



Dear AEC Marketing and Business Development Professionals,

For 40 years, SMPS South Florida has celebrated the people who strengthen our industry through leadership, education, and collaboration. As we celebrate this milestone anniversary, we're excited to introduce a new tradition: the **inaugural PALM Awards (Professional Achievement and Leadership in AEC Marketing)**.

As marketers and business developers, we're often the ones recognizing everyone else's achievements. We celebrate project wins, highlight our technical teams, and elevate our firms' successes. The PALM Awards are an opportunity to celebrate **you**, the professionals and teams whose strategy, creativity, and dedication help make those successes possible.

More than a competition, the PALM Awards recognize the thinking behind the work. Judges will evaluate the strategy, collaboration, innovation, execution, and measurable results that helped move your firm forward.

Why Enter?

- **Celebrate your team** and recognize the people behind your firm's success.
- **Strengthen your firm's brand** with award-winning work you can share internally, with clients, and throughout the industry.
- **Build team pride** by recognizing the creativity, collaboration, and dedication that drive successful pursuits and marketing initiatives.
- **Prepare for future National MCA submissions** with a program modeled after the SMPS National Marketing Communication Awards.

The **inaugural PALM Award winners** will be recognized during the **SMPS South Florida 40th Anniversary Gala**, where we'll celebrate the outstanding individuals, teams, and firms helping shape the future of our profession.

And because every great tradition has to start somewhere, **entry fees have been waived** for the inaugural year. We hope firms of every size will take advantage of this opportunity to recognize their people, celebrate their accomplishments, and become part of the very first class of PALM Award winners.

We hope you'll join us in launching a new tradition of recognizing excellence in AEC marketing and business development, and we look forward to celebrating with you this fall.

Sincerely,

The SMPS South Florida PALM Awards Committee

Melissa Bailes
Hedrick Brothers Construction

Renee Kissane
Corradino

Rachel Stevens
Suffolk

BUSINESS TRANSFORMED THROUGH MARKETING LEADERSHIP.

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A stylized palm tree graphic in gold, positioned above the word "PALM". The palm tree has a dark trunk and several fronds. The word "PALM" is in a large, gold, serif font. Below "PALM" is the word "AWARDS" in a similar gold, serif font. The entire graphic is set against a dark background with faint, stylized palm fronds and small gold sparkles.

PALM AWARDS

RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE IN AEC MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

SMPS South Florida PALM Awards

Recognizing Excellence in AEC Marketing & Communications

OVERVIEW

The SMPS South Florida PALM Awards recognize excellence in marketing strategy, creativity, execution, and measurable results across the A/E/C industry.

Inspired by the SMPS National Marketing Communication Awards (MCAs), this program is designed to celebrate exceptional work while preparing members to compete on the national stage. Submission requirements intentionally mirror the National MCA program, allowing entrants to build upon their chapter submissions for future national award consideration.

ELIGIBILITY

- Entries must be submitted by a current SMPS South Florida member or by a firm with at least one active SMPS South Florida member.
- Work must have been completed between January 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026.
- Entries may be submitted by an individual or team and may include work developed in collaboration with consultants or outside partners.
- Multiple entries are permitted.
- Judges reserve the right to withhold an award if submissions do not meet the standards of excellence.

AWARD CATEGORIES

Digital Experience

Recognizes outstanding digital marketing efforts that leverage online platforms to engage audiences, strengthen brands, educate clients, recruit talent, or support business development.

Examples include:

- Corporate or project websites
- Landing pages
- Interactive presentations
- Digital presentations
- Email marketing campaigns
- Video campaigns
- Social media campaigns

APPLY: DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

Brand & Communications

Recognizes exceptional internal/external print or integrated communication materials that strengthen a firm's brand, communicate value, and/or support client pursuits.

Examples include:

- Statements of Qualifications/pursuit materials
- Brochures and corporate collateral
- Annual reports and publications
- Brand refreshes and brand campaigns
- Recruiting materials
- Internal communications
- Project sheets

APPLY: BRAND & COMMUNICATIONS

Events & Experiences

Recognizes marketing created to promote or enhance an event, conference, trade show, client event, milestone celebration, or community engagement initiative.

Examples include:

- Trade show marketing
- Conference promotions
- Client appreciation events
- Groundbreakings
- Grand openings
- Anniversary celebrations
- Community events
- Sponsorship activations

APPLY: EVENTS & EXPERIENCES

SUBMISSION NARRATIVE

Each submission should include representative samples of the work along with responses to the following six questions. Together, these responses should tell the story behind your marketing effort, from the initial challenge through measurable results. Submissions should be packaged via the online form, and any links to pdf's and websites should be included.

