

Hyatt Regency Princeton
102 Carnegie Center,
Princeton, NJ 08540

May 21st, 2026
8:00AM - 2:00PM



Building Better Business Summit



ABC New Jersey's Building Better Business Summit brings together construction industry experts and business leaders for a full day of insights to help contractors grow and strengthen their businesses.

Designed for owners, leadership teams, and office professionals (HR, finance, operations), this one-stop event covers key topics impacting daily operations and long-term success— including employee benefits, hiring challenges, prevailing wage updates, and more.

Attendees will gain practical insights, valuable connections, and actionable takeaways they can immediately apply. More details and speakers coming soon.

[Register Now!](#)



ABC New Jersey’s *Building Better Business Summit* brings together construction industry experts and business leaders for a day focused on helping contractors strengthen and grow their businesses. Designed as a one-stop resource for owners, managers, and office professionals alike, this event will cover topics that directly impact your bottom line and daily operations.

Keynote Presentation (1:00 – 2:00 PM)

<p>Chapter Advocacy in 2026</p>	<p>Chapter counsel Russ McEwan will discuss numerous ways ABC New Jersey is currently serving as a powerful collective voice for the merit shop community, championing your interests before policymakers and regulatory bodies. Russ will also break down ABC’s multi-layered advocacy strategies, ranging from direct legislative lobbying to providing critical legal strategy and updates that safeguard your business.</p>	<p>Russ McEwan, Esq., Shareholder Little</p>
--	---	--

Session 1 (9:00 – 9:55 AM)

<p>Mastering the Bid: Staying Compliant in State and Local Markets</p>	<p>Being the lowest bidder is only half the challenge. You must also be responsible and responsive. There are many rules governing procurement at the state and local level, and successful bidders are adept at navigating these rules to ensure that their bids are not disqualified as noncompliant. This seminar will address the many requirements of state and local contracting and provide real-world advice to help you submit a responsive and responsible bid. We will address the many do’s and don’ts of public bidding so that you can go into your next public bid confident and prepared!</p>	<p>Maeve Cannon, Esq., Shareholder Stevens & Lee</p>
<p>Debunking the Essentials of Prevailing Wage Compliance</p>	<p>Chapter counsel and prevailing wage practitioner Russ McEwan will highlight best practices for compliance, current NJ DOL enforcement trends, and issues on the horizon under a new administration. Topics to be covered include public works registration, apprenticeship, and new length of service requirements, classification of work, and certified payroll reporting.</p>	<p>Russ McEwan, Esq., Shareholder Little</p>

Session 1 (9:00 – 9:55 AM)

