



HeritageRail Conference Seminars

Thursday, October 5 • 8:30 AM

Brand Building: Who Are You? Who is your brand?

Tim Brunelle

The answer is why your members, audience and benefactors care. Your organization's brand equals all the elements that tell your story, attract engagement and sustain loyalty. Let's unpack all that in simple, actionable steps you can leverage today and into the future.

Tim Brunelle is a Creative Director, teacher and entrepreneur. He has been developing and sustaining brands since 1992 including Volkswagen, 3M, Harley-Davidson, Goodyear, Porsche, Anheuser-Busch and SPAM.

FRA Regulations

Mike Ramsey and Bob Opal

Learn the latest about FRA regulations. How have they changed, how does that affect you?

*Mike Ramsey has been the FRA primary contact with tourist railroads and railway museums.
Bob Opal is HeritageRail Alliance's representative to the FRA.*

Canadian Council for Railway Heritage

Don Evans, moderator

In 2016 the CCRH voted to become part of the HeritageRail Alliance. This is an opportunity for Canadian museums and tourist railroads to meet and discuss common concerns.

Don Evans, West Coast Railway Association.

Parts meeting

Rod Fishburn, moderator

Looking for parts to complete a restoration? Have surplus parts that need a home? For decades the HRA Parts List has provided a much-needed forum for museums and tourist railroads to exchange parts and expertise.

Rod Fishburn, Orange Empire Railway Museum.



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Thursday, October 5 • 9:45 AM

Brand Building: Public Relations – Promote & Protect

Glenn Karwoski

In a world where reputations can be quickly made or destroyed, public relations is more important today than ever. Learn strategies and tactics for harnessing the marketing power of this valuable communication tool, as well as how to be ready if you need to defend your organization.

Glenn Karwoski is managing director, Karwoski & Courage Public Relations. With more than 25-years of PR experience serving clients such as Walmart, 3M, Valspar, and US Bank,, as well as having worked on local, national, and global crisis communications for a wide variety of clients.

The Restoration of Winona 10

Howie Melco and Dick Zawacki

The 14-year restoration of 1914 Winona, Minnesota streetcar #10, from a stripped body to full operation, is almost complete. Along the way, the crew had to acquire the correct power truck, learn to hot rivet, understand the complexities of manual door mechanisms, and solve the mystery of the car's original colors. See how all this was accomplished.

Dick Zawacki is the Minnesota Streetcar Museum Chief Mechanical Officer. Howie Melco is Winona 10's Project Manager.

Riding the High Iron

Nick Modders

Operating the all-volunteer Osceola & St. Croix Valley Ry. on the rails of Class One Canadian National.

Nick Modders, is Railroad Operations Manager for the Minnesota Transportation Museum.



HeritageRail Conference Seminars

Thursday, October 5 • 11 AM

Insurance update

Dan Roddy and Tripp Salisbury

Learn the latest insurance market trends.

Dan Roddy of HMBD

Tripp Salisbury of McRail.

Brand Building: Volunteers as Brand Ambassadors

Jean Nierenhausen, Ronda Maurer and Pat Cosgrove

The care and feeding of your most important assets: volunteers. As the folks who meet, greet and interact with your guests, do they represent who you are? Museums and tourist railroads are heavily dependent on volunteers, and the volunteer coordinator has a pivotal role to play.

Jean Nierenhausen is Volunteers and Interns Manager at the Minnesota Historical Society.

Ronda Maurer (Hamilton) is Volunteer Manager at the Science Museum of Minnesota.

Pat Cosgrove is the Minnesota Streetcar Museum's Volunteer Coordinator.

Brand Building: Making Events Special

Rod Eaton • rpeaton@comcast.net

Special Events reinforce your brand message, help fulfill your mission statement, and generate revenue. How can we create unique events for our organization? We'll look to two of the world's best marketers for ideas and inspiration.

Rod was Director of Sales Promotion for Target Stores, overseeing broadcast, in-store signage, and special events. He is Events Coordinator for the Minnesota Streetcar Museum.



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Friday, October 6 • 8:30 AM

Wexford Depot Project

Scott Becker

Learn how the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum discovered the surviving Wexford interurban depot, moved it to their museum site, restored it and programmed it.

Scott Becker is Executive Director, Pennsylvania Trolley Museum

Alternative Fuels for Steamers

Davidson Ward

As coal production continues to decrease, heritage steam operators seek safe new fuels at affordable prices. Learn what's being done to develop alternatives from sustainable biomass.

Davidson Ward is President of the Coalition for Sustainable Rail.

Friday, October 6 • 8:30 AM

Brand Building: Building Your Community Online

Gianna Kordatzky, Tracy Babler and Samara Postuma

Are we really reaching our core market of young families? A panel of women with family activity blogs and websites discuss how to promote your brand through this valuable advertising and PR resource. How can you find these resources? How can you become a partner? How can you join the community?

