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Feature Article

IS IT FAD OR FUTURE? OMNI-CHANNEL RETAIL



by **Natina James**, RSP Architects

In today's environment, retailers encounter drastically different client demographics along with the constant evolution of shoppers. These shoppers can be categorized into three types – single channel, multi/omni-channel and web shopper. Each has its separate needs, wants and desires when it comes to their retail experience. We are seeing retailers struggle to cater to these very different types of shoppers. Brick-and-mortar retailers are battling online retailers for sales. The question shouldn't be *which* channel the shopper is using to purchase your products. Instead, it should be *how many* of your channels are your customers using to make their purchase.

State of the art retail is evolving into an omni-channel experience, unifying and integrating customer-centric experiences. In a September 2009 [web story](#), IDC's Global Retail Insights research unit first used the term "omni-channel". Their research concluded that multi-channel shoppers spent 15% to 30% more with store retailers than the single channel shoppers, and that omni-channel shoppers spent 15% to 30% more than their multi-channel brethren.

As a result, retailers must simultaneously leverage customer touch-points — mobile, social, kiosks, store, etc. — to create a seamless experience.

The omni-channel label implies that retailers will be able to intelligently interact with customers across traditional and non-traditional channels—websites, physical stores, kiosks, direct mail and catalogs, call centers, social media, mobile devices, gaming consoles, televisions, advertising, home delivery, blogs and more. It's a complete brand experience. Being a truly omni-channel retailer means the consumer can choose whichever channel they want to interact with, using any device, and still get a very convenient, consistent shopping experience. "Consumers don't think in terms of channels. Retailers still do. The future of the retail store is no different than the future of all retail — seamlessly integrated,

technologically-enabled and personal," said Gaurav Pant, Research Director for EKN. A consumer expects to be treated the same way in every single store and channel across the retailer's organization.

How does the change affect stores? How do retailers avoid becoming a "showroom"? There are many facets to the retail environment one must consider, like how customers interact with both the employees and merchandise. Retailers must offer a personalized experience, better integrating channels,

engaging store experience with localized assortments, keep items in stock, and offer shipping to store. How is stock managed? Are buying behaviors reviewed in markets and adjusted accordingly? Stock must reflect the buying behavior and sentiment of consumers who shop that store. Marketing becomes localized to assortments available to the market. Retailers such as Cabela's, Macy's and Safeway are being successful with this approach. Another item to consider: is the store a place "to be seen"? We are social creatures. "The physical, human

experience of shopping is in some ways of far greater value than the goods that come along for the ride. So, while shopping is a means of acquiring the things we want and need, it's also a meaningful social activity that appeals to our deepest, human tendency to gather."

How can the in-store experience evolve with the omni-channeling trend?

1. **Make use of social media** - Social trends are an integral part of omni-channeling. Retailers must allow customers to help "build" their brand through online discussions and recommendations, for example, utilizing "likes and dislikes" during web and in-store experience.
2. **Personalize shopping** - Consumers want a personalized shopping experience. Retailers are testing apps to deliver information about in-store sales and events while customers shop. They are collecting data on consumers

continued on next page



Omni-Channel Retail - continued

shopping behavior and past purchases in order to make new recommendations and personalized comprehensive product guides.

