



Chapter Toolkit

From Start to Finish:
Navigating Chapter Conferences

AMPP
Toolkit

2023-2024



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Overview

The creation of this Conference Toolkit aims to empower Chapters in their endeavor to plan and host impactful conferences at the local level. Conferences hold immense significance as they serve as catalysts for community building, collaboration, professional growth, and shaping the future of our technical landscape.

Within this comprehensive resource guide, Chapters will find invaluable support in organizing successful events independently. By leveraging the information and tools provided, Chapters can enhance their event planning capabilities, ensuring the delivery of exceptional conferences that meet their members' and stakeholders' needs and expectations.

The AMPP Conference and Exhibits team readily offers guidance throughout the planning process. In addition, Chapters can explore co-sponsorship opportunities with AMPP, enabling them to benefit from a collaborative partnership in delivering outstanding events.

With this Conference Toolkit at their disposal, AMPP Chapters are equipped with the necessary resources to take charge of their conference planning, creating impactful experiences that drive professional development, foster collaboration, and shape the future of their technical domains.

For questions regarding this toolkit, please contact Lesley Martinez, Conference Manager, at Lesley.Martinez@ampp.org for additional assistance.



Why Your Chapter Should Host a Conference

Hosting a conference for an association can bring numerous benefits to local chapters. Here are some compelling reasons why local chapters should consider hosting a conference:

1. **Networking Opportunities:** Hosting a conference gives local chapters unique opportunities to bring together professionals, experts, and enthusiasts from their specific industries or field. It allows attendees to connect, share knowledge, exchange ideas, and build valuable relationships within their local community.
2. **Community Engagement:** A conference hosted by a local chapter fosters a sense of community and belonging among association members. It strengthens the local network, encourages collaboration, and creates a platform for individuals to engage in meaningful discussions and initiatives.
3. **Knowledge Sharing and Education:** Conferences offer a platform to share industry-specific insights, best practices, and the latest advancements. By hosting a conference, local chapters can contribute to the professional development of their members and provide valuable educational opportunities, including keynote speeches, workshops, and panel discussions.
4. **Brand Visibility and Recognition:** Hosting a conference elevates the visibility and reputation of the local Chapter within the Association and the broader industry. It establishes the Chapter as a key player and thought leader, attracting attention and recognition from professionals, organizations, and stakeholders.
5. **Revenue Generation:** Conferences can be a significant revenue source for local chapters. Through registration sales, sponsorships, and exhibitor fees, hosting a conference allows chapters to generate funds to support their operations, initiatives, and future events.
6. **Leadership and Professional Growth:** Organizing a conference provides local chapter members with valuable leadership development opportunities. Taking on planning and organizing roles allows individuals to enhance their project management, communication, and teamwork skills, making them more effective leaders within the Association and in their professional lives.
7. **Showcasing Local Expertise:** Hosting a conference allows local chapters to highlight their unique strengths and expertise within their geographical area. It provides a platform to showcase local talent, businesses, and resources, further solidifying the Chapter's position as a hub of knowledge and expertise.
8. **Membership Growth and Retention:** A well-executed conference can attract new members to the local Chapter and increase overall membership retention. The opportunity to participate in a high-quality conference enhances the perceived value of association membership, encouraging individuals to become active members and renew their membership in subsequent years.

By hosting a conference, local chapters can create a vibrant and thriving community, contribute to professional growth, and elevate the Association's presence within the industry. It offers a platform for networking, education, and collaboration, ultimately benefiting the local Chapter and its members.

Resources for Chapters to Plan and Host a Conference

Before hosting an event, a Chapter should consider several important factors to ensure its success. The following topics are vital considerations your Chapter should consider before hosting a conference. This list is incomplete, as there may be other key considerations your Chapter should consider before hosting a conference; however, this listing of factors can help lay a solid foundation for a successful event.

Conference Planning Timeline

18 months – 12 months in advance

- ▶ Event date and location selected 18 months in advance of the event date.
- ▶ Host hotels selected and contracts signed if applicable.
- ▶ Committee created to include but not limited to the following positions: Event Chair, Event Co-Chair, Technical Chair, Technical Co-Chair, Sponsorship & Exhibits Chair, Awards Chair, Marketing Chair and Entertainment Chair.
- ▶ Create and review budget with participant goals (sponsorships, exhibits and attendees) and typical expenses associated with running a conference.
- ▶ A Marketing Plan created and approved.
- ▶ Sponsorships and Exhibits created and approved.
- ▶ Website built and published.

