



# **Happy Holidays!**



**Five radical changes for  
your association**

**Welcome  
to Savannah**

**Where's your  
market niche?**

**Business records  
retention schedule**



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BXNews is published by the Builders  
Exchange Network as a service to  
members.

Our website is: [www.bx-net.org](http://www.bx-net.org)  
Submissions, articles and other  
information for content is compiled  
from members of the organization.

Suggestions or submissions  
can be sent to:  
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## President's Column

It's hard to believe that Christmas and New Year's is just around the corner. It seems like we were just in Arizona last week.

Well, anyway, we all will be shopping, wrapping, eating, traveling, visiting and doing all the other "ing" things we do this time of the year. Hope your family is safe and happy; and the memories you plan and build this season will fill your heart for years to come.

Your BXNet Board meets by teleconference every other month. We have a strong and vibrant association and we still need your help to keep it this way. As much as we board members enjoy each other's company every month,

- We need **YOU** to attend our annual meeting
- We want to know what is on your mind, your concerns.
- We want to know what we as a board are doing right for you, your association; not just what you perceive as wrong.

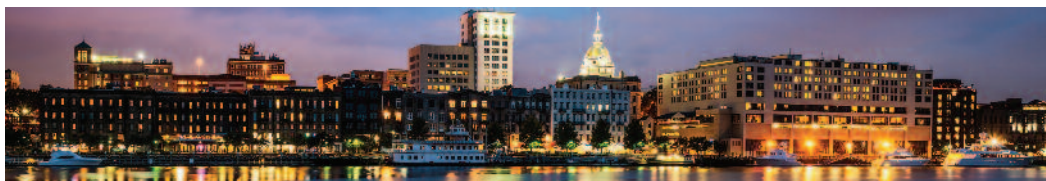


The planning for the Annual Meeting in January is in full swing now and the agenda is almost complete. **THANKS TO ALL** who have made suggestions and provided input to complete this work.

Go to our/your website <http://bx-net.org/> for helpful information and links to helpful sites. Names and phone numbers whom you can contact if you need assistance can be found in the Membership Directory. Log into The Vault for latest information from meetings and issues of BXNews.

Please do not hesitate to contact Kristen Loney (855) 719-0733 if you have any questions about our organization, or have any ideas for the BXNews newsletter. You can also email us at [info@bx-net.org](mailto:info@bx-net.org).

Please come to 2016 Annual Meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup> through January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 at the Hyatt Regency in Savannah, GA. It's *the* Annual Meeting and is the premier gathering for the builders exchange/plan room industry, offering valuable and unique educational sessions, networking opportunities, and entertaining events.



Happy holidays to everyone and let us know if we can do anything to help your Builders Exchange. Remember, we are **TEAM BXNet**, where **Together Everyone Accomplishes More!**

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Phil Davenport



# Five radical changes for your association



If you don't know Mary Byers, you probably should.

Based out of Illinois, she is a consultant, a speaker and a facilitator. She's also an author, and her latest book, *Race for Relevance: 5 Radical Changes for Associations* takes aim at wasteful and inefficient practices that associations of all shapes and sizes observe.

As its title suggests, the book offers five ways associations can modernize their business models and position themselves for prosperity. She and her co-author Harrison Coerver begin by suggesting associations first overhaul their governance models and committee operations. How many times have you seen an association board of directors that is so large as to be unwieldy? The fact of the matter is that too many associations carry too many board members. As a result, important board functions are often pushed onto smaller committees and task forces. Smaller groups of directors, say Byers and Coerver, can be more nimble and more productive.

The authors' second recommendation: empower the CEO and enhance staff expertise. Anyone who leads an association needs to do so with authority and confidence, and the support of strong personnel. Let the members of the board of directors advise on the strategic direction of the association. Give the power and the authority to implement that strategy and to take care of the day-to-day business of the association to the paid employees. Always keep those roles distinct.

Thirdly, they say to rigorously define the member market. When your association tries to be

every thing to every member, it fails to serve any of those members well. Take time to identify a small core market of members, and then offer very specific services to those companies—and do so very well. That can be a difficult decision to take, but it pays dividends in the end.

