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**Project Management Update from Omaha**

By Ted Koval, PMP, CSM

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Introduction

The PMI Heartland Chapter held its annual one-day project management professional development event, ProDev2009: "PMs Building Omaha", at the Scott Conference Center in Omaha, Nebraska, USA on Monday, 21 September 2009. Official attendance was approximately 220, with participants from a wide range of companies and government organizations in northeastern Nebraska and Western Iowa.

Of particular importance, the keynote speaker for the event was David Pells, Managing Editor of ***PM World Today***, who provided a glimpse of projects and project management around the world. This was a refreshing opportunity for attendees to have an opportunity to learn about project management outside local borders.

This month's report contains two articles that were originally prepared as breaking news articles shortly after the September event in Omaha, but which were never published. So this is an opportunity to share a little of what occurred in Omaha in September.

PMI Heartland Chapter's ProDev2009 a success in Omaha

According to **Renée Wickes**, MBA, PMP, Immediate Past President of the PMI Heartland Chapter, who opened the event and welcomed participants, "This was another successful professional development event. We were pleasantly surprised by the high attendance, considering the dire economy this year. And

everyone seemed happy with our speakers this year, especially the presentations about downtown Omaha development plans and David Pells' presentation about projects and PM around the world."

"Clearly project management continues to grow in importance to organizations in the Omaha area," she added.

Speakers and topics featured at this year's event included the following:

- Mr. **Mark Norman**, Senior Director of Business Attraction/Retention for the Greater Omaha Economic Development Partnership – "Building Omaha"
- Mr. **Gary Bunjer**, General Manager of Breaking Ground Landscaping – "Building the Client Vision"
- Mr. **Garry Flemings**, PMP, Project and Systems Management Consultant – "Building a Business"
- Mr. **Douglas J. Bisson**, AICP, Vice President and Community Planning Manager for HDR Engineering, Inc. – "Building the Downtown Omaha Master Plan: Creative Resolution to Unique Challenges"
- Mr. **David L. Pells**, President and Management Editor for PMForum and PM World Today eJournal – "Building the World Through Projects and Project Management"
- Ms. **Sally Elatta**, President of Agile Transformation, Inc. – "The Art of Becoming and Effective Facilitator"



In addition to the above, the event included an afternoon panel discussion on the topic of "Building Your Career." Panelists included **Deborah Bass**, President and CEO of Bass & Associates, Inc.; **Ryan Christensen**, PMP, Project Management Officer in the Office of the CIO, State of Nebraska; **Brenda Decker**, Chief Information Officer, State of Nebraska; **Laura Miller**, PMP, Vice President of Product Delivery, First Data Corporation; **David Pells**, President and

Management Editor for PMForum, Inc.; and **Jackie Schoening**, PMP, Director of Project Management Office/EPO, Mutual of Omaha. Panel moderator was Mr. **Ted Koval**, ProDev2009 Chairman.



According to **John Mueggenberg**, PMP, VP Programs for the PMI Heartland Chapter, "Today's event turned out great. Everyone seemed happy, no one fell asleep after lunch, and there were good questions for each speaker. The panel was excellent, and it was good to have a keynote speaker who could talk about PM around the world. Hopefully we can repeat this success next year."

The annual ProDev project management symposium is organized by the PMI Heartland Chapter to provide PMI members with opportunities to grow and develop their project management skills. Speakers from different backgrounds and professions are invited to share their wisdom and experience. Each year's event includes a keynote speaker and a panel discussion with highly respected local executives.

PMForum Editor David Pells keynotes ProDev2009 Project Management event in Omaha, Nebraska

David Pells, Managing Editor for PMForum and PM World Today, was the keynote speaker at the PMI Heartland Chapter's annual one-day project management professional development event, ProDev2009: "PMs Building

Omaha”, on Monday, 21 September 2009. This major project management event was held at the Scott Conference Center in Omaha, Nebraska, USA.

The topic of Mr. Pells' lunch time speech was “*Building the World with Projects and Project Management.*” During his hour-long presentation, Mr. Pells discussed the some of the current drivers for the highly visible number and importance of projects around the world and the obvious corresponding growth and visibility for project management. After an overview of the globalization of PMForum over the last three years, including identification of the organization's global teams for advisors and correspondents, he reviewed a number of major projects underway around the world that have been reported about by PMForum correspondents in the last year.



