

HEADLINES

Time to Begin Preparing for Elections

Recognition of those Deserving Region and Institute Awards begins

In This Issue

- Guest Message— Marvin Kemp, AIA, FCSI, CDT—”Strategies for Successful Collaboration
- Sheldon Wolfe—CRM 1707—Wayward Websites/ New “Suggestion Box” Community Launched
- Your Board of Directors at Work
- New Source for Communications—Let’s Fix Construction Blog 2018 / February Meeting Flyer
- LRCSI Golf Tournament Flyers
- Let’s Fix Construction Blog Article—”Technology is Ruining AEC?” - Jake Ortego
- Little Rock Chapter Website is Moving
- Let’s Fix Construction Blog Article— “The Value of CDT Certification—RandyNishimura
- Re-Print—Excerpt from the Construction Specifier Express – November 21, 2017 Edition.
- Little Rock Chapter Information





7 COLLABORATION STRATEGIES FOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

At CONSTRUCT 2014 in Baltimore, I gave a presentation called "Building A Highly Collaborative Team." At CONSTRUCT 2017 in Providence, I gave a similar presentation called "Symbiosis: The Importance of Collaboration between the Owner, Architect and Contractor." (Editor's Note: This session was teased in this Let's Fix Construction post from August 29, 2017 here)

Authored by [Marvin Kemp](#)

originally in his Blog

["accidentalleader.blogspot.com"](#) and reprinted in the

Let's Fix Construction Blog.

Both presentations were based on my experiences in construction over the past 20 years and focused on three projects from the past 15 years. In those presentations, I offered 7 strategies for increasing collaboration on construction projects as examples of real world ideas to help the attendees in their jobs. While space won't allow me to give all the background to the stories like I did in the presentations, I think these are still good strategies for anyone involved in team projects, whether in construction or not.

Strategy 1 - It's Sometimes Okay to Work Around Obstinate Team Members

We've all seen them: the one team member who is obstinate or obstructionist and unwilling to compromise. The person who will say the sky is red when the rest of the team says its blue. That's okay. Some people welcome negativity and thrive in that environment. It does not have to bring the whole team down. Work around that person by improving communication with the rest of the team and doing your best to avoid unprofessional situations. As the team gels and everyone does their job and holds each other accountable, the obstinate member will be revealed for the obstructionist which will make the team's success shine more brightly.

Strategy 2 - Communicate More, Email Less

Nearly everyone in our society carries a smartphone in their pocket. The operative part of that title is "phone." Yes, it is a powerful computer that can facilitate messaging in multiple formats - text, email and social media - but it is a phone. All of those other message formats are one-directional: the sender messages someone who can choose to reply or not. Telephones are truly two-way communication, so use it and embrace it. Face to face, two-way communication will always be superior to one-directional email or texting. However, we can't always answer our phones. When you receive someone's outgoing voicemail message, leave a message. Don't rely on them to look at their phone and see that you called in the caller ID. And when you receive a voicemail, return the call. It sounds simple, but



many of us simply don't do it. We say we're too busy or we'll get to it tomorrow. Have some common courtesy to return the call, even if it is to say, "can we talk more tomorrow? Your communication with the team members will increase exponentially.

Strategy 3 - Recognize the Situation

Whether good or bad, recognize the situation that you are in. If you're put in a tough situation, recognize it and work to make it better. Try to make other's jobs easier by doing your job better. If you do that, you will be appreciated as a go-to person and a team player. Your job will then be easier. Also know that all projects and teams have a culture that is cultivated in the early days of the collaboration. Sometimes it's a good culture and sometimes it's a bad culture, but recognize what it is. If warranted, buck the culture in an effort to make things better.

Strategy 4 - Top Down Collaboration

Behaviors start at the top of teams: with the highest managers and executives. If the top leaders buy in to what needs to be done, the rank and file employees will fall in line. It is imperative that leaders exhibit and practice good collaborative behaviors in order for the team to be successful. Show up early for meetings and be prepared. Listen first and then speak. Have respect for the other team members, their needs and their goals. Seek consensus. If our leaders do all of these things, our teams will function more collaboratively and be more successful.

Strategy 5 - Tension Breeds Tentativeness

Bad news is right around the corner. Sometimes you can see it coming and sometimes you cannot. It is almost better when you don't see it coming because many of us become tentative when we see it coming. Tentativeness can lead to the unhealthy form of tension on our project teams. Be willing to embrace the bad news because being tentative will not make the bad news go away. Embrace it, work to fix it and then the whole team can move on. Be a part of the solution and you'll feel better about the news because you worked to solve the problems.

