



Final Draft

Upcoming Meetings

Houston Chapter

- [Chapter Meeting](#)
Wed., Apr. 1, 2009, 11-1
3010 Briarpark Drive
- Board Meeting
Wed., May 6, 2009,
3010 Briarpark Drive
- Chapter Meeting
Wed., June 3, 2009,
3010 Briarpark Drive

Central Texas Chapter

- Board Meeting
Sun., Apr. 5, 2009, 6-7 PM
Bear Rock Café
4005 W. Parmer Lane, Austin
- Planning Meeting
Wed., Apr. 15, 2009, 6-7 PM
RSVP by E-mail
apmpcentraltexas.com
- Chapter Meeting, 2009 Q2
Thurs., May 7, 2009, 6 PM
URS Corporation, 9400 Amberglen Boulevard, Austin
Speaker: To be announced

APMP 2009 Conference

- 20th Anniversary APMP International Conference and Exhibits
Tues.-Fri., June 9-12, 2009,
Chandler, Arizona

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Successful Virtual Teams

April 1 Presenters Focus on Co-Located Teams

The challenges and costs associated with bringing a proposal team together have increased dramatically. Whether it's requiring frequent, extended travel, pulling operations staff from a client site, or decreased productivity resulting from travel time, co-locating the proposal team can have far-reaching impacts on budget, performance, and morale.

At the next meeting of the Greater Houston Chapter of the Association for Proposal Management Professionals (APMP), Wednesday, April 1, Amy McGeady and Michelle Petty will offer practical tips for determining when to consider virtual proposal teams and how to work effectively in a virtual environment. They



Amy McGeady (above) and Michelle Petty (page 5)—April meeting speakers.

will discuss when to bring the team together (if at all), the effective use of collaborative document management tools, and the discipline of strong

communication among dispersed team members.

The meeting will begin at 11 AM at ABB, [3010 Briarpark Drive](#), Houston. Admission is \$20 for members, \$25 for nonmembers, and \$15 for students (student ID required), and includes lunch. Seating is limited.

Amy McGeady, President of [Propel Consulting](#), has been managing, writing, and editing proposals for 15 years. Before becoming a consultant, she served as Proposal Manager and Proposal Team Director at Lockheed Martin IMS and ACS Government Solutions. She is the Chair of APMP's Central Texas

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Do Proposal Covers Really Make a Difference?

By Mike Parkinson
Principal and Senior Designer
[24 Hour Company](#)

Yes. One of the best examples I've heard was for a ballistics bid. (The names have been changed to protect the innocent.)

The United States Army needed a bullet that flew 2,000 yards and then fell from the sky. They had a favorite, Company A; however, Company B hoped to establish a relationship with the Army as well. Company B had tested this type of bullet before and, using these results, wrote their best proposal.

They believed they had a chance despite information that suggested Company A was a certain winner.

After writing their proposal, Company B opted for a simple approach to the cover and used a photograph of a ballistics test

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From the Prez: '09 Board Brings a Blend of Old, New

It is spring in Houston and things are popping for the Houston Chapter.

First, this is the first Issue of *Final Edition* with Marlane Kayfes, our new Communications Chair, as Editor.

Second, we have expanded the listing of events to include the Central Texas Chapter and the Lone Star Chapter. If you find yourself in Austin or Dallas, check out one of their meetings!

Third, I had the pleasure of taking part in an ad-hoc meeting to start discussion on an APMP Texas Symposium. The preliminary committee is still deciding location and date.

In the meantime, we will be sending out a questionnaire to gather your input on what type of presentations you would like to see.

Fourth, our speaker for the April meeting is the President of the Central Texas Chapter and Regional Director (Central US), Amy McGeady. Amy is a great example of the talent we have in Texas. I know there is much more Texas talent out there. Please consider giving a presentation to our chapter. For more information, please contact Tim Budzik at timothy.m.budzik@usa-spaceops.com.

Did you know that APMP is a great place to find talented people? The Houston Chapter offers free job bank ad for any Houston-based

opportunity. Contact Lisa Tinsley at ltinsley@cbi.com or me at jeannette.waldie@att.net to post a job ad.

