

Community Involvement

in Hand

beyond theory

New technology helps Steed Hammond Paul provide instant community feedback

Contemporary or traditional architecture? Colorful finishes or muted monotoes?

Community involvement helps Steed Hammond Paul architects, engineers and interior designers answer design questions like these before the first plans are ever drawn. In the past, community involvement might have meant a cross-section of school or university constituents gathering in a room, listening and viewing various types of information, and rating what they consider best for the campus or community on a paper questionnaire. Some time later, the group would be reconvened to hear the survey results.

Now Steed Hammond Paul can offer instant feedback to building concepts that can be displayed in real time. TurningPoint® from Turning Technologies is a system that allows a PowerPoint® presentation to become interactive—the audience can be polled and results immediately displayed.

“It’s like ‘ask the audience’ on the TV show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*,” says Mike Dingeldein, AIA, vice president of Steed Hammond Paul.

Meeting participants use a handheld device similar to a remote control to record their responses to design concepts. Response totals are tabu-

lated and displayed for the audience immediately, giving an instant idea of how each concept is received.

“As an architect, I love the idea of getting instant feedback,” Dingeldein says. “TurningPoint makes the entire process less labor-intensive and ensures accuracy. I also think it adds a ‘fun factor’ to the process. It engages the community one step further to actually see their response appear on the screen.”

Results can be displayed in a variety of formats—bar graphs, 3-D pie charts, distributed pie charts and other infographics. A countdown timer lets participants know how long they have to answer and displays the number of responses gathered. Data collected from a community meeting can also be placed in any spreadsheet program to be added to a larger database.

TurningPoint also has other potential uses. College professors can use it for quizzes and tests, or companies can use it to facilitate corporate training programs and meetings. The technology even be configured to allow participants to use their cellular phones or PDAs to submit responses.

Steed Hammond Paul has started using TurningPoint at community involvement meetings throughout the state.

