

PERSPECTIVE

A Publication of the Association of Proposal Management Professionals

EXORCIZE YOUR PROPOSAL DEMONS!



The "Get-It-Out-The-Door" Demon

By Chuck Keller, AFAPMP

This demon leads a proposal team to focus on planning, writing, and reviewing a proposal at the expense of planning and allotting enough time to produce the proposal for delivery. When the proposal is ready for production and this demon strikes, the proposal team can find itself in a mad dash to get the proposal out the door for delivery by the submittal deadline.

To avoid the errors and omissions— and heartburn— caused by this demon's time squeeze, assume that proposal production— printing, assembly, and packaging— and delivery can take more time than you think, and if something can go wrong, it will. (Mr. Murphy is a first cousin to the "Get-It-Out-The-Door"

New Perspective Feature

In this new regular feature in the *Perspective*, the Proposal Exorcist (aka Chuck Keller) will preach sermonettes about how to avoid and combat proposal demons that can haunt your proposal. His first published exorcist sermon appeared in the Fall/Winter issue the *APMP Journal*. Chuck is owner of Keller Proposal Development & Training, President of ProposalCafe.com, and the APMP Accreditation Program Director. To suggest proposal demons for attention in future sermonettes, contact the Proposal Exorcist at kellerpdt@aol.com.

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- A Proposal Management "Mission Impossible"—Joe Kralovec
- Teaming and Subcontracting: How Do You Know If You Have a Winning Team? —Maria Witkowski and Kirste Webb
- When Price is the Object—Michael Tresko
- 40 Years of “Getting in the Winner’s Circle!” —Jay Herther
- Green Delivery: A Winning Proposition—Kym Harrington
- Success Metrics: How to Define and Measure Effectiveness—Tracy Warren and Howard Nutt
- Business Growth Through Great Client References—Joanne Libby
- Differentiate Yourself as a Proposal Professional—Melissa DeMaio and Bobbie O’Brien
- Harness the Power of Social Networking on Your Intranet—Bill Cava.

Each speaker brought a unique perspective and experience to bear on his or her chosen subject matter. Some presentations were thought provoking, others humorous; all were informative and targeted to the Nor’easters membership. The chapter chairs selected a mix of topics and speakers to engage an audience with a variety of perspectives: government versus commercial, one-person department versus large proposal group, graphic artist versus technical writer, and proposal newbie versus seasoned pro.



Howard Nutt and Tracy Warren present on success metrics.

Corporate sponsorship grows

“Bridging the Gap” was fortunate to receive even more corporate support than its predecessor event. In all, six sponsors attended and exhibited at the symposium: SalesEdge, XRSolutions, Proposal Software, Sant, and Strategic Proposals (all Platinum Partners), as well as SM&A (an Event Partner). In addition, Mimeo graciously printed the “Bridging the Gap” event guides for all attendees.

Symposium sponsors provided financial support, sales and promotional materials, and generously donated a variety of popular raffle prizes. Throughout the event, attendees had numerous opportunities to visit each sponsor booth and see firsthand a range of industry-leading proposal services and solutions.



One of six sponsor tables at the symposium.

Recognition, giveaways, and awards

“Bridging the Gap” speakers and sponsors were recognized with certificates of appreciation for their role in supporting the event, and making it a positive learning and networking experience for attendees. Participants had chances throughout the day to win one of the many raffle prizes donated by chapter sponsors and the chapter itself. Attendees also received an event bag, which included sponsor brochures, a variety of promotional items, and a “Bridging the Gap” CD containing all speaker presentations and event materials.

To close out the symposium, chapter president Jon Myerov presented the first-ever APMP Nor’easters President’s Awards to

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four Nor'easters board members who have had a continuous leadership role in the chapter since it was reactivated in the fall of 2005. Those recognized were Lisa Payne (Treasurer), Beth Goonan (Programs), Tim Nason (Membership), and Gregg Kulichik (Web/PR).



APMP Nor'easters President's Award recipients.

And the survey says...

Last year's post-symposium e-survey provided valuable feedback that was used to make the 2008 event even better. In the spirit of continuous improvement, another online survey was conducted following this year's symposium to capture attendees'

thoughts on "Bridging the Gap." Thirty percent of attendees participated in the survey, and overall feedback was again quite positive. One example:

"I just wanted to send a quick email to both thank and congratulate you on putting together a fantastic event. Although I've been in the proposal world for 10 years, this was my very first APMP symposium. Both the breakout sessions and the key note speaker were excellent. Tom Sant's perspective on "bridging the gap" was both informative and hilarious - he could have a career in stand up! Again, well done on putting together this event, I will certainly be looking forward to the next one."

Further, as indicated in the following graphic, survey respondents rated such event metrics as the quality of speakers, professional development opportunities, registration process and quality of materials as either "good" or "excellent."

The survey results netted some excellent suggestions for topics, speakers, and areas of improvement for 2009 and beyond.

Parting thoughts

Despite the recent economic downturn, the excellent turnout at the APMP Nor'easters "Bridging the Gap" symposium highlights the continued interest in, and need for, proposal-related events in the northeastern US. While there are still challenges ahead for the chapter and the profession, the ongoing collaboration and networking among proposal professionals continues to narrow the gap. See you at the next event! ■

* Please rate the following items based on your impression of this event:


1 = N/A, 2 = Poor, 3 = Fair, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent

Answer	1	2	3	4	5	Number of Response(s)	Rating Score*
Professional development opportunities				4		31	4.0
Networking opportunities				4		31	4.2
Overall quality of event				4		31	4.2
Quality of materials (N/A if you didn't receive the CD)				4		31	4.0
Overall organization of event				4	1	30	4.6
Registration process (N/A if you didn't register yourself.)				4		30	4.1
Quality of speakers				4		31	3.8

*The Rating Score is the weighted average calculated by dividing the sum of all weighted ratings by the number of total responses.

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