12 months - 6 months in advance

- ▶ Technical Program topics created, and Call for Abstracts opened no later than 12 months before the event date.
 - Call for Abstracts closed, and speakers selected and notified 8 months in advance.
- ▶ Flyers created for distribution. Translated materials included when appropriate.
- ▶ Keynote speakers identified and contacted.
- ▶ VIPs identified and contacted.
- ▶ Outside venues for any special activities, receptions or dinners selected and booked.
- ▶ Outside vendors (e.g., audio visual, security, greeters, decorators, transportation, translators, and photographers) selected and booked.

6 months – 3 months in advance

- ▶ Speakers contacted with further instructions and guidelines.
- ▶ Advanced Technical Program completed and published no later than 5 months in advance
- ▶ Send monthly status updates to event stakeholders at 6-4 months in advance.
- ▶ Send weekly status updates to stakeholders beginning at 3 months until one week prior to the conference.

3 months – 1 month in advance

- ▶ Sponsorship fulfillment items ordered (e.g., lanyards, notebooks and bags)
- ▶ Exhibitor kit distributed.
- ▶ Presentations reviewed and Final Program created.
- ▶ Food and beverage and audio-visual needs finalized.
- ▶ Final numbers sent to venue and additional vendors if necessary.
- ▶ All signage created and approved.
- ▶ Awards and gifts ordered.

1 month – opening of event

- ▶ Review and approve all event orders.
- ▶ Final venue walk-thru and pre-conference meeting.
- ▶ “Know Before You Go” instructions sent to all registered attendees.



Location Selection

A hotel may be the ideal setting for Chapter Conferences for your needs. Convention centers can be costly and should only be considered if the anticipated attendance exceeds 750 registrants. When selecting the location for your meeting, consider the following:

Overall Destination: Accessibility and cost are important factors when attendees determine if they will attend a conference. Is your destination accessible by air, train, and/or ground transportation? What does an average flight cost in the region?

Venue Location: The location should include sleeping rooms or easy access to nearby hotels and restaurants, preferably within walking distance and/or near good public transportation to make it easy for attendees to get to and from the site.

Meeting and Exhibit Layout: It is important for the meeting to be in one central location, making it easy for attendees to move from session to session. Hotel and conference center meeting areas are designed to provide good traffic flow during a meeting and offer a variety of rooms of varying sizes to comfortably accommodate sessions and events. They should also have a variety of resources in the venue that might be needed to support a meeting (e.g., exhibition companies, event planners, and AV support companies). When selecting a venue, it is possible to negotiate for these items to be included at a lower cost. Many hotels will offer special discount room rates and may provide free meeting rooms depending on the number of sleeping rooms guaranteed in the contract. Attendees are more likely to visit the exhibition if it is convenient to the sessions. Increased traffic for exhibitors may influence their decision to participate as an exhibitor in future area conferences.

Food and Beverage: Attendees have easy access to meals. Venues located in major cities allow attendees access to dining and evening social activities at a variety of price ranges. It also means that there are hotels in the area offering a range of room rates to better accommodate attendee budgets. When considering a venue, ask for their event catering menu to compare prices with other venues. The cost of food in some locations may be expensive. Food and beverage is a significant portion of the budget. Look at things like the cost of coffee/tea, muffins, boxed lunches, buffet lunches, reception food, beer, and wine. Compare the cost of these items across multiple venues.

Internet Access: Inquire about internet access for conference attendees. Is access complimentary? Is it available for purchase? Can it be provided by the conference organizers for a fee? As we continue to move towards a paperless environment, the desire for internet access continues to grow but can often be costly.

Business Center: Business centers provide attendees/vendors/speakers/staff with a place to receive deliveries of shipments. Most hotels have business centers to meet these needs.

Social Events: What activities are there to do in the area in the evening and after the conference ends? What events does the Section want to include as part of the programming? Remember that off-site activities may have an additional venue rental fee, food and beverage minimums, and require transportation. Will the event be free or require attendees to purchase an additional ticket? For conferences attracting a more local audience, keep in mind that tourist destinations may not be as popular if many of the attendees are local.

