

A/E/C PROJECT MANAGEMENT BOOTCAMP

APRIL 14-15 / JERSEY CITY, NJ
APRIL 20-21 / CHICAGO, IL
APRIL 21-22 / LOS ANGELES, CA
APRIL 28-29 / PHILADELPHIA, PA
APRIL 28-29 / SANTA FE, NM
MAY 5-6, 2016 / NEW ORLEANS, LA
MAY 5-6, 2016 / PORTLAND, OR
MAY 11-12, 2016 / DENVER, CO
MAY 12-13, 2016 / NASHVILLE, TN
MAY 19-20, 2016 / AUSTIN, TX
JUNE 2-3, 2016 / HARTFORD, CT
JUNE 9-10, 2016 / CINCINNATI, OH
JUNE 16-17, 2016 / LAS VEGAS, NV
JUNE 23-24, 2016 / ARLINGTON, VA
JULY 14-15, 2016 / CHICAGO, IL
JULY 21-22, 2016 / BOSTON, MA
JULY 28-29, 2016 / VANCOUVER, BC
AUGUST 4-5, 2016 / SAN DIEGO, CA
AUGUST 11-12, 2016 / DENVER, CO
AUGUST 18-19, 2016 / PHILADELPHIA, PA
SEPTEMBER 15-16, 2016 / AUSTIN, TX
SEPTEMBER 21-22, 2016 / CHICAGO, IL
SEPTEMBER 22-23, 2016 / NEWPORT BEACH, CA
OCTOBER 6-7, 2016 / KANSAS CITY, MO
OCTOBER 13-14, 2016 / SAN FRANCISCO, CA
OCTOBER 26-27, 2016 / DENVER, CO
NOVEMBER 3-4, 2016 / MINNEAPOLIS, MN
NOVEMBER 9-10, 2016 / SEATTLE, WA
NOVEMBER 17-18, 2016 / BOSTON, MA
DECEMBER 1-2, 2016 / LAS VEGAS, NV
DECEMBER 8-9, 2016 / ORLANDO, FL

A/E/C MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS ROUNDTABLE

MAY 3-4, 2016 / ALEXANDRIA, VA
AUGUST 9-10, 2016 / DENVER, CO
OCTOBER 4-5, 2016 / SEATTLE, WA

BRANCH OFFICE OPTIMIZATION STRATEGIES ROUNDTABLE

APRIL 26-27, 2016 / BOSTON, MA
MAY 10-11, 2016 / ST. PETE BEACH, FL
JUNE 14-15, 2016 / DENVER, CO

HOW NOT TO ALIENATE YOUR CLIENTS DURING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE

By Andy Shahan, P.E., P.S., P.M.P.

Organizational change can affect all functions of a professional service business, including leadership, profit center operations, sales and marketing, human resources, accounting, subject matter expertise, and even project management.

Because project managers are frequently viewed as business leaders within their organizations, they are often responsible for leading internal business functions as well. This is especially true during times of organizational change. During these times, project managers are required to balance their internal business responsibilities with continuing to meet client expectations. Unfortunately, client service and project quality can be the victims when organizational change is not handled well.

If your organization is approaching a period of change—which seems to be universal in today’s business climate—here are five tips that will leverage the expertise of project managers without alienating your clients.

1. Before engaging project managers in the process, allow a team of organizational leaders to develop the scope of the change. For instance, if your company wants to reorganize its internal organization structure, a team comprised of the chief executive officer, chief financial officer, chief administrative officer, and other internally-focused leaders can develop a framework for a new structure before involving project managers to implement the change. This will minimize time away from clients.

2. Once the scope of the change has been decided, treat it as a project and assign one project manager to implement it as such. Traditionally, organizations “beg, borrow, and steal” the time from multiple project managers, rather than dedicating time for internal project management and planning other schedule commitments around it. Just like any other project, an organizational change process will benefit from having a dedicated leader that is responsible for involving all necessary parties and adhering to outlined parameters. The project manager should lead the initiation, planning, monitoring and controlling, and closing the implementation just as they would for any other project, while also being mindful of the emotional personal impact the change can cause. Having one dedicated resource also allows other project managers to stay focused on clients and prevents client projects from becoming stalled due to lack of time and attention.

3. When selecting a project manager to help lead the implementation of the organizational change, it is important to choose the right one. Internal tasks often require multiple meetings and discussions among employees. This takes time away from client interaction and providing services to clients. Some project managers may not see this as a valuable use of their time and expertise, while others excel in and genuinely enjoy this type of work. Make sure to choose a project manager that will take ownership of the job and thrive with the opportunity to serve the company. This encourages all project managers to operate within their strengths.

