



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

## Business Development & Marketing Forum

Hilton Cleveland Downtown – 100 Lakeside Ave E, Cleveland, OH  
September 27 - 29, 2026

### - Daily Schedule of Events -

Sunday, September 27, 2026

---

**5:30 pm - 6:30 pm**                    **All Forum Opening Reception**  
Cocktails & hors d'oeuvres

Monday, September 28, 2026

---

**7:30 am - 8:00 am**                    **Breakfast & Networking**

**8:00 am – 8:30 am**                    **Introductions – Open Roundtable**  
**Superior A**

**8:30 am - 10:00 am**                    **Opening Topic 1 – Digital Transformation & Technology**  
*Katherine Fey, Assistant Vice President | AI Product Owner & Strategist; Technology Stake Lead, WSP in the U.S.*  
*Sarah, Verschoor, Proposal Content Strategy Manager, WSP in the U.S.*  
*Tim O'Rourke, Chief Technology Officer, Wade Trim*  
*Tom Brzezinski, PE, Executive Vice President, Wade Trim*

- Using AI and automation to enhance marketing efficiency.
- Digital tools for proposal management, CRM, and client engagement.
- Adapting to new digital channels as traditional marketing funnels loses relevance.

**10:00 am – 10:15 am**                    **Coffee Break & Networking**  
**Superior A Foyer**

**10:15 am – 11:00 am**                    **Roundtables**  
Table Topics: Tools, Emerging Trends, AI for Research, Risk Management, AI agents & prompting

**11:00 am – 12:00 pm**                    **Topic 2 – Data Management: Building a Culture of Accessible, Actionable Information**  
*Moderator: Holly Painter, Associate, Client Account Manager, KCI*  
*Karen Cotton, Senior Marketing Manager at Timmons Group*  
*Elizabeth Scarce, Chief Marketing Officer, Dewberry*

- Clarify what “the right information” is for A/E firms and how to capture and maintain it effectively.
- Ensure that accurate, reliable data is easily accessible across the



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

organization through thoughtful workflows, governance, and tools.

- Drive the cultural shift needed to motivate engineers, architects, and project managers to contribute consistently, overcome resistance, and build healthy data habits into daily work.

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

**Buffet Lunch & Networking**

1:00 - 1:45 pm

**Roundtables**

**Superior A**

Table Topics: CRM Selection, Integration, Data Quality, Client Insights, User Adoption, Business Development, Emerging Trends

1:45 pm - 2:45 pm

**Topic 3 – Leading Culture Through Change Panel**

**Superior A**

*Moderator: Maxinne Leighton, Senior Vice President*

*Marketing/Communications and Business Development, JB&B*

*John Lavey, Vice President Director of Strategic Marketing, Morrison-Maierle*

*Stefany Barone, Chief Marketing Officer/Senior Vice President, Wilson & Company, Inc.*

*Meghan Stiklestad, Director of Communications, Mead & Hunt*

- Understand how organizational culture shifts during growth, mergers, acquisitions, and evolving political climates.
- Apply communication and change-management strategies that strengthen alignment, trust, and employee engagement.
- Identify approaches to attract, integrate, and retain talent while preserving cultural cohesion during expansion.

2:45 – 3:00 pm

**Coffee Break & Networking**

**Superior A Foyer**

3:00 – 4:00 pm

**Roundtables**

Table Topics: M&A Culture, Onboarding, Talent Attraction, Internal vs External Communications

4:00 – 4:30 pm

**Shred.ai + OpenAsset**

**Superior A**

Proposal software demo and happy hour

5:30 – 7:30 pm

**All Forum Reception**

**NEW! Offsite Event (tba)**

Tuesday, September 29, 2026

---

7:30 am - 8:00 am

**Breakfast & Networking**

8:00 am – 9:00 am

**Topic 4 – Back Office to Boardroom Panel**

**Superior A**

*Moderator: Diana O'Lare*



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES

*Jamie Mabile, Principal, Senior Manager, Communications & Engagement with CDM Smith*  
*Laurie Lumish, Principal, Director of Marketing & BD, Degenkolb*  
*Cecilia Tran Arango, Principal, Marketing Director, Thomas & Hutton*

- Explore career journeys and success stories that illustrate how professionals advance from back-office and administrative roles to influential leadership positions.
- Identify pivotal turning points that help emerging leaders gain credibility, expand influence, and elevate their strategic impact within the firm.
- Structure and lead effective teams that support organizational growth, enhance client service, and strengthen firmwide business development efforts.

**9:00 am – 10:00 am**

**Roundtables  
Superior A**

At your table discuss career pathways, credibility building, influential moments, team structure, training and support.

**10:00 – 10:30 am**

**Coffee Break & Networking  
Superior A Foyer**  
*Check out*

**10:30 am – 11:30 am**

**Topic 5 – Strategic Public Relations for A/E/C Leaders  
Superior A**

*Jeff Lavery, Managing Principal, Pedigree PR*

- Master essential PR skills in media relations, crisis communication, and public-facing messaging.
- Strengthen government relations by engaging elected officials, coordinating with agencies, and leveraging their communications teams to amplify your message.
- Enhance BD impact by training teams to communicate strategically and build relationships that elevate your firm’s visibility and credibility.

**12:00 pm - 1:30 pm**

**Economic Outlook 2026: Trends, Risks, and AEC Industry  
Sentiment – Buffet Luncheon  
Superior A**

*Joe Bates, Head Researcher, ACEC Research Institute, Economic Assessment and Thomas Grogan, Chief Economist, ACEC*

- Gain a clear understanding of current U.S. economic trends and their implications for the AEC sector.
- Interpret the latest AEC industry sentiment data to identify emerging opportunities and risks.
- Apply insights from ACEC economists to inform strategic planning and decision-making within your organization.

**Adjourn**