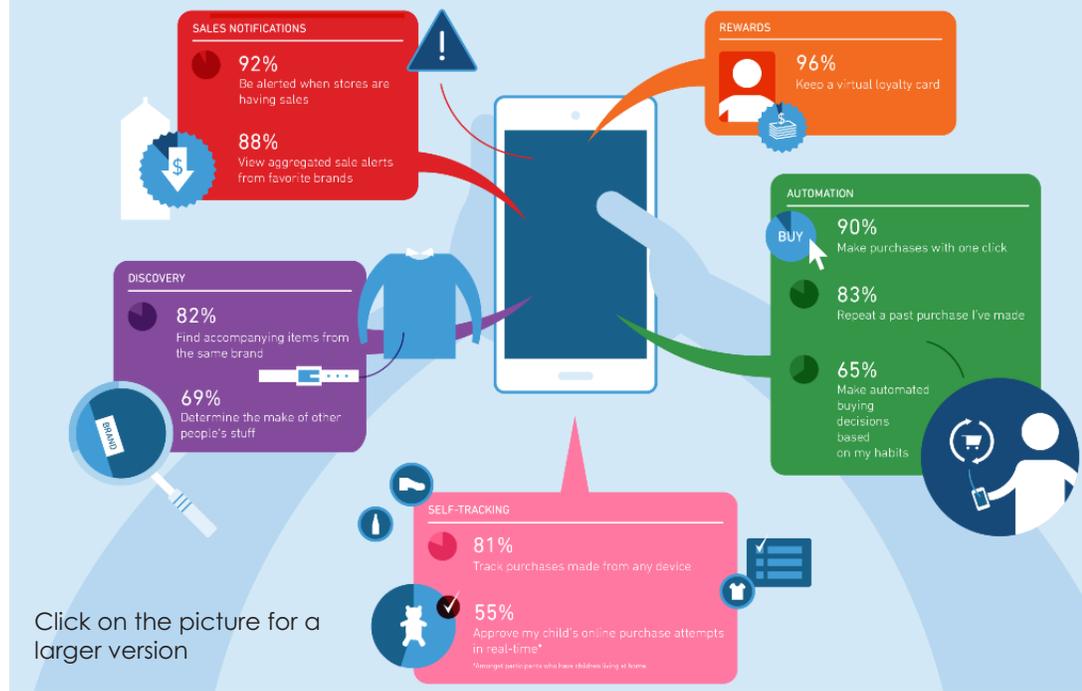
- 3. Technology** - Technology allows retailers to offer more detailed and personalized shopping recommendations. In-store stations empower customers to interact with new products, research products, and check inventory.
- 4. People** – economies drive merchants to automate their store environments to remain competitive; cashiers become replaced with technology. Greeters and front end sales people are required to be brand ambassadors. They will be paid more and be brand believers, users and co-creators with customers.
- 5. Customized products** – Less Take and More Make – stores become point of creation as customers create the perfect bicycle, computer or customized suit. On site experts help customers make a unique personalized product and experience.
- 6. Challenge typical store layout and design** – elimination of typical point of sale – replace with tablet or other mobile device. Introduction of digital media – allow customers to investigate products, check stock and pricing.
- 7. Less Conversion More Converts** – purpose of store is to transform the customer into a “disciple of brand itself. It doesn’t matter where they buy the product – online, mobile or in-store. The goal is to make the customer fall in LOVE with the brand and provide a place to share it with others. The store becomes “emotional center of gravity” for the brand.

Omni-channeling is the integration of all retail channels for a consistent, consumer-oriented shopping experience. Given that the consumer has a choice and is well-equipped with technology, retailers must ensure that the store is relevant and personal when they visit.

Let’s use one of recent personal experiences. I’m a Mac geek. I’ve wanted a Mac for years but have avoided doing so since my main program, AutoCAD, was focused on the PC platform. Yet, still I bought their products, first an iPod touch and then an iPhone. I follow Mac product announcements religiously. I love the Apple store – architecturally and experientially.

On September 20th my sister and I woke up early to go wait in line at Rosedale Center with about 100 other people for the new iPhone 5S. I had never been to one of these first product launches, but my curiosity and sense of excitement got the better of me! At 7 a.m., the line was greeted by Apple staff, informing us of the delayed arrival of the gold iPhone. They soothed our disappointment by offering hot coffee and water. At 8 a.m., the line starts moving from the food court area, inching its way toward the Apple store. Corraling us into stanchions, they once again offered coffee, water and granola bars. Apple staff members walked through the line, verifying whether or not you were an “approved” user for the phone account and could purchase a phone. If you passed

MOBILE “FUTURE REQUESTS” FOR VIRTUAL RETAIL



that test, your next question was about your cell phone provider and desired phone.

The associate asking the question was holding a non-descript box like it contained precious gems. The box held small embossed white cards, each one identifying a phone by provider. You were given a choice of availability by phone provider, color and spec, and then handed this valuable card representing your new phone. At 9 a.m. sharp, 80 Apple Blue Shirts come out of the store and start clapping – the store was opening. Initially, I wanted the gold phone but found it too bright for my taste once I saw it in real life. It appeared more of a champagne color online. I quickly switched preference to the space gray phone (nicknamed the bat phone). Finally, the end is near. Within an hour, I was meeting with a sales associate, only to discover my Sprint corporate account does not allow me to buy a phone in store. I’m devastated! I’ve waited all three hours and now I have to leave empty-handed. Oh no, Apple wasn’t going to let that happen. One quick call to Sprint and a space gray iPhone is being shipped to my house, free of charge, overnight. Even with this delayed satisfaction, the experience leaves me a happy and loyal Apple customer.

