



A conversation with Peter Kienle, FSMPS, CPSM, Chief Marketing Officer of McKim & Creed, P.A., and 2006-07 SMPS National President

Pete Kienle, FSMPS, CPSM, is the Chief Marketing Officer of McKim & Creed, P.A., a 475-person engineering, surveying, and planning firm serving the Southeast United States.

McKim & Creed has 18 offices in North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, and Virginia. An *ENR* Top 500 firm, McKim & Creed recently received the ZweigWhite Hot Firm award, as one of the fastest growing A/E/P firms in the country. Last year, the firm grew over 40% and is expecting 20% growth this year.

Pete is the National President of the Society for Marketing Professional Services (SMPS) and is a Certified Professional Services Marketer as well as a Fellow of the Society. He has a BSBA and an MBA from Ohio State University, and previously served in marketing roles for Moody-Nolan Inc. and NBBJ, both in Columbus, OH.

He started his career as an owner's representative on over \$250 million of construction, including serving as the chair or committee member on over 100 A/E selections.

In the last 5 years, he has made over 40 presentations on A/E/C marketing practices, speaking before AIA, SMPS, and engineering associations, as well as audio conferences for ZweigWhite and IOMA.

We sat down with Pete to talk with him one-on-one about his thoughts on being a CPSM.

CPSM: What was your motivation for becoming a CPSM?

KIENLE: I would have a credential just like the "professionals" I was working with – architects and engineers.

CPSM: Has your certification made a difference in your professional life?

KIENLE: First, I know what I have accomplished in becoming certified – mastering the skills and acquiring the knowledge for the six domains of practice. Also, when people see my CPSM they ask what that is and I get a chance to promote certification.

CPSM: Does your employer support your certification?

KIENLE: Yes. He knows there are critical knowledge and skills that are necessary to be a professional marketer.

CPSM: Would you encourage others to seek certification?

KIENLE: Yes. There is no other way to distinguish a professional accomplished in A/E/C marketing. Soon it will be the standard for A/E/C marketing in the United States. I can actually give you an example of a success story where I encouraged a fellow colleague to earn the CPSM. Russ Sanford, CPSM, Vice President of Healthcare Real Estate (a real estate development, brokerage, construction and property management services firm with offices in Cincinnati and Columbus, OH, and Tampa, FL) called me while working with a new client just after he earned the CPSM. He told me that he was happy he'd read all the books to prepare for the exam because he'd learned a lot and now all that knowledge was proving to be really helpful in working with the client. He was grateful that I'd got him involved in the CPSM program.

CPSM: What did you find was of most value to you in studying for the exam?

KIENLE: All the books and articles were excellent. I found out about areas I do not routinely work in.

CPSM: What advice would you give to future certification candidates to help them prepare for the CPSM examination?

KIENLE: Read the material, start a study group, and have a plan for certification. Without a plan, it will be very difficult to discipline yourself to prepare for the exam.

CPSM: How does your local SMPS chapter support the certification program?

KIENLE: Our chapter is now starting its first study group and certification is promoted at the monthly meetings of the chapter.

CPSM: Would you be likely to maintain your certification if you left the A/E/C industry?

KIENLE: Certainly. A certification in professional services marketing is a valuable entity in today's world.