



Society for Marketing
Professional Services

Atlanta

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Fall 2009

TOOLS OF THE TRADE
Google Analytics

TECHNOLOGY
Social Media

MARKET FOCUS
K-12 Procurement

PAY IT FORWARD
Supporting the Troops

CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT
Walter P Moore

MEMBERSHIP
Member Spotlight



SHERRI SMITH
Schirmer Engineering

Sherri has been in the A/E/C industry since 1994 and served on the SMPS Atlanta Board of Directors since 2006. Sherri has been with Schirmer Engineering Corporation, an AON Global Company, since 2003. Schirmer Engineering is celebrating its 70-year anniversary this year offering services in fire protection engineering, life safety code consulting, process safety, and security engineering consulting services.

Sherri can be reached at
sherri_smith@schirmereng.com
or (770) 381-1126.

President's Perspective

As SMPS Atlanta begins its new year, I am very excited and honored to take the post of Chapter President. The new Board of Directors and I look forward to serving you, the members, and helping to make SMPS Atlanta the premier forum for education and networking.

Our theme for this year is **Survive and Thrive**. The time has never been better to take a serious look at the SMPS Atlanta Chapter and find out how you can get more involved. Find out what all the fuss is about! Our mission is more relevant today than ever, to advocate for, educate and connect leaders in the building industry. We intend to do this by offering exciting programs, continuing our very successful **Boot Camp Series**, and offering several networking events throughout the year. As a board we will strive to offer ways for you and your firm to **Survive and Thrive** through the coming year. Please visit our website at www.smpsatl.org for the most up-to-date information on our programs and events.

SMPS Atlanta is consistently acknowledged for our efforts and pointed to as an example for other chapters. Ours is an award winning chapter, focused on the future, our members' future, striving to grow and improve benefits for members and promoting the local A/E/C community as a whole.

We will still continue our **Pay It Forward** challenge, encouraging all to do good deeds, watching them grow and multiply and ultimately paying them forward. Some of the Chapter's "giving back" activities include our mentoring program, supporting an engineering unit working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region District in Iraq, providing scholarships and sharing ideas and initiatives with other SMPS chapters to help them grow. If you would like to share your **Pay It Forward** story, please visit our website for an online form.

I look forward to seeing you throughout the year,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sherri". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sherri Smith,
Schirmer Engineering

Analytics: Google Broadens its Horizon

■ by: Michael Rouse, Draper & Associates

Google Analytics is a website service that provides detailed statistics on visitor behavior, traffic sources, advertising effectiveness, and other website operations. Analytics enables the user to customize analyses and easily produce at-a-glance reports. It works pretty well, and even better- its free!

The Google behemoth, at the core of its existence, has simply been a collection of information produced by others. It is a channel, an index, and an incredibly well-sorted bulletin board for audience and advertisers alike. There is no doubt that the mechanics of the search engine are complex, or that the impact of Google is resounding; however, Google basically offers its audience no intelligence of its own creation. It has merely been a provider of the ideas of others.

But with the advent of Google Analytics, the Google entity becomes less a reflection of ideas and more an actual creator of the information itself. Valuable information that is free for those who want it. Though it is still subject to interpretation, the information is very accurate and presented in a coherent format that belies its lack of cost.