Potential Partnerships for Collaboration: Some of the most successful conferences and events are due to strong partnerships with local governments, laboratories, industry partners, and universities. Are the destination and venue considered close to any of these potential partners? Do members of the committee have contacts within these organizations to conduct outreach? Developing these partnerships can help contribute to off-site events, tours, sponsorships, and increased attendance.

Event Contracts

Per the Chapter affiliation agreement, any contracts with hotels, convention or event centers require review by headquarters before the Chapter executes any contracts. Contract review also applies to any contracts that exceed \$2,500 in value.

AMPP staff will review contracts for any potential risks and may suggest edits based on staff expertise.

This process not only helps ensure fair contract negotiation for our Chapters but also gives headquarters transparency into contracts signed in the Association's name. Remember, even if you execute an agreement under the name of your Chapter, your Chapter operates under the EIN of AMPP and is essentially signing agreements to the responsibility of AMPP.

Forward contracts for review to membership@ampp.org.



Financial Considerations

Having a well-planned and carefully managed conference budget is of the utmost importance. Below are some considerations when planning your event budget.

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Revenue	Expenses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Registration fees (consider the number of complimentary and discounted registrations as this can have a significant impact on the revenue)■ Sponsorships■ Exhibitors■ Guest Registration Program (if applicable)■ Banquet tickets (if applicable)■ Miscellaneous (i.e., conference proceedings)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Venue Rental (Note: some items can be included in the venue rental)■ Food and Beverage (Note: some venues have a required minimum you must spend)■ Audiovisual: projectors, screens, computers, etc.■ Printing: flyers, programs, signs■ Advertising■ Photography (if applicable)■ Sponsorship (items that must be purchased to fulfill the sponsorship, such as bags or pens)■ Entertainment■ Transportation■ Decorator/Labor (i.e., exhibit hall set-up, registration area, etc.)■ Equipment rental (i.e., registration systems, computers)■ Shipping costs (i.e.; supplies to venue)■ Travel (if applicable for keynote, plenary, or VIP)

Suggested Registration Categories

Determining your registration fees will help you anticipate some of your revenue and expenses associated with the conference.

Category	Fee
Member	The base registration fee for the conference.
Non-member	20% or more than the member registration fee paid in advance or onsite. A benefit of membership is reduced fees at conferences, so you want to charge non-members more than members.
Student Member	Reduced or waived fees.
Unemployed Members Retired Members Special VIP Guests	Reduced or waived fees. Reduced fees for these groups are at the discretion of the conference organizing committee and should be properly vetted.

Offer Early Discounted Fees

An early discounted rate is typically offered before the full registration fee goes into effect. There are many benefits to offering discounts not just for the attendees but for the conference as well.

Reward: Attendees are rewarded for early registration with access to popular sessions and keynote speeches.

Buzz: As attendees register early, this provides more time for them to promote your conference to other colleagues and friends.

Marketing Evaluation: Based on the number of registrations during the early discounted rate time period, marketers can evaluate their efforts and determine if a further push is necessary.

Cancellation/Refund Policy

Clearly state the cancellation and refund policy on the registration form and conference website and in the registration confirmation letter.

Typical refund policies:

- Cancellations must be made in writing.
- Fees are refundable within 30+ days of the event, less a processing fee. The refund is reduced by a small fee, usually US\$50 to US\$100, to cover the administrative costs of processing and refunding a registration.
- Cancellations less than 30 days prior to the start of the event can be 50%-100% of the registration fee.
- Refunds are made within seven to ten days of receiving the cancellation.
- If a cancellation is made within 30 days of the start of the event, the refund is made after the event.

QUICK TIPS

Never extend the deadline for the early discounted rate and ensure you market the early rate as much and as often as possible.

Organizing Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Building your team is a critical step to planning your conference. Look at your Chapter members to join your planning committee; not only are local members experts at recognizing timely topics, but they can also assist in identifying the best speakers. Below are some positions and job roles to consider when building your conference committee.

Conference Chair and Co-Chair

- Appointed by the Committee and will be the key liaison between the committee and AMPP staff.
- Responsible for appointing/recruiting the other committee members who make up the Conference Organizing Committee.
- Ensures the event meets milestones to achieve to goals.

Technical Chair and Co-Chair

- Ensure a well-balanced, high-quality program is organized and presented at the conference.
- Assist in the scheduling of presentations once the technical program has been finalized.
- If partnering with HQ, work with AMPP staff for the overall abstract, paper and presentation management.

