



## NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR CSI CHICAGO MEMBERS MARCH 2011

### Congratulations to Members Celebrating March Anniversaries

**45** Mr. W. Dean Walker, CSI, CCS, AIA, SCIP ; **32** Bruce Schmiedl, CSI, AIA, Walgreens; **31** Mr. Thomas B. Engstrand, AIA, CSI, CCS, ALA, LEED AP, NCARB; **26** Mr. Joseph A. Stypka, FCSI, CCS, AIA, Murphy/Jahn; **24** Alan B. Itzkowitz, AIA, CSI, CCS, CCCA, NCARB, LEED AP ; Mr. Charles Hart, CSI, CDT, Hart Associates **23** Mr. Ronald J. Spellich, PE, CSI, CDT, Accelerated Building Technologies **20** Mr. Robert C. Boettcher, CSI, CCPR, McGraw-Hill Construction Sweets **18** Mr. Richard J. Basten, Jr., CSI, VOA **17** Mr. Stephen R. Shull, CSI, CDT, Rheinzink America, Inc.; Mr. Gregory Lehn, CSI, LM Consultants, Inc.; **16** Mr. James R. Kreps, CSI, CCCA, AIA, CCCA ; **14** Mr. David Foler, CSI, ; Mr. Robert J. Rada, CSI, A. Epstein and Sons International; Mr. Donald E. Sieracki, CSI, CCS, AECOM; **13** Mr. Frank E. Heitzman, RA, CSI, AIA, ASID, Heitzman Architects; **10** Jeffrey Denenberg, CSI, Bradco; **8** Mr. Stephen Maines, CSI, AHC, Opening Solutions; Mr. James B. Sagstetter, RA, CSI, Linn-Mathes, Inc. 60607; **7** Mr. Leslie J. Raffel, CSI, RAK Ceramics; Thomas J. McGing, CSI, AIA, STR Consulting LLC; **6** Mr. Troy A. Furgal, CSI, Johns Manville; Mr. Fernando Araujo, CSI, HOK; **5** Mr. Chris J. Wascher, CSI, Taylor Coating Sales, Inc.; **4** Mr. Steven T. Butts, CSI, ; Ms. Lynn Perry, CSI, Architech Consulting, Inc.; Mr. Robert L. Borhauer, CSI, CDT, Jeld-Wen Inc.; Mr. Dan R. Smith, CSI, CCPR, LEED AP, ; **3** Mr. Earl H. Bickett, CSI, Mortar Net USA Ltd; Elias S. Saltz, CSI, LEED AP, Eckenhoff Saunders Architects; Mr. Jeff E. Tolle, CSI, Flexco Floors; Mr. Christopher E. Chwedyk, CSI, The Code Group, Inc.; **1** Mr. Sean M. Meracle, CSI, The Sherwin Williams Company; Mr. James Povejsil, CSI, Accurate Partitions Corp.; Mr. Charlie A. Renner, CSI, TEC/CHAPCO; Mr. Adam Joseph Sesso, CSI, GAF Materials Corporation; , ;

### Welcome New Members Joining in February

Laura A Gagliano, CSI, AIA, Ingersoll Rand Security Technologies  
Mark E. Madden, CSI, MOEN, Inc.  
Bill Schaeffer, CSI, American Hydrotech

### Member News

Alan Itzkowitz, CSI, CCS, CCCA, SCIP, AIA, LEED AP, after 3 years as the specification writer at DeStefano Partners, has formed ABI Specifications Consulting, a new firm specializing in specifications and quality/constructability peer reviews for projects in all phases, from conceptual design through construction. ABI Specs offers value added technical services for architects, engineers, contractors, design-builders, and product manufacturers.

Alan brings over 37 years of specification writing, architecture, structural engineering, project management, quality control and administrative management experience to the architectural community. He is a licensed architect in Illinois and 3 other states and holds CCS and CCCA certifications. Additionally he is a LEED®AP and MasterFormat® Accredited Instructor, and has a

NCARB Council Record. As a member of the Chicago and Northern Illinois chapters since 1987, Alan has been actively involved in both chapters serving as a board member and CDT Study Course instructor for the Chicago chapter and President, Secretary, Director, Newsletter Editor, and CDT Study Course instructor for the Northern Illinois chapter. He is also a member of SCIP and AIA. Additional information can be found at [www.abispecs.com](http://www.abispecs.com).

