



SPEAKER APPLICATION DUE
OCTOBER 27, 2025

BEYOND THE LOOKING GLASS:

CLARITY, CREATIVITY, AND CONNECTION IN A NEW LANDSCAPE

2026 CALL FOR SPEAKERS

Hilton Norfolk - The Main | Norfolk, VA
March 17-19, 2026



**Southeastern
Regional Conference**

www.smps-serc.org

theme:

BEYOND THE LOOKING GLASS:

Downtown Norfolk, located at the mouth of the James and Elizabeth Rivers, has long been known for its history as a central port for trade and maritime activity. But in the past decade, Norfolk's parallel identity as a creative hub has blossomed and has polished the city into a destination of a new kind, given it a more multi-faceted creative identity.

As our industry is at its own nexus of change, navigating the ethics and implementation of AI, an ever-shifting job field, and unpredictable market trends, join us as we step through our own looking glass – gaining clarity, sparking creativity, and building connection with our peers to build a new landscape together.

SMPS's Southeastern Regional Conference, **Beyond the Looking Glass: Building Clarity, Creativity, and Connection**, will take place in Norfolk, Virginia from March 17 to 19, 2026, at the Hilton Norfolk The Main Hotel. Downtown Norfolk, surrounded by the Elizabeth River, is a vibrant, walkable city center with easy access to countless restaurants and shops, as well as landmarks and institutions like Towne Point Park, Nauticus Maritime Discover Center, and the Battleship Wisconsin. We can't wait to see you there!

Present on topics that invite proposals that turn reflection into action for AEC marketers. Share how you facilitate growth, encourage collaboration or promote the latest trends.

Dynamic Key Note Speakers



Tyler Gillum, Head Coach
Savannah Bananas - Breakfast Keynote

Explore Innovative Topics



Driving Valuable Connections



- Engage with an anticipated diverse audience of architects, engineers, and construction professionals.
- Participate in a dynamic environment designed to inspire collaboration and innovation.
- Network with key players in the industry during our vacation-like social events and breakout sessions.
- Leave a lasting impact—your insights could boil down to the very success that attendees set out to achieve!

GENERAL INFORMATION



The Southeastern Regional Conference (SERC) includes marketing and business development professionals from Alabama, Atlanta, Charlotte, Central Florida, Nashville, North Florida, Palmetto, Research Triangle, South Florida, Tampa Bay, and Virginia chapters. SERC is the region's premier business development, marketing, and leadership conference designed to educate and connect professionals and leaders in the A/E/C industry.

Who Will be There?

350+ A/E/C professionals

11 SMPS Chapters: Alabama, Atlanta, Charlotte, Central Florida, Nashville, North Florida, Palmetto, Research Triangle, South Florida, Tampa Bay, and Virginia.

What is the Focus?

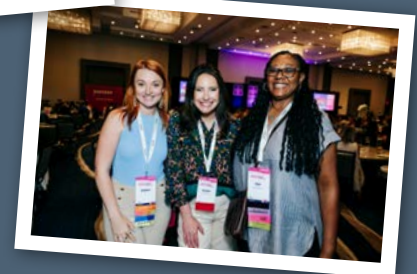
- Share innovations and solutions
- Provide actionable takeaways
- Ignite creativity!
- Connect and collaborate

When is my Application Due?

Monday, October 27, 2025 at 11:59 PM

How Do I Submit?

Scan the QR code found at the back of this packet to submit speaker application(s) online by October 27th.



Expand Your Visibility as an Industry Expert!

SPEAKER BENEFITS

Your compensation package for each session is **worth over \$1,375.00!**



Each session compensation package includes:

- **Full Conference Access:** Enjoy one complimentary registration to the entire event per session. Registration includes conference meals and access to the Welcome Reception and Social.
- **One-Night Hotel Stay:** Relax with a complimentary stay arranged by the SMPS SERC committee in our designated block.
- **Promotional Opportunities:**
 - Include your flyer or swag in the attendee bags.
 - Reach 350+ A/E/C Professionals
 - Build Business Relationships
 - Industry Recognition
 - Expand Your Network
 - Receive Valuable Feedback



What it Takes to Create a Winning Submittal

PROGRAM FORMATS

SERC is seeking dynamic sessions that captivate and involve the audience. We're open to various formats that foster active participation and lively discussion. If your session is chosen, please note that SERC may adjust titles, reassign topics, or refine program summaries to enhance promotional materials and the overall program.

Sessions are typically 60 minutes, with exceptions noted. Be sure to include time for a Q&A segment to boost interactive engagement and make your presentation truly memorable.



Interactive Lecture

Speakers should plan for a 10- to 15-minute Q&A segment to actively engage A/E/C industry attendees. Think about adding other interactive elements, like impromptu Q&A, audience polls, or live feedback through mobile devices, to make your presentation even more engaging.

Skill-Building Workshop

Workshops teach a specific skill and include one or more exercises that allow attendees to practice these skills. Presenters ask audience members to present their work to the group and give live feedback.