Technical Committee Members/Session Chairs

- Works with Technical Program Chair to ensure their sessions include high quality presentations.
- Review and approve abstracts, papers, and presentations.
- Manage the order of presentations within their sessions.

Exposition / Sponsorship Chair

- Responsible for the sale of exhibition booths and sponsorships that the committee has agreed to do per the agreement.
- If partnering with HQ, will work with AMPP Sales staff to determine a contact list and who will be responsible for reaching out to specific companies.
- If partnering with HQ, will work with AMPP Exhibits and Sponsorship staff to ensure proper handling of contracts, deliverables, floor space selection, and exhibitor registration for those companies recruited by the chair.

What resources can AMPP provide?

If your Chapter decides to host a conference independent from headquarters, there are still services and support available from staff to ensure your Chapter puts on an outstanding event and provides a positive experience for attendees.

Complimentary services:

- ▶ Provide a suggested timeline and sample templates.
- ▶ Monthly office hours with an experienced Conferences team member.
- ▶ Event listing on www.ampp.org calendar.
- ▶ Email scripts provided by AMPP.
- ▶ Contract review by AMPP Staff.

Optional services for a fee:

- Marketing package – for more information about paid opportunities, please reach out to marketing@ampp.org
- Registration services – prices vary
 - Pre-event registration
 - Onsite equipment, including badge stock and holders
 - Onsite logistics
- Paper Management – prices vary
 - Abstract submission portal
 - Paper and Presentation collection
 - Digital copies of papers and/or presentations provided for conference attendees post-event.
- Exhibitor Management – prices vary
 - Build and maintain floorplan
 - Invoice and collect payments
 - Contract service provider and manage exhibitor resources

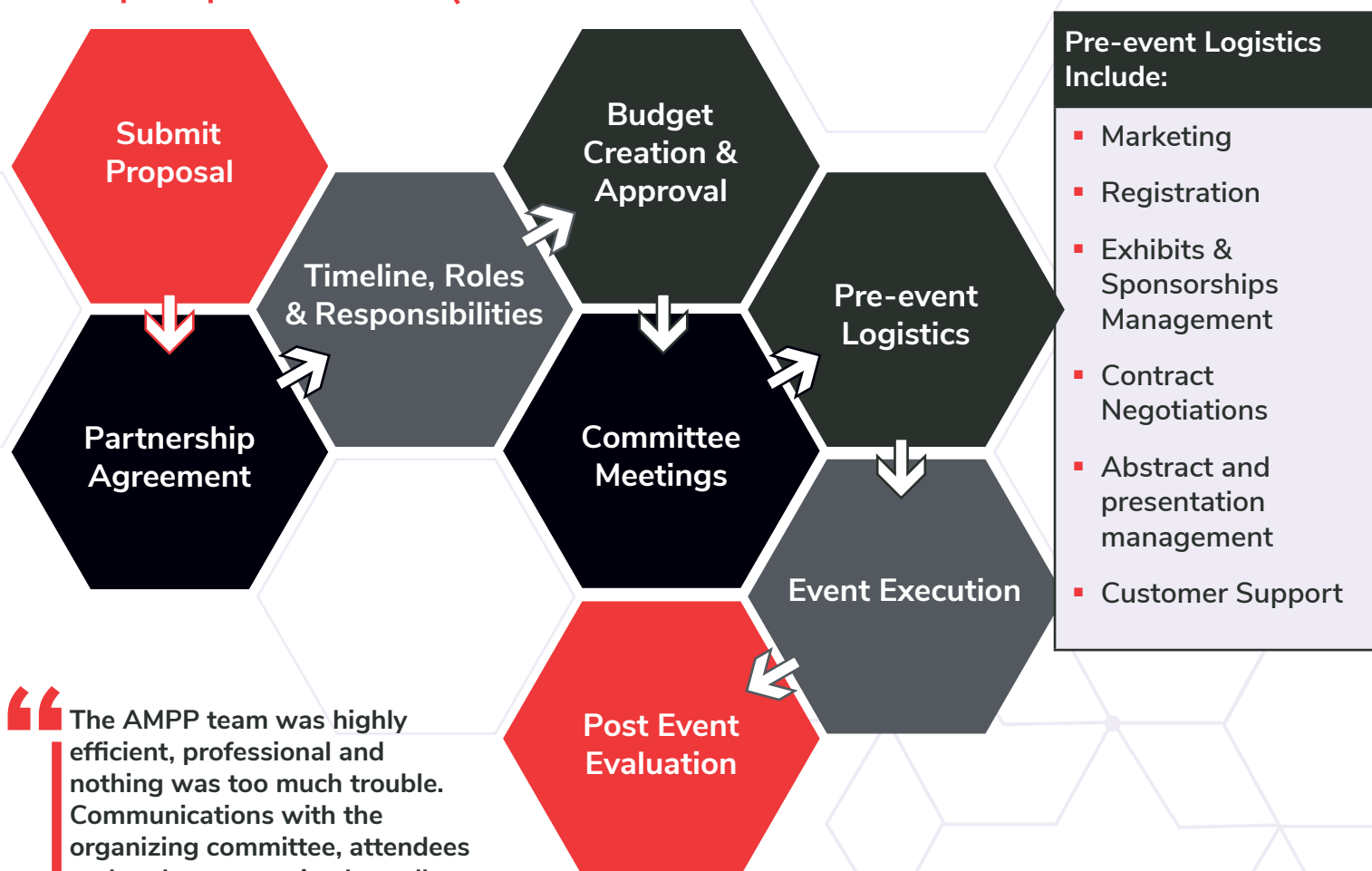
Contact Info: For information on AMPP services related to conference planning, please contact Lesley.Martinez@ampp.org.

