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Book Review Editor: Theodore J. Weidner, Ph.D., P.E., AIA

There are two books reviewed this time. While both are about management, they are very different; nuts and bolts vs. inspirational. You decide which is which.

—TW

PROJECT ADMINISTRATION FOR DESIGN-BUILD CONTRACTS: A PRIMER FOR OWNERS, ENGINEERS, AND CONTRACTORS

James E. Koch, et al., ASCE Press, Reston, VA, 2010, 279 pages, softcover, \$64.00.

Not many universities can use the design-build delivery method yet, but for those who can, it is a great tool. Other states and universities are realizing the power of the design-build method and are considering changes in laws or policies to use it. I recently read that the State of Ohio, which has a cumbersome system, is also considering design-build (DB). By the time this article is published, the Ohio schools may have a new tool to use.

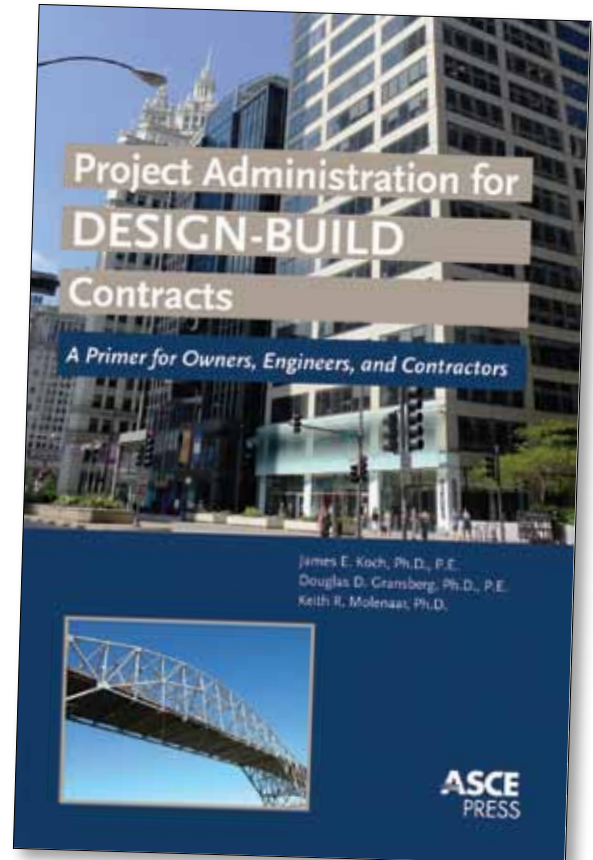
But what is this tool and where is the power? *Project Administration for Design-Build Contracts* is a dense discussion of the pros and cons of every step along the way. Because the authors go over the pre-award steps quickly but thoroughly, the reader doesn't have to have read the earlier publication, *Preparing for Design-Build Projects*. In addition, the authors do a good job of describing all elements of any construction delivery method, not just DB.

If you're unfamiliar with the DB method because you've been using the traditional method (Design-Bid-Build, or DBB), Design-Build is a way of selecting both the design and construction team as one, providing them with a detailed list of your needs, budget, and schedule, and then awarding them the

entire project, start to finish. The owner's involvement in the project is limited by their ability to understand the process and to develop milestones, checkpoints, and options early on. It's entirely possible to deliver a DB project without all the forethought and preparation, but that is true of DBB projects also. You get what you put into the project up front.

Details about how to manage the construction after the design is essentially complete, and how to keep the project on schedule — and within budget — are presented with clarity. While the DB method leaves a lot of decisions to the DB contractor, the owner's involvement is necessary to ensure a successful project. And in the case of public owners, the DB process helps the owner keep coordinated with the public. The book ends with several case studies of successful and unsuccessful applications of the DB method.

Project Administration for DB is dense. There's a lot to be said, and there's a lot one can learn about DB even if you've been using DB for years. I found it informative on non-DB delivery methods, too. Recognizing that the greatest ability to save costs on a project occur at the very beginning—before much design is done—the planning and organizational discussion presented in this book make it a worthy investment for any owner involved in significant capital construction.



THE THANK YOU ECONOMY

Gary Vaynerchuk, Harper Collins, New York, NY, 2011, 126 pages, hardcover, \$24.99; softcover \$14.99; Kindle, \$11.99.

We learn how to make customers happy every day, and what the consequences are if we don't. The trouble is, we don't understand the structure required in order to deliver the happiness frequently, and without consequence. I can't say that I know all the conditions either, but I do know several organizational steps I have taken, or encouraged in my organization to take, that have helped improve our ability to behave as Gary 'V' recommends.