Strategy 6 - Take Care of Your Business Because No One Else Will

In many project teams, perception is reality, however unfair that might be. If you or your firm presents an image of low confidence, low performance or timidity, the rest of the team may move past you. That's a corollary to Strategy 1. Be confident, be believable and be right and things will go more smoothly for you. Being right does not mean always having the answer or knowing everything there is to know. Sometimes the right move for you and for the team and project is to take time, research, analyze and discuss before acting. That is the definition of "taking care of your business."

Strategy 7 - Don't Be Afraid to Communicate and Hold Others Accountable

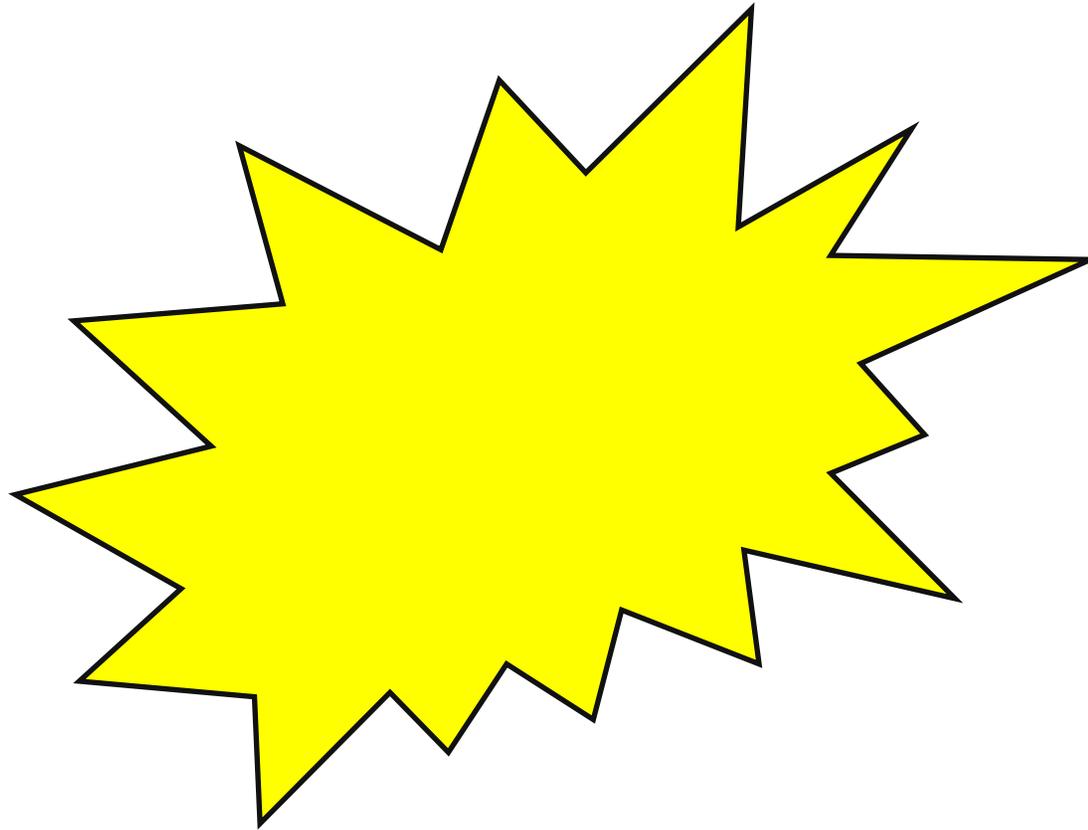
I saw a presentation once that said projects fail for 1 of 3 Reasons:

1. Technology Failures
2. Individual Failures
3. Stakeholder Failures

It was noted that two of those three reasons are PEOPLE. We need to communicate with each other in order to be successful. But as I noted above, communication must be two-ways, not one-directional. Use the telephone to communicate and then follow up with email if a "written" record is needed. That communication should also include the follow up of doing what you say you'll do and when you say you'll do it. That is accountability. Don't be afraid to hold your team members accountable. If a deadline is set and not met, ask why. Not in a negative way, but in an open and honest way: if there's something that you could have done to help the deadline be met, you want to know what that is.

These are simple ideas but ones that are not always easy to practice. It takes work to be able to do all of these every day. I welcome all comments on this list. It is not inclusive, but is a list of things that we should all do in our day-to-day lives, whether work or personal, to make things better.





New on-line community called the “Suggestion Box”.

This is a fully moderated community that we (the Member Connection Committee along with Lizzie Urban, our staff community manager) will use to “mine” suggestions about CSI and how we operate and how we bring value to the membership.