Partnering with HQ to Host a Conference

AMPP has experienced staff to assist with your conference planning needs. When partnering with headquarters, we handle all pre-event and onsite logistics, vendor relationships, contracting, promotions, and the conference budget. Our staff experts can help mitigate risks associated with planning a conference.

If your Chapter is interested in a partnership with HQ, a partnership agreement between the Chapter and AMPP Headquarters is required. This partnership agreement will establish the roles and responsibilities of all parties and confirm the revenue share.

Steps to partner with HQ:



“The AMPP team was highly efficient, professional and nothing was too much trouble. Communications with the organizing committee, attendees and authors were timely, well thought through, and all managed by AMPP. They took the time to understand the key elements of our conference and planned accordingly. At the event this high level of professionalism was again evidence, and it ran like clock-work, with much praise shared for the AMPP representatives.”

-Stuart Medway, Jacobs (Chair of the Environmental Degradation of Materials in Nuclear Environments)

To explore a conference partnership with AMPP Headquarters, please complete and submit the Conference Proposal form on pages 14–19.

CONFERENCE/SEMINAR/ WORKSHOP PROPOSAL FORM



Submitter Information		Description/Notes	MRD USE ONLY
Submitted by (Name):			
Contact Information:			
Phone:			
Email:			
Date Submitted to AMPP Conferences:			
General EVENT Information			
Proposed Event Title:			
Ideal Time of Year:			
Ideal Location:			
Sponsor (if applicable)::			
Type of Event			
Conference (250 Plus attendees)			
Seminar (100 -150 attendees)			
Workshop (75 - 100 attendees)			
Event Format			
Technical Papers			
One Track			
Two Track			
Three Track			
Round Table			
Panel Discussions			
Event Length			
Half Day			
One Day			
One and Half Days			
Two Days			
Three + Days			
Steering Committee Recommendations			
1:	6:		
2:	7:		
3:	8:		
4:	9:		
5:	10:		
Hot Topics/Proposed Tracks Titles			
1:	6:		
2:	7:		
3:	8:		
4:	9:		
5:	10:		

Define industry need for event		
Why should I attend?		
How does this align with AMPP's strategic direction and mission?		
What is the problem we are looking to solve and how are we solving it?		
Industry Gap		
Political (Policy, Regulatory)		
Environmental		
Financial		
Competition and Obstacles		
Competing Industry Events:		
Competing AMPP Events:		
Competing Organizations:		
Obstacles:		
What are we offering that is different from what our competitors offer?		
What are the benefits of attending?		
Potential Exhibitor/Sponsors		
1:	6:	
2:	7:	
3:	8:	
4:	9:	
5:	10:	
AMPP - Staff Use Only		
Vetting Committee Comments:		
AMPP Staff Comments:		
Status of Submittal:		
Practical/Technical Equipment Needs:		
Additional Comments or things to consider:		

What Type of Company should attend this event**Market Type**Primary Secondary Tertiary

