

Connectivity. The Internet of Things (IoT). Controlling Costs.

Thoughts & Takeaways from BOMA International 2018



By **James Newman**

CEM, LEED AP BD+C, ASHRAE OPMP & BEAP

Jim Newman is recognized as one of the country's most experienced energy-efficiency and green building experts. Known as the "Dean of Green," Jim regularly speaks to professionals and the media about sustainability and green technology.

Maybe these are not such new ideas in building operations and maintenance, but every year they improve...and it was all on display in San Antonio at BOMA 2018 (Building Owners and Managers Association International www.boma.org). It was a hot time in Texas! Touring the exhibit floor, I made a point to learn what's new in these areas.

- We're seeing impressive continued improvement in programs that allow facility managers to see (and even control remotely) exactly how a building uses energy – right down to individual equipment or even devices – in real-time using the internet of things (IoT). The Operations & Management department gets the information they need to optimize energy use. When implemented wisely, these systems can help minimize the added costs of reactive maintenance, which is considerably more expensive, and more disruptive, than preventive maintenance.
- Preventive maintenance also aims to cut down on employee complaints. Proper cleaning of air-handling coils to keep them free from mold and fungi is one preventive maintenance strategy that continues to improve and should be more widely adopted. Studies show that clean coils save

money and keep employees and tenants healthier and more productive!

- The more connected your company becomes with IoT or any cloud-based applications, the more you must be vigilant about cybersecurity, and there were several such vendors at BOMA explaining how converged and connected systems are prime targets. The IT department and the Operations Department must understand the perils of remote access to internal systems and must work together with a qualified cybersecurity provider to close the potential gaps.

At one talk I attended, I was surprised to find out how many accountants don't employ specialized tax strategies such as cost segregation and 179D energy tax deductions. These can significantly reduce tax liability and increase cash flow. Be sure to ask your accounting team if they understand and use these tax strategies.

I was in San Antonio to present a seminar on "Transforming Existing Buildings into High-Performance Properties." The standing-room-only crowd learned how Wayne State University in Detroit saved \$20K per year on their utility bills by implementing some simple retrofits costing only \$13,200.

Thanks to technology, and the conference center's IT guy, I was able to share a brief interview with WSU's Director of Utilities & Energy Management about the energy audit and retrofit project.

San Antonio is a delightful place to visit. Of course, at the end of June it does tend to be a bit warm and humid (to put it mildly), but the Riverwalk and the restaurants, stores and cafes on both sides are very enjoyable. And, of course, the many parties thrown by vendors are always good places to meet and mingle – and sometimes even learn something.

For more on this topic, request a copy of our guide "Why - and How to - Transform an Existing Building into a Sustainable Facility" at www.newmanconsultinggroup.us.

More About the Author:

Jim Newman is Owner and Managing Partner of Newman Consulting Group, LLC, an EPA Energy Star® and Rebuild Michigan® Partner. He is a Certified Energy Manager, a LEED-Accredited Professional for Building Design and Construction, an ASHRAE Operations and Performance Management Professional and Building Energy Assessment Professional, and a Fellow of the Engineering Society of Detroit (ESD).