



The Sept. 16 event provided a rare opportunity for MBE exhibitors to showcase products and services with corporate buyers and end-users.

Making connections and creating value

It looked like a typical business opportunity fair except for one thing -- the exhibitors were minority business enterprises (MBEs) and the individuals walking through the displays were procurement professionals, corporate buyers and supplier diversity representatives.

The unique twist came courtesy of SCMBDC's Minority Business Enterprise Input Committee (MBEIC), which organized the Sept. 16 event called "The Power of Relationships: Making Connections and Creating Value for Southern California Businesses."

Sponsored by Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and held at its headquarters in Los Angeles, the event attracted 81 supplier exhibitors, comprised of MBEs, WBEs, SBEs and OBEs, (minority/women/small/other business enterprises) and more than 300 attendees.

Among those in attendance were 45 buyers, supplier diversity teams, and decisionmakers representing 20 majority corporations from AEG, Amgen, Apple, Brutoco Engineering, Chevron, City of Los Angeles, Kiewit, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Los Angeles World Airport, Metro, MWD, Northrop Grumman Corporation, Southern California Gas Company, Schmmick Construction, Southern California Edison, Toyota Motor Sales, The Walt Disney Company, Turner Construction, University of Southern California, and Walsh Austin.

The event provided a rare opportunity for suppliers to showcase products and services to corporate buyers and end users. For suppliers who did not exhibit, there was ample business networking opportunities among all those present.

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Mark Your Calendars

Become the speaker and leader you want to be
Sept. 30, Oct. 14 and 28
9 a.m. - 11 a.m.

SCMBDC headquarters

Part of SCMBDC Toastmasters International, this learn-by-doing workshop helps participants hone their presentation and leadership skills. Attendees learn skills such as the use of humor, gestures, eye contact, speech organization and overall delivery. To pre-register, contact Fernando Velasquez at fvelasquez@scmbdc.org or call 213-689-6968.

Leadership Awards Dinner
Oct. 15, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m.
The Beverly Hills Hotel

Join us as we honor Michael Allman, president and CEO of Southern California Gas Co., with this year's Leadership Award. The award is given to an individual and/or corporation whose achievements and leadership in the business community have resulted in positive results for small and minority-owned businesses. For information, tickets or sponsorship opportunities, contact Shawn Smith at ssmith@scmbdc.org or (213) 689-6940.

The idea for the "reverse trade fair" came from members of the MBEIC, according to Pat Watts, MBEIC chair and president and CEO of FCI Management Consultants. "We wanted to do something a little different from our annual signature networking event and everyone loved the idea of having MBEs as exhibitors."

The original concept was to have only MBEs exhibit exclusively; however, it evolved to being more inclusive in deference to the many small businesses who also wanted to exhibit. The exhibitors who paid \$50 to confirm their participation, "represented a wide range of industries, including construction, information technology, staffing, marketing, promotional merchandising, fulfillment, engineering consultants, and manufacturers, among others," adds Rita Vigil-Ferguson, event chair, MBEIC member and president of G&F Concrete Cutting, Inc.

Denise Peoples, president and CEO of Peoples Choice Staffing, Inc., says as an exhibitor, she hoped to get "face-to-face time with the people who can say 'yes' to our products and services. SCMBDC hand picks corporate partners that really do have a need to increase their diversity spending and are interested in utilizing our products and services. At the end of the day, it is about seeing a return on our investment."

Another exhibitor, Dana Emberson, vice president of sales for Fulfillment Corp. of America, says, "I've been to other supplier diversity trade fairs, but the three hours I spent here was the most productive -- I was impressed with the event," adding he met representatives from LADWP, Apple, and several MBEs.

From a corporate perspective, Maurice Webb, supplier diversity manager corporate procurement at Apple, adds, "This is the most phenomenal event I've seen among NMSDC's regional councils." He added he was impressed that corporate representatives were visiting MBE exhibitors, offering the chance to see their products and services.

Dennis Thurston, supplier diversity manager at Southern California Edison, says, "We hit every table because it's important to see what MBEs have to offer. It was also nice putting a face to a company."

Michelle Ballard, director of community affairs, Turner Construction Company, added, "It was great to see so many construction firms. The format was perfect... putting the exhibitors by industry allowed me to concentrate on construction, and also allowed me to spend time with other suppliers for Turner's indirect products and services."