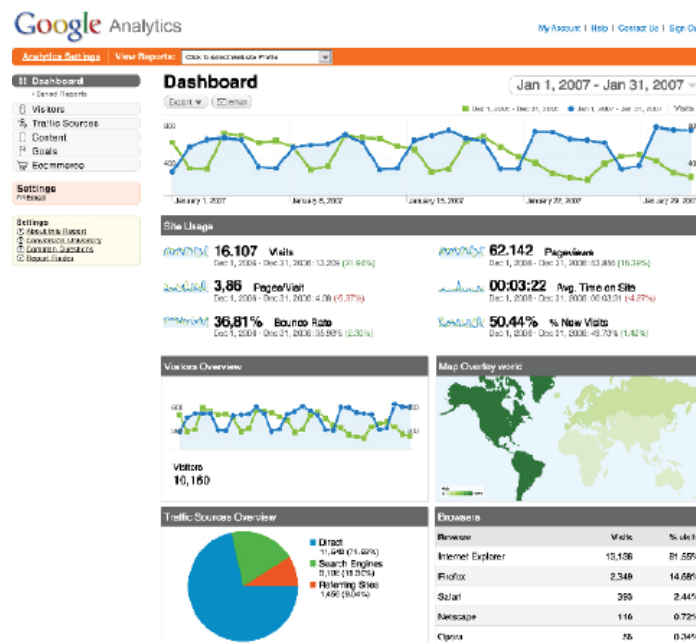
Over the last four years, Google Analytics has significantly grown in its capabilities. And just like the Google search engine, how deep you go into the data is up to you. The information you and your company can glean from Analytics can lead to valuable insights that can be applied immediately and allow you to study, in detail, the anatomy of your website.

Here are just a few examples of what Google Analytics has to offer:

- Get a website hit overview showing a graphical representation of the total number of visitors, where they navigated from, where they went within your site, and how long they stayed.
- Develop your site's advertising capabilities by integrating AdSense. With this free program, you can access Google's network of advertisers, place targeted ads, generate revenue and track your success.
- Customize your reports for an in-depth and visually striking presentation outlining the success of a recent email campaign.

Once your site is set up, your Analytics account can be customized and understood by anyone with the login information and a mouse. When you are logged in, a little exploring can go a long way. And there is no shortage of training, product support, and public forums available to help you generate some creativity while developing your website and your future marketing plan or goals.

So if you haven't already set up your website with Analytics and would like to do so, check out the SMPS Atlanta blog smps-ga.blogspot.com for instructions on getting started. There you can find application ideas and references to help you get the most from your website. Or, you can just do what comes naturally and "Google it"!



About the Author: Michael Rouse is a Business Development Coordinator and Project Consultant for Draper & Associates, a construction scheduling and project management consulting firm based in Atlanta, Georgia. Michael became a member of SMPS Atlanta in March of 2009 and has just recently become a member of the communications committee.

Social Media: Its Relative to the A/E/C Industry!

■ *by: Anna Harrison, CPSM, Yates Construction*

The rapid growth of social networking has marketers in every industry scratching their heads to determine where it fits in their marketing strategy.

Facebook, the world's largest social networking site, reports having over 300 million users worldwide, with hundreds of thousands of users added daily. While some marketers may have dismissed Facebook as a tool for students only, the truth is that their fastest-growing user segment is women over 55, with 45 percent of its U.S. audience over 25 years old. With these statistics and the growth of other social networks such as LinkedIn, Twitter, and MySpace, marketers would be wise to take a hard look at social networking before dismissing it as inappropriate for their company.

What is Social Networking?

By definition, social media refers to content generated by "regular" people, or "users." Social networking refers to a social group or community that is tied to some affinity or interest.

Online social networks facilitate peer-to-peer communication and interaction. These sources have a high degree of trust since the content is provided by the public, rather than a company's advertising efforts. Information in these networks travels quickly and virally.

The A/E/C industry has been slow to adopt social media for marketing purposes. Concerns range from feeling that it is simply "not professional," to the fear that they will lose control of their image.

Putting your brand in the hands of employees and the general public can be disconcerting. This brings up the concern over the amount of time it will require to manage social networking initiatives. Providing fresh content and policing the content that is out there related to your brand can be very time consuming.

With that said, one A/E/C firm has fully embraced social networking and seen promising results.

Life at HOK

With over 2,000 employees and 23 offices on four continents, HOK recognized social media applications as an opportunity to truly connect with both their internal and external audiences.



HOK has utilized blogs, Facebook, YouTube, Flickr, LinkedIn, Twitter and more to change the perception of the company from "HOK the big company" to "HOK the creative people."

While all HOK employees are encouraged to comment and participate, the company has established a Facebook Queen, a chief executive tweeter and a Lord of the Flickr to help manage each network. HOK uses these sites for recruiting, sharing photos and videos, and showcasing news about the company and the design industry.