**Michael De Rouin, CSI, CCCA, AIA** principal of FitzGerald Associates Architects has been promoted to President. DeRouin succeeds Patrick FitzGerald, who has become Chairman of the Board. Mr. De Rouin will maintain his role and client responsibilities as a firm principal as well as now overseeing operations of the firm. Mr. FitzGerald will continue his focus on client relationships and long-term company strategy. Mike will also step into the presidency of the Chicago Chapter of CSI for fiscal 2012, which begins in July of 2011



## February 22 Building Envelope Event

Over 250 members and guests learned new information about the various elements of the Building Envelope at a panel discussion in Chicago and Rolling Meadows. Presented in conjunction with ALA and the Northern Illinois chapters, all three organizations were well represented and joined by other design and construction professionals throughout the area. Thank you to our presenters who tackled some complicated case studies "From Top to Bottom"

### Above Grade Vertical Enclosure

**Kenneth M. Lies, CSI, AIA**, Principal, Raths, Raths & Johnson

### Roofing Systems, Kami Farahmandpour, PE, FRCI, RWC, CSI, CCS, CCA

Principal and founder Building Technology Consultants, PC

### Below Grade Waterproofing

**Jason Aspin, RA**, Senior Associate, Wiss Janney Elstner

The program would not have been made possible without the program sponsors, representing excellence in building envelope products:





## Two PRM's Available at a Discount

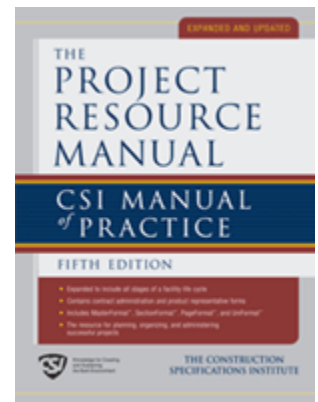
Due to a bulk order, the chapter has two brand new PRM's that are available for purchase on a first come basis. Cost is \$225 for members or \$295 for nonmembers. Shipping is additional or it can be brought to the March 22 chapter meeting

A Comprehensive Resource for Construction Professionals - This publication includes a PDF on CD, which makes it easy for users to search for key terms and references. MasterFormat and UniFormat are included on the CD.

The Project Resource Manual - CSI Manual of Practice (PRM) is the authoritative resource for the organization, preparation, use, and interpretation of construction documents, encompassing the entire life cycle of a facility from conception through facility management.

Used universally throughout the construction industry, The Project Resource Manual—CSI Manual of Practice is the ideal tool to help you—

- Understand the roles and responsibilities of the four project teams: Owner Team, Design Team, Contractor Team, and Supplier Team
- Determine the most appropriate project delivery method
- Understand the design process and product selection
- Prepare accurate and enforceable specifications applying the CSI/CSC UniFormat, MasterFormat, SectionFormat, and PageFormat for clear, concise, correct, and complete contract documents
- Coordinate, interpret, and enforce contract documents
- Effectively administer construction contracts
- Improve communication among project participants
- Utilize project resources for effective facility management
- Plan for existing facility improvements and modifications





## Contributed Article

### A Tale of Two Companies

*By Sheldon Wolfe*

A few months ago, in "Go-to guys", I spoke of the many excellent product representatives I know, and how valuable they are to me in my job as specifier. This past month, I experienced something just a bit different. It wasn't that the product reps weren't helpful, but their corporate structure made it difficult for them to offer the help that specifiers need, which, in turn, makes it difficult for specifiers to properly serve their clients.

It all started with an e-mail from one of our construction administrators, about a substitution request. The subcontractor claimed that a substantial savings would result from using the proposed products, and went on to say that one of the proposed substitute products was, in fact, identical to one that had been specified.

I'm sure many specifiers are asking themselves, "If it wasn't specified, why didn't you just reject it?" That's a great question for a future discussion, but for the moment, accept as fact that there was more than one good reason to consider the request.

My research began with the supplier's claim that one of the proposed substitutions was the same as one that had been specified. As it turned out, this was *not* a simple claim that one product was very similar to the other, but that the two literally were the same. This was something of a surprise, as we had been using the specified products for more than a decade, while the supposed equal product was an unknown.

It didn't take long to determine that the manufacturers of the competing products were subsidiaries of a larger company. The fun began when I called the parent company's toll-free number. After identifying myself, the call went something like this.

"I'd like to talk with someone in your technical department, to find out if [specified] product A and [substitute] product B are the same."

"Where are you located?"

"St. Paul."