JUDGING CRITERIA

Entries will be evaluated by marketing professionals from outside the SMPS South Florida Chapter to ensure an impartial review. Judges will evaluate each submission using the six required response areas. Each section is assigned a point value based on its importance, with a maximum combined score of 100 points.

What Judges Are Looking For

Judges are looking beyond attractive marketing pieces to understand the thinking behind the work. Successful entries will clearly demonstrate how strategy, creativity, execution, and measurable results worked together to achieve a defined business objective.

Awards will recognize excellence—not simply participation.

1. **Creative Brief (250 words maximum) — 15 Points**

Provide a concise overview of your submission.

Include:

- The challenge or opportunity
- Your overall strategy
- Why this project deserves recognition

2. **Marketing Objectives (150 words maximum) — 20 Points**

Describe the goals established for the project.

Include:

- Marketing objectives
- Timeframe
- Budget (optional)
- Methodology for collecting and evaluating results

3. **Target Audience (75 words maximum) — 15 Points**

Describe your intended audience.

Include:

- Who you were trying to reach (target audience)? What is their size/composition/location?
- Distribution or engagement goals

4. **Research & Planning (150 words maximum) — 15 Points**

Describe the research and planning that informed your strategy.

Include any/all that are applicable:

- Market research
- Competitive analysis
- Planning process

5. **Messaging (75 words maximum) — 15 Points**

What was the primary message or call to action? Describe the key idea you wanted your audience to remember.

6. **Results & Impact (150 words maximum) — 20 points**

Demonstrate the effectiveness of your work. Whenever possible, include measurable results.

Examples may include:

- Return on investment
- New opportunities generated
- Client feedback
- Engagement metrics
- Business development outcomes
- Recruitment success
- Brand awareness
- Website analytics
- Social media performance
- Lessons learned

INDIVIDUAL CHAPTER AWARDS

Vanguard of the Year — PUBLIC NOMINATIONS Digital Experience

This award recognizes a senior AEC professional who champions the value of marketing, business development, and strategic communications within their organization and throughout the industry. The recipient demonstrates exceptional leadership by fostering a culture of collaboration, empowering marketing and business development professionals, and advancing the strategic vision and long-term success of their firm.

Through their leadership, advocacy, and commitment to professional excellence, the recipient serves as a true champion of the marketing and business development profession.

Eligibility

- Must have 15 or more years of experience in the AEC industry
- Must serve in a senior leadership role with the authority to influence organizational strategy and decision-making
- Must be a current SMPS South Florida member in good standing

APPLY: VANGUARD OF THE YEAR

SUBMISSION NARRATIVE FOR VANGUARD OF THE YEAR

1. Leadership & Strategic Vision — 30 points

Demonstrates executive leadership and champions the strategic role of marketing and business development within their organization.

2. Advocacy for Marketing & Business Development — 25 points

Actively supports, empowers, and invests in marketing and business development professionals and initiatives.

3. Industry & SMPS Leadership — 20 points

Contributes to the AEC industry and SMPS through mentorship, speaking, leadership, or other meaningful involvement.

4. Organizational Impact — 25 points

Demonstrates measurable impact on firm growth, culture, collaboration, or business success.

Letter of Recommendation (Required)

Each nomination must include one letter of recommendation (maximum two pages) from a colleague, client, supervisor, peer, or industry professional who can speak to the nominee's qualifications, professional character, and contributions to the AEC industry.

The letter should address the following:

- **Professional Contributions**
Describe the nominee's most significant contributions to marketing, business development, leadership, or the AEC industry.
- **Leadership & Impact**
Provide a specific example that demonstrates the nominee's leadership, collaboration, innovation, mentorship, or measurable impact within their organization or the profession.
- **Recommendation**
Explain why the nominee is deserving of this award and how they exemplify the values of SMPS South Florida.

Letters should include specific examples that support the nomination rather than general statements of recommendation.

Marketing/Business Development Professional of the Year — PUBLIC NOMINATIONS

This award recognizes an outstanding marketing or business development professional who demonstrates excellence in strategy, leadership, collaboration, and measurable contributions to their firm and the AEC industry.

Nominees exemplify the value of professional marketing and business development through innovation, client service, mentorship, and a commitment to advancing the profession.