APMP is a membership organization and the Houston Chapter continues to work on serving our membership here in Houston and throughout Texas. Thank you for your support, and I look forward to seeing you soon.



Jeannette Waldie, APM.APMP
President, Greater Houston APMP Chapter

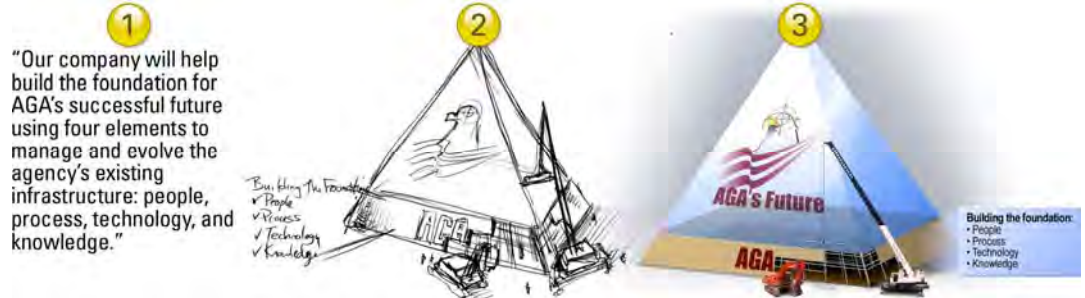
The Graphics Guru on Proposal Graphics

Editor's note: The following article is reprinted courtesy of the APMP National Capitol Area's (APMP-NCA) newsletter, "Executive Summary."

By Mike Parkinson
Principal and Senior Designer,
[24 Hour Company](#)

What are the top three proposal graphic mistakes?

Many graphics fail for three reasons: too complicated, unclear, and poorly rendered. A visual becomes overly complex when the author attempts to convey too many messages in one graphic or includes more detail than is necessary. The target audience will lose interest and can become frustrated, if the graphic is too complicated. Graphics should always identify



Save time and money by evolving your concept before rendering the final graphic.

key elements and explain their meaning and benefits. When the author erroneously assumes that their target audience understands the subject matter on the same level that he/she does, they produce an unclear graphic (lacking in identifiers or explanation) and can cause confusion in the audience or send the wrong message. Poorly rendered graphics result in a host of negative outcomes such as miscommunication and the perception that the presenter (the person, place or thing most

associated with the graphic) is unprofessional and may not fully understand the topic.

Can I use photographs and art from the Internet in my proposals?

As soon as you write a paragraph, take a photograph, or make a graphic you own it. According to a United States ruling, once you make something it is protected under copyright law. (The challenge has been proving who made it first.) With that in

mind, everything we find on the Internet is copyrighted. You may use it only if you are granted permission (for the purposes you intend), or your organization owns or has purchased the rights to use it. There are some websites that offer "royalty-free" graphics at no cost (certain government sites provide free images), but you need to make sure that the website allows free image downloads or else you could

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Keep Winning Simple: Tell Your Story With Proof of Successes

By Janice Scanlan

[Performance Foundations](#)

How to Keep Winning Simple in the Real World was Janice Scanlan's topic at the February 2009 general meeting. Many factors, she said, can derail you from communicating in benefits to the client. Your company's technical experts might be too engaged in how to do the project and lose focus from what the client wants or the benefits of your company's solution. The most effective way to keep the team focused is with a simple what-how matrix. For each of the client's hot buttons, determine:

- What – your solution(s) for the client's needs
- How – the benefits of your solutions
- How Well – proof that you have done and can do what you say you're going to do
- How Much – the cost benefits of your solutions

This information then becomes "your story," which should address the client's needs.

Use a conversational context with your proposal team, Ms. Scanlan suggested, to elicit the information outlined above. Get people talking by asking, "What are the different solutions that will meet the client's needs?" Then follow up by asking, "When you did (xyz), what happened? Was the client pleased?" This helps you develop your benefits and proof.

