



2008 SDA St. Louis Board

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SDA – St. Louis Chapter *Monthly Meeting Minutes*

Wednesday, August 27, 2008
The Value of Membership in SDA
Melodee Futch, President-Elect, SDA National

Engineer's Club, St. Louis, Missouri

Members Present:

Erica Blomgren - Aerotek
Pat Brown – Kennedy Associates
Karen Dahl – Mackey Mitchell
Sheila Dumayne – SCI Engineering
Julie Finocchio - Arcturis
Karen Grasso - CBIZ
Julie Lynch – SCI Engineering
Katheryne Morschl – McClure Engineering
Cathy Murphy-Maijer
Cindy Risman – HERA Inc.
Donna Scott – EDM Inc.
Bob Staed – Ames & Gough Risk Mgt.
Jean Tedesco – Tarlton
Al Thomas – Kaskaskia Engineering
Kristine Tillitt – EDM Inc.
Danielle Weston – McClure Engineering

Guests Present:

Brent Batliner – QRS (Sponsor)
Amanda Boyce – Mackey Mitchell
Lisa Deterding – Arcturis
Melodee Futch – FKP Architects (Speaker)
Kelly Galvin – TME
Deanna Lyman - Arcturis

1. The meeting began with informal networking. Danielle Weston opened the meeting at 11:50.
2. Announcements:
 - September is the membership drive month. If a member attends with a non-member, both may attend the meeting free. Tracy Hart, President, Tarlton – speaker.
 - October – Meet at Alberici HQ, have lunch, and then tour their LEED-Platinum building.
 - November – Bob Staed – Risk Management.
 - December – Holiday Luncheon.

- 10 year anniversary of St. Louis SDA Chapter – next year.
 - Introduced New Members:
 - Bob Staed, Ames & Gough
 - Kristine Tillitt – EDM Inc.
 - Canstruction – Julie Lynch and Vickie Hayden – Volunteers are needed.
3. QRS Sponsor Presentation – Brent Batliner
 - Business – Recycling
 - Business began 1974 – St. Louis
 - Operations in St. Louis, Nashville, Tennessee, Louisville, KY
 - St. Louis – 2 Plants: Northside & Southside
 - 4th Generation
 - “Simply Recycling” – Single Stream Recycling. Invested Millions in the last 2 years to bring plants up-to-date.
 - First Recyclers for Printers and Grocery Stores.
 - Change – due to LEED and Green initiatives.
 - Space is one of the big concerns.
 4. Danielle Weston introduces speaker, Melodee Futch, National SDA President-Elect.
 5. Melodee joined SDA Chapter in 2001 as a requirement to be promoted to an Associate at FKP. They required membership in a professional organization. Two or three months later became a member of the Board. Served from 2001-2007.
 6. Then started to rise up through SDA to serving on national committees.
 7. Including friendships SDA has helped Melodee to grow professionally.
 8. Value of SDA Membership
 - Value to firm
 - Value to member
 9. Value of Certification
 - Re-engineered process
 10. Membership growth seen during time with SDA Executive Board.
 11. Business Development – ear to the ground for business and networking opportunities as a member of SDA.
 12. Connected through SDA to firms as far away as Canada.
 13. Mission Statement – “To promote the exchange of ideas and to educate its members in the related disciplines of design firm administration and management.”
 14. Information gathering – SDA will help widen the ability to gather information.
 - SDA List Serve
 - Newsletter
 - AIA Document User Group
 - Beta Testing
 - Expert Week
 15. Other Services and Benefits of SDA Membership
 - Employee Recruitment
 - Employee Retention
 - Education
 - Leadership Training
 - Community Service
 16. Addition of KLO & Associates
 - Karen Lee resigned as SDA Executive Director.
 - Executive Board worked through summer sending out RFPs and reading responses.
 - Peggy Pearl new Executive Director. She has hit the “ground running.”
 - Peggy and Staff (KLO) have a lot in front of them. Looking at SDA programs, mailers, conferences, etc., with “new eyes”.
 17. National EdSymposium (04.29.2008 in San Francisco) – affiliated with AIA convention. Advising to make reservations at the Westin, where SDA will be headquartered, as soon as possible.

Reservation can be changed. Just let SDA National know.

18. Leadership Conference – 02.20.2009 thru 02.21.2009 Tampa, Florida.

- In the past, conference for Presidents and President-Elects of Chapters. Offering material and training.
- Changing to two full days of continuing education. Each day will be split into two 3-hour seminars. Example: Come Thursday night, miss one day of work, stay for Saturday and get 12 hours of continuing education. Topics will include, for example, “The Virtual Office.”

19. 2010 – Breaking away from AIA. Looking at 10 different smaller cities. Investigating smaller cities so SDA can get better rates for members.

20. November, 2006 began Audi Conferences. Last year there were 12 and this year there are 15. A way to get continuing education.

