



PWC holds its Data Center Technology Forum on October 17th

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First the good news, "If you're involved in building and designing data centers you're in one of the fastest changing, most exciting, and most challenging and complex areas of technology and construction there is today," said Robert McFarlane, principal of Shen Milsom Wilke, LLC, a speaker at Professional Women in Construction's (PWC) recent Data Center Technology Forum held at Club 101. The caveat from McFarlane, "There's no room for error."

Clearly, the speakers at the PWC event were, as Nicole Hunter, senior cost engineer of The Louis Berger Group said in her introduction, "the leading lights of the technology field - the people who make it happen."

Or, as event chair James Rizzo, NE representative for Tate Access Floors, Inc., said, the program provided a rare "opportunity to meet... some of the most significant owners, developers, designers, engineers, managers and builders, of today's modern data center environments."

McFarlane discussed the immense costs involved: ten times per s/f greater than other construction, i.e. a single cabinet can cost a million; and "the value of the data...is incalculable."

Dennis Cronin, COO of Steel ORCA, LLC, spoke of the current "wave of new technologies" and stressed that "things are changing so rapidly, if you don't listen you're left behind."

Paul Hines, VP, data center operations & engineering, Sentinel Data Centers, discussed the paradigm shift in the industry wherein enterprises now see the value of wholesale co-location. He said, "We provide flexibility so there's no need to over-commit: the necessary infrastructure capacity is in place on day 1 with options for tenants to increase load densities and/or s/f with 90-days notice." It is also difficult today to validate the need to build and operate a company's own data center.

Ronald Bowman, Jr., executive VP, Structure Tone Mission Critical, agreed that co-location was the trend and noted that the fear of financial loss drives the market. He spoke too of the improved knowledge of the "highly educated" end user.

Daniel Kennedy, senior sales engineer with Tate Access Floors, Inc., said that data center construction is "like nothing else in the industry," a "great market to be involved in" that continues to expand.

The response to this first-ever PWC forum was hugely positive: Pearl Odu, PE, LEED AP of AKF, an electrical engineer said, "I thought the presentation was great, good to have different speakers from different arenas. Very informative."

Zeenat Insaf, an associate of Callison Barteluce, an architectural firm, said, "There was a very good balance - relatable to the layman, technical enough for the professional."

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