

# Data-Driven Preparation Makes the Difference

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It's an overwhelmingly data-rich world we live in, but the key to any successful meeting, presentation or business opportunity is get to the useful data that can help you prepare properly.

Some of the ways we do this at Benesch includes business intelligence tools that give us background information on companies-their board members, SEC filings, pending lawsuits, patent applications and so on. We also leverage our data by keeping up on news regarding our clients, their industries and even their competitors. These web-based tools have been very helpful, and we've even put them in the hands of our lawyers, who we know always love to be prepared.

In addition to these public-facing tools, remember there is a wealth of rich data within your own companies. Your financial and accounting information is important to understanding where your company stands, who your clients are, and where there may be opportunity for growth in the business. Also, know where your company contacts reside, including "who knows whom"- who within your company knows whom within the businesses and networks of your clients, prospects or referral sources. This, too, can lead to great business opportunities and relationship building internally and externally.

Finally, know the strengths, expertise and background of your own people. Who can help you with a project, a business opportunity or a referral? Keep a database of their experience and the companies and industries they work in or have worked in previously.

We try very hard at Benesch to use the data available to us so that we have a better understanding of how best to serve clients. It's difficult at times to decide how much is too much, but it's better to have the information at your fingertips. As the saying goes, "knowledge is power." If you'd like to have a conversation about some of the web-based tools we use, feel free to contact me.

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