Website has new look, features



Michael W. Allman

Michael W. Allman, president and chief executive officer of Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas), will receive SCMBDC's 2010 Leadership Award at its 26th Annual Leadership Award dinner on Friday, Oct. 15.

The event will be held at The Beverly Hills Hotel, located at 9641 Sunset Blvd. The reception begins at 6:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m.

Internet Marketing: Advanced Social Media Strategy

Oct. 21, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
SCMBDC headquarters

Part of the Entrepreneurs in Conversation series, attendees can learn about advanced social media from Majid Abai CEO, Pringo/RedSeeb, followed by networking. There is no charge to attend. To register, contact Fernando Velasquez at 213-689-6968 or fvelasquez@scmbdc.org.

NMSDC 2010 Conference and Business Opportunity Fair

Oct. 24-27
Miami Beach Convention Center

This year's theme: Minority Businesses and Corporate America Partnership: The Engine for a Global Economy.

Internet Marketing: Search Engine Optimization

Nov. 4, 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.
SCMBDC headquarters

This event features a candid conversation with Majid Abai, CEO, Pringo/RedSeeb, on search engine optimization, followed by networking.

For more information about these and other events, visit www.scmbdc.org

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The Leadership Award is given to an individual and/or corporation whose achievements and leadership in the business community have resulted in positive results for small and minority-owned businesses.

Allman became president of SoCalGas in March 2010. Previously, he served as president and CEO of Sempra Generation, another subsidiary of Sempra Energy, overseeing the operation of merchant power plants through North America. Allman has spearheaded the development of several groundbreaking renewable energy projects, including the country's largest solar photovoltaic plant in Boulder City, Nevada.

He has held several leadership positions with Sempra Energy and its subsidiaries, including chief financial officer of Sempra Global, president of Sempra Technology Ventures, vice president of corporate planning and development and vice president of audit services.

Prior to joining Sempra Energy in 1998, Allman was responsible for marketing and delivering consulting projects to corporate clients of the Los Angeles office of LEK/Alcar, a strategic and financial consulting-services firm.

Allman has a master's degree in business administration from the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business and a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Michigan State University. He is a certified management accountant and a certified internal auditor. He serves on the board of the American Gas Association, Los Angeles World Affairs Council and the California Chamber of Commerce.

Previous award winners include: Tetsuo Iwamura, president and CEO, American Honda Motor Co., Inc.; Earvin "Magic" Johnson, chairman and CEO, Magic Johnson Enterprises and founder and chairman, Magic Johnson Foundation; Alfred E. Osborne, Jr., senior associate dean, UCLA Anderson School of Management, associate professor of Global Economics & Management, founder and faculty director, Harold Price Center for Entrepreneurial Studies; Stephen F. Bollenbach, co-chairman and CEO, Hilton Worldwide, and Robert A. Iger, CEO, The Walt Disney Company.

For information and sponsorship opportunities, contact Shawn Smith at (213) 689-6940, or ssmith@scmbdc.org.

Demystifying electronic RFPs



Panelists at the e-RFP workshop told attendees to be flexible and embrace electronic tools - they are here to stay.

As many minority business enterprises (MBEs) know, electronic requests for proposals have not only grown in the last few years, but they are here to stay. The turnout at SCMBDC's "Electronic RFPs and Auctions Demystified" workshop held Aug. 31 -- about 50 MBEs -- is an indicator that e-RFPs are not a passing fad.

"e-RFPs have become an effective way to work more efficiently since they automate many steps in the sourcing process. More and more corporate members are using e-RFPs to invite suppliers to bid on contracting opportunities," according to Council President John W. Murray, Jr.

The benefits of e-RFPs for MBEs are instant and complete access to registered vendors where suppliers can share their products and services. Interactions between buyers and suppliers in real-time produce cost benefits and speedier transactions, saving time, paper and energy.

The idea for the workshop came from Mitzi Murakami, senior consultant, national supplier diversity at Kaiser Permanente, who notes, "It's important that the MBE community is equipped with the proper tools in order to compete successfully for contracting opportunities. Workshops that focus on such tools are invaluable.

"In speaking with businesses about participating in e-sourcing events, I've encountered some uncertainty and general lack of understanding about the process," she adds. "I felt it was important for corporations to help these businesses better understand these events and get their questions and concerns answered in a small workshop setting. The goal of the workshop was to demystify the process and demonstrate that it is possible for minority businesses to participate."