Their fourth recommendation is to carefully rationalize programs and services. It sounds obvious to say, but it's more important now than ever before to ensure your staff's time and energy is spent developing, delivering and improving those services that most of your members use. It's all too easy to fall into the trap of spending months and months' worth of energy planning an annual

conference, for example. But if only 20 percent of your members attend that event, can you honestly say that was time well spent? Allocate project resources according to numbers of members served.

Finally, they urge associations to build a robust technology framework. How many associations out there delay implementing technology because a handful of members are holding them back? Your decision to improve your technology infrastructure shouldn't be driven by the lowest common denominator. It should be driven by what's current or, better still, what's emerging. Ditch the fax machine and build a smartphone app. The longer you wait to implement technology, the further behind the curve you'll be.

Implementing all this change isn't easy. Byers and Coerver are realistic about that point, but they argue that change of this scope and nature is essential to remaining relevant in an ever-more competitive marketplace.



## See Mary Byers in person at the BXNET 2016 Annual Meeting!

Mary Byers will deliver a special session entitled *Race for Relevance: 5 Radical Changes for Associations* on January 21 as part of the BXNET 2016 Annual Meeting in Savannah, GA.

Her program provides a bold, no-nonsense look at the realities of today's marketplace—and what it will take for associations to prosper tomorrow. You'll learn how to lead and manage for the future and how to look at your member markets and programs and services. Both seasoned professionals and tomorrow's leaders will benefit from the thoughtful and practical approaches outlined for leading an association's revolution. This program is not only focused on the "what," but more importantly the "why" and "how."





# Welcome to Savannah

We hope you join us on January 19-21, 2016 in Savannah, Georgia for our Annual Meeting. We have planned your days full with educational sessions, networking receptions and dinners, and have even set up an afternoon of golf at the Club at Savannah Harbor. Savannah offers a wide variety of things to do regardless of the season so if you are looking to see what else Savannah has to offer here are a couple ideas.

## Sightseeing Tours



**Hearse Ghost Tours:** Take a ride if you dare and hear the tales of ghosts and spirits. On your travels you will experience historic Savannah as never before. You will ride in a real hearse that was in service for over 15 years.

**Dolphin Magic Tours:** Touring Savannah's Historic Waterways! We invite you to come aboard, sit back, relax and enjoy a full featured narrated tour of Savannah's Riverfront, waving Girl, Fort Jackson and Fort Pulaski (trip route/duration varies according to dolphin location). Each cruise is 1-1/2 to 2 hours long.



**Savannah Riverboat Cruise:** See Savannah from the river that made her! Relive a bygone era on board one of our Riverboats. Hear our captain's intriguing tales and historic facts as we travel a river once used by the founders of our beautiful city. Learn about the history of Savannah, her port modern day and past.



## Where to go in Savannah

**Old Fort Jackson:** Celebrating its bicentennial in May 2008, making it the oldest standing brick fortification in Georgia! A National Historic Landmark, the fort is one of only eight Second System fortifications (a series of forts built prior to the War of 1812) still standing in the United States. Built on the site of a battery used in the American





Revolution, construction began in 1808 under the supervision of a nineteen year old graduate of West Point named William McCree.



**River Street:** A glittering, multi-faceted gem along the broad Savannah River. The century old buildings, once cotton warehouses, have been converted to antique shops, distinctive boutiques, spectacular galleries, quaint brew pubs, fabulous restaurants, unique nightspots, elegant inns and hotels. Bustling with welcoming hospitality, it's also the place to see Savannah from the river that made her by taking a cruise or watching ships from around the globe sail into one of the busiest ports in America.



**City Market:** Established itself as a destination for entertainment, dining, art and retail in downtown Savannah. To create an anchor attraction that would attract both travelers and Savannah residents, the developer emulated its successful Torpedo Factory project in Alexandria, Virginia and established the Art Center at City Market. This group of working artists' studios occupies approximately 19,000 square feet of space