The goal is two-fold (at minimum).

1. Give people a place to speak and be heard about what they want and need from CSI (to reach their full professional potential).
2. De-clutter other (more technical) threads so that advancement of knowledge stays the focus there.

Go to <https://www.csiresources.org/home>, log in and go to the Communities Tab. You will find it there. Join and help everyone do better, improve your Member experience, and maybe even offer a suggestion for something great.

Article Submitted by Sheldon Wolfe, RA, FCSI, CCS, CCCA, CSC—Construction Specifier, Curmudgeon, Heretic Architect



Wayward websites

There's often a lag between the time something new comes along and the time it is fully incorporated into our lives or work. When websites first came online, in the mid-'90s, they had obvious potential but companies weren't sure what to do with them. As I recall, many of them focused on the history of the company, stocks and market activity, and various other things useless to most visitors. The content was what the company owner thought was interesting; it was not what the prospective customers needed.

At the time, there wasn't much in the way of instruction for web designers and there were few rules about how to make a website work or what it should be. An architecture firm in my area had a beautiful website, graced by one of the firm's most impressive projects. The problem was, it took forever to load. I analyzed the code and the files, and discovered they were using a huge image file. They apparently didn't know that there usually is no discernible difference between an image file of a few kilobytes and the same image in a two-megabyte file.

Eventually, website designers grew familiar with HTML and the way web pages should be formatted, companies learned what users wanted, and users learned how to search websites to find what they wanted. Even though most websites weren't perfect and many had serious problems, websites became much better and continued to evolve.

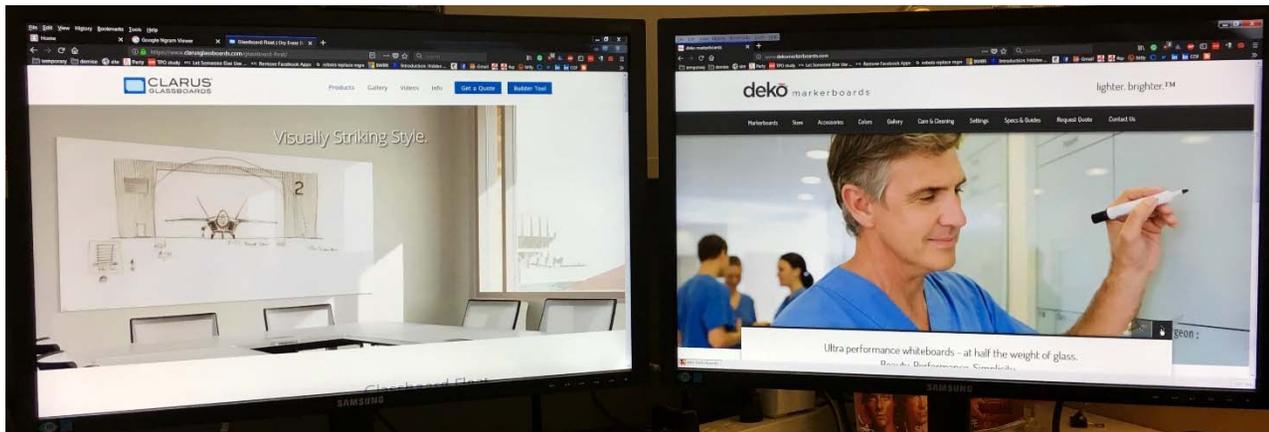
And then, along came mobile devices. At first there were few problems, but in typical fashion, the more people used their smartphones, the more they expected from them, and the more they became like miniature computers, able to do most of what their larger cousins were able to do. Unfortunately, their size - the very thing that made them so useful and contributed to their rapid growth - limited the amount of information they displayed. Monitors had been growing in size for many years, and software was written to take advantage of the available space. Despite the obvious limitations of a small screen, users demanded that websites be fully functional on a smart phone, and website designers did what they could to make everything available to this new market.



All that makes sense, but instead of making *everything* work, computer and software designers merely moved the problem from one machine to another. The first image in this article is a screen capture from my iPhone. It's close to actual size, so you can imagine that it isn't easy to work with. The picture can be resized, though, making it easy to access the various options. The same image on my desk monitor fills the screen from top to bottom. All of the twenty-one links to other information are large enough to read, and all are visible at the same time.

I've been using multiple monitors for a few years, and I've found that I have not yet reached the point where I have enough of them. I used two (the notebook monitor plus one external monitor) for a few years, and acquired a third this summer. It's so much easier to work when several documents or programs can be displayed at once, rather than having to continually pull one on top of the others!