Guest panelists included Erik Hansen, program director, supply chain systems, procurement and supply, Kaiser Permanente; Brandon Jones, eBuy manager, The Walt Disney Company, and Scott Searway, procurement manager, WellPoint, Inc.

To help MBEs take advantage of e-RFPs and stand out from the crowd, panelists told them to highlight their unique business characteristics, ask questions about the RFP if it's unclear, be clear and concise in their responses, understand what the client wants and needs, and remember, low price doesn't necessarily win the business.

In short, MBEs were told to participate fully in the e-RFP process, distinguish yourself, be flexible and embrace -- don't fight -- electronic tools. They are here to stay.

"The workshop was very informative," says Josephine Gradillas, president of Gradillas Court Reporters. "Being able to openly discuss and question any part of the process was useful and beneficial."

To view each panelist's PowerPoint presentations, click on the following links:

Erik Hansen - Kaiser Permanente

Brandon Jones - The Walt Disney Company

Scott Searway - WellPoint.

Smart tips for MBEs

Protecting your business from identity theft

Do you have reports with sensitive information lying around the office? Are computers left logged on to private networks? Do you leave unshredded financial statements in the trash? If so, you may be vulnerable to identity theft.

Hundreds of organizations, including businesses, universities and government agencies, have been victims of identity theft. While some are high-tech methods of data theft, most crimes happen through human error, such as not destroying personal documents and having an untrustworthy person handling company finances.

Thieves can use names, addresses and phone numbers to register credit cards and run up bills and damage your company's name. The average cost to an organization of recovering from a data breach is about \$6.75 million, not including lost productivity, customer goodwill and brand equity.



Here are a few tips to ensure your business is protected from identity theft:

- Conduct employee background checks
- Make sure computer equipment - including laptops, hard drives, smart-phones - is encrypted and has a password
- Shred sensitive documents
- Make employees aware of security measures

News briefs

Council program featured in L.A. Times

SCMBDC's Capacity Building Initiative, a two-year mentoring program designed to help minority-owned firms increase their capacity through resources and one-on-one coaching, was featured in the Aug. 23 edition of the Los Angeles Times.

The article stated, "Mentoring programs, such as the one put together by the nonprofit Southern California Minority Business Development Council, allow small companies not only to network, but also to hear about opportunities to do work for corporations.

"I've always said that for some people this stuff happens on the golf course, where relationships are formed and information exchanged, but some people don't get asked [to play], so how do they get the opportunity?" John W. Murray Jr., president of the council, said in the article.

The story also featured Pat Watts, CEO of FCI Management Consultants and Minority Business Enterprise Input Committee (MBEIC) chair. FCI, one of the seven minority-owned suppliers participating in the program, received not only know-how but also some business for her energy services company, the article noted.

Not mentioned in the article were the following corporate mentors: AEG, Metropolitan Water District, Southern California Gas, San Diego Gas & Electric, Southern California Edison, and The Walt Disney Company. Also,

input from corporate member Caggemini, which provided early strategic planning sessions and counsel at no cost, was critical to the program's success.

To view the story, go to www.scmbdc.org/news.

Pepperdine's E2B ranked in Top 10

Pepperdine University's Graziadio School of Business and Management Education to Business (E2B) Program was ranked by U.S. News & World Report as one of the "10 College Courses That Will Pay Off at Work."

Posted April 26, the article states, "Companies facing real-world business problems come to Pepperdine for consulting assistance. In each of the consulting classes, students are split into groups that work to solve the various problems facing the company. The arrangement is mutually beneficial. Rather than invest in an expensive consulting firm, businesses save money while gaining access to a team of budding consultants. The students, in turn, are asked not to solve theoretical problems, but offer solutions in real time that a company may implement to help improve its bottom line. In the past, students have worked with companies large and small, ranging from corporate giants like Coca-Cola and Cisco to local auto collision shops and software companies."

Last year, the council worked with Pepperdine on an educational webcast and video series to help minority entrepreneurs innovate and advance their business performance. Called "Elevating Your Business During a Downturn," the series featured the university's distinguished faculty members in marketing, economics, finance, strategy and information systems.

Part 2 of the SCMBDC and Pepperdine On Demand Video Series was launched in early September. No webcasts will be included in the series.