Additional tips that Ms. Scanlan had included:

- Break the larger proposal team into smaller, homogenous groups



Janice Scanlan of Performance Foundations emphasizes how to keep winning proposals simple.

- Keep any back-up data that the discussion generates to help your team prepare for the client presentation that is sure to follow
- Identify and examine the client's objectives and challenges if it seems that the client does not know exactly what they need or want

After you've developed your offering, expand the "what" portion of your matrix to competitive analysis to identify the strengths or weaknesses of your proposal so that you can influence the selection criteria priority or neutralize the importance of a selection factor in your favor.

Janice Scanlan, of [Performance Foundations](#), is known in the Houston area for her work with professional sales service effectiveness.

If you would like your proposal team to hear this talk for a lunch-and-learn or actually apply the method in a workshop, contact Janice at (281) 261-2320.

More resources. If you are experiencing difficulty repositioning in a volatile market,

click the link below to read a true story of how a market cycle change caused a client to shift from a value position to a "nowhere to go but price" position that includes another simple analytical tool to not be blindsided by changing client priorities.

<http://www.performancefoundations.com/market%20position.htm>

For Future Use ...

Bookmark These Helpful Web Pages

<http://www.apmp.org/siteSpecific/job/jobBank.aspx>

<http://www.apmphouston.org/Employment.html>

<http://proposalcafe.com>

<http://www.acquisition.gov/>

The Graphics Guru on Proposal Graphics

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face a lawsuit. Also, photographs and art from the Internet are usually at a lower resolution (72 dpi) than you require for your proposals. To get crisp and clear graphics (no jagged or pixelated edges) for your oral and written presentations, you need to use images that are between 150–300 dpi. Otherwise, your graphics will look poorly rendered and give your presentation an unprofessional appearance.

Where can I get quality clip art to use in my graphics?

For clip art I use Nova Development's Art Explosion 750,000 or 800,000 clipart collection. There is a lot of unusable clipart in these books, but the few that I use make it well worth the purchase price (~\$99). There are other similar clipart libraries available but I cannot comment on their usability.

For editable proposal graphics I use BizGraphics On Demand (www.BizGraphicsOnDemand.com).

For photographs and illustrations I recommend: iStockPhoto (www.istockphoto.com)

Dreamstime (www.dreamstime.com)

StockExpert (www.stockxpert.com)

BigStock Photo (www.bigstockphoto.com)

Getty Images (www.gettyimages.com)

When using Getty Images, be sure to choose only royalty-free images versus rights managed. It is far less expensive. For United States military photographs, visit the .mil websites. You may use the photographs in their image databases, but they request that you acknowledge where you found the photo and, when possible, acknowledge the photographer (i.e., "Photo courtesy of U.S. Army. Photo taken by Spc. D. A. Dickinson."). Be sure to verify that the image you are using is

cleared for release and are considered in the public domain. This information is usually posted on the same page as their image library or on their "Privacy" or "Security" pages.

What is the difference between jpg, other types of graphics files? When should which be used?

A filename extension is a suffix to the name of a computer file applied to show its format. A file extension consists of the characters after the "." such as ".doc", ".txt", ".xls", ".bmp", and so on. I will focus on only the following due to their applicability to proposal graphics:

- BMP = Bitmap
- GIF = Graphic Interchange Format
- JPG = Joint Photographic Experts Group
- PNG = Portable Network Graphics
- TIF = Tagged Image File Format
- WMF = Windows Metafile

I use 200 dpi RGB (unless you are printing the files on an offset press) tifs for placement in Microsoft Word, Adobe InDesign, and Quark Xpress. It is worth noting that jpgs are acceptable in written documents if file size is an issue since jpgs are about a third of the size as tiffs and are only of a slightly lower quality. I use 200 dpi RGB jpgs for Microsoft PowerPoint. I prefer 200 dpi images because they look great in print and on screen and can be half the file size of 300 dpi images. I recommend 80% compression when saving your jpgs to avoid "pixel garbage" in your graphics. I use 300+ dpi RGB or CMYK files for professional printing like brochures, slicks, folders, etc.