HOK's Social Media Initiatives

Blog	hoklife.com
YouTube	youtube.com/hoklife
Flickr	flickr.com/hoklife
Twitter	twitter.com/hoknetwork
Delicious	delicious.com/hoknetwork
Facebook	facebook.com/hok
LinkedIn	linkedin.com/companies/hok

As with any marketing initiative, it's important to set guidelines and provide training. HOK's corporate team wrote a "Blogger Manifesto" outlining the creative vision and goals for the blog. They also

wrote an HOK Blog Policy regarding topics such as etiquette and confidentiality and hosted a two-day, in-person training session for bloggers to learn about the concept and receive training on how to use the software.

The Life at HOK blog serves as a launching point for all of HOK's other social media applications, which has improved traffic and awareness of the firm. The team is also able to accurately monitor statistics through the blog's Google Analytics site. *"It's been a helpful tool to measure results thus far,"* says the HOK team. *"Success at HOK's other social media applications is continuously monitored through direct user feedback, number of subscribers, number of page views, and active participation."*

Recommendations

Even if you have determined that social networking isn't appropriate for your firm, you should monitor social media, particularly relative to the A/E/C industry. Blogs are a great source for information, and as social media becomes more commonplace, you may decide to add it to your marketing plan down the road.

There are many well respected blogs within our industry including SMPS Atlanta's own at smps-ga.blogspot.com.

Other recommended industry blogs include:

- aecmarketingprogressive.blogspot.com
- constructionmarketingideas.blogspot.com
- blog.civilengineeringcentral.com
- www.sustainablecoin.com

LinkedIn and other professional online social networking sites are another great source for connecting to those in the A/E/C industry.

LinkedIn allows its users to join or create groups that are relative to one's interests. There are

several relevant groups available including ACEC (national and state chapters), AIA (national and local chapters), ASCE (national and local), SMPS (national and local), and others such as AEC Industry Networking Group. These groups present promising opportunities to connect and share

with peers. For example, the SMPS national group has almost 700 members, and discussions are posted and updated daily.

LinkedIn delivers benefits with relatively little effort and, like other aspects of social networking, the more you use it the more you will benefit from its opportunities, connections and community.

Source: SMPS Foundation White Paper, "Social Networking for Competitive Advantage. How professional services firms differentiate themselves to win work, recruit, and retain talent" by Regina M. Connell, Barbara D. Shuck, FSMPS, CPSM, and Marion Thatch, FSMPS, CPSM



About the Author

Anna Harrison is a Marketing Manager for Yates Construction in Atlanta Georgia. Anna has been an active member of the SMPS Atlanta Chapter for over five years and is the Director of the Communications Committee.

K-12 Procurement: Incorporating Sustainability

Despite the economic downturn, national public education spending is up 6.4% over the past year. While other markets have suffered from lack of financing, nearly \$200 billion in state and local government aid was included in the stimulus plan and is strengthening the education sector.



Professional photography of Arabia Mountain High School by Jonathan Hillyer. ©2009 Jonathan Hillyer Photography, Inc.

As spending in this sector is tied to enrollment demands, elementary spending slightly decreased this past year, while middle schools have remained steady and high schools have seen the largest area of spending. Locally, Atlanta Public Schools continues to build projects funded through the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax Program (SPLOST) which collects approximately \$100 million annually.

For these reasons, the K-12 market is attracting more attention from A/E/C firms. The collapse of the residential and retail sectors has caused many consulting firms to branch out into other markets. This has resulted in a highly competitive bidding process, but firms with limited K-12 experience will find it difficult to enter this competition. There are many firms that are established experts in this market, with an understanding of the owner's unique requirements regarding issues such as scheduling, safety and sustainability.

Sustainability

Environmentally friendly public school design and construction requirements are becoming more noticeable in our A/E/C world.

Not only considering LEED Certification, Energy Star Certification is quickly gaining ground. Energy Star involves benchmarking buildings with the EPA's Portfolio Manager software and verifying that a building is in the upper 25th percentile for energy efficiency. If a building meets this requirement, a licensed engineer certifies that the building meets air quality, thermal comfort and lighting standards.