Panel Discussion

Attendees experience three to four viewpoints on a specific topic, concluding with an extensive question-and-answer segment. This format provides attendees direct access to experts. Panels are limited in size to no more than one moderator and three panelists. Consider panelists who present opposing views, have different roles, and/or come from different areas of the industry.
(One session package total)

Keynote Session

The programs committee selects keynote speakers directly. If you have keynote suggestions, contact SERC Programs Chairs at programs@smgs-serc.org.



THE DOMAINS & CEUs

The Domains of Practice form the cornerstone of SMPS's certification program. Achieving the Certified Professional Services Marketer (CPSM) designation distinguishes marketers as experts dedicated to the highest standards of professional excellence. SMPS has identified and validated the essential body of knowledge and skills crucial for competency in professional services marketing. These are organized into six Domains of Practice for Professional Services Marketing:

DOMAIN 1: RESEARCH

Marketing research involves gathering, recording, and analyzing data related to a firm's services. This data helps identify and define marketing opportunities, generate and evaluate marketing actions, monitor performance, and forecast trends.

DOMAIN 2: PLANNING

A marketing plan defines a firm's market prospects and key characteristics. It includes marketing goals and strategies and guidance on allocating marketing budgets and efforts.

DOMAIN 3: CLIENT AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Business development focuses on building relationships with current and prospective clients, often before a request for a proposal is issued. Activities include calls, visits, correspondence, social media interactions, referrals, and trade shows.

DOMAIN 4: PROPOSALS

Proposals are responses to specific solicitations that outline the project and scope of work. They include firm information, relevant projects, technical approaches, and key staff resumes.

DOMAIN 5: PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY

This domain encompasses all forms of communication and marketing, such as advertising, direct mail, websites, social media, brochures, presentations, special events, public relations, and press releases.

DOMAIN 6: MANAGEMENT

Management involves coordinating staff and/or consultants to achieve marketing goals and objectives. It includes effective planning, organizing, staffing, and directing projects within an organization.

Continuing Education Credits at the Conference:

Attendees of the SERC who hold a CPSM designation can earn Continuing Education Units (CEUs), with up to 9 CEUs available for attending the regular conference and an additional 6 CEUs for attending the pre-conference sessions or 4 CEUs for attending the project/site tour (pending). One CEU is awarded for each contact hour of instruction, defined as one hour of interaction between a learner and an instructor. Please note that social or networking time does not count as contact time. CEUs must be self-reported and tracked for CPSM program recertification. Additionally, attendees may earn learning units for other professional certifications such as AIA, which must be self-reported.

Get to Know

YOUR AUDIENCE



WHAT IS SMPS?

The Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS) is a community of marketing and business development professionals dedicated to advancing the A/E/C industry. It is the only organization focused on creating business opportunities in this sector. The Southeast Regional Conference includes eleven SMPS chapters: Alabama, Atlanta, Charlotte, Central Florida, Nashville, North Florida, Palmetto, Research Triangle, South Florida, Tampa Bay, and Virginia representing 1250+ members.

WHAT IS THE A/E/C INDUSTRY?

A/E/C stands for architects, engineers, and construction professionals who collaborate on projects in the built environment, such as schools, commercial buildings, and public infrastructure. These disciplines are crucial for community development, from design to construction. The A/E/C industry is growing globally and is expected to reach \$18.8 trillion by 2027. It is critical to understand this audience. We market professional expertise rather than products.

Challenges in the A/E/C Industry

Digital Marketing and Branding: A/E/C firms use digital channels like LinkedIn, social media, and content platforms to stand out, strengthen their online presence, and attract talent and clients. What strategies effectively translate a brand into impactful digital communications and campaigns?

Client-Centric Approach: Firms that prioritize client experience and satisfaction by understanding client needs and preferences, and tailoring services accordingly, are winning more work. What success strategies and tactics have you noticed?

Data-Driven Decision-Making: Data analytics help firms make informed decisions, optimize resource allocation, and identify growth opportunities. How are firms tackling this seemingly impossible challenge?

CRM Integration and Automation: A/E/C firms are integrating CRM systems and automation tools to streamline business development processes, centralize client information, and improve efficiency. What impact do you see on firms that utilize these methods?

Embracing AI and Emerging Technologies: The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies is reshaping the A/E/C industry. How are firms using AI to boost innovation, efficiency, and gain a competitive edge? What challenges are they facing in this tech-driven landscape?

Management vs. Leadership: Today's workplace focuses more on connectivity, networks, and collaboration. Firms that offer flexibility for employees, such as working from home, flexible working hours, and accepting the need for sabbaticals, are winning the talent game. What tips and tricks do you have for leaders in this area?

Generational Changes – Gen Z's Impact: Managing generational differences, especially with Gen Z's distinct influence, can be tough for many firms. What strategies can help navigate these challenges effectively?