Mike Parkinson

I do not work with bmps and pngs because of their history of volatility with certain programs. For example, pngs allow for transparency but print poorly and have been known to corrupt entire PowerPoint presentations. There are many other file types beyond those I have listed but I have found that jpgs and tifs are the most accepted, stable, and reliable for proposals. However, if you have had successful results with other file types (like metafiles—which requires article unto itself), use them. If it isn't broken, don't fix it.

What is the "industry standard" for graphics development these days? What are the advantages and disadvantages of some of the leading graphics packages?

Most graphic departments and design firms use Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator. Some use CorelDraw but it is not the industry standard. Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator are ubiquitous and have a plethora of easy-to-use features that allow for high-end, dynamic graphics: layering, filters (add shadows, outer glows, beveling, embossing to shapes and images), photo touch-up, image blending, text overlay, etc. Photoshop is perfect for creating image collages, touching up team photos, and isolating images. Illustrator is a great package to generate organization charts, process flow charts, bar charts, pie charts, etc. Each element (text, arrows, lines, boxes) within Illustrator can be saved on separate layers making it easier to edit. Best of all, you can copy and paste images from Illustrator into Photoshop and vice versa.

The disadvantages to these packages are the higher cost, steep learning curve, and the fact

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Do Proposal Covers Really Make a Difference?

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tracer round from one of their experiments. This photograph showed exactly what the Army had requested: a bullet traveling 2,000 yards and dropping. (It was actually an image from a failed field test of an earlier project for a bullet that was intended to travel farther.) With the cover in place, Company B submitted their proposal.

Weeks later Company B won the bid, and the winning team met with the contracting officer. Company B asked how they won—especially since they were the underdogs. The contracting officer said their cover won the bid, despite the fact that their



proposal wasn't well written and almost resulted in a loss. Company B showed they already had the bullet on the cover image, which gave them the edge over the other bidders who still needed to design the bullet.

Most of the time, relationships and/or the contents of proposals—cost, past performance, an understanding of the customer's need—win the effort. Nonetheless, the cover forms a lasting impression. It is the first thing that the evaluator sees, and he or she cannot help but be influenced.

Behavioral Psychologists agree that most of our decisions are based on intuitive judgment and emotions. Herbert A. Simon, Nobel Prize winning scholar at the Carnegie Mellon Institute in Pittsburgh, studied corporate decision-making and found that people often ignored formal decision-making models because of time constraints, incomplete information, the inability to calculate consequences, and other variables. Intuitive judgment was the process for many decisions.

If you want a winning edge, start with your covers. Covers carry enough weight that they can, and have, significantly contributed to wins and losses. You use a lot of resources, not to mention time and money, to develop your proposal; do not ignore such a powerful tool in your proposal arsenal.

Mike Parkinson is an internationally recognized visual communications expert, multi-published author, and graphics trainer. In 2008 Mike received the prestigious APMP Fellow award. He is a partner at 24 Hour Company (www.24hrco.com) specializing in bid-winning proposal graphics. His Billion Dollar Graphics website (www.BillionDollarGraphics.com), Billion Dollar Business Graphics book, and BizGraphicsOnDemand.com empower proposal professionals to increase their win rates using clear, compelling graphics. For more information, contact Mike at mike@24hrco.com

April 1 Meeting on Virtual Teams

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chapter and the Regional Director for APMP's Central Region. Prior to starting her



Michelle Petty, April meeting co-presenter

proposal career, Amy earned her doctorate and Master of Arts degrees in political science from Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana, and a bachelor's degree in government from the University of Texas at Austin.

Michelle Petty, CEO of [Propel Consulting](http://PropelConsulting.com), is a 20-year veteran proposal manager with a diverse background supporting federal, state, and local, and commercial opportunities. Before starting her own consulting firm, Michelle served as Proposal Manager and Proposal Center Manager for a variety of companies, including Lockheed Martin IMS, Cable & Wireless, CGI-AMS, and IT Corporation. An active member of the Association of Proposal Management Professionals (APMP) for more than 11 years, Michelle currently serves as the Membership Chair for APMP's Central Texas chapter. She also is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) and Certified Six Sigma Green Belt (CSSGB).