Eligibility

- Must have 5–15 years of experience in the AEC industry
- Must be a current SMPS South Florida member in good standing

APPLY: MARKETING/BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

SUBMISSION NARRATIVE FOR MARKETING/BD PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

1. **Marketing & Business Development Excellence — 30 points**

Demonstrates exceptional strategy, creativity, execution, and measurable results in their role.

2. **Leadership & Collaboration — 20 points**

Works effectively across technical, marketing, and business development teams while positively influencing others.

3. **Innovation & Professional Growth — 20 points**

Introduces new ideas, embraces innovation, and continually develops professionally. success.

4. **Industry & SMPS Engagement — 15 points**

Contributes to the profession through SMPS involvement, mentorship, networking, education, or industry leadership.

5. **Firm Impact — 15 points**

Contributes to business growth, client relationships, brand awareness, recruiting, or organizational success.

Letter of Recommendation (Required)

Each nomination must include one letter of recommendation (maximum two pages) from a colleague, client, supervisor, peer, or industry professional who can speak to the nominee's qualifications, professional character, and contributions to the AEC industry.

The letter should address the following:

- **Professional Contributions**

Describe the nominee's most significant contributions to marketing, business development, leadership, or the AEC industry.

- **Leadership & Impact**

Provide a specific example that demonstrates the nominee's leadership, collaboration, innovation, mentorship, or measurable impact within their organization or the profession.

- **Recommendation**

Explain why the nominee is deserving of this award and how they exemplify the values of SMPS South Florida.

Letters should include specific examples that support the nomination rather than general statements of recommendation.

Rising Star of the Year — PUBLIC NOMINATIONS

Recognizes an emerging marketing or business development professional with five (5) or fewer years of experience in the AEC industry who has demonstrated exceptional initiative, leadership potential, and engagement within SMPS South Florida. This award celebrates the next generation of industry leaders and their early contributions to both the profession and the chapter.

SUBMISSION NARRATIVE FOR RISING STAR OF THE YEAR

1. Professional Biography (150 words maximum) — 10 points

Provide a brief overview of the nominee's professional background, including their current role, responsibilities, and career progression within the AEC industry

2. Leadership & Initiative (250 words maximum) — 35 points

Describe how the nominee has demonstrated initiative, leadership potential, and a commitment to professional growth early in their career

Examples may include:

- Leadership opportunities
- Taking initiative
- Innovation
- Problem-solving
- Contributions beyond their primary responsibilities

3. Professional Impact (250 words maximum) — 35 points

Describe the nominee's contributions to their firm, clients, projects, or the AEC industry. Whenever possible, include measurable results.

Examples may include:

- Marketing or business development successes
- Collaboration with project teams
- Process improvements
- Business development support
- Client engagement
- Recruiting efforts
- Brand initiatives

4. SMPS & Industry Engagement (150 words maximum) — 20 points

Describe the nominee's involvement with SMPS South Florida and/or the AEC community.

Examples may include:

- Committee participation
- Event attendance
- Volunteer service
- Educational programs
- Industry organizations
- Community involvement

APPLY: RISING STAR OF THE YEAR

Letter of Recommendation (Required)

Each nomination must include one letter of recommendation (maximum two pages) from a supervisor, mentor, colleague, client, or industry professional who can speak to the nominee's leadership potential, professional character, and early contributions to the AEC industry.

The letter should address the following:

- **Professional Growth**
Describe how the nominee has demonstrated initiative, leadership potential, and a commitment to professional development early in their career.
- **Impact & Contributions**
Provide a specific example that demonstrates the nominee's contributions to their firm, clients, projects, SMPS, or the AEC industry.
- **Recommendation**
Explain why the nominee is deserving of the Rising Star of the Year Award and how they represent the future of the AEC marketing and business development profession.

Letters should include specific examples that support the nomination rather than general statements of recommendation.

BOARD RECOGNITION AWARDS

The SMPS South Florida Board of Directors annually recognizes individuals whose service and contributions have had a meaningful impact on the chapter and its members. These awards are selected solely by the Board of Directors and are not open for nomination.

New Heights Volunteer Service Award

Recognizes an SMPS South Florida member whose exceptional volunteer service, leadership, and commitment have strengthened the chapter and advanced its mission. The recipient consistently goes above and beyond in supporting chapter initiatives, events, committees, and fellow members.

Selected annually by the SMPS South Florida Board of Directors.



Submissions due by August 28th, 2026.

**Winners announced October 23rd, 2026 at "A Night Beneath the Palms" -
SMPS South Florida 40 Year Anniversary Gala**