The result of these changing technologies is that I finally have about as much monitor area as I want, but because of the drive toward miniaturization, that space is poorly used by today's software. Here's a picture of my monitors:

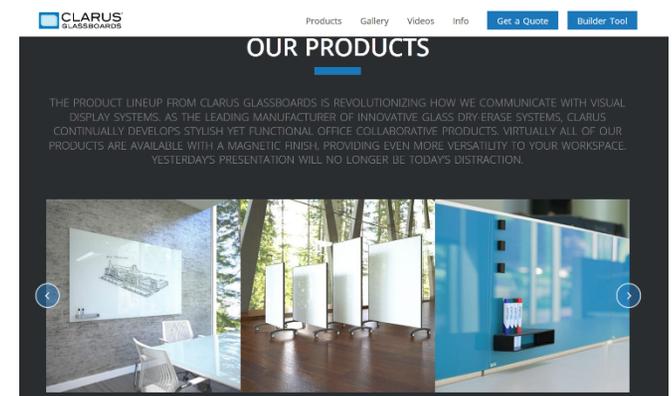


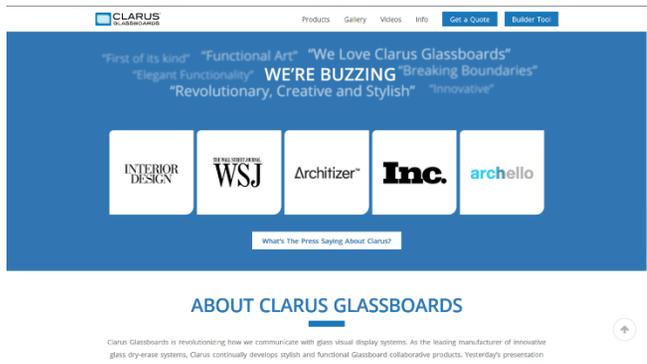
Both are 24-inch monitors, with a viewing area 20-1/2 inches wide by 16 inches tall. That's 164 square inches, or 1.14 square feet per monitor. Total: 2.28 square feet. My iPhone has a screen that is 2-1/2 inches wide by 4 inches tall, total area 10 square inches, or 0.07 square feet.

Now look at the websites on my monitors. Notice the inefficient use of more than two square feet to show two nearly full-screen images and a handful of words. That may

work on my iPhone, assuming I wanted to try to use it to read large quantities of information, but it makes no sense on a standard monitor.

You might be inclined to dismiss this problem, knowing that it's easy to scroll down or choose a menu option. That would be fine, but the same format typically is used throughout the website. So, instead of being able to read a reasonable amount of text on that big You might be inclined to dismiss this problem, knowing that it's easy to scroll down or choose a menu option. That would be fine, but the same format typically is used throughout the website. So, instead of being able to read a reasonable amount of text on that big monitor, the user is forced to scroll through huge graphics and choose options presented in oversized icons. Here are two more examples that show how something designed for a tiny screen makes no sense on a monitor.





I can easily display two Word files on a single screen with a font size even I can read without my glasses, a total of about 1,000 words. With websites like those illustrated here, I might see only as much as 100 words plus a few icons on the entire screen!

Other irritating features of many sites are the pop-up and drop-down screens that often conceal much of the information that was present. Some of these suddenly appear or disappear as the cursor is moved, while others hang on until the cursor is moved to another place.

The crazy thing is that many of these probably are award-winning websites. They can be beautiful, and the bells and whistles can be interesting, but instead of helping the user, they present more obstacles to finding useful information. In a way, they're like magazine architecture. Lots of wow factor, with function as an afterthought.

There *are* ways that websites can detect what device you're using and modify the website content to fit. In fact, the Clarus and Deko websites use this technology. If you visit those sites, you'll see that the arrangement and size of the things you see will change as you shrink or expand the browser window. Unfortunately, the font size appears to be fixed, and while some images will change size, there seems to be a lower limit, and the sizes of many icons are fixed. So, despite the flexibility, the information density is high only on mobile devices, and what is seen on a large monitor is mostly empty space.

For an interesting discussion of current website layout, see <http://blog.teamtreehouse.com/which-page-layout>.

What has your experience been? Do you find yourself doing a lot more scrolling and searching now? How often do you look for product information with a smartphone instead of a computer? Do you write or read specifications on a smartphone?

© 2017, Sheldon Wolfe, RA, FCSI, CCS, CCCA, CSC

[Agree? Disagree? Leave your comments at https://swconstructivethoughts.blogspot.com/2017/12/wayward-websites.html](https://swconstructivethoughts.blogspot.com/2017/12/wayward-websites.html)

YOUR CHAPTER BOARD OF DIRECTORS AT WORK

Your Little Rock Chapter Board of Directors is working hard to make the Little Rock Chapter more relevant to the local Construction Community.