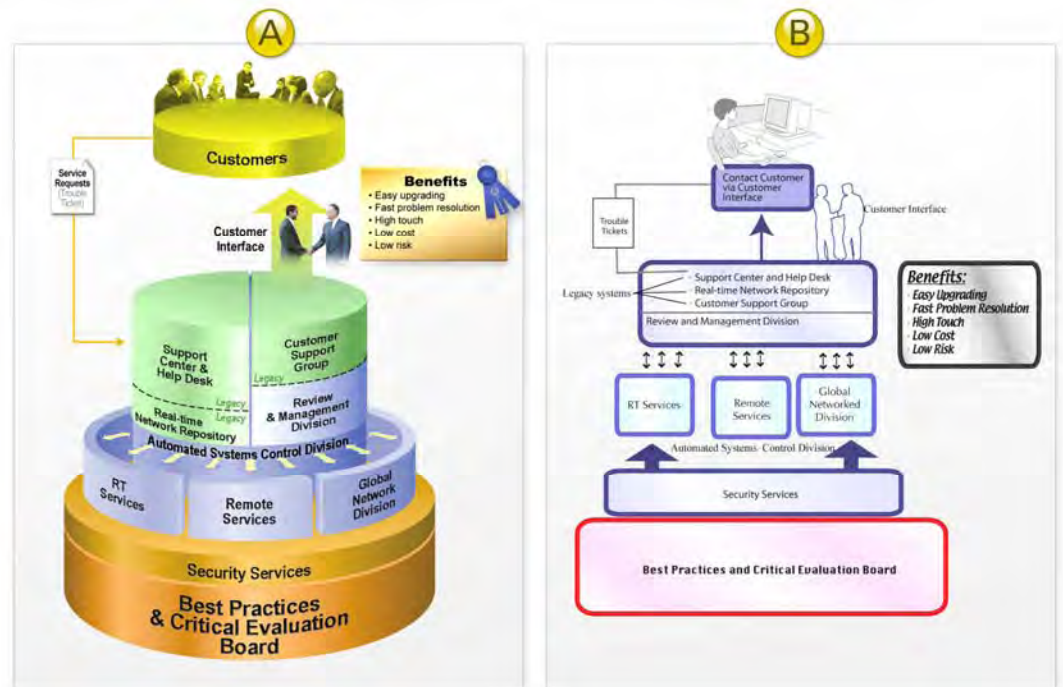
The Graphics Guru on Proposal Graphics

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that they are unlikely to be in most non-designer's software libraries—so all edits will have to be done by the designer. When high-end graphics are not needed, most graphic departments generate visuals in PowerPoint, which allows the author to word smith and tweak the graphic as needed. Unfortunately, PowerPoint lacks the some graphic-specific tools and features that dedicated graphics software offers. As a result, the visuals are usually of a lower quality and, if the author modifies their graphics, are inconsistent and potentially unprofessional in appearance. There are tricks to using PowerPoint to create higher-end graphics but they involve using other graphics packages to augment PowerPoint and create a dedicated library of images that can be pulled together to form new visuals as needed.

What packages do I want a graphics person to be expert in if I'm going to bring him/her on board either as a permanent hire or as a consultant?

They should have a working knowledge of Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator for image and graphic generation and Adobe InDesign or QuarkXpress for page layout of brochures and corporate collateral. If they are familiar with Microsoft Word for written proposals and Microsoft PowerPoint for oral proposals, then that is a



The quality of your graphics quickly tells evaluators and decision makers that your company is committed to the project, your team gave more thought to their needs (than their competitors), and your company offers superior quality services and products.

bonus. Of course, it depends upon your companies' software collection and need. If your organization has invested in CorelDraw, then CorelDraw is the software a new designer should know. If your company needs 3D graphics, then the designer should have a working knowledge of 3D design applications. It is important to note that if a designer has been trained and uses Adobe products, their learning curve on CorelDraw is lower.