SPEAKER TRACKS

Track One **REFLECT**

Before proposals, interviews, or pricing, great AEC marketing starts with knowing which opportunities deserve your time—and exactly how to win them. Reflect spotlights the research, intel, and planning that sharpen go/no-go decisions, shape capture strategy, and raise win probability, diving into the first two Domains of Practice: Research (Domain 1) and Planning (Domain 2). We're seeking sessions that turn reflection into direction: practical methods for finding, sizing, and qualifying opportunities; mapping stakeholders; understanding the competitive field; and building capture plans that align teams and accelerate action.

- **RESEARCH:** Research is executed to gather, record, and analyze data related to marketing a firm's services. The data can be used to identify and define marketing opportunities; generate, refine, and evaluate marketing actions; monitor marketing performance; and forecast trends.
- **PLANNING:** A plan is created to map a path to a goal and provide a series of actions to achieve business aspirations. In the marketing and business development space, plans typically define a firm's market characteristics and revenue prospects.

Sample Topics:

- Digesting the World of Big Data
- Presenting Data to Leadership
- Secrets to Effective Client Surveys
- Mastering the Strategic Planning Process
- Best Practices for Managing Your BD Budget
- Integrating AI into your processes
- Demonstrating Your Marketing Plan's ROI

When it's time to move from insight to impact, your story has to break through—on the page, on the screen, and in the room. Break Through is about the craft and discipline of proposals, interviews, and promotional campaigns that win attention and decisions, focusing on the Domains of Proposals (Domain 4) and Promotional Activity (Domain 5). This track explores best practices for implementation and innovation of AEC marketing and business development processes.

- **PROPOSALS:** Proposals are prepared in response to a specific solicitation where the project and scope of work are identified. Proposals can include general firm information, relevant projects, a technical project approach, and key staff resumes.
- **PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY:** This undertaking includes all forms of communications and inbound/outbound marketing. Some examples include advertising, direct mail, website, social media, brochures, presentations, special events, public relations, and news releases.

Sample Topics:

- The Art of Storytelling in Proposals
- Perfecting the Go/No-Go Process
- The Power of the Post-Award Debrief
- Developing a Stellar Social Media Strategy
- Leveraging Digital Content
- Maximizing Your Relationships with the Media
- Delivering the Next Big Win

Track Two **BREAK THROUGH**

SPEAKER TRACKS

Track Three **GO BEYOND**

Going beyond the looking glass means moving past reflection and execution to the relationships and management systems that sustain growth. Go Beyond explores Client & Business Development (Domain 3)—the purposeful relationship-building that happens long before a solicitation—and Management (Domain 6)—the planning, people, and performance practices that make marketing and BD consistently effective.

- **CLIENT & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT:** Business development involves relationship-building with current and prospective clients, often prior to a request for proposal. Through interaction with the client, development activities may include emails, calls, visits, correspondence, social media, referrals, conferences, or trade shows.
- **MANAGEMENT:** Management involves coordinating the efforts of staff and/or consultants to accomplish marketing goals and objectives. Using available resources, management effectively plans, organizes, staffs, and directs projects of a firm as well as evaluates technical and financial performance.

Sample Topics:

- The Magic of the Doer-Seller Model
- Make it Rain! The Diary of an Industry Rainmaker
- Avoiding the Pitfalls of the Sales Cycle
- Driving Adoption for Your New CRM System
- Effectively Managing Conflict
- Building Your Team from the Ground Up
- The Mentorship Impact

ARE YOU READY TO SUBMIT?

Scan the QR code or click below for the application.

[CALL FOR SPEAKERS FORM](#)



SPEAKER RESPONSIBILITIES

PROVIDE A HIGH-QUALITY, EDUCATIONAL, AND INTERACTIVE PRESENTATION

Engage conference attendees through audience participation and discussion, including group discussions, volunteer participation, small group breakouts, polls, question and answer, and live feedback via mobile device. Audiences learn best when they feel connected to speakers; our goal with these presentations is to provide experiential programming.

ALLOW AMPLE TIME FOR PRESENTATION AND NETWORKING

Speakers should provide ample time between their arrival and departure from the conference to accommodate their respective presentation times. We encourage our speakers to use their free conference registration to attend other sessions and take advantage of multiple networking opportunities.



REFRAIN FROM PITCHING PRODUCTS/ SERVICES

Please refrain from pitching products or services to attendees before, during, or after the session. Ensure the session is not perceived as an infomercial. The purpose of your session is to educate.

COORDINATE WITH SMPS SERC COMMITTEE FOR SPECIAL EQUIPMENT NEEDS

Ensure all necessary equipment including projector, microphone computer, and any required materials are arranged in advance to support the presentation effectively.

CLEARLY COMMUNICATE EXPECTATIONS TO PANEL SPEAKERS

Clearly communicate expectations of additional panel speakers before the event. Each panel speaker has 10 minutes before and after their session to network before exiting the venue.

NEED MORE INFORMATION

programs@smps-serc.org

smps-serc.org

Have a great time!

smps

Southeastern
Regional Conference