and enhances the environment where other tenants of City Market establish and operate successful food, entertainment, and retail businesses. In addition, City Market has three apartments and approximately 11,000 square feet of office space. Savannah boasts a vibrant art scene – and City Market is at the center of it all. On your visit to City Market, allow plenty of time to enjoy the wide variety of original work – from fine art to contemporary art – by over 50 local artists. Explore the many art galleries and visit with the artists in the City Market Art Center Studios. City Market is home to some of the best places to eat in Savannah. Diners can satisfy their appetites at one of the many restaurants, cafes or specialty food shops. Our wide variety of choices will appeal to all tastes and pocketbooks and, our casual atmosphere and outdoor dining are available just about year' round. But if a sit-down meal isn't on the menu, then just settle back in our courtyard to enjoy an ice cream, espresso or cocktail and do some people watching. The mercantile and produce offerings of yesteryear in Savannah have been replaced by an eclectic blend of art galleries and specialty shops. Shoppers will discover unique gifts, original works of art, freshly made candy and a host of other delights at the many shops and boutiques in City Market. It's the perfect spot for delightful browsing or to just take a seat and relax in the courtyard shade.

# SAVE THE DATE



## JANUARY 17-19, 2017

## BXNET ANNUAL MEETING

**HYATT FRENCH QUARTER  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA**

Interested in presenting?

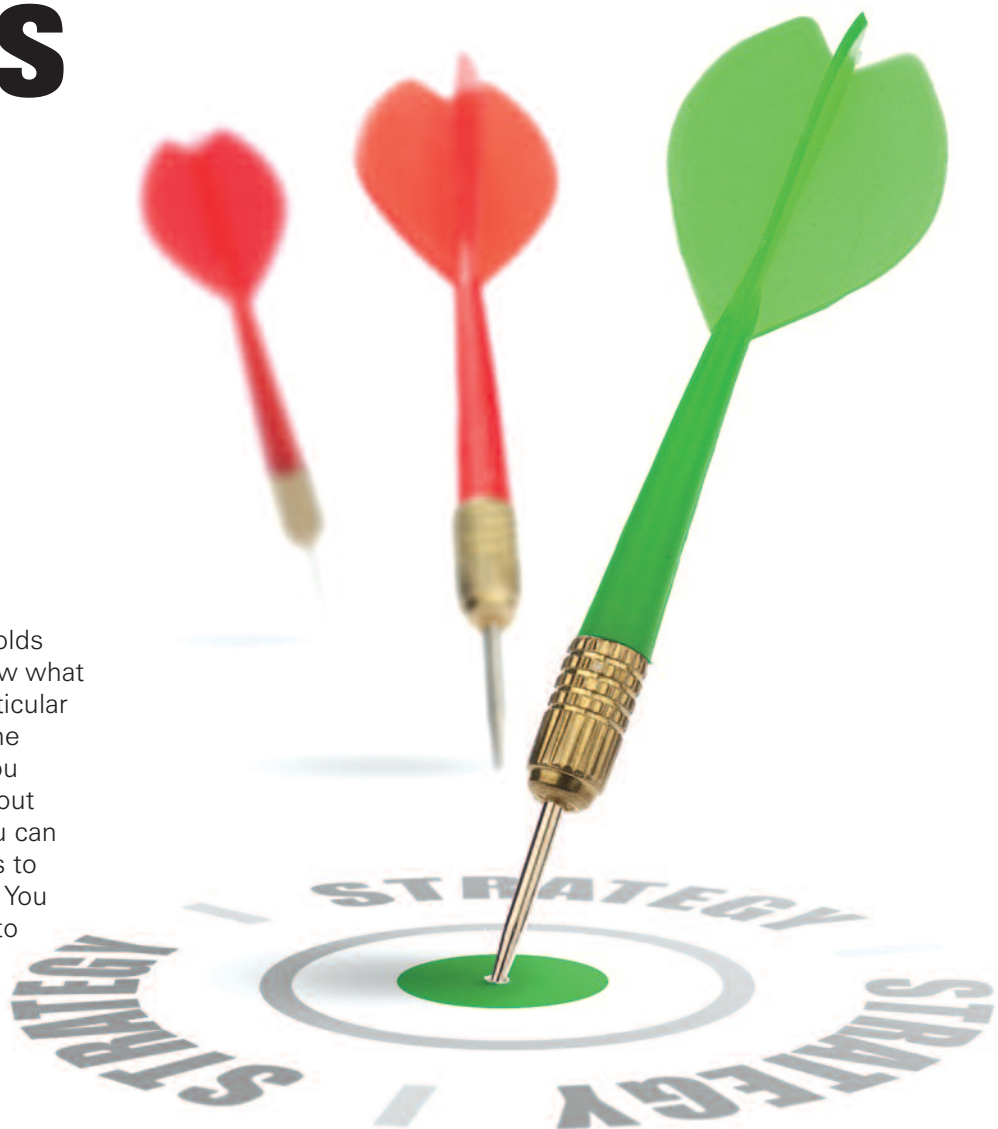
Like to hear about a specific topic?