What are the best colors to use in my graphics?

Color choice is mostly subjective and should be made based upon your goals. If your goal is to increase mindshare or brand your company, stick with your

corporate colors. If your goal is to win new work with the government or another proud organization, use their colors (i.e., green and beige for the US Army). If your goal is to play it safe, I recommend blues and greens. They are calming colors. If you are creating a new color palette, choose analogous colors—those that appear next to one another on the color wheel. When creating color palettes I choose three colors (usually the potential client's colors). I specify which color is primary, which is secondary, and which is tertiary. I then create swatches of each color with different values so that I have more flexibility without leaving the safety of my color palette.

Should I use a lot of smaller graphics or a few larger ones?

It depends. Let the content drive the size and number of graphics in your proposal. I use graphics for complex concepts, key concepts, and discriminators. However, there is no doubt that evaluators like graphics. Important information can get lost in a sea of words. Like you, they are distracted and, at times, tired. Make it easy for them to find, understand, and remember the most important information by putting it in a graphic. The golden rule for graphics is to use a graphic on every page. It has

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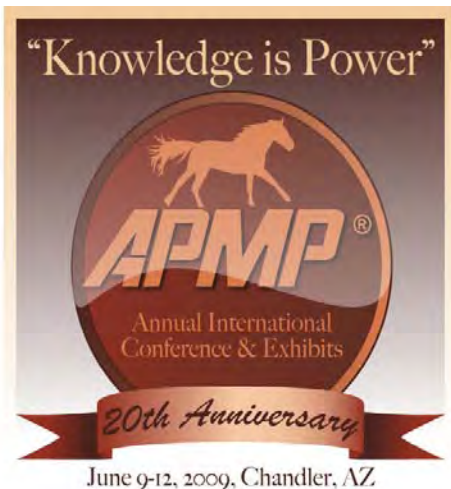
(Continued from page 6)

been my experience that this is nearly impossible and forces proposal professionals to shoehorn graphics where none are needed. Instead, use graphics to communicate complex concepts or key concepts and shelve the need for a graphic on every page.

What are the best programs to use to create my graphics if I'm not a trained graphics artist?

Visio and PowerPoint are accepted alternatives for graphic development. For PowerPoint, ask a graphic designer to develop a color palette and frequently needed graphic elements that you can use for future projects. If you want more polished PowerPoint graphics, BizGraphicsOnDemand.com is who I recommend. You can edit elements and tailor the proposal graphics as needed. They can be brought into Word and other packages after editing.

Mike Parkinson is an internationally recognized visual communications expert, multi-published author, and graphics trainer. In 2008 Mike received the prestigious APMP Fellow award. He is a partner at 24 Hour Company (www.24hrco.com) specializing in bid-winning proposal graphics. His Billion Dollar Graphics website (www.BillionDollarGraphics.com), Billion Dollar Business Graphics book, and BizGraphicsOnDemand.com empower proposal professionals to increase their win rates using clear, compelling graphics. For more information, contact Mike at mike@24hrco.com



[CLICK HERE for More Information](#)

Fonts: Arial Black, Arial Narrow Bold, Arial Narrow Bold Italic, Arial Narrow, Arial Narrow Italic

Color Palettes: Main Database, 2nd Database, 3rd Database

Tables: Categories, Program Team, Description; Methods/Tools

Special Use Boxes: Fake Data (Sample text, Sample text 2), Decision, Highlight

Tagline/Bumper/Takeaway: Use or disclosure of data contained on this sheet is subject to the restriction on the title page of this proposal or quotation.

Include color choices in your template and apply the colors to all elements to help guarantee consistency.

Knowledge is Power: Theme of 2009 International Conference

With the arrival of conference brochures in the mail last week, members are buzzing about the [20th Annual APMP International Conference and Exhibits](#) June 9–12. Early registration (at the lowest rates) ends March 31, 2009.

The location for this year's event is the [Sheraton Wild Horse Pass Resort and Spa](#) in Chandler, Arizona. The 500-room resort was designed to be an authentic representation of the [Gila River Indian Community's](#) heritage and culture. The Sonoran Desert landscape and the full spa services are sure to enhance your conference experience.