21. When SDA asked to write the Design Administrator’s Hand Guide, they realized women and men in the different positions want to focus on one particular area. So broke down into Professional Emphasis Groups.

22. Re-engineered – Certification process – CDFA replaces SDAC (unless have already – then grandfathered in).

- Exam (resource from all types of fields)
- Required to know all aspects of an office.
- 100 Random questions.
- Not easy to pass. Will probably need study group.
- Pay for exam. If fail, can retake one time for free.
- Non-SDA members can take exam. Exam fee a little more. With exam fee and passing the exam, person is granted one year member-at-large membership.
- Must maintain certification by getting 18 hours of continuing education. SDA will audit.

- Employers will want people who are CDFA certified.

- CDFA certification – Changed from recognition to practiced management efficiency. (Upgrade of status).

- SDAC – Grandfathered in; must pay \$25 fee; required 18 hours CEU to maintain.

23. Kathy Morschl, Chairman-Membership. Reminded next membership drive. Has folders with information regarding SDA.

24. See “What You Missed” on the SDA Web Site for the full presentation.

25. Danielle Weston adjourned the meeting at 1:00 PM. The next meeting will be September 24, 2008.



Topics for Discussion

- Value of SDA Membership
 - Value to firm
 - Value to member
- Value of Certification
- Membership Growth
- Addition of KLO & Associates

Business Development

- Primes
 - Know your sub-consultants
 - Their projects
 - Reputation
 - Interact with them – **Band of Brothers**
- Consultants
 - Teaming opportunities
 - Working together

Networking

Holy Grail of Successful Business
is Networking

□ 6° Degrees of Separation

- Stanley Milgram
 - Small World Problem: How are human beings connected?
 - Chain letter
 - 160 people in Omaha, Nebraska
 - Mailed packet to stockbroker in Sharon, MA
 - Mailed to someone who could get it closer
 - Cousin in Boston
 - College classmate
 - Lawyer-friend in Boston
 - What was the average number of steps?
-

Networking

□ 6° Degrees of Separation

- Average number of steps equals 5 to 6
 - More important: half the letters used same three people as conduit
 - Meaning? Very small number of people linked to everyone else in a few steps. Rest of us linked to world through those special few
 - Illustrates: Importance of finding that small number of people are connectors and mavens
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Networking

□ Circle of Acquaintances

- Non-technical administrators and managers great connectors. They are:
 - Less formal
 - Less threatening
- SDA administrators are ideal as they already recognize value of the network

Working SDA and other professional organizations
establishes the natural network needed to improve
business and the bottom line.

SDA is . . .

- An national organization
- Established in 1959
- Mission

"To promote the exchange of ideas and to educate its members in the related disciplines of design firm administration."

Networking

- Affiliate of AIA
- Relationships with ACEC, SMPS, AGC, DBIA
- Members are administrators, managers, principals, architects, and engineers
- Regional and national educational conferences

Never underestimate the value of best practices information that arises during casual conversation and networking.

Information Gathering

- Circle of Information
 - *The Tipping Point* – Malcolm Gladwell
 - "Weak ties"
 - Looking for information?
 - Widen circle of acquaintances
 - Increase probability of new information by exposure to wider circle
-

Information Gathering

- SDA ListServ
 - Offers e-mail based interactive forum
 - Furnishes immediate response
 - Widens the circle to include nationwide input
 - Provides benefit of members' research
 - Trend analysis
 - Principals' ListServ for members who are owners within their firms
-

Information Gathering

- Newsletters
 - Recent AIA survey: Administrators are the number one source of information to emerging professionals
 - SDA newsletter has a regular column in:
 - Emerging Professionals
 - Engineers in Training
 - Abstracts
 - Whitepapers
-

Information Gathering

- SDA ListServ– past 45 days – 25 topics
 - Multiple HR Issues
 - Tips and Tricks in Office 2007
 - Employee Incentives
 - IT issues - Newforma
 - Company Logo-Wear / SWAG
 - Benefits/Total Compensation Statements
 - Archiving Practices
 - Mentoring Programs
-

Information Gathering

- AIA Documents User Group
- Beta testing
 - AIA Contract Documents
- Expert week on ListServ discussing
 - Deltek
 - Axium

Employee Recruitment

- Opportunity to work with people
 - Free sample of how they work
 - Meet deadlines?
 - Naysayers?
 - Good ideas?
 - Good Leadership?
 - Good connectors?
 - canstruction®

Employee Retention

- Different strokes for different folks
- Many want/need the challenge professional organizations can provide
 - Community service
 - Leadership opportunities
- Cost of employee turnover

Salaries attract -- benefits retain!