References

- [How different types of Omni-channel services can improve the customer experience](#)
- [Omni-Channel Integration Still a major Roadblock](#)
- [The Flaw in Omni-channel Retailing](#)
- [Saks Embraces Omnichannel but Stores Remain the 'Big Kahuna'](#)
- [The rise of omni-channel retail: definition and 5 tips](#)
- [Omnichannel: A solution to the burden of commercial real estate](#)
- [Key considerations for digital signage and omnichannel retail](#)
- [Staples Unveils Smaller Omnichannel Stores Aimed At Mobile Professionals](#)
- [Multi-channel to Omni-channel Retail Analytics: A Big Data Use Case](#)
- [The Future of the Retail Store](#)

Member Profiles

Christopher Huntley

Huntley Law, LLC

What is your primary career focus? I am an attorney that represents clients in a wide range of real estate and business transactional matters including real estate acquisitions and sales, leasing, entity formation and maintenance, and business contracts.

What is your favorite Disney movie? Lion King

What junk food is your weakness? Chocolate is probably the toughest to resist.

What makes you feel old? When I realized that the music I was listening to in college was being played on 107.9.

What is something you have always wanted to try? Running with the bulls in Pamplona, Spain. I plan on going when I turn 40.

If you could hire out one household chore, what would it be?

Doing the dishes. It is an incessant pest.

What is your favorite board game? Trivial Pursuit or Monopoly.

What is your favorite alcoholic drink? Beer. Any kind.

What was your favorite toy as a kid? Legos.

How many rings before you answer the phone? It depends on if I am avoiding phone calls. Two usually.

What is something you said you would never do, but did anyway? Drink too much beer. This, of course, has happened multiple times since college. I believe it was Einstein who said that stupidity is doing the same thing multiple times and expecting a different result.

How long have you been an MSCA member? Three years.



Christy Lewis

Doran Companies Construction

What is your primary career focus? My primary focus is any and all activities that generate new business opportunities for the construction segment of Doran.

What junk food is your weakness? Warm tortilla chips and great salsa.

What makes you feel old? Seeing Skinny Jeans and styles from the 80's on my daughter.

What is something you have always wanted to try? Driving a race car on a real track. I LOVE cars, the faster the better.

If you could hire out one household chore, what would it be?

Oh wow, ANY and ALL! Toilet cleaning comes to the top of the list. Any takers?

What is your favorite board game? For me that would be Monopoly. I played for countless hours as a child with my father. I am pretty certain he thought this was a teaching lesson of money management. He never let me win and I was bound and determined too.

What is your favorite alcoholic drink? Believe it or not I love tequila—Patron shaken and chilled. On the lighter side a great glass of red wine, a light beer or Captain and Coke.

What was your favorite toy as a kid? My Raggedy Ann doll.

How many rings before you answer the phone? Depends on who it is... Laughing. A few.

What is something you said you would never do, but did anyway? Hmmm. The only thing that comes to mind that, I am still saying today. I will never run a marathon! Ok you all heard it!

How long have you been an MSCA member? 2+ years



Rising Star

ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES



by **Brandon O'Connell**,
Mid-America Real Estate – Minnesota, LLC

With the recent explosion of electronic cigarettes in the metro market, as well as on a national level, many are wondering if this is another fad or a sustainable product that is here to stay. Many have speculated that e-cigs will lose its luster once the honeymoon phase wears out. Others however, are betting big that this product category will continue its momentum in replacing the cigarette and becoming a new American staple



As with any new product to the market, electronic cigarettes have several obstacles to overcome to make it past the fad stage. In this particular case, the largest issue is federal regulation. The FDA was aiming to have regulations for the sale and use of e-cigs in-place by October 31st; however, with the recent government shutdown, this appears more likely to take effect later this year. As proposed, these regulations would include banning online sales, which accounts for nearly 70% of current sales for the industry. The proposed legislation would also ban television advertisement. Fearing the products appeal strongly to younger users, the FDA is also reviewing plans to ban e-cigarette flavors.

The state of Minnesota recently became the first state to place a tax on e-cig sales with more states poised to follow. Some counties in Minnesota have also placed regulations on where e-cigs can be used on public property. With these government regulations set to take place, specifically banning online sales, many see a golden opportunity to begin selling e-cig products in a retail setting. The driving force behind this rush to a retail setting is industry revenue, which is projected to top the \$1 billion mark in 2013.

