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Look to the future...today - Seeking new opportunities as industry professionals

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As industry professionals, responsible for growing our businesses, we are constantly seeking new opportunities. So often, we may find ourselves reacting and responding to the present competition or market movements, causing us to lose the perspective of the "long view."

The tougher decisions we face are what does the future hold? Where are the new markets? What will be the areas of work that will provide my future opportunities and am I positioned as a business to capture work in these areas? If not, are there strategic decisions my business needs to make to position the firm for success? Predicting the future today is an amorphous process and outside our comfort zone of "black and white clarity" we are so accustomed to design/construction professionals. Through my many years of being active in the Connecticut Business Congress (CBC), I have found an invaluable resource to bridge that gap between today's demands and the future's opportunities. The organization is a cross-section of the A/E/C community that provides deep relationship building and nurturing opportunities, while providing a monthly forum on relevant industry topics that are informative, timely and forward-looking.

While we were putting together this year's calendar, we reviewed the calendar of the past two years and noticed a trend. Our current reality is informed by the conversations we were having on future developments years ago. CBC's programs from two years ago are providing real "boots on the ground" opportunities for our businesses today.

This year there are three conversations which we will likely dig through our notes to find in 2015. UConn's growth plans, casinos in New England, or the State's investment in public infrastructure will all likely prove to be great opportunities for our industry. While other CBC conversations will address timely issues to help you run your business better, they include energy financing, diversity in the workplace, and construction claims.

Finally, what's the fun in constantly looking to the future if you cannot acknowledge your accomplishments and look to the past a little bit? Our hit architecture bus tour will return with a tour of New Haven's master builders.

And our calendar year will end in June with the CBC Project Team Awards and Scholarship dinner, as we recognize the year's best project teams while awarding scholarships to future A/E/C professionals.

If you are planning for the future, and wish to be involved with peers dedicated to our industry, join us at the CBC for one of our programs. Get a glimpse to the future by experiencing the vision today. Jim Fuda, PE, is president of the Connecticut Building Congress and Connecticut division manager of Alfred Benesch and Company, Glastonbury, Conn.