Education

- Continuing education at member rates
 - Leverage participation with show and tell
 - Involvement in program planning steers programs to those of interest to firm
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SDA Education

- Monthly or quarterly education seminars
 - 2008 Regional Conferences
 - Central States Regional Conference, Fort Worth, TX September 18-20
 - Western States Regional Conference, San Diego, CA September 26-27
 - Eastern States Regional Conference, Atlanta, GA September 25-28
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SDA Education

- National ED Symposium
 - April 29, 2009 in San Francisco
 - Leadership Conference
 - February 20-21, 2009 in Tampa, Florida
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SDA Education

- Audio Conferences
 - September 11, 2008 – IDP: Mentoring Training
 - September 18, 2008 – Value of Membership: Firms' Bottom Line (**FREE**)
 - October 16, 2008 - Meeting the Challenges of Regulated Learning
 - October 30, 2008 – IDP: Supervisor Training
 - November TBD HR + Payroll Update
 - December TBD Year End: Closing the Books
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SDA Education

- Professional Emphasis Groups
 - Office Administration
 - Marketing
 - Finance
 - Human Resources
 - Project Management
-

SDA Education

- National Certification Program
 - Exam
 - Formal education
 - Continuing education
 - Experience in A/E/C industry
 - Leadership experiences
-

SDA Education

EDTrak™

Helping design professionals track continuing education requirements

A single page, single entry Excel spreadsheet system designed to help design professionals track CEUs and PDHs.

EDtrak™ enables the user to know at a glance the number of credits obtained and the number of credits still needed to satisfy requirements for the AIA and all state licensing boards

Leadership Training

- Shows community your company's employees are connectors, shakers and doers
- Provides risk-free training to employees
 - Business or accounting skills as treasurer
 - Marketing skills as membership chair
 - Free marketing for firm with:
 - Corporate name on fax cover sheets, emails, in-office printing
 - Presence at events

The more you put in, the more you get back

Community Service

- All companies benefit when the community in which they do business thrives.
- Professional organizations have philanthropic foundations and endeavors
- Consider the causes you want to adopt and the organizations that are appropriate partners for your company
- Benefits:
 - Raises company profile
 - Improves employee morale
 - Increases teamwork; provides welcome break from work routine

Community Service

- SDA Design Treasures – Design to middle schools
- Kidstruction – Design to middle school
- NSPE MATHCOUNTS® – Science and math enrichment/competition to middle schools
- NSPE JETS – Students designing assistive technology
- AAF / Target – High schoolers designing ideal places to learn in the 21st century
- canstruction®**

canstruction®



Design/build competition where A/E/C firms build uncanny structures from food cans, benefiting local foodbanks.

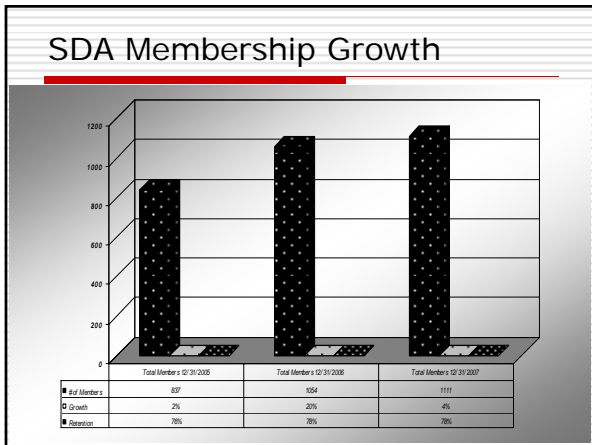


Community Service

- Maximize impact of your efforts
 - Consider a press release for:
 - Election to office or board
 - Organization honors an employee
 - Inform media of charitable events and activities
 - Partner with charity for logo placement, naming rights
 - Send out postcard with winning **canstruction®** or firm of the year award

It's more than charity...it's good business sense.





- ### SDA Firm Benefits
- Is key to knowledgeable, professional management and administrative staff
 - Improves practice management
 - Improves employee recruitment
 - Improves employment retention
 - Raises your firm profile in the A/E/C community
 - Marketing avenues through corporate sponsorships
 - Raises your firm profile in the community

SDA Membership Benefits

- Is key to professional development
- Provides ready access to other design firm administrators and managers
- Earns the respect of peers
- Makes a career out of a job
- Advances a career

Marketing Opportunities



- Corporate Sponsorship
 - Advertise firm on a grand scale
 - Customized to firm's needs
- Sustaining Partnership

SDA NATIONAL THANKS OUR
2008 NATIONAL SPONSORS

The slide displays a collection of logos for the 2008 National Sponsors of SDA. The logos are arranged in several rows. The top row includes the Society for Design Administration logo and the text 'SDA NATIONAL THANKS OUR 2008 NATIONAL SPONSORS'. The second row features Delttek, KAPLAN, and XL INSURANCE. The third row includes PLANCOMMAND, a smaller Society for Design Administration logo, ORANGE LOFT, and a logo for 'Newforma'. The fourth row contains AXIUM, sepialine, and Huckabee. The fifth row shows ZweigWhite, AIA, CLARK NEXSEN, and RedVector.

NOW IS THE TIME TO JOIN