Volunteer or email your suggestions to [info@bx-net.org](mailto:info@bx-net.org).



# Where's your market niche?

There's a clear rule in marketing which holds that, in order to prosper, you have to know what your company does well and how its particular offering differs from everyone else's in the marketplace. That makes sense. Once you understand what's unique or valuable about your offering to your target audience, you can sell those particular features and benefits to your customers with greater confidence. You don't need to be everything to everyone to succeed. All you need to do is do one thing really, really, well.







Association plans rooms are no different. A quick scan of the competitive landscape reveals a crowded market. Dozens upon dozens of online bidding information or plan room services have sprung up in the past 10 to 15 years and are taking direct aim at the business of selling construction documents to contractors. While it's true that many of the builder exchanges across the United States have enjoyed market leadership for some time due to longevity or market exclusivity or a host of other factors, it's undeniable that exchanges no longer have the market for plan room services cornered.

What's interesting about the various competitors out there is that each has a stated core strength and target market. BlueBook, for example, has been around for more than 100 years. It offers regional directories and targets small general contractors. F.W. Dodge/McGraw Hill is strong on market analysis and trends, and markets its products through affiliations with groups like the Construction Users Roundtable, the American Institute of Architects and the Associated General Contractors of America. Reed Construction Data specializes in pre-bid information, BidClerk wins on price (although that's not something necessarily worth celebrating). And so on.

The point in all of this is that, in a time when the market space is becoming ever-more crowded, your exchange has two options to stay competitive. The first is to lower prices—to make your service offering more desirable based on the simple fact that it's more affordable than any other. In the short run, that may prove successful, but in the long run, that approach touches off a race to the bottom. The second, more appealing option, is to take a long, hard look at who you are, what you do well, and what your customers—your members—want. Think about what makes your service offering unique or particularly valuable to your members, and then trade off that uniqueness.

This isn't always an easy exercise to run, by the way. It takes careful thought and some degree of sacrifice, but at a time when the Internet is changing the way everyone does business—photographers, cab drivers, government—it's naïve to assume that your exchange can continue to do business the same way today as it has for decades.

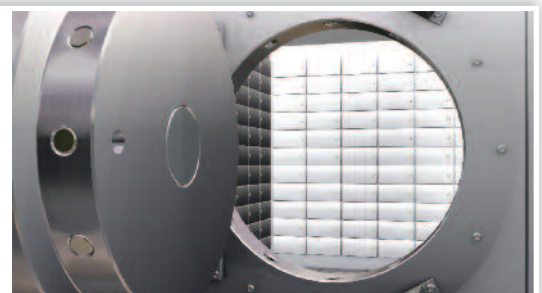
Good luck!

## ATTENTION MEMBERS!

Be sure to visit the "Vault" at [www.bx-net.org](http://www.bx-net.org) to view copies of the BXNET newsletters, slides from past Annual Meeting presentations, articles of interest, sample documents and much more!

USERNAME: ibmember      PASSWORD: 2015BXnet

Why re-invent the wheel? Have sample documents or information you think would be helpful to your fellow members? Simply email it to [info@bx-net.org](mailto:info@bx-net.org) to be uploaded into the vault.





# Business records retention schedule

## Internal Revenue Code Section 6001

Consistent record retention supports a paper trail for organization activities and serves as documentation for a financial or IRS audit. The IRS offers record retention guidelines in Code Section 6001 and Publication 583 – Starting a Business and Keeping Records.

Heed the special retention requirements at the state level. For example, the tax collecting agency may have special requirements of trade show contracts or the agency approving continuing education may require forms be kept for a specific period.

Your organization's accountant and attorney should provide advice on adopting a record retention schedule. Have the board adopt it as a *policy*; then have the staff conduct an annual file-cleanup to dispose of unnecessary documents.