Recent legislation has been passed requiring all new construction of government buildings starting in 2010 to be Energy Star Certified. School systems are exempt but many are incorporating these elements in their facilities as a practical way to cut spending.

Some energy-saving examples include:

- Placing sensors in rooms to cut lights and HVAC after a certain amount of inactivity
- Installing waterless urinals, water-flow sink sensors, and double-flush toilets
- Incorporating natural light and sun-shades
- Selecting building sites that face north-south to reduce energy use

Recent Projects

The \$11 million Springdale Park Elementary school, designed by Perkins+Will and constructed by Barton Malow, will be the first LEED certified project for Atlanta Public Schools. LEED Certification is now a requirement of Atlanta Public Schools for all new facilities. Many school systems are requiring that sustainable elements and practices be incorporated in new construction. DeKalb County Public Schools plans to achieve LEED Silver Certification with the new Arabia Mountain High School.

Design elements for this high school include:

- Bioswales along a building to capture rain water from roof drains and clean the runoff
- Light colored roof areas that reflect sunlight to minimize atmospheric warming
- Materials used in construction of the building will have between 10 and 20% recycled content, i.e., steel, plastic bleachers, and the rubber track

Owner Selection

Owners now have a large pool to choose from

ing Smarter Spending & Sustainability

■ *by: Georgia Roy, Tekla, Inc.*

during the selection process with lower pricing being a major factor. Procurement methods are changing more to a best value scenario to ensure quality of work and to avoid dangers of low-ball non-responsive bidders.

While pricing plays a large part in decision-making, it is not necessarily the ultimate factor as owners recognize the need for quality work and experienced consultants to avoid future mistakes. Prequalification methods still emphasize experience, qualifications and subcontractor relations as top factors in the selection process.

Owners are also realizing the importance of smarter spending. Multiple year maintenance contracts for various services such as painting, playground maintenance, and landscaping allow owners to lock in pricing and prevent rebidding on individual projects year after year.

The K-12 market remains afloat due to the stimulus and local tax plans. By learning to build smarter through more energy efficient methods, schools are not only helping the environment, but also saving money on facility operations and maintenance. However, the most important factor for K-12 facilities continues to be in providing a successful learning and teaching environment. *"The compliments we receive from students and teachers for our school designs are reward enough,"* explains Stevens & Wilkinson's Design Principal, John Abbott, AIA, LEED AP.

About the Author

Georgia Roy is the North American Marketing Coordinator for Tekla, Inc. a 3D Modeling BIM Software Company located in Kennesaw, Georgia and headquartered in Finland. Georgia has been a member of SMPS Atlanta since 2003.

On The Cover: PUTNAM COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

In September 2009, the new Putnam County High School, located in Eatonton, Georgia, opened to rave reviews. The Stevens & Wilkinson design team consisted of in-house architects, engineers and interior designers who worked closely with GMK Associates, the construction management firm. The new high school, the first phase of a three-school master plan on 127 acres, was funded through a voter-approved one cent sales tax. The new school is 177,000 square feet and is designed for 1,200 high school students with a core capacity for 1,000 students.

The use of natural light is prevalent in key areas such as Main Street, the Commons and the Media Center. The Main Street circulation spine of the school connects the Academic Wing, the Commons, Gymnasium, Black Box Theater, and Media Center. The bright and airy materials palette gives the campus a non-institutional appearance. With the need for local agencies to decrease spending, the new Putnam County High School will also provide after-hours use of the Black Box Theater for community programs. Key facilities include classrooms, science labs, a gymnasium with locker and weight rooms, multi-purpose fields, as well as a special education, career services and administrative suite.

For more than 90 years, Stevens & Wilkinson has been one of the leading architecture, engineering and interior design firms in the Southeast. They have set this pace through design excellence, smart solutions and steadfast personal service. Stevens & Wilkinson was founded in 1919 and has offices in Atlanta, Georgia and Columbia, South Carolina.



SMPS Atlanta: Supporting the Troops

■ *by: Josie Vetrano Costa, AHA Consulting Engineers*



U.S. Army Maj. Dan Hibner and Fallujah Water Department Director Hamed Munster go over the drawings of a proposed new water main. Hibner is the officer in charge of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Central District Fallujah Office. DoD photo by Norris Jones, U.S. Army.