Traveling around the metro area, it appears new electronic cigarette tenants are popping up weekly in many different types of developments. Angie Griffith, co-owner of Smokeless Smoking, has plans to open up 10 new shops in the Minnesota market and 425 nationally in the coming year. Angie says her customers feel e-cigs are less harmful than traditional cigarettes and can be smoked in public areas without the offensive odor. Customers have also used the products to help quit smoking by gradually weaning off traditional cigarettes and eventually off of e-cigs.

Will e-cigs survive long-term in a health conscious society with increasing federal regulation? The jury may still be out, but many are cashing-in before this industry potentially burns out.



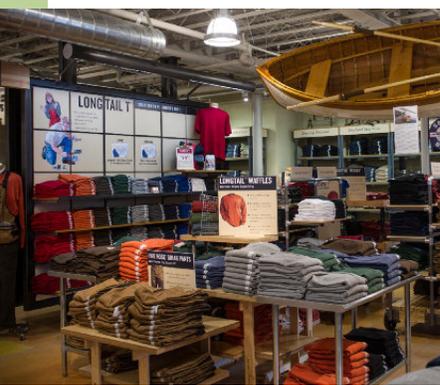
Benihana is coming to the Mall of America. The Doral, Fla.-based restaurant chain, known for its teppanyaki-style Japanese cooking, has signed a lease for an 8,600-sf space on the mall's third floor, next to the Cadillac Ranch restaurant near Macy's department store. It is scheduled to open in spring 2014.

Steele Fitness is launching a line of upscale, 24-hour health clubs following its August acquisition by Snap Fitness Inc. The new **Steele365** clubs will be between 5,000 and 6,000 sf, comparable to a standard Snap Fitness location. They will feature high-end locker rooms,

towel service, an around-the-clock concierge, complimentary group classes and access to Steele's personal trainers.

Caribou Coffee and **Bruegger's** will open their first joint store later this year in Roseville. Caribou Coffee Co. Inc.'s existing Har Mar Mall store will be converted into a new shared store. The brands also are working on plans to open two or three locations by the end of the year and several more in early 2014.

The Minnesota Wild announced that it will open a **Hockey Lodge** retail store at Southdale Center in Edina on November 1st. The Southdale store — located between Macy's and Ruby Tuesday's on the west side of the mall — will be the third Hockey Lodge location, replacing the store at Burnsville Center. The other locations are at Maplewood Mall and Xcel Energy Center in St. Paul.



The Duluth Trading Co. opened its first Minnesota store in Bloomington. The retailer — which was founded in Duluth in 1989 — already had three stores in Wisconsin. The new location is a 14,000-sf store at 9801 Lyndale Avenue South. It will be the company's largest store in size and its first to sell the complete line of men's and women's merchandise displayed in the catalog and online

Patrick's Bakery Café is expanding to Maple Grove. The local restaurant plans to open in January at The Shoppes at Arbor Lakes in Maple Grove, filling a space where California Pizza Kitchen recently closed after its lease expired.

Bruegger's Bagels opened a new location in Mall of America's recent expansion. The bagel shop opened on the third floor, near the new Radisson Blu Hotel. It's the company's first Minnesota location in an enclosed regional mall.

H&M opened its sixth metro-area store at the rapidly evolving Ridgedale Center. The low-priced Swedish retailer opened a 20,000-sf store on the upper level of the mall. Ridgedale also is getting a new Nordstrom store as part of the redevelopment of space formerly used by Macy's, which has reduced the space it's using at the Minnetonka mall.

Total Wine & More has signed its second Twin Cities lease as it prepares to enter the market later this year. The Potomac, Md.-based company will open a 21,166-sf liquor superstore at Rosedale Marketplace in Roseville.

Popular Uptown/Whittier coffee shop **Spyhouse Coffee** opened a third location in Northeast. The space features floor-to-ceiling windows, custom-designed tables and chairs, and a vintage roaster. In addition to brewing coffee, the new location will also serve as a roasting facility.



Linder's Garden Center, a century-old gardening icon in the Twin Cities, is going out of business. The family-owned company, founded in 1910, operated its main garden center and greenhouse in St. Paul, a 52-acre production site in Lake Elmo, and 53 flower marts in the metro area between the months of April and July.

Lund Food Holdings Inc. is converting a Prior Lake grocery store it bought into a Lunds location. Lund Food did not disclose the price it paid for Village Market, a 35,000-sf grocery store, or other terms of the deal. The store is at 16731 Highway 13.