Gianna began blogging in 2006 as the typical mommy blogger, but in 2013, she joined forces with two other moms and developed a local-community-focused info sit, Family Fun Twin Cities. She helps local businesses develop an online presence and choose the best online tools available.

Tracy Babler is a freelance writer from Minneapolis, MN. She blogs about children's literature at luandbeanread.com and produces the Lu and Bean Read #kidlit podcast with her five- and seven-year-old daughters.

Samara Babler has spent the last 10-plus years building the online community via her blog and other social media work. She now works as a social media and communications consultant for brands and businesses throughout the Twin Cities.



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Brand Building: Creating an Eco-Oasis

Ross Hammond, Rich Harrison and Andy Novak

Does your site look like a polluted brownfield? Are you burning money because of inefficient building systems? Upgrade your public image, help the environment, and save money while you're doing it.

Ross Hammond is an energy analyst.

Rich Harrison is a landscape architect for Metro Blooms

Andy Novak is a landscape architect for the Capitol Regional Watershed District.

Steam Up

Steve Sandburg

For 25 years, North Star Rail and the Friends of the 261 have successfully operated Milwaukee Road 4-8-4 Number 261 and its excursion train. That didn't happen by accident.

Steve Sandberg is Executive Director of Northstar Rail.

Rebuilding 1300's Trucks

Rob Mangels and Dennis Stephens

Last year streetcar 1300's 1931-vintage power trucks were removed, disassembled and completely overhauled. They were badly worn and repairing them required a balance between restoration and component replacement. Learn about this complex project from truck rebuilding specialist Mangels and the Minnesota Streetcar Museum carbarn crew.

Dennis Stephens is Mechanical Projects Coordinator for the Minnesota Streetcar Museum.

Rob Mangels is President of Transportation Innovation Services, prime contractor for the truck rebuild project.



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Brand Building: New Brand Stories

Bob Medcraft, Collette Morgan and Hannah Baines_.

A bookstore, a train shop, a museum of electricity. See how these organizations crafted their unique brands. Be inspired by the success of their creativity.

Bob Medcraft produces television commercials and is the owner and operator of "Choo Choo Bob's Train Store," a St. Paul toy store for kids of all ages.

Collette Morgan is co-owner and Manager of Wild Rumpus Book Store.

Hannah Baines is Director of Advancement for the Bakken Museum.

IT for Museums--Admin

Ben Franske

Keeping track of members and volunteers, selling merchandise, logging maintenance, and more which can be made much easier through the use of technology systems and software. Hear about the recent website overhaul at the Minnesota Streetcar Museum, and ongoing membership database upgrade project, Point-of-Sale and web-based merchandise sales including handling credit cards.

Ben Franske is the Minnesota Streetcar Museum's Technology Manager.

Recommended Practices for Railway Museums

Bob LaPrelle and panel

The Recommended Practices document is being rewritten and updated. Learn the latest.

Bob LaPrelle is Executive Director of the Museum of the American Railroad.



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Brand Building: Telling Compelling Stories

Tim Pearson

A best practices presentation on social media and content. You have a web site and Facebook page. Now what? We are bombarded with over 5,000 ads and branded messages a day; we pay attention to just 12. How can you make your message come out on top of the other 4,988?

Tim Pearson, Principal at Taxi Branding, is a branding expert. For the last seven years he has applied those skills to the content space for such brands as Sears, Deluxe, Blue Cross Blue Shield and Allina Health.

IT for Museums--Operations

Ben Franske

We may be running the old iron, but electronic and digital technology has the potential to improve management, maintenance, and operation of equipment at museums and tourist railways. Hear about the many ways (some surprising) in which the Minnesota Streetcar Museum is discretely applying network connected microprocessor and microcontroller technology to shop operations and vintage streetcars to better ensure safe and reliable operations.

Ben Franske is the Minnesota Streetcar Museum's Technology Manager.

Hiring an Executive Director

Scott Becker, Richard Anderson, Jim Schantz, and Peter Gagnon,.

Making the leap to professional management can yield major rewards, but there are real risks as well.

*Scott Becker is ED at the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum
Richard Anderson is ED at the Northwest Railway Museum
Jim Schantz is Board Chair at the Seashore Trolley Museum
Peter Gagnon is with Orange Empire Railway Museum.*

Programming a Roundhouse

Erik Johnson and Kate McDonald

If you have a large building, the revenue potential often has little to do with it having a railroad theme. Learn from the experience of the Jackson Street Roundhouse.

*Erik Johnson, Minnesota Transportation Museum Executive Director.
Kate McDonald, Programming Manager, MTM.*