<p>AI for Contractors in the Real World: 10 Uses Every Merit Shop Contractor Can Start Using Now</p>	<p>Artificial intelligence is no longer a future concept — it is already transforming how businesses communicate, plan, estimate, document, and compete. AI tools have seen explosive growth in a very short period, showing that AI has moved from a novelty to a mainstream business tool. For contractors, this creates both opportunity and urgency: firms that learn how to use AI effectively can save time, improve responsiveness, reduce administrative burdens, and strengthen project management. In this seminar, we will look at practical, real-world ways merit shop contractors can use AI in daily operations, from preconstruction and estimating to project administration, communication, and risk management. The goal is not to replace judgment or field experience, but to show how AI can support better decisions, faster workflows, and more efficient business operations in a rapidly changing industry.</p>	<p>Evan Blaker, Esq., Partner Michael Payne, Esq., Partner Cohen Seglias</p>
<p>Healthcare Isn't Built for Construction - Let's Fix That</p>	<p>Join ABC Insurance and Trinity Captive Group for a practical discussion on the evolving healthcare landscape. This session explores how construction employers can optimize health plans to enhance employee well-being and workforce stability. Attendees will gain insights into the ABC Healthcare Captive, featuring mental health resources, \$0 surgery options, and proactive concierge services. Discover actionable strategies to support your team's physical and mental health while maintaining a competitive, productive, and stable construction workforce.</p>	<p>Ben Gelnar, VP of Mid-Atlantic Markets ABC Insurance Trust Bill Baker, SVP Sales Trinity Captive Group</p>
<p>The Questions You Should Be Asking Three Years Before You Sell</p>	<p>Most contractors spend decades building something valuable and still arrive at the finish line without answers to the most important questions. This session is a plain-English look at what owners need to figure out <i>before</i> a deal is on the table — so the sale actually funds the life you planned, you're not leaving more on the table for taxes than you have to, and you're not finding out too late that your attorney, your accountant, and your financial advisor were never really talking to each other.</p>	<p>Jason F. Gabrieli, CFP® Financial Advisor / COO / CCO Co-founder HFM Investment Advisors LLC</p>
<p>Cyber Liability Defense: A Strategy for Business Survival / Bonding: Your Key to Profitable Growth</p>	<p>Cyber Liability Defense: A Strategy for Business Survival - In today's environment, cyber threats aren't just an IT issue—they're a direct business risk that can disrupt operations, damage reputation, and create significant financial loss. A strong cyber liability strategy goes beyond basic security, combining risk assessment, employee awareness, incident response planning, and the right insurance protection. Bonding: Your Key to Profitable Growth - Bonding isn't just a requirement—it's a powerful tool for scaling your business strategically and profitably. With the right bonding capacity, companies can pursue larger projects, build credibility with clients, and create new revenue opportunities. By understanding how to manage and leverage bonding effectively, businesses can strengthen their financial position, win better work, and support long-term, sustainable growth.</p>	<p>Larry Cohen, EVP/COO Charlie Cygal, Director of Surety BCA Insurance Group</p>

Session 2 (10:00 – 10:55 AM)

<p>Healthcare Isn't Built for Construction - Let's Fix That</p>	<p>Join ABC Insurance and Trinity Captive Group for a practical discussion on the evolving healthcare landscape. This session explores how construction employers can optimize health plans to enhance employee well-being and workforce stability. Attendees will gain insights into the ABC Healthcare Captive, featuring mental health resources, \$0 surgery options, and proactive concierge services. Discover actionable strategies to support your team's physical and mental health while maintaining a competitive, productive, and stable construction workforce.</p>	<p>Ben Gelnar, VP of Mid-Atlantic Markets ABC Insurance Trust Bill Baker, SVP Sales Trinity Captive Group</p>
<p>From Spreadsheets to Systems: How Growing Contractors Build a Scalable Back Office</p>	<p>How \$5–\$25M contractors outgrow manual workflows in dispatch, billing, and job costing. What a “baseline” tech stack looks like for HR, finance, and operations (and what can wait). Change management playbook: getting field leaders and office staff to actually adopt new processes.</p>	<p>Addison Haller, Enterprise Account Executive BuildOps</p>
<p>Managing Economic Volatility in Construction Projects: Legal and Practical Strategies for Contractors</p>	<p>This panel discussion provides contractors with actionable strategies to navigate market instability. Moving beyond theory, the program focuses on practical risk management, from negotiating effective price escalation clauses to handling material delays and scheduling pressures. Attendees will learn to strengthen contracts, protect payments, and master documentation techniques that preserve claims without damaging owner relationships. It is an essential guide to surviving—and thriving—in a volatile economic landscape.</p>	<p>Jeffrey Bright, Esq. (Moderator), Offit Kurman, Daniel Schneider, Esq., Offit Kurman, Amanda Szmuc, Esq., Offit Kurman, Joseph Hellenbrand, K2 Construction Consultants, Andrew Bernard, K2 Construction Consultants</p>
<p>Learn the Secret that Successful Contractors Have Known for years – Apprenticeship</p>	<p>In this fast-paced, interactive program, we will discuss the legal and business benefits of apprenticeship. From complying with the New Jersey Public Works Contractor Registration requirements to the financial advantages to make your business more competitive.</p>	<p>Marc Furman, Esq., Partner Cohen Seglias</p>
<p>Co Ops, Compliance, and Risk: New Jersey's New Rules for Public Works Contractors</p>	<p>New Jersey recently enacted a cooperative purchasing law that significantly affects public works contractors performing work through cooperative pricing and purchasing systems. This presentation will explain how the law and proposed regulations change contractor eligibility, prevailing wage enforcement, and compliance obligations when working through co-ops, and will highlight common risk areas and practical steps contractors can take to protect future public work opportunities.</p>	<p>Fran Kenny, Esq., Counsel Little</p>
<p>One Big Beautiful Bill and the Construction Industry</p>	<p>With tax season behind us, this session will provide highlights of the OBBBA, a review of business tax provisions (TCJA, SALT, QBI, R&D), and the strategic tax planning steps construction business owners should continue to implement for 2026. We will also discuss ways to optimize cash flow during economic uncertainty.</p>	<p>Stephen Slade, CPA, Partner, Wouch Maloney CPAs & Business Advisors</p>