Some of the interesting programs and projects highlighted, and their locations were:

- Aqaba, Jordan – Aqaba Port Relocation Project
- Arlington, Texas – new Dallas Cowboys Football Stadium
- Athens, Greece – New Acropolis Museum
- Birmingham, UK – Schools for the Future Programme
- Dallas, Texas, USA – Trinity River Corridor Project, new Convention Center Hotel, and new Performing Arts Center
- Ft. Worth, Texas – Trinity River Downtown Redevelopment Project
- Helsinki, Finland – E18 Muurla-Lonja Highway and Vuosaari Harbor Project
- London, UK – 2012 Summer Olympic Games Preparations

- Moscow, Russia – World Famous Bolshoi Theatre Reconstruction
- New Delhi, India – Sharva Shiksha Abhiyan Schools Program & National Identity Care Program
- Vancouver, BC, Canada – 2010 Winter Olympic Games
- Seattle, Washington, USA – Sound Transit 2 Regional Transportation Program
- South Africa (various locations) – 2010 FIFA World Cup
- Sydney, Australia – Sydney Opera House Preservation & Reconstruction



Pells ended his presentation with a major change of subject, challenging attendees to think about the potential impact of Disruptive Events on their projects and organizations. He then presented a disruptive scenario, the discovery of a new renewable source of cheap and plentiful energy that would allow point-of-use power and eliminate our dependence on fossil fuels. This subject absolutely surprised everyone and generated some animated and interesting reactions.

According to **John Mueggenberg**, PMP, VP Programs for the PMI Heartland Chapter, "Mr. Pells' presentation about major projects around the world was really interesting, and well received by our audience. It was great to get a picture about what's happening around the world of project management too, it's something we get too little of here in Omaha."

"His closing scenario about the new energy supply that could transform society and disrupt all of our projects was really surprising," he added. "I'm not sure what to think about that, but it certainly got everyone to think about big unexpected changes."

David L. Pells is the Managing Editor of *PM World Today* and of www.pmforum.org, one of the world's leading online sources of project management news and information. David is an internationally recognized leader in the field of professional project management, with over thirty years' experience in a wide variety of programs and projects, including engineering, construction, transit, defense and high technology. He continues to advise several major organizations and programs. He served on the board of directors

of the Project Management Institute (PMI®) twice, was awarded PMI's Person of the Year award in 1998 and was named a PMI Fellow in 1999. He is also an honorary Fellow of Project Management Associates (PMA), the national PM society of India, and of the Russian Project Management Association SOVNET.

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The PMI Heartland Chapter, based in Omaha, serves the project management professional communities in Omaha and Lincoln, Nebraska and Western Missouri, USA. Dedicated to advancing the project management profession and to representing PMI to the local business and governmental communities, the PMI Heartland Chapter conducts monthly meetings, sponsors an annual professional development symposium, and provides other services for members and non-members alike. For more information, visit <http://www.pmiheartland.org/>.

About the Author:***Ted Koval, PMP, CSM****Author**International Correspondent**Based in Omaha, Nebraska, USA*

Ted Koval, PMP, CSM is an International Correspondent for PMForum and ***PM World Today*** in Nebraska, USA. He is also an a Business Project Manager for Mutual of Omaha, a Fortune 500 insurance and financial services company based in Omaha, Nebraska. Ted has 13+ years of experience as a Project Manager both in State government and in IS/IT project management in the United States. Ted has managed campaigns and outreach for several Pennsylvania State Representatives, served as Director of the Policy Committee for the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, and was project manager for the first nationally recognized centralized voter registration system in the USA. Ted subsequently became project manager and Director of PM for the largest provider of enterprise class voter registration and election systems in the United States. Ted was name "*PMP of the Year – 2008*" by the PMI-Heartland Chapter. For more information visit <http://www.pmforum.org/pm%20forum%20team/index.htm>. Ted Koval can be contacted at takoal@cox.net.