1. Old Business

- a. Set up a Task Team to begin consideration of the Re-Organization of the Chapter doing away with committees. The groundwork has been done by Billy Mathis who will finalize the presentation and publish in the upcoming issue of the Newsletter and on the Website, Facebook and Linked-In for all to review.
- b. Certification Scholarship. We consistently have cash reserves exceeding \$20,000. What if we could use some of that money to provide incentive for persons to take the CDT test and become members. This concept is being successfully utilized by the Portland Chapter and is being looked at for adaptation to the Little Rock Chapter.

2. New Business:

- a. Report from Secretary on the corporate update to the Secretary of State. The Secretary is reviewing the requirements and will report at the Board Meeting.
- b. Set up Audit Team to audit the books for FY2017.
- c. Set up Budget Team to set Budget for FY2018 (once the Audit is complete).
- d. Little Rock to Host Gulf States Region Leadership Conference in 2021. Form a committee to start this and who will be involved. This is just a heads – up. The Chapter should begin committee and task team assignments and selection process.
- e. Upcoming activities:
 - 1) Awards: Bishop Submission Submitted / Board approved submission of Billy J. Mathis, FCSI, CDT for the award.
 - 2) Need to begin consideration of nominations for FY2018 Institute Awards and the OCC.
 - 3) Need to determine if a Chapter Awards Banquet or Celebration will be conducted.
- f. We need more Contractors involved with the Chapter. Need volunteer to get this process off the ground.
- g. The Nominations for the FY2019 Board of Directors need to begin and we need people in multiple positions.

LetsFixConstruction.com

What is it?

Let's Fix Construction is an avenue to offer creative solutions, separate myths from facts and erase misconceptions about the architecture, engineering and construction (AEC) industry.

Possessing hundreds of years of combined experience in all facets of construction, the contributors of 'Let's Fix Construction' demonstrate the way things are supposed to be in AEC. It is sometimes too easy to offer complaints without offering a resolution and that is why 'Let's Fix Construction' was born.

While we aren't here to offer solutions to *all* of the problems you face, we are here to let you know that you aren't the only one seeing issues in the office or in the field. We are here to offer a new point of view, our thoughts on what we see and perhaps an answer or two along the way that you may be able to use.

Would you like to contribute your voice? Read here for how

WHO?

Let's Fix Construction was co-founded by two opposing coast AEC professionals.

Eric D. Lussier of [Precision Athletic Surfaces](#), hailing from the East, just outside of Burlington, Vermont and Cherise Lakeside, Specifier for [LSW Architects](#) of Vancouver, WA and representing the West.

Having met through the Construction Specifications Institute and keeping in touch through social media, Eric and Cherise decided to do more than just gripe about issues plaguing the industry, and created [LetsFixConstruction.com](#) on August 15, 2016.

LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER
CONSTRUCTION SPECIFICATIONS INSTITUTE

LUNCH AND A SEMINAR—WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2018

Lunch 11:30 am
Seminar 12:00 p.m.



Please make reservations online at
[Http://littlerock.csinet.org](http://littlerock.csinet.org)

Cost of the Meal is being Sponsored by
Specialties Plus, Inc.

Questions or Problems should be sent to
Billy Mathis - bjmathis@taggarch.com

LOCATION:

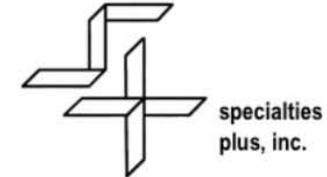
Baldwin & Shell Construction Conference
Room

1000 West Capitol, Little Rock, AR
72201

**Reservation Deadline: Please RSVP
by Noon, Tuesday, February 20, 2018**
(LRCSI must guarantee meal count
for the Presentation)

SPEAKER:

Terry Davis, Specialties Plus, Inc



PROGRAM:

Roofing Warranty—What Lies Within

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

PVC is one of the most diverse products in the building industry and one of the most misunderstood. This presentation will help to better understand why PVC is one of the most versatile and modifiable thermoplastics. With all the different formulations, types, reinforcements and construction, knowledge of this product type will assist the specifier in creating better specifications.