4. While the project manager is focused on internal responsibilities, tap into your technical subject matter experts to take on additional client-facing responsibilities day-to-day. The project manager can still handle management of scope, schedule, and budget. This will ensure that clients receive the time and attention they deserve while the project manager is otherwise engaged. This also provides opportunities and training for other staff members, as well as deeper client engagement within your organization.

▶ CONTINUED / PAGE 6

THE NEW WAY PROFESSIONAL SERVICE BUYERS SEEK OUT PROVIDERS

by Sylvia Montgomery, CPSM

In PSMJ Radio's March 16th podcast, Matti Oberg and I discussed the difference between branding and marketing. Generally speaking, firms don't have a clear understanding between branding and marketing for professional services firms. Simply put, the brand is the DNA of your firm – it's what people say and think about your organization; particularly as related to the firms' positioning in the marketplace and its value proposition. A brand is a complex organism; the messages associated with a brand are just as important as the visual queues, although the logo tends to be the most recognizable aspect dimension of a brand.

Marketing is the strategic awareness-building for a said product or service. As described by Peter Druker, the founder of modern management, "The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well the product or service fits him and sells itself." The goal of marketing is to open doors to the business development conversation. It's throughout that conversation that the prospect should see themselves working with the firm at hand.

Can you have a brand without marketing?

Can you market without a brand?

Yes and no. Every organization has a brand, whether it's intentional or not. Even if steps have not been taken to shape that brand, your firm still has one. Whether it's a 100-year-old architecture firm or a 10-year-old construction firm, all firms have a brand even if they never intentionally focused on defining that brand. For most firms, the challenge comes in the lack of attention given to their brand at the onset of the firms' creation. It's only after some years that branding becomes a point of conversation. On the other hand, marketing is having a dialogue with target audiences. Creating conversations around value and the brand becomes symbolic of the reputation, expertise and overall brand strength of a firm.

A greater disconnect occurs around understanding the role of marketing vs. business development. But why? It helps to understand a bit about human behavior. In product sales, it's much easier to highlight features and benefits. When it comes to services, the conversation shifts to individuals, with varying personalities, technical expertise and relevant experience. Characteristics that are not quite as obvious when it comes to marketing and characteristics that may appear much like that of any other must be crafted in differentiated manners to successfully connect with buyers, in a meaningful way.

For professional services, the premise has always been "If I do a good job, I'll get more clients and referrals. Just need to keep my head down and I'll get more work". Traditionally, the road to new work was doing good work. As times have changed and the rise of the digital buyer has grown, the traditional ways no longer fit. Through strategic business development, firms can help target audiences, those prospects, understand the value the firm can bring to an engagement. In essence, why they are a good fit!

Evolution of marketing for A/E/C firms

Facts:

- **Generational shift in business and AEC is in the thick of it.**

- **Seasoned practitioners that established most firms are retiring, along with their peers and contacts.**
- **Multiple recessions caused a void in middle management that could now be poised to take leadership reigns. Thus, leaving many firms without proper succession plans.**
- **Geographic limitations no longer an issue – buyers of services want to work with the best, regardless of location.**
- **Talent wars at their peak.**
- **Online accessibility provides a radical change to how information is consumed.**
- **Individuals are predisposed to self-educating – even when it comes to issues and topics relevant to their business. Everyone is doing his or her own level of research.**
- **The traditional growth engine (a.k.a. referrals) have also evolved. Referrals are now vetted online.**

From our primary research, we know that 80% of buyers check out your website at some point in the buying process, but an eye-opening 52% of the time, a referred prospect never reaches out to your firm because your firm's website did not match what they had heard from their trusted colleague! Knowing that referrals are vetted online makes the rise of online / digital marketing even more important.

For all of the reasons above, there is a revolution related to how buyers of professional services seek out providers. Online presence is at the forefront and for firms rejecting this new reality, their existence is questionable. ●

Sylvia Montgomery, CPSM, has over 25 years of experience in the fields of visual communications and marketing planning, including more than a decade of working in the A/E/C industry. As a senior partner at Hinge, Sylvia is in charge of Hinge's AEC practice, developing new business, and creating marketing and branding strategies for clients. To connect with her: @BrandStrong or smontgomery@hingemarketing.com.

HOW NOT TO ALIENATE YOUR CLIENTS... (continued from page 5)

5. Engage outside business consultants to bridge specific experience and skill gaps. Many project managers do not have the appropriate background in business and organizational change to effectively plan and execute all aspects of transition. Consider this: the money saved by using only internal resources will pale in comparison to damaged client relationships or bad projects that may result from a project manager's diverted focus.

In business, change is inevitable. Organizational change can have a wide-reaching effect across all business functions. Proper planning and allocation of company resources can help ease the process for employees as well as clients. ●

Andy Shahan is a principal and project manager with LJB who has 18 years of experience specializing in transportation and public infrastructure design. He has led projects ranging in construction costs from \$50,000 to \$30 million for municipalities, ODOT, and the Department of Defense.