



Society for Marketing
Professional Services
Seattle

BLOGGER HANDBOOK

2018

OVERVIEW

WHO IS OUR AUDIENCE?

The primary audience for the SMPS Seattle Blog is the community of marketing and business development professionals in the greater Seattle area.

SMPS Seattle is one of the oldest and largest chapters in the country. Helping A/E/C marketers and business developers succeed since 1983. With more than 250 members, the Seattle chapter is a vibrant and powerful network for A/E/C professionals at all stages of their careers. Members and Non-Members alike benefit from the vast amount of educational, networking and scholarship programs SMPS Seattle offers.

WHAT IS OUR GOAL?

SMPS Mission: Our mission is to advocate for, educate and connect leaders in the building industry and create business opportunities.

SMPS Seattle Vision: SMPS Seattle's vision is for professional service firms in the built environment to recognize SMPS Seattle as their most trusted resource for building business and achieving success.

WHY BLOGGING?

The SMPS Seattle Blog allows us to share useful, relevant, and meaningful content and promotes a fresh insight, comradery, and personal accounts of SMPS. CPSM blog writers have an opportunity to earn CEUs for publishing articles.

Contributes to the Strategic Goal of the Chapter:

"Connect with Content"

Objective: Provide relevant forward-thinking content that elevates the skills and knowledge of the AEC industry that established SMPS Seattle as an industry thought leader.

1. Stay on Trend with Current Topics & Interests
2. Engage in Value Added Communication & Outreach

WRITING GUIDELINES

TOPICS

SMPS Seattle's Director of Marketing and Blog Chair will identify and oversee blog topics and an annual content calendar. However, we encourage Blog Writers to think of ideas and pitch them for consideration to the Blog Chair. SMPS Seattle seeks to provide blog content aligned with the following themes:

- Answers to common questions, especially 'things you're too afraid to ask'.
- Helpful content about the CPSM program.
- Design tips and tricks.
- Business Development best practices.
- Interviews with industry experts and upcoming speakers.
- Interviews with seasoned professionals such as Fellows and firm Leaders.
- Event recaps that offer key takeaways and provide additional resources.
- SMPS National News .
- Simply suggest topics!

HEADLINES

- Great headlines use lines like "5 things you didn't know about..." or "The surprising truth about...", Hook sentences and spark words.
- Create a headline that touches on one or more of the following: urgency, speed, ease, desirability, intrigue, controversy, outlandishness.
- Write a draft headline when you start a post but don't finalize it until the end — the writing process will probably inspire you.
- Keep headlines and sub-headers short and snappy — treat them as an exercise in word economy.
- Include search-friendly keywords within your headline if doing so does not interfere with its readability.

BEST PRACTICES

- On average, blog posts are around 500 words but may be longer or shorter depending on the content/topic.
- First, please review the [SMPS Chapter Communications Manual](#) available through MySMPS.
- Haven't written in a while? Read *The Elements of Style* by Strunk and White.
- Write with your audience in mind — who are you writing for and what are their motivations for reading?
- Thesis statement, remember that? Start every blog post with a short introduction (100-150 words as a rule of thumb) that clearly states what can be expected from reading the post.
- End every blog post with a conclusion that highlights the key point(s) made in the post and gives the reader a clear call to action (e.g. "Share your thoughts in the comments section below.").
- Include graphics! But they should be generated by you, or be protected by creative commons licensing. More info here: <http://creativecommons.org> Flickr is a good place to look, you can search by creative commons licensed images.

TIPS & TRICKS

Blog post structure and formatting suggestions:

- Break up your content regularly with sub-headers.
- Write using short words, short sentences and short paragraphs. Keep it simple!
- Pare out all unnecessary words during the editing process. The fewer words the better!
- Use bold and italics for emphasis – but use sparingly.
- Don't use underlines unless you're linking to something.
- Lists are a great way to catch your readers' attention.

Some miscellaneous suggestions and tips & tricks:

- Let your personality shine through! Don't write like a robot.
- As Ernest Hemingway once said, "Write drunk, edit sober." Get your thoughts down first and worry about how to package and present your post afterwards.
- Look at other bloggers, A/E/C firms' blogs, and blogs in other industries to get ideas for content, style, and technique.

SMPS SEATTLE STYLE & VOICE

The SMPS Seattle Brand Voice was updated in 2016 as part of the redesign of the SMPS Seattle website. Below is a matrix to help you get a feel for how to write for the SMPS Seattle Blog. The basics of the SMPS Seattle voice is that it should be *professional*, *fun* and *accessible*. We adhere to:

Voice Characteristic	Description	Example	Do's	Don'ts
<i>Professional</i>	SMPS Seattle is a go-to source for A/E/C professionals.	SMPS Seattle is a professional services organization dedicated to helping you and your team succeed.	Write like your boss is reading your text. Be clear but friendly, and get to the point.	Be too corporate or stuffy, don't use overly complex phrases.
<i>Fun</i>	SMPS Seattle is professional — but we know how to let loose and have fun, and we don't take ourselves too seriously.	Are you helping your team prepare for an interview? Do you want to knock their socks off? We've got the workshop for you.	Write in the present tense when possible. Use descriptive words, and use uncommon adjectives when possible. Use questions to lead into event descriptions and calls to action.	Don't ask questions just for the sake of using questions. Don't be too casual, don't use abbreviations or acronyms (without first writing out the entire name), and don't use slang or text message style writing.
<i>Accessible</i>	SMPS Seattle welcomes anyone who will benefit from our tools, training and	SMPS Seattle provides the tools you need to be successful.	Use active voice, concise language, try to eliminate unnecessary	Don't use jargon, overly complex sentence structure, obscure

	resources — from entry-level marketers to firm leaders.		words when possible.	vocabulary, or passive voice.
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CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS (CEU)

A CPSM who authors an article during the recertification time frame is eligible to receive one CEU for every 500 words published. This includes articles or other industry publications whose content covers any of the six Domains of Practice and is available to the general profession and marketing community. The author may write for SMPS or any other organization. In addition, the author may receive one CEU for every two hours of research used to write the article. Articles written for internal publication at one's own firm do not qualify unless the publication is available to the general profession and marketing community. To earn CEUs for writing, complete a Writing Documentation Form for each article or book. Note: A maximum of 15 CEUs may be submitted during a three-year period for writing.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for your interest in writing for the SMPS Seattle Blog! This is a team effort, so if you feel stuck, reach out to the Blog Chair or the Director of Marketing for more information.

BLOG CHAIR

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