Business records retention is required by the Internal Revenue Code, Employee Retirement Income Security Act and Uniform Commercial Code. The following business record retention schedule considers those laws.

Accordingly, this schedule should be used as a *guide*, modified as necessary to meet your specific needs. Be sure to contact legal and accounting professionals for specifics applying to your organization and its activities.



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## PERMANENT RECORDS

- Audit reports of CPAs
- Cancelled checks for important payments, i.e., taxes, purchases of property, special contracts, etc. (checks should be filed with the papers pertaining to the underlying transaction)
- Capital stock and bond records: ledger, transfer registers, stubs showing issues, record of interest coupons, options, etc.
- Cash books
- Chart of Accounts
- Correspondence (legal and important matters only)
- Deeds, mortgages, and bills of sales, as well as contracts and leases still in effect
- Financial statements-end of year (other months optional)
- General and private ledgers
- Insurance records, current accident reports, claims policies
- Journals
- Minute books of directors and stockholders, including by-laws and charter
- Property appraisals by outside appraisers
- Property records-including costs, depreciation reserves, and end-of-year trial balances, depreciation schedules, blueprints and plans
- Tabulating records related to above areas
- Tax returns and worksheets, Revenue Agents' Reports and other documents relating to determination of income tax liability
- Trademark registrations

## SIX TO SEVEN YEARS

- Accident reports and claims (settled cases)
- Accounts payable (see Voucher Register)
- Accounts receivable ledgers and trial balances
- Cancelled checks (see exception under Permanent Records)
- Cancelled stock and bond certificates and expired options
- Contracts and leases (expired)
- Expense analyses and expense distribution schedules
- Inventories of products, materials and supplies
- Inventories to customers
- Invoices from vendors (see Vouchers)
- Notes receivable ledgers and trial balances
- Payroll records and summaries, including payments to pensioners

- Employee personnel records after termination (if a retirement plan was in effect, regardless if employee was a plan participant); (if employee was a participant in a pension plan, consult your plan advisor)
- Retirement Plan returns and reports (from filing date of such returns and reports)
- Retirement Plan accounting records (to correspond with returns and reports)
- Purchase orders (purchasing department copy)
- Sales records
- Scrap and salvage records-inventories, sales, etc.
- Subsidiary ledgers to the general ledger and trial balances
- Time books
- Voucher register and trial balances
- Vouchers for payments to vendors, employees, etc. (including allowances and reimbursement of employees, officers, etc., for travel and entertainment expenses)

## TWO TO THREE YEARS

- Applications for Employment
- Employee personnel records after termination (see exception under Six to Seven Years)
- General Correspondence
- Insurance policies which have expired
- Internal audit reports, including working papers (in some situations, longer retention periods may be desirable)
- Miscellaneous internal reports
- Petty cash vouchers
- Physical inventory tags
- Savings bond registration records of employees

## ONE YEAR OR LESS

- Bank reconciliations (keep one year)
- Bank statements (keep one year)
- Correspondence of unimportant nature with customers or vendors
- Duplicate deposit slips
- Purchase orders (except purchasing department copy)
- Receiving sheets
- Requisitions
- Stenographers' notebooks
- Stockroom withdrawal forms

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**NOTE:** It is critical to seek the advice of legal and accounting professionals when adopting a record retention schedule and board policy on record retention.

*Information provided by Robert C. Harris, CAE, The NonProfit Center.  
For more information, tips, and templates visit [www.rchcae.com](http://www.rchcae.com).*



## **The BXNET's Mission, Vision and Strategic Goals**

# BUILDING OUR FUTURE

### **"Serving Construction Association and Builders Exchange Professionals"**

#### **MISSION**

The Builders Exchange Network is a catalyst for the exchange of ideas and experiences amongst the membership to enhance the effectiveness of plan room and construction associations.

#### **VISION**

The BXNet is a representative organization of Construction Association professionals and their organizations, dedicated to the pursuit of excellence in Construction Association and Plan Room services through cooperation and participatory action.

#### **STRATEGIC GOALS**

Provide the education and access to expertise to help exchange professionals.

Maintain the strength of the industry and association through engaged membership.

Promote the organization, its programs and achievements to the industry.

Maintain the leadership and resources to advance the industry.