Session 3 (11:00 – 11:55 AM)

<p>The Value of Business Valuation for Construction Companies</p>	<p>In this session, you will learn how valuation professionals assess your business’s value for tax and management planning. Construction companies face unique valuation factors, including project pipelines, margin volatility, and equipment value. Partnering with a valuation professional enables owners to benchmark performance and plan confidently with a clear understanding of their business’s worth.</p>	<p>Jake Libucha, Director of Value Consulting Wouch Maloney CPAs & Business Advisors</p>
<p>Competing with Labor for Labor</p>	<p>Facing a persistent nationwide labor shortage, construction industry employers must compete for talent not only against competitors, but also against building trades unions promising structured training, higher wages and better benefits. Learn best practices to achieve organizational buy-in; recruiting, hiring and onboarding quality candidates; training through apprenticeship; performance management for busy contractors; the role of compliance in employee relations; and strategies for equipping field management with necessary people skills.</p>	<p>Russ McEwan, Esq., Shareholder Littler</p>
<p>Using AI in Construction Operations Without Breaking the Business (or Freaking Out the Field)</p>	<p>Practical, non-hype examples of AI for scheduling, call handling, estimating, and documentation, Guardrails around data privacy, ownership, and union/non-union workforce concerns, A simple roadmap: pilot → policy → scale, geared to owners and office leadership who are “AI-curious” but cautious.</p>	<p>Tom Hehre, Mid-Market Account Executive BuildOps</p>
<p>Building a Predictable Pipeline in an Unpredictable Market</p>	<p>Tailored for mid-level managers and small business owners, this session prioritizes actionable results over theory. Participants will master building reliable sales pipelines, generating consistent opportunities, and leveraging client relationships to stand out in price-driven markets. By focusing on practical strategies rather than abstract concepts, attendees leave with a clear framework to boost visibility, increase win rates, and secure predictable revenue. It is the definitive workshop for leaders ready to transform their sales process into a growth engine.</p>	<p>Jerry Hampton, Major Accounts Sales Specialist Primepoint LLC</p> <p>David Kryszczak, Founder/President Spartan Digital</p>
<p>Liens & Lien Rights</p>	<p>This presentation will focus on liens as a practical business tool for protecting cash flow and managing risk. Attendees will gain a clear understanding of what a lien is, how lien rights create leverage in payment disputes, and how those rights differ on private versus public projects. The session will also cover lien considerations, including how to preserve rights and avoid common missteps that can impact payment and project profitability.</p>	<p>Mark Snyder, Esq., Partner Brian Glicos, Esq., Senior Counsel Peckar & Abramson, P.C.</p>
<p>Construction Claims: A Practical Approach to Maximizing Recovery</p>	<p>Construction claims begin at the jobsite, not the courtroom. Contractors often delay claims, assuming owners will act fairly, but missing notice deadlines and documentation can ruin recovery chances regardless of merit. Modern contracts further complicate this, often leading to payment delays and litigation. This presentation offers practical insights into claim management, highlighting best practices for contract compliance, contemporaneous documentation, and effective communication. The goal is to help contractors resolve claims at the project level, ensuring maximum recovery and minimal legal involvement.</p>	<p>Anthony Tavormina, Esq., CPA, Partner Trif & Modugno</p>