Academia/R&D

Asset Owner/Operator

Association

Government/Regulatory Agency

Manufacturer/Supplier

Media/PR/Advertising Agency

Service Provider/Contractor

No Company Affiliation**Target Audience works in what Geographic Area(s)****Market Type**Primary Secondary Tertiary

(Select all that apply)**NORTH AMERICA AREAS (U.S. & CANADA)**

Northern Area

Eastern Area

Central Area

Western Area**GLOBAL AREAS**

East Asia/Pacific Rim Area

West Asia/Africa Area

European Area

Latin American Area**What Industry Segments will benefit from this event****Market Type**Primary Secondary Tertiary**INFRASTRUCTURE**

Airports

Gas and Liquid Pipelines

Hazardous Material Storage

Highways/Bridges

Railroads

Waterways and Ports

Other Infrastructure Oil and Gas Exploration & Production**UTILITIES**

Coal

Electric

Gas Distribution

Nuclear

Solar

Telecommunications

Water/Wastewater

Wind

What Industry Segments will benefit from this event—continued**Market Type**Primary Secondary Tertiary**TRANSPORTATION**

Aerospace/Aircraft

Automotive/Motor Vehicle

Hazardous Material Transport

Marine/Ships

Railroad Cars

Other

PRODUCTION AND MANUFACTURING

Agricultural Equipment

Chemical - Petrochemical

Electronics

Food Processing

Home Appliances

Medical

Mining

Oil and Gas Exploration & Production

Pulp & Paper

Refinery/Gas Processing

GOVERNMENT

DoD – Military

Nuclear Waste Storage

Other/Industry Segment Not Listed

What Specific Function/Service does the attendee's company provide**Market Type**Primary Secondary Tertiary

Above Ground Storage

Architectural/Design

Cathodic/Anodic Protection

Chemical Processing

Coatings

Concrete

Construction

Contractor, Commercial Coatings

Contractor, Concrete Specialty and/or Parking Structure

Contractor, Flooring

Contractor, General

Contractor, Industrial Plant or Military Facilities Maintenance

Contractor, Insulation

Contractor, Roofing

Contractor, Sandblast/Waterblast/Surface Prep

Contractor, Spray Bed Liner

Contractor, Structural Steel, Metal Tank and/or Pipeline

Engineering

Continued on page 18

What Specific Function/Service does the attendee's company provide—continued	Market Type		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Fleet Operator			
Inspection Services			
Insulation			
Insurance			
Legal Services			
Linings			
Maintenance/Rehabilitation			
Materials Selection & Design			
Measuring, Analyzing & Controlling Instrumentation			
Metal Fabrication			
Offshore			
Onshore			
Original Equipment Manufacturer			
Power/Energy Distribution			
Power/Energy Generation			
Power/Energy Transmission			
Rail Cars/Tank Trucks			
Refining/Gas Processing			
Laboratory/Research			
Ship Building			
Surface Preparation/Blasting			
Testing Services			
Training			
Underground Storage			
Water Domestic			
Water Industrial			
Wastewater Domestic			
Wastewater Industrial			
Wind			
Other/Company Function Not Listed			

What Job Title or Job Function would benefit from this event	Market Type		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Architect/Designer			
Attorney/General Council			
Chemist			
Coatings Applicator			
Coatings Inspector			
Consultant			
Contractor			
Engineer			
Executive/Senior Management			
Health & Safety/Compliance Manager			
Human Resources			
Inspector			
Integrity Manager			
Maintenance			

Continued on page 19

What Job Title or Job Function would benefit from this event—continued	Market Type		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Project Manager/Supervisor			
Media Buyer/Press Liaison/Account Executive			
Plant/Facility Manager			
Professor/Instructor			
Purchasing/Buyer			
QA/QC			
Retired			
Sales/Marketing			
Scientist/Researcher			
Specifier			
Student			
Systems Manager/Operator			
Technician/Technologist			
Tester			
Trainer			
Other/Job Function Not Listed			

Products Attendee Buy or Sell	Market Type		
	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Abrasives			
Adhesives			
Application Equipment			
Cathodic/Anodic Protection			
Chemical Inhibitors			
Coatings			
Concrete			
Data Recording and Management Equipment Software			
Inspection Equipment			
Insulation			
Linings			
Materials—Ferrous			
Materials—Nonferrous			
Mechanical Equipment/Machinery			
Monitoring Equipment			
Safety Equipment			
Surface Preparation Equipment			
Testing Equipment			