The Atlanta Chapter of SMPS has a new **Pay it Forward** challenge this year: we are sending care packages to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the Gulf Region Division (GRD) headquartered in Baghdad, and located throughout Iraq. The Atlanta Chapter will be collecting specific items at each lunch program this year to include in care packages to show our support and appreciation for this important group of construction industry professionals, who have been left out of mainstream “support the troops” efforts.

The GRD is comprised of Civilians, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Contractors. The GRD provides quality and sustainable engineering in support of civil and military construction in Iraq. These projects include hospitals, medical clinics, water treatment facilities, schools and military installations. The GRD is comprised of a small group of about 250 brave men and women who are spread out across Iraq, from resident offices in Baghdad to the Kurdish region in the north. More information about the GRD including their mission and news updates can be found at www.grd.usace.army.mil.

SMPS needs your help!

The Chapter has already collected toys and school supplies at the October luncheon meeting. We have also gathered homemade cookies for the care packages at the November luncheon that should arrive in Baghdad in December and give the GRD a taste of home. Thanks to everyone who donated toys, supplies and baked goods!

At the Chapter Holiday Party on **December 1st** we will be collecting new, unwrapped toys for Toys for Tots. A Marine will be present at the event to collect the toys. We appreciate the continuous generosity of our chapter members. Help us make this event as successful as it was last year!

Please visit our website at smpsatl.org for updates on our **Pay it Forward** challenge and also for upcoming collection dates for our support the troops efforts. For more information on the SMPS Atlanta care package program, please contact Beth Harris, MBP at bharris@mbpce.com.



Army Col. Dan Anninos (left), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region District commander; Army Lt. Col. J.B. Chadwick (center), officer in charge of USACE's Kirkuk office; and Army Maj. Edward Allen, Kirkuk deputy resident officer in charge, relax at one of the six parks under construction in Kirkuk. U.S. Army photo by Mike Scheck.

About the Author: *Josie Vetrano Costa is the Marketing Manager for AHA Consulting Engineers, Inc., a mechanical, electrical, plumbing and fire protection design engineering firm located in Roswell, Georgia. Josie is the blog administrator for the communications committee and has been a member of SMPS Atlanta for 18 months.*

Moore than Stadiums and Skycrapers

■ *by: Cari Gerrits, CPSM, Walter P Moore*

In an effort to make buildings safer and to reduce insured losses to property, major insurance companies, working through the Institute for Home and Business Safety (IHBS), are building a new research center. This center will be able to perform full-scale tests on two-story homes, manufactured homes and small commercial buildings under a myriad of catastrophic threats.

Walter P Moore is providing structural engineering design services for this test facility. The \$36 million complex is centered on a 145' square test chamber with the capacity to test homes with up to 140 mph wind speeds. The wind will be generated by 105, 5'-6" diameter fans, in a precast concrete tower located in an arc 100' away. There will also be rain and hail producing equipment in the test chamber to interact with the winds. Other tests will simulate firestorms as low velocity winds will blow burning embers over the test structures.



To simulate the varying directions from which wind or debris may strike test structures, each specimen will be mounted on a 55-foot diameter turntable. This turntable is capable of supporting a weight of 540,000 pounds, as well as overturning loads from the anchored building structure. In addition to the test chamber, the facility includes observation areas, catwalks with video equipment, offices, labs, and storage space.

Due to the extreme conditions within the test chamber, many design measures were taken to protect the facility. To protect against spreading fire, a 65'x65' deluge sprinkler system was designed to be suspended over the test specimen. This deluge system is mounted on a motorized rigging system that can be lowered to protect a building from fire, or hoisted 30 feet to stay clear during a wind test. The walls of the facility were made of precast concrete to withstand impact from flying debris and to control vibration due to the fan motors. All exposed steel is galvanized to protect from possible corrosion during frequent wet/dry cycles. Walls are acoustically designed to protect observers from the intense noise generated by the fans.