"Call your local representative at 555-555-0101."

"Does that representative deal with both A and B?"

"No. If you want the representative for B, call 555-555-0123."

"I'd like to speak with someone who is familiar with both products."

"You'll have to call your local rep."

"Do you mean to tell me that there is no one in your office who can answer the question?"

"That's what our field representatives are for."

It was clear that this wasn't going any further, so I said "thanks" and hung up. I called one of the numbers; the phone rang for so long that I gave up and tried the other. That rep was out of the office, so I left a callback message.

I then went to my secret source of information, the CSI member database. Ta-da! I found the name of a person who was a vice president of the parent company. I called and got a message saying that person was out of the office. Transferring to the operator, I again found myself talking to the person I had talked with a just a few minutes before. I'm sure she wasn't pleased that I was still trying to burrow into the company, but I wasn't pleased by the run-around.

A short time later, I got a call from the rep for product A. When I told him about the substitution request, and the claim that A and B were the same, he expressed frustration, and made comments to the effect that he had run into this problem before, that A and B were not the same, and that there was some confusion at the corporate level that led to the problem. He said he would look into it and get back to me.

I then got another call, which I assumed would be from the VP of the parent company. However, instead of returning my call, the VP had passed my request off to a head of the product B company, so I was unable to talk with someone who could speak for both companies.

"Mr. B, I have been told that your product B is identical to product A. Is that true?"

"They're not really identical. They do use the same material, have the same properties, and use the same MSDS, but the pigment and the name are different."

"So they're really the same?" Although Mr. B never came right out and said so, everything he said indicated that A and B are the same. He then spent some time explaining the distribution systems used by the two companies. One is sold direct to installers, while the other is sold through distributors. Furthermore, an installer of A is not allowed to purchase B, and vice versa.

"What I'm concerned about is that we've been specifying A for many years, and now it appears that your company is selling the same thing under a different name at a lower price. In other words, our clients may have been paying more than they had to. Is there a difference in the quality of installers?"

"No. We do have factory training, but we do not certify installers."

Giving up the battle, I asked if we could get a list showing all of the products of both companies, indicating which are the same. I'm certain someone knows this information, but I was told such a list is not available.

When I got back to my computer, I discovered an e-mail from the product A rep. He told me the proposed substitution wasn't available any longer, and had been replaced by another product. Mr. B said that was essentially correct - but the new product is really the same thing with a different name. OK, maybe there is good reason to have two distribution systems for a single product, but why not just sell the same product and avoid the confusion? Is there a point to this shell game? Could it be nothing more than a way to get around public bidding requirements? Whatever the reason, it doesn't really matter. Apparently, we have two product representatives selling many of the same products under different names, competing with each other, and, understandably, not too interested in talking about the competing company's products.

Design professionals need straight answers, and episodes like this can quickly destroy a company's credibility.

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## **Syracuse Chapter President Speaks—We Should All Listen**

*We are reprinting this article written by the Syracuse Chapter President for his Chapter Newsletter as the message should be important to every CSI Member or potential member. As you recruit or introduce friends to CSI, please remember the contents of this article.*

It's 1 AM and I just had an inspiring dream, and I believe I have something to say. Or rather, I have something to say that I believe in. When other organizations have lost members, the Syracuse Chapter of CSI has managed to keep its membership at a steady and slowly increasing level for over three years. CSI has become even more vital and important to the local construction community than ever before.

Let me share a story why CSI is so important to me. And let's take this time to review and refocus as a chapter. Let's look at our future opportunities and possibilities.

Two years ago, a very close, old friend of mine, who I haven't spoken to in over 13 years said to me something like, "Kevin, you did exactly what you always wanted to do, ever since you were younger, and you stuck with it over all of these years". After 13 years, she remembered my dream of becoming an architect. This is a dream that I've had.....ever since I was 12 years old.....

I have worked very hard towards my dream. After college, in 2002, I couldn't find a job, so I started a company to provide ad hoc CAD and rendering services to local architects, engineers and

developers. The economy was slow, and many local professionals could only afford part-time or temporary workers. Very few people were hiring full-time, intern architects. I figured that starting this business was better than working in retail or pumping gas. After all, I didn't spend all of that money and time in college to be pumping gas. I wanted to work in the field of architecture....so I did just that! I made very little money, so I had to supplement my income with pizza delivery. I loved what I was doing, and the experience of owning my own business was invaluable. I learned a lot! It wasn't about the money, it was about learning and experiencing my love for architecture.