Objectives

1. Attendees of this presentation will learn the history of PVC and learn how truly safe it is to the environmental and building occupants.
2. Understand how PVC roofing membranes fit within the building code for fire resistance, fit within industry energy programs offering a more sustainable opportunity, and review studies on service life of the material, so the designer is more prepared to discuss PVC options with the building owner.
3. To learn the about the major different components, such as the thickness, scrim choice, and formula in the manufacturing of PVC roofing membranes and how together they impact on its longevity and performance.
4. Learn about the latest enhancement option for PVC membranes through the types of plasticizers and how different plasticizers offer a wider range of durability and mitigate issues for applicators and building owners.

Approved 1.0 CEU / HSW by AIA.

Little Rock Chapter, CSI Annual Golf Tournament

Where: Country Club of Arkansas
Maumelle, Arkansas

When: Friday, May 4, 2018
Registration: 07:00 a.m.
Shotgun Start: 08:00 a.m.

In order to put on this event, we need companies to be sponsors and help offset the costs associated with the Tournament. The Little Rock Chapter, CSI, holds an Annual Golf Tournament in order to raise funds for two purposes. The first is the replenishment of our Scholarship Funds and the second is to replenish our Operating Fund so we can sponsor Member attendance to Region and Institute Events as well as provide assistance to those desiring to attain one of the Certifications CSI offers.

EVENT SPONSOR: \$650.00
(Hole Sponsorship Logo In-Cart Display and 2 Complimentary Lunches)

HOLE & TEAM SPONSOR: \$725.00
(Includes 4 Player Team with Lunch and Hole Sponsorship Logo In-Cart Display)

FOOD AND BEVERAGE CART SPONSOR: \$400.00
(Includes Custom Sign on Beverage Cart and 2 Complimentary Lunches)

HOLE SPONSOR \$350.00
(Includes Hole Sponsorship Logo In-Cart Display)

All Sponsorships will also receive placement on the Tournament Sponsors Billboard, a write-up in the Next LRCSI Newsletter, and a "shout out" during the Tournament Trophy Program.

Name of Company: _____
Level of Sponsorship: _____
Amount of Sponsorship: \$ _____

Payment can be made by Check or through PayPal. Check Payment should be made out to LRCSI Golf Tournament. Contact Billy Mathis—bjmathis@taggarch.com for further information or to request an invoice for PayPal payment.

**Interested in being
a Sponsor for the
annual Little Rock
Chapter CSI Golf
Tournament**

Little Rock Chapter, CSI Annual Golf Tournament

Where: Country Club of Arkansas
Maumelle, Arkansas

When: Friday, May 4, 2018
Registration: 07:00 a.m.
Shotgun Start: 08:00 a.m.

Entry Fees: (Includes Complimentary: Lunch, Range Balls, Green Fees, Cart, and Bottled Spring Water)

4 Man Team: \$450.00

Single Player: \$125.00

Registration Deadline is Thursday, May 4, 2017.

Registration Information:

Captain _____

Single Player Name

Player 2 _____

Player 3 _____

All Players must be paid in full prior to the day of the Tournament. See below for payment information.

Player 4 _____

Name of Company: _____

Team or Single Player

Amount Included: \$ _____

Payment can be made by Check or through PayPal. Check Payment should be made out to LRCSI Golf Tournament. Contact Billy Mathis—bjmathis@taggarch.com for further information or to request an invoice for PayPal payment.

**Interested in
playing or fielding
a team in the
annual Little Rock
Chapter CSI Golf**

TECHNOLOGY IS RUINING AEC?



Contributed by Jake Ortego

Within the last few months, I have heard each of these statements:

- BIM is the best
- BIM is the worst
- BIM creates a better design
- BIM disrupts the natural design process
- BIM reduces errors
- BIM stifles creativity
- BIM takes huge (or unnecessary) processing power

I'm sure that each of these statements is rooted in a truth relative to a certain point in the AEC process. But buried in many of the comments is an increasing feeling that the quality of the design documents themselves are on a downward slope despite the notion that technologies such as BIM should be improving the designs.

Many will admit that the idea of BIM is fantastic. Albeit, a true single building model is a dream that may be unrealistic. These concepts are then quickly countered with criticism that the technology creates nearly as many problems as it fixes. Even the most outspoken BIM supporter would agree that it is not a perfect system. So, should we abandon it for the "old school 2D" model?

Put that thought aside for a minute and set the way-back machine to the 1860s. Back then, chemists figured out a way to duplicate a drawing using ferro-gallate. Construction reprographics was born...with a blue tinge. And with that, an entire profession was eliminated. The once critical job held by tracers and copiers was now a thing of the past.

What does this have to do with BIM?

Everything!

