




TO: NSPE Board of Directors

cc: NSPE House of Delegates
NSPE Committee, Task Force, Council and Interest Group Chairs
State Society Leadership
State Society Executives Council

FROM: Mark J. Golden, FASAE, CAE 

DATE: November 17, 2015

RE: Board Update: November 1-15, 2015

Internal staff and our outside partners (McKinley Advisors) are hard at work on both levels of our two-pronged strategy to fuel growth and long-term sustainability in NSPE membership.

1. **Short Term Membership Stimulus:** Data collection, immersion and planning is well underway for this intensive six-month sales effort to conduct two to three membership marketing promotions within the established three-tiered membership model. Based on initial work, we will be focusing on a lapsed-member strategy as one of these pilots. Market analysis is being gathered to identify two more that offer the highest probability for immediate results.
2. **Engineering a Sustainable Future for Integrated Membership.** McKinley has completed its review of the initial collection of historical data on NSPE membership, and identified data gaps, which staff is working to fill. We also have narrowed the list of 10 national and state leaders for initial in-depth interviews by McKinley. (25 more will be interviewed in phase 2 of the study). The lead consultant on the project met by telephone conference call with the NSPE Membership Committee on November 6th.

Ongoing updates are available in the NSPE Leadership Toolbox [here](#).

1. Member Value

The latest versions of the NSPE Talking Points for Volunteer Leaders are now available in the Leadership Toolbox here. These downloadable presentations, updated at least quarterly, contain the latest NSPE information and key messages for use by NSPE officers, Board members, and other leaders during state visits, chapter meetings, or other venues to promote NSPE and its activities. There are three versions of the presentation to suit your presentation style and skill – an animated PowerPoint with moving graphics and text, a static PowerPoint with no animation, and a Word document with an outline overview of the presentation.

2. Advocacy

The Georgia Society of Professional Engineers informed us earlier this month that ACEC Georgia has begun lobbying to reintroduce [legislation](#) from last session, which would create a separate license for structural engineers. The bill would make structural engineering for all intents and purposes a separate profession. We are working with the Georgia Society to assist them in their response. NSPE supports the concept of licensure of engineers only as a professional engineer and opposes licensure status by designated branches or specialties. This well-tested approach to the regulation of engineering practice has been protecting the public for decades. Information and resources on this issue can be found on the [website](#).

A thought-provoking article appearing in *The Atlantic* argued that computer programmers who call themselves “engineers” are undermining “a long tradition of designing and building infrastructure in the public interest.” The article, “[Programmers: Stop Calling Yourselves Engineers](#),” says, “When it comes to skyscrapers and bridges and power plants and elevators and the like, engineering has been, and will continue to be, managed partly by professional standards, and partly by regulation around the expertise and duties of engineers. But fifty years’ worth of attempts to turn software development into a legitimate engineering practice have failed.” NSPE President Tim Austin responded in a [letter to the editor](#), pointing out the role NSPE has played in advocating to prevent the cheapening of the title of engineer and in promoting the licensing of software engineers. You can read more [here](#).

As first reported in my [September 16th board update](#), NSPE took the initiative of alerting our strategic partners of the danger in a draft model code on climate change that will be considered by the World Federation of Engineering Organizations’ (WFEO) General Assembly in Kyoto later this fall. The standards and provisions within the draft document could have established a new [standard of care for professional engineers](#) that far exceeds their existing duties and responsibilities.

I am happy to be able to report that NSPE successfully secured full support from the American Association of Engineering Societies (AAES) to endorse NSPE’s recommended changes to ameliorate these concerns, and the working group that drafted the initial document has approved NSPE’s recommendations and supports them as they move forward for final consideration by the WFEO General Assembly in December. You can read more [here](#).

3. Content

Associations have traditionally been in control not only of creating content of value to its members, but also of deciding how to make it available. Association-designed print and electronic communications vehicles (as well as face-to-face and online events), determine the frequency of communications, and identify the recipients. In short, the association designs an *experience* for the user, devised to capture their attention and engage them with association-created content in print, electronic, and meeting formats.

At a recent conference of association CEOs I attended, the group assessed data and analyzed trends in social media. This demonstrated a real shift in the traditional model of content creation,

management and distribution. Social media is part of it, but the more critical factor turns out to be the impact of *mobility*. This past year, the percentage of internet access handled on mobile devices reached 60%, up from 50% just a year ago. And more than half of that mobile online traffic is handled through mobile apps, rather than website visits.

Mobile turns the traditional model for associations on its head. Instead of the association designing and controlling how the association presents itself to the world, mobile allows the *user* to choose the app they prefer to use to create whatever experience they want for themselves. *They* choose when and how to access you, *they* select the information they want and only the information they want, and they decide the format (video, audio, text).

It isn't enough anymore to have a great website with your valuable content clearly organized and presented in a compelling fashion. It isn't enough to have a Facebook strategy, and Twitter strategy and an Instagram strategy to try and drive members to your website. (Although, you still need to do all these things as well.) You need to be everywhere with your content to maximize the likelihood that each stakeholder, with their own unique set of mobile access tools and preferences, will find you.

