottom line by integrating sound new ethical principles with existing business practices, and more.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 30

10:30 am – 11:45 am

CONCURRENT SESSIONS *(cont.)*

Show Me the Money: Maximizing the Benefits of Information Technology

Ty Kicklighter, Walter Schoel Engineering Company, Inc.

Leveraged correctly, information technology can affect the financial performance of firms positively in unique ways. Using a firm's financial statements and examples of common IT projects, this session will explore the consequences of IT spending on firm health. Firm management will take away a better understanding of IT project expenditure financial implications, and know-how for evaluating IT projects' effectiveness relative to the firm's financial performance and expectations. IT professionals will learn how to communicate the value of projects to management in financial terms.

12 noon

Lunch on Capitol Hill