

# President's Message

Chris Calcaterra,  
CSFM, CPRP

chris.calcaterra@peoriaaz.gov



## M2MEDIA360 PRESIDENT/CEO

Marion Minor

## VP OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS

Gerald Winkel

## VP OF CIRCULATION AND COLLATERAL SALES

Joanne Juda-Prainito

## PRODUCTION & OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Mary Jo Tomei

## DIRECT MAIL LIST SALES

Cheryl Naughton 678-292-6054  
cnaughton@m2media360.com

## SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES

Phone 847-763-9565 Fax 847-763-9569

## REPRINTS

Cheryl Naughton 678-292-6054  
cnaughton@m2media360.com

## Account Representatives:

### Joy Gariepy

16267 W. 14 Mile Rd., Ste 202  
Beverly Hills, MI 48025 • Ph: 248-530-0300,  
ext. 1401  
jgariepy@m2media360.com

### Bruce Loria

626 Wilshire Blvd., Ste 500  
Los Angeles, CA 90017 • Ph: 213-596-7226  
bloria@m2media360.com

## Classified Sales/Marketplace:

### Glenn Datz

Phone: 213-596-7220  
Fax: 213-624-0997  
gdatz@m2media360.com

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## Tools available to help justify STMA Conference attendance

**S**TMA takes pride in developing relevant and affordable education for members. The Annual Conference and Exhibition is our primary event for comprehensive education. Included in this issue on page 12 is the program for our 2011 conference. Take a few minutes to review all that is being offered. The subcommittees that worked on it—conference education, tours, exhibition and student challenge—are to be commended for creating an excellent conference and trade show.

In addition to the panels, sessions, and classroom-taught education, the conference offers interactive learning. New this year are roundtable sessions where you can talk with speakers and ask your urgent questions. We designed this time as a reception, too, so that you can relax and mingle with your STMA family of peers.

Be sure to go online for helpful resources. You can get information about the Return On Investment of attending the conference, and other strategies to help you get approval to go to Austin. Be sure to promote the low cost of airline flights. Another strong selling point of Austin is the reduced time you spend on a plane and away from work. Austin is truly a central destination for all of our US members.

Did you know that this year is STMA's 30th anniversary? To commemorate, we've asked a group of venerable members to sit on a panel. Hear from them about "how it was" when they started their careers. You'll be able to ask questions and be amazed about how far this profession has come in such a short time.

Another important component of the conference happens after the conference when you return home. I promise that you will be ready to apply what you've learned, and earn the opportunity to attend our 2012 conference in Long Beach. To help you communicate the value you received by attending, we have created a customizable trip report. It is online, and in the conference brochure. Much of it is already filled in. You just need to add a few bullets, and it will be ready to present to your employer.

I am excited about the education and excited to be in Austin. It is the first time STMA will be in this city. Registrations are coming in steadily, and the conference is on track to be a very well attended event.

Another STMA activity that I hope will have excellent participation is the 2011 election process. Your ballots will be arriving via US mail later this month, and the slate will be filled with superb candidates. I encourage you to learn about them and to cast your vote. You have the opportunity to define STMA's future with your vote.

As the holiday season approaches, it is a signal that the year is coming to a close. This is a good time to reflect on the positive impacts that you have made in your corner of the world. Fields are safer, the environment is protected and the fans are happy. Well done!

Have a wonderful Thanksgiving with family and friends.