All of which is why the NSPE content strategy staff team is constantly working to create additional points of engagement with every message and every piece of content. To use a recent, high profile example (the Gold King Mine spill and subsequent investigation into the lack of professional engineering oversight at that project), NSPE did all the usual things to keep members aware and to reinforce NSPE's role and value as the advocate for PE licensure: e-mail news blasts, posting on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, posting to the homepage, in-depth follow-up in print and online. But it didn't stop there: soon after we added video to NSPE's YouTube channel. We "repurposed" the content as items in community specific communications (such as the electronic Interest Group newsletters).

But we are also branching out into other media that will hopefully bring NSPE content to the attention of users who don't come looking for NSPE.

For example, NSPE's first advocacy update in audio [podcast](#) form has been posted on the homepage. Future podcasts will soon be available for free through the iTunes store.

The Gold King Mine story has also been organized into a [Storify](#), a social network service that allows us to create context for our stories by importing content in a variety of media from both NSPE and non-NSPE sources into a timeline.

4. Collaboration

It was my great privilege to attend the Change of Command and Retirement Ceremony for Rear Admiral Katherine Gregory, PE, who was completing her tour as commander of the Naval Facilities Engineering Command (NAVFAC) and Chief of Civil Engineers. RADM Gregory has been a tireless advocate for the value of licensure, generously providing her time in support of NSPE's Federal Engineer of the Year program. The event at the Washington Navy Yard was well attended, and RADM Gregory graciously acknowledged NSPE in her retirement remarks.

NSPE Deputy Executive Director and General Counsel Art Schwartz served as a keynote speaker at the Society of Fire Protection Engineers (SFPE) Annual Meeting on November 9th in Philadelphia, PA, a panelist at the American Nuclear Society (ANS) Annual Meeting (“The Importance of the Professional Engineering Licensure in the Nuclear Industry”) on November 11th in Washington, DC and provided a two-hour ethics seminar for the New Mexico Society of Professional Engineers in Albuquerque, NM on November 13th.

5. Member Engagement

The member comment period on proposed modifications to NSPE Professional Policy 168 and Position Statements 1737 and 1739 closed on November 13, 2015. All comments, whether received through the official portal established for member use on the NSPE website or through other channels, were compiled into a [single document](#) and circulated to the House of Delegates and Board on Monday, November 16th.

COPA, which had been provided the input on a weekly basis throughout the comment period, quickly turned around its assessment and recommendations, which are on the agenda for the board’s November 18th conference call.

The remaining steps in the process are as follows:

- November 30-December 4: Discussion of NSPE Board recommendation by House of Delegates (listserv).
- December 7-11: House of Delegates Electronic Ballot Opens on approval of revisions to PP 168 and recommending Board approval of revisions to PS 1737 and 1739, in accordance with NSPE OP 7.6 (formerly OP 80).
- December 11-16: House of Delegates voting on approval of revisions to PP 168 in accordance with NSPE OP 7.6 (formerly OP 80).

Detailed information on the process can be found at: [Process for NSPE House of Delegates Action Regarding NSPE Professional Policies and NSPE Position Statements](#)

6. Professional and Leadership Development for the Licensed Professional Engineer

Marketing for NSPE’s first-ever Virtual Career Fair has started. Banners have been placed on the NSPE website with jump off links for [job seekers](#) and for [employers](#). Job seekers can register to create their profile and flag their online resume as a Virtual Career Fair candidate on the NSPE Career Center. The event is being conducted through Boxwood Technologies, the company that manages NSPE’s online job board. E-mail blasts will start this week promoting the virtual career fair to employers and job seekers.

7. Finance, Administration, Operations and Staff Alignment

On Monday, November 16th, key staff from across the organization had an intensive demonstration and training session on the new Association Management System (AMS) software. All staff now have the credentials necessary to login, experiment and test the new system, prior

to our mock-go-live next month and launch in January. (A detailed timeline of the AMS rollout was included in my last [report](#).)

8. NICET

I am pleased to report that NICET has finalized an agreement with the US Army Prime Power School and 249th Engineer Battalion to recognize the education/training attained by graduates of the Prime Power School as 18 months of work experience credit toward their NICET Electrical Power Testing certification. New students at the Prime Power School (starting this December) will also be taking the NICET Level I and Level II examinations for Electrical Power Testing before they graduate – and immediately applying for Level I certification. Then after gaining six months of field experience, they will be eligible to apply for Level II certification.

We should be receiving the first batch of applications from the US Army within the next couple of weeks. This is a terrific first step with the US Army – but we still have to develop a similar working relationship with the other branches of the military.

I am saddened to report the sudden death this past Sunday of American Society of Certified Engineering Technicians (ASCET) General Manager Philip L. Gaughan due to complications from a recent heart attack. Phil served as NICET Chair and as a member the NSPE Board in 2009-2010. NICET chief staff operating executive Mike Clark will be travelling to Philadelphia to attend the funeral.

Finally, please remember that access to NSPE leadership resources is always available to you in the Leadership Toolbox at www.nspe.org/toolbox. You will need to log in with your user name and password.

This includes [sample presentations](#) for volunteer leaders, [sample](#) promotional and other materials for membership, advocacy, association management, meetings, governance and other areas, and the [latest advocacy news](#).

There is also great material on NSPE's purpose, mission, vision and a history of the *Race for Relevance* and the resulting Strategic Plan in a section called "[Who We Are and What We Do](#)."

You can also review a detailed calendar of NSPE and state society events on the website at: www.nspe.org/AboutNSPE/Events/index.html.