After the economy picked up, I was able to get full-time employment at Nelson Associates Architectural Engineering in Clinton, NY. I finally could start my IDP (Intern Development Program) and make a stable income for myself and my fiancé. About a month after I started my employment I took my CDT (Construction Documents Technology) exam offered through CSI. This was my first introduction to CSI. I passed my exam and received a certificate as a Construction Documents Technologist.

Studying and taking that exam opened my eyes to a whole new world. I learned so much about construction documents and the industry as a whole. I felt that I had a HUGE advantage over my peers because I learned much more about the industry than they had....in a short period of time.

Soon after, I decided to join the local chapter of CSI because I heard that they wanted to start up programs again, and they were offering other exciting opportunities. Of course, I volunteered right away, and I offered my services to the chapter without any hesitation.

Right now I am eligible to sit for my ARE (Architecture Registration Exam). I just need to find time to study while balancing time to spend with my wife and my 10-month old baby daughter. I have no doubt in my mind that I will pass all parts of my licensing exam because of the knowledge and assistance that I received from CSI.

This is why I am so passionate about CSI. I want to show students and interns the huge opportunities and learning experiences within this multi-profession organization. Where else can architects, engineers, product representatives, contractors and facility managers meet together? This is what makes our organization so unique. I want emerging professionals to know that you can receive IDP credit for taking your CDT or other higher certifications exams through CSI. But it shouldn't be because you receive credit—it should be because of the knowledge learned about construction documents. I know that since I have my CDT, I should easily pass the construction documents part of the ARE. After all, one of the two main study materials for this part of the exam is the CSI—Project Resource Manual, formally known as the Manual of Practice.

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This passion and the vast knowledge that I learned through CSI makes me want to give back to the organization and to assist students and interns to reach their highest potential. This is why I'm trying to energize our local CSI board, wanting them to provide more student and emerging professional initiatives. I am very proud of my board and everything that we have accomplished so far, but more needs to be done. I would like to see more students and emerging professionals involved. I would like to see at least one student affiliate established on a college campus. I would like to see more mentoring opportunities and student lectures. I would like to hand out at least one student scholarship and provide CDT (and other higher certification) reimbursement to long-valued members who pass these exams. And finally, I would like to see our membership grow

These are very ambitious goals, but what is at stake? Without CSI, who will fill the void? Who will remind students of the importance of specifications and construction documentation as a whole? Our

local attorneys will definitely remind them when poor construction documentation is the cause of a huge lawsuit. This is why education is very important!

We want to provide our clients with the utmost best service possible, with the best construction documentation that we can humanly provide.

Without strong local chapter of CSI, how many projects will have to go into litigation? How many interns will have to be “re-taught” about the preparation of proper construction documents? How many students will have a hard time finding a full-time job? How many interns will fail parts of the ARE? How many interns will not know about the importance of having a CDT? How many interns will be confused and overwhelmed by abbreviations like ASTM, ASHRAE, ADA and AAA, from ABC to XYZ? How many ‘mistakes’ will there be? How many products will be detailed improperly? How many construction products will be installed improperly? How many construction failures? How many angry clients will there be when you don’t meet their expectations when you tell them that their building won’t be LEED certifiable?

Many of this is preventable through proper education and construction standards....that is where CSI comes in! So what can you do to help? First, you can become a mentor and let your interns know about CSI. Tell them about CDT, CCCA, CCS and CCPR. Do you know what these abbreviations stand for?

For college professors, we offer a vast amount of tools and information. Use the CSI—PRM as a textbook in class. Use our study materials and PowerPoint presentations to assist you. Request a guest lecturer in your classroom. If you are a principal of a local firm, then get involved with CSI and set an example. Get other employees to participate or volunteer...and ultimately become a member. This is important because the Northeast Region of CSI is interested in creating leaders through our new leadership training program. Will your firm’s next young leader come from CSI?

Ultimately, I cannot do this alone. I will need everyone’s help for us to be successful because the alternative is unacceptable.

So let us start a revolution. Let us start a revolution that is not just about fancy 3D models or unbuildable, theoretical buildings. I am prepared to do something. I am prepared to pursue a cause. The cause is helping the next generation of construction professionals succeed. The secret to helping is through volunteering and mentoring.

So who is with me ?!?!

Onward!

*Kevin E. Phillips, Jr., CSI, CDT, LEED Green Assoc.  
President Syracuse Chapter*