

Effective Marketing Presentations from a Client Point of View

Contributed by Frank Stasiowski, FAIA, excerpted and adapted from *Architect's Essentials of Winning Proposals*

Revised December 2006

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SUMMARY

Effective marketing presentations are thoughtfully prepared and are delivered from the client's point of view. Time, effort, and practice determines the outcome of a presentation.

Clients uniformly respond well to clarity in both language and visuals; customization to the needs of the specific project; staying within time limits; and a sense of the personalities in the firm who will work on the project.

They dislike disorganization; lack of focus on the clients' specific needs; unclear, irrelevant, or excessive visual aids; and presenters who will not be in charge of the project or who act like prima donnas.

PREPARE, PREPARE, PREPARE

Clients want to work with people they know and trust. A good proposal demonstrates to a client that you are qualified to do the work. A successful presentation helps the client get to know and trust you and your team.

A thoughtful, professional, and polished presentation takes time, effort, and practice. The outcome of your presentation is determined before you walk into the room—by how well you have prepared.

Clients are remarkably consistent in what they wish to hear and how they react to presentations. While the elements of a good (or bad) presentation are relatively obvious, they are too often ignored or overlooked.

WHAT CLIENTS LIKE

- Customized presentations that focus on the specific needs of the specific project, not on the presenter's portfolio of past projects
- Clear, straightforward, layman's language
- Visuals that are clear, understandable, and that support and reinforce the oral presentation

- A sense of the personalities of the people who will be working on the project
- Presentations that conclude on time, within the specified time limit

WHAT CLIENTS DO NOT LIKE

- Prima donna presenters who seek to impress or be the center of attention
- Generic, unfocused presentations, not clearly related to the clients' specific needs
- Unclear or unrelated visual aids
- Too many visual aids
- A review of qualifications or other information already furnished in the proposal
- A presentation made by someone other than the person who will be in charge of the project
- Presentations that are evidently disorganized or carelessly prepared

ABOUT THE CONTRIBUTOR

Frank Stasiowski, FAIA, is founder and president of PSMJ Resources. He is a consultant to the building and design industry and the author of numerous books and publications about management.

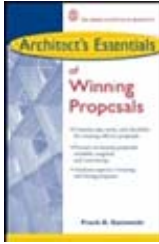
RESOURCES

More Best Practices

The following AIA Best Practices provide additional information related to this topic:

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| 05.04.01 | The Client Interview: A Sample Questionnaire |
| 05.05.05 | Public Relations for Residential Architects |
| 06.02.01 | Thinking Like a Client |
| 06.02.02 | The Art of Listening |

For More Information on This Topic



This article is excerpted and adapted from *Architect's Essentials of Winning Proposals* by Frank Stasiowski, FAIA. Written by a leading expert in the field, this valuable resource presents a complete, organized approach to writing, designing, and presenting proposals that grab clients' attention, stand out from the crowd, and win contracts.

See also "Seeking the Project" by Howard J. Wolff, *The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice*, 13th edition, Chapter 7, page 155.

See also the 14th edition of the *Handbook*, which can be ordered from the AIA Bookstore by calling 800-242-3837 (option 4) or by email at bookstore@aia.org.



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Keywords

- Practice
- Marketing