

Session Descriptions for Call for Presentations

Please use the session descriptions below as reference. Choose the corresponding session on the submission form to submit your presentation idea(s) by **Friday, December 16, 2016**. The planning group wants to hear from you!

GENERAL SESSIONS

Best Practices in Organizational Alignment and Team Engagement

The most effective organizations align their activities from top to bottom and have team members who are fully committed to and engaged with a common vision, values and priorities. But it is a challenge to deliver on that promise, particularly in today's constantly changing environment. Political and executive leadership changes, tightening budgets, mergers with other public agencies such as State DOTs, or business acquisitions can wreak havoc on an organization's focus and energy. What best practices do you use at your organization?

Cyber Security: Managing Threats to Customer Data and Privacy

Beyond the ongoing challenges of protecting infrastructure and people, this session will focus on protecting customer data and privacy. The toll industry processes millions of electronic transactions each year worth billions of dollars. If you think your systems can't be hacked, you're wrong. And if you think your data is safe, think again. Hear from industry leaders, law enforcement and public relations experts who will discuss current threats, costs of data breaches, the strategies employed to protect your systems and data and how to react and recover from incidents when they occur.

The Truth and Nothing but the Truth: How to Communicate with Your Customers

As communication professionals, we attempt to convey clear and relevant messages to our customers. But in a world where they control the relationship, is the message received as intended? When we communicate with the media are they hearing a different message than we intend? New communications tools present challenges and opportunities to communicate in real-time but is the information we are conveying relevant to their needs? With Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Waze, are our customers using the same rules we understand? This panel will address the ever-changing rules of social engagement and how to communicate with your customers using various all platforms.

Going Viral: Setting Policy on Social Media

It's hard to think of a more significant change over the past decade than the arrival of social media as a communications tool. For good or bad (or a bit of both), social networks have changed the way employers and employees communicate, network and share information. That reality translates into new opportunities, but also new responsibilities for the legality and appropriateness of employees' social media use. This session will focus on the role of human resources, communications, and senior management in developing, implementing and overseeing staff use of social media as the tools themselves continue to go viral.

Transportation Policy and Politics – NO submissions accepted for this session

Will Infrastructure spending dominate policy and political agendas in the coming years? Will the federal government lead, will states lead, will user pay toll facilities continue to grow? How can we best adapt, communicate and administer to this fluid process? Transportation policy experts and industry leaders will share their insights on the short-term future of a Trump Infrastructure Plan and what it means to the tolling industry.

BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS
(two tracks will run concurrently)

COMMUNICATIONS TRACK

Crisis Communications – Creating a Working Plan

It's the knot in the pit of your stomach that keeps you up at night. Your mind begins to race through the worst-case scenarios. Suddenly, you're thinking about the crisis communication plans you've developed. Wait! It's four years old or even worse, you don't have a plan! Prepared statements aren't enough, nor will they help if you can't get them out to the right audience. Every department must have a plan to address an emergency whether natural or manmade. This interactive session will discuss the various steps in collaborating and putting your plan together and how to get buy-in from all levels within your agency.

We've Been Hacked! Responding to Customers in the Digital Age

Building on the General Session on cyber security, this breakout will provide communicators operating in a fast-paced workplace with the necessary tools to navigate multiple disciplines from legal and operations, to external news organizations and social media. Boards, CEOs, senior management and communications teams are demanding greater levels of preparedness, training, response and capabilities. There is rarely time to gather and respond with all the facts. What is the best approach, how do you get an early seat at the table, and where do you go from there to develop a working plan?

Website Optimization – Are You Reaching Your Customers?

Websites are an essential tool for disseminating an organization's information to customers. However, your site is only effective if the people you want to reach are visiting and finding the information they need. This session will look at what constitutes a good website. Presenters will offer tips for improving your search engine optimization (SEO) and page ranking, creating engaging content that resonates with audiences, developing strategies to reach your target market, acquiring the tools to find out more about your visitors and measuring your return on investment.

BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS
(two tracks will run concurrently)

ADMINISTRATION TRACK

Winning the War for Talent

The war for talent is on and it's intensifying. In the coming years, toll agencies may see a shortage of talented employees, at a time when superior talent is the key to success. The first step in winning this war is to understand why companies are having such a tough time attracting, managing, and keeping talent. Companies that fail to adapt their approach to talent management will fall into a newly-opened crevasse from which they may never escape. In this session, you'll learn how the war on talent developed and what leading organizations are doing to respond, survive and thrive.

Procurement: The Pros and Cons of Bundled vs. Unbundled Customer Service

Electronic tolling has changed toll agency's operations and expanded their areas of expertise. Customers now expect the equivalent of retail customer service and experience, including sophisticated account management and back-office systems, interactive websites and phone systems, seamless billings and collections and friendly, well-informed service representatives. How these services are provided will vary from agency to agency. This session will explore the delivery options agencies have considered— from outsourcing entire systems to contracting separately for individual functions, to bringing it all in-house. The panel will help you determine the best service delivery model for your agency and the variables to consider, including how your organization's risk profile point toward a more or less bundled approach.

Current and Emerging Legal Challenges in Tolling

This session will update participants on legal challenges and decisions in the toll industry and explain how agencies can avoid situations or decisions that might create a litigious environment. Toll operators have seen lawsuits from customers who objected to onerous tolls and fees or to collection methods that violated state law or constitutional principles. There have been lawsuits between vendors and agencies on back office and customer service center operations and one recent court decision on the use of toll revenues for "off-system" projects. These types of legal challenges are not new, but what, if anything, is different about these cases? What other emerging legal challenges can the industry expect in the years ahead and how can we prepare?