While drawing reprographics seems like simple technology to us now, imagine how revolutionary it was when it was invented. There were many who undoubtedly thought it created more problems than it solved. Somewhere I recall reading that the design professionals of the time criticized early blueprints for being "...inadequate and free translations of the author's original lines." It took 20 to 30 years for the cost of the blueprint to drop low enough to make hand copies and tracing uneconomical. And it wasn't until the 1940s that someone figured out how to drop the blue and go to the white sheets we see today.

Now, we can't imagine not having instant reprographics of the drawings. This clunky new technology changed AEC forever. Then there was CAD. This technology got its start in the 1950s and you better believe that it was not an instant hit. CAD was criticized for inhibiting the brainstorming process and viewed as much slower than traditional sketching. But at the same time, it spawned libraries of standard steel shapes, doors, patterns, and that "person" that is put in the drawing for height comparison.

I remember hearing grumblings about CAD vs. hand drawings even into the 90s. The older designers would talk about how the younger generation would make the drawings too complicated and put less care into their work. But let's be honest, no one is out there building skyscrapers and power plant with hand drawn designs. Like blueprinting, CAD has become an integral tool for our AEC.

Technology happens despite the tried and true methods that have built up an industry over years and generations. Go to the movies and take note that you are watching a completely digital product. Not so long ago, no one could conceive of replacing all that cellulose with ones and zeros. Now, the major filmmakers can't see going back. Or think of how the modern computers are on nearly every desk in every office, while in the 1980s we used terms like Computerphobia to describe the fear of these machines. Even take a more relevant AEC tool such as scheduling. Whether you are a [Primavera](#) purist or are happy with [MS Project](#), it is inconceivable to not use a scheduling tool for complex sequences.

But, yet, it wasn't always so.

C. Arthur Clarke said, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." BIM certainly would seem like magic to a builder of 1861 equipped with their fancy blueprinting machine. While it is unlikely that there are modern architects, engineers, or construction professionals believing that BIM is magic, there are many who like to blame BIM for the decline in design quality and increased costs. And they are probably right about some of the design outputs.

So once again, does that mean we shouldn't use BIM? Or technology?

BIM is an evolution of design tools. This evolution goes from reprographics to CAD and then onto 3D CAD and the early pioneers of single building models like [Bentley MicroStation](#) and [ArchiCAD](#). In my opinion, BIM is just another step in this evolutionary process. Perhaps the next phase is designing in augmented reality and then onto 3D printing structures and process lines. I'm sure the technology will take all type of twists and turns in the future to the point that the BIM of today will seem like the hand tracing of the past. But more important than where it is going, BIM is a tool of today. And there is a difference between knowing how to use a tool and knowing what to use the tool for. By itself, a hammer has no idea what to do with a nail or piece of wood. And, knowing how to swing a hammer and saw a piece of wood doesn't make you a carpenter...even if you are the best hammer(er) and saw(er) person on the planet. The key is to have a grasp of what you are trying to create and how you are going to get there. This is as true for carpentry as it is for AEC.

From the wheel to the smart phone, we integrate technology into our lives and come to rely on it. Let's face it, it's much more efficient to cut and paste something that's already been designed. And it should be! That is a core part of CAD. CAD and BIM tools go so much further than just cut and pasting. These are today's tools that help our industry get their job done. But there is a limitation to the tool. There is a part where the creative, adaptable, and experienced human mind takes over to create innovative results. This can manifest in the form of unique architecture, a brilliantly simple engineering solution, or the knowledge of what is practical in the field.

BIM is the latest in a string of technological tools at our disposal. Like a hammer, you can't blame BIM (or CAD or Reprographics) for a poor-quality product. It is important for our industry to understand the current limitations and know that the tools by themselves cannot solve every design issue. We still need to understand what we are trying to achieve with any design. This includes if something is buildable, functional, and accomplishes its purpose. This is a concept that must be understood by new people to the field, as well as seasoned veterans.

Technology does not ruin AEC. But the users can if they depend solely on the technology without fully grasping what they are doing with the tools.

Little Rock Chapter Website is Moving

The Little Rock Chapter Website is moving from the current location (link <http://littlerock.csinet.org/>) to it's new location (link <https://csilittlerock.org>). There are several reasons for the move but the primary reason is that Institute is no longer able to support the old Microsite we have been using. This new website is in the process of being built and should be fully functional in the next few weeks. For now, basic information has been uploaded along with the most current Chapter Newsletters. Please check back with us periodically as new features are added. The old website will cease to function at the end of March this year so please go ahead and move your favorites link to the new website.



THE VALUE OF CDT CERTIFICATION



Contributed by [Randy Nishimura](#)

Change is a constant in architecture and construction. If anything, the pace of this change is accelerating. We all struggle to keep up with the latest developments in an effort to remain competitive. Our success is contingent upon how quickly we adapt in an environment buffeted by forces largely beyond our control. Survival of the fittest is a maxim always in play.