If you haven't seen the *Daily Grape* on the Internet, you've missed a lot about what Gary is referring to. This Inter-

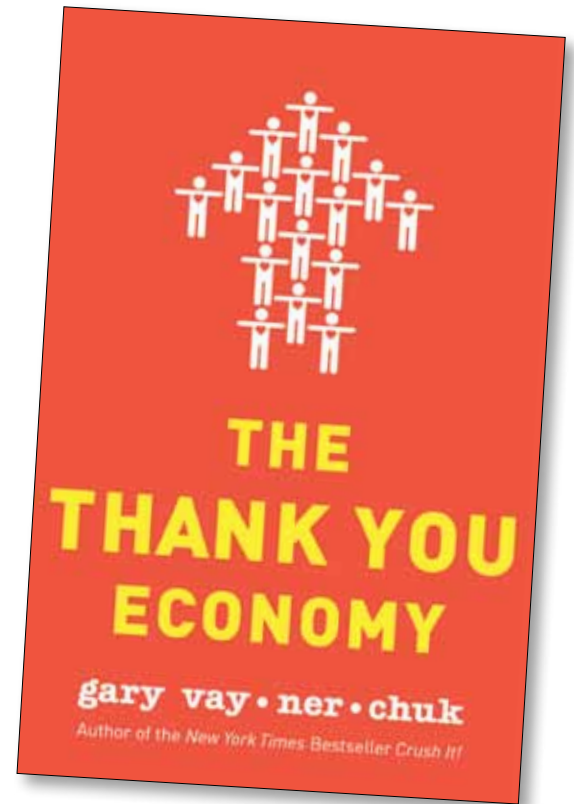
net celebrity is more than just a wine connoisseur; he's a savvy businessman who understands what keeps customers happy. He also understands the risks of new technologies and the potential rewards.

The Thank You Economy is loaded with examples, as you might expect. These examples focus on the immediate connectivity we're all experiencing with social networking: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc. These systems are making inroads to business quickly — but is business taking advantage of them? No, because there is risk in doing something too new or using a technology that seems focused elsewhere. Of course, there are the risks because the numbers aren't right; the big competitors aren't using the new technology so there's no clear track record or payoff.

However, some businesses are, just look at *The Daily Grape*. That's what

Thank You is pushing: connections. Not just connections for connections sake, but meaningful communication and interrelationship between the company and the consumer. Twittering as a substitute for traditional ads is not what the thank you economy is about. Gary V provides numerous examples of failures, from his perspective, despite perceived successes by those stuck in the traditional economy.

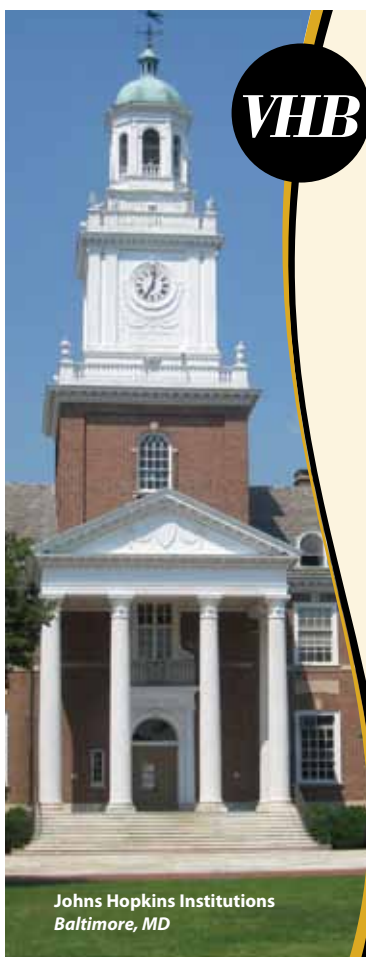
This forward looking book may not be for everyone. It introduces new perspectives and ways to deal with clients. These new ways are not trivial, and they do not rely on many traditional, passive solutions. They draw large and small corporations back to the traditional community store methods; helping the customer beyond the simple transaction.



The goal is to increase transactions through this increase personal attention. In higher education one can find this played out among the elite, high tuition colleges. But how does one institute this at a large campus? More importantly, how does one implement this in an internal service organization?

The Thank You Economy is not a silver bullet for facilities organizations but it is a new way of looking at how to interact with customers. As most businesses gradually move to the thank you economy we will be pushed, too. It's better to be ahead of the wave than consumed by it. Consider this book as an opportunity to get ahead. ☺

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