Construction on this facility started in June 2009 and is scheduled to be completed by June of 2010. This facility is located in Chester, South Carolina.

For more information on what Walter P Moore can do for you, contact Doug Robinson, P.E. at drobison@walterpmoore.com or Cari Gerrits, CPSM at cgerrits@walterpmoore.com.

Member Spotlight

Every month, SMPS Atlanta spotlights a **Member of the Month**. These individuals show leadership, dedication and a continued service to the chapter. For more information regarding the Member of the Month, please visit smpsatl.org

August



Tiffany Konenkamp was named August Member of the Month for her continued service to the SMPS Atlanta Chapter and SMPS National. Since serving as Chapter President in 2005, Tiffany has taken a major leadership role in the SE Regional Conference, is currently a member of the chapter's Executive Advisory Council and is serving on several national committees. As a result of this level of commitment from our past chapter leaders, SMPS Atlanta continues to be a leader among other chapters in the nation. Tiffany is the Service and Quality Control Manager for Certified Fire Protection, Inc., a special hazards fire protection company known for expertise in clean agent fire suppression, explosion protection and building fire alarm systems.

September



Eric Keens was named September Member of the Month for his exemplary service to the SMPS Atlanta Chapter. In his first year as a chapter member, Eric has actively served on the Membership Committee providing hands on contributions for the new membership orientation program as well as fulfilled the Co-Chair role for the highly successful *Year End Party* at Fado. For the past eight years, Eric has been the Marketing Associate for Hood Patterson & Dewar Engineers, an electrical and mechanical commissioning & testing firm focused on mission critical facilities around the country and internationally. Eric has been a member of SMPS for over a year and is an active member of the Membership Committee.

October



Beth Harris was selected as the October Member of the Month for her incredibly successful year as President of SMPS Atlanta. After her year of chapter leadership, she took on the challenge of championing the October program, the first big task of the new year for the Programs Committee. Beth coordinated the speaker, content and travel arrangements and has helped develop an excellent program to jump start the new year for the chapter. Beth is the Regional Business Development Manager and Marketing Manager for McDonough Bolyard Peck (MBP). MBP is a multi-disciplined construction consulting firm experienced in assisting clients in managing the construction process from initial budget, through design and construction, to successful project closeout.

November



Heather Collins was selected as the November Member of the Month. She has been instrumental in her service with the Education Committee. Her enthusiasm and participation has been essential in the planning of the *Boot Camp Series*. Heather, a graduate of the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota, started her marketing career in 2003. She joined the A/E/C industry in 2006 as a marketing coordinator at Kimley-Horn and Associates, a national full-service engineering, planning, and environmental consulting firm headquartered in Raleigh, NC. In 2008, Heather relocated to Atlanta to help set up a marketing presence in Kimley-Horn's two Atlanta area offices. She has been a part of SMPS Atlanta for one year and is a member of the Education Committee.

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If you would like to contribute to an *Inspiration* Article, please contact the Editor for upcoming articles and content ideas.

New Members

Janice C. Bowers, Marketing Administrator, M.C. Dean

Ashley Crook, Office Manager, Faithful + Gould

Brian Glaze, P.E., Associate, Pruitt Eberly Stone, Inc.

Amy Granelli, Director of Marketing, Smoak Designs, Inc.

C.G. Jester, Jr., Esq., Vice President, Boyken International, Inc.

Robin M. Moutray, Project Engineer, HSA Engineers & Scientists

Robert Mullen, Marketing Communications Manager,
Jordan Jones & Goulding

Lindsey O'Keefe, Marketing Coordinator, US Cost, Inc.

Pamela E. Parker, Director of Business Development,
Catamount Constructors, Inc.

Scott Pate, President, Sierra Piedmont Engineers & Geologists

On The Move

Laura Melson recently joined Choate Construction as Marketing Assistant.

Chryse Johnson, CPSM recently joined EDT as Marketing Coordinator.

Tom Gardener recently joined Protection Engineering Group opening their Atlanta Office.

SMPS Atlanta Board

President: **Sherri Smith**, Schirmer Engineering Corp.

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