If there is another constant in our industry it is the importance of clear, concise, correct and complete construction documentation and communications. Architecture and construction are increasingly dependent upon the effective conveyance of design intent. They are likewise dependent upon the clear definition of project responsibilities and roles detailed by the forms of agreement most widely used in construction projects. It's important and necessary for everyone — owners, architects, engineers, specifiers, general contractors, subcontractors, construction materials suppliers, and others — to understand project delivery options, standard forms of agreement, means for organizing drawings and specifications, etc.

Change and the Four C's of construction documentation are not incompatible. A key to managing the former and mastering the latter is knowledge, specifically fluency with the lingua franca of our industry. Knowledgeable employers highly value those who understand the language of construction, its underlying principles and terminology, and the critical relationships between all the participants in any design and construction undertaking. Employees who thoroughly understand this language not only survive but are more likely to thrive. They are the winners in today's challenging and constantly changing environment.

So, how can you demonstrate your construction knowledge and competence? How can you stand out in the crowd? One of the best ways is to achieve CSI's [Construction Documents Technologist](#) (CDT) status.

The Construction Specifications Institute developed the CDT program decades ago to provide training in construction documentation for architects, contractors, contract administrators, specifiers, and manufacturers' representatives. Since then, it has become the cornerstone for all of CSI's certification programs, which presently include Certified Construction Specifier (CCS), Certified Construction Contract Administrator (CCCA), and Certified Construction Product Representative (CCPR).

Passing the CDT examination means you have become fluent with construction project processes and communication. It means you've demonstrated professional commitment, credibility, and reliability to your employer, colleagues, and clients. Obtaining CDT status benefits you, your company, and your customers. Getting your CDT also means acquiring the privilege to add "CDT" after your name on your business card and resume.

In some respects, I regard the value of the CDT as analogous to that of a liberal arts degree, in that both provide a foundation for more advanced learning. I became a CDT back in 1989, and subsequently achieved Certified Construction Specifier status a couple of years later. There's no doubt in my mind that studying for and passing both examinations has served me very well professionally. What I learned provided me with a solid knowledge base I've relied upon throughout my career. I know I'm a much better architect than I might have been without the benefit of what I learned through those two certification programs. I truly believe this knowledge equipped me with the ability to better cope with the accelerating changes in our industry by ensuring I first thoroughly grasped the time-tested fundamentals of construction documentation and communications.

I highly encourage any of you who are simply curious about CDT certification to seriously consider learning more about its value. Ask others besides me who have become CDTs. Or check out [CSI's YouTube channel](#) for informational webinars about its certification programs. The webinars provide more information than I have shared here. Each webinar covers the requirements and resources needed for successful exam preparation and study. Many [local CSI chapters](#) also offer educational courses to help those interested prepare for the examinations.

As the saying goes, knowledge is power. Knowledge provides a competitive edge. Give your knowledge about construction documents and communication a boost by becoming a Construction Documents Technologist. The true value of CDT certification is beyond calculation—it's priceless.

Volunteerism

Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another.

Erma Bombeck

Volunteers are paid in six figures... S—M—I—L—E—S.

Gayla LeMaire

Those who can, do. Those who can do more, volunteer.

Author Unknown

Volunteers are love in motion!

Author Unknown

Volunteers don't get paid, not because they're worthless, but because they're priceless.

Sherry Anderson

LITTLE ROCK CHAPTER INFORMATION

Chapter Officers

President:		Garrett Shaffer, CSI
President-Elect:		Open
Immediate Past President:		Clark Wood, CSI
Vice President:		Open
Secretary:	T	Tiffany Henry, CSI-EP
Treasurer:		David Bradke, CSI
Directors		
Operations		Open
Communications		Tyler Newton, CSI
Honors		Rachal Belanger, CSI
Education		Zac Corbitt, CSI

Chapter Info

Chapter Website:	http://littlerock.csinet.org/
Chapter Newsletter:	SpecWork
Chapter Meeting Day and Time:	2nd Wednesday of Each Month unless otherwise specified by the Chapter President
Chapter Board Meeting Day and Time:	1st Friday of each Month unless otherwise specified by Chapter President

If you are interested in following the Little Rock Chapter, our links are as follows (*for Facebook and LinkedIn look for the Little Rock Chapter*):

Website: <http://littlerock.csinet.org/>

Facebook: www.facebook.com

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com

If you are interested in Joining CSI or if you are just interested in keeping up with the information provided by CSI, See the slides shown from the "Why CSI" presentation