Dynamic speakers and topics are lined up, and some speakers are familiar to Greater Houston Chapter members. Amy McGeady and Michelle Petty, presenters for the chapter's April 1 meeting, will discuss *The Art of the Question* during the conference. Addressing sometimes conflicting or confusing information in requests for proposals, Ms. McGeady and Ms. Petty say it is important to

know the art to asking good questions that position your company for success. Attendees will receive tools and techniques to know when to ask questions, how to ask questions, and which questions to ask.

Mike Parkinson, a frequent contributor to *Final Draft*, will co-present a workshop titled *This Old Proposal: A DIY Guide to Proposal Graphics*. Mr. Parkinson and his partner, Colleen Jolly, will take an old proposal and show you how to update the graphics—in real time, in front of a live audience. They will provide tips and tricks for updating your graphics and, along with them, your proposals.

Tom Sant will present a two-part workshop, *Bridging the Knowledge Gap*.

Shipleigh Associates will present a pre-conference workshop—*APMP Professional Accreditation Onsite Coaching*.

That's just the tip of the iceberg for this exciting conference in the beautiful Sonoran desert. Make your plans today to be there.



2009 Board of Directors

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Final Draft is the official newsletter of the Greater Houston Chapter of APMP. All content is copyrighted and authors retain rights. Unless otherwise stated, the views expressed in this newsletter are those of only the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Greater Houston Chapter of APMP or the APMP National Organization.

The mission of the Association for Proposal Management Professionals (APMP) is to advance the arts, sciences and technology of new business acquisition and to promote the professionalism of those engaged in those pursuits.

We are extremely proud that we have grown into an internationally recognized association with membership and corporate sponsors from a diverse range of disciplines and industries who are committed to the pursuit of proposal excellence. Our journey has been one of promoting the professionalism of our members and shaping the future of the proposal profession throughout the world.

*APMP is a learning environment for both novice and seasoned proposal professionals. We offer professional symposia, conferences, and publications - the **Perspective and the Journal of the Association of Proposal Management Professionals.***

Join our organization online at https://www.apmp.org/siteSpecific/customer/register_accountData.aspx. You can pay with a credit card or check (follow the online instructions). For a chapter affiliation, simply select the Greater Houston Chapter from the corresponding drop-down list.

Join us and discover how we can help you pursue new horizons in proposal excellence.

Welcome to...

New Members

Help the Greater Houston Chapter of APMP welcome two new members:

- Cindy Griffin, Proposal Software, Inc.
- Marlane Kayfes, IRC Risk and Safety, LLC

Expanded Distribution

With this issue, *Final Draft* is expanding its distribution to the [Lone Star Chapter](#) and the [Central Texas Chapter](#) of APMP. We would like to officially welcome our new readership and invite the Boards of those Chapter to keep us informed of any events.



Apply for Business Development Research Grant

The Association of Proposal Management Professionals—National Capital Area Chapter (APMP-NCA) in McLean, Virginia, announced March 16 that it is sponsoring a grant program to initiate original research on how business development, capture, and proposal professionals can most effectively position themselves to win bids. Applications will be accepted through April 30, 2009, from APMP members worldwide and scholars.

The selected grantees will submit their research findings in a 60– to 45-minute presentation at the association’s annual Professional Day program, October 13, 2009 in Fairfax, Virginia.

The number of grants awarded will be based on the total budget for the year and the number of qualified grant applications received. APMP-NCA reserves the right to award up to \$2,000 per grant or a lesser amount than that in the application. The grant covers the cost of labor and other direct charges associated with the development of original research, writing, and production of the presentation.

For more details and application instructions, go to http://apmpnca.org/announcements/grant_program/.

APMP-NCA is the largest chapter of the Association of Proposal Management Professionals, serving the information, knowledge and networking needs of proposal professionals in the Mid-Atlantic region. Sign up to receive e-mail notices about all our events at www.apmpnca.org.