Construction is underway in Northeast on Minneapolis's first hard cider taproom by **Sociable Cider Werks**. The brewery is co-owned and co-founded by longtime friends and former roommates Jim Watkins and Wade Thompson. I saw that the beer taproom scene has been exploding in the Twin Cities, but that no one has been using the apples that Minnesota is famous for.

Tumble Fresh, the first self-service laundromat in Cottage Grove, opened this past month. The 3,600-sf facility offers patrons more than 40 high efficiency washers and high capacity washers and dryers, and takes coins, all major credit cards, debit card. Tumble Fresh is located at 8470 East Point Douglas Road.



Off-price retailer **T.J. Maxx** opened a store in the midway area of St. Paul. The 26,000-sf store will be located at Hamline & University Avenues, a former PetSmart location between a Herberger's department store and a Cub Foods store. This will be T.J. Maxx's 10th location in the Twin Cities area.

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2013 CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

To view MSCA program presentations, [click here](#).

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MEMBER NEWS

Minneapolis-based Leonard, Street and Deinard shareholder **Gina Fox** has been named among the year's "Top Women in Finance" by Finance & Commerce for her work on several high-profile real estate transactions in 2013.

NEW MSCA MEMBERS

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Tim Portzen, BMO Harris Bank

Mark Domino, VSI Construction, Inc.

CALL FOR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

MSCA is currently looking for committee members for 2014!

If you would be a dedicated and hardworking addition to one of our nine committees, then take a look at our committee page for your chance to contribute to this great association.

Committees meet at all sorts of different times throughout the year, so find the one that fits your interests and schedule the best

[Click here for the committee page!](#)

 Monthly Program

 Third Thursdays

For more information and registration, go to www.msca-online.com

Click on date within current month for details and registration link for that meeting.

THIRD THURSDAYS

Next Meeting:
Thursday, November 21

Time:
8:30 am – 9:30 am

Where:
Dunn Bros
201 Third Ave South
Minneapolis, MN

Member hosts: **Matt Drier** – NaturalGreen Landscape Management, **Cindy Nosan** - Guaranty Commercial Title, Inc. and **Jeff Orosz** - CMA

What: Casual networking hosted by MSCA members

Why: Create synergy in the commercial real estate industry—share ideas and stories and make new effective relationships. RSVP to [Ryan](#) is preferred, but not required.

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Program Recap

DOLLAR AND SENSE OF PLACEMAKING FOR RETAILERS AND SHOPPING CENTERS

The October program provided attendees with an in-depth look at how retailers and shopping centers can utilize to increase their value. Max Musicant, the founder and Principal of the Musicant Group, focused on the shopping experience, creating places where people want to be and placemaking at your shopping center.

Placemaking is a people-centered approach to the planning, design and management of public spaces. Placemaking involves looking at, listening to, and asking questions of the people who live, work and play in a particular space, as well as discovering the customers needs and aspirations.

Shopping has become an experience. This is something that e-commerce cannot take away from the brick and mortar experience, which makes up for 95% of retail sales. People like the convenience of goods and services together as well as the increased opportunity for unplanned positive social interaction and community.

An increasing trend between the Millennials and the retiring Boomers is the want and need for urban style living. Data shows that 60% of Millennials prefer a mix of housing choices, proximity to shops, dining, offices and transit. Additionally, 75% of those surveyed prefer the walkability in their communities.

Creating places where people want to be produces activity at your center. Retail thrives off of activity. A result of this placemaking will generate new customers, extend their stay and create experiences that keep customers coming back again and again.

Employing placemaking activities at your shopping center can be done in several ways with a small or large budget, can be easy to implement and quick to put into action. Placemaking can be something as simple as putting a bench outside your store, hosting yoga in the park, developing a kids play area, or putting in TV's, a waiting area or art exhibits at the center. This space would give the customer a chance to relax, stay awhile, see others at the space and ultimately spend more time and money at the center.

Live, eat, work, shop, play.

For more information on The Musicant Group, visit www.musicantgroup.com.

Experiential Retailing or "Placemaking" is at the heart of Northtown Mall owner Glimcher Realty Trust's corporate development strategy. Speaker Max Musicant offered a roadmap to the art and science of creating retail places where people want to be...and spend money!

– Paula Mueller

Attend the November program!
Click [here](#) to register.



by [Nicole Wagner](#), Pastor Enterprises



Max Musicant and Jeremy Striffler

OCTOBER PROGRAM PROFESSIONAL SHOWCASE



CMA

For over 36 years and 9,000 retail and restaurant projects, CMA® has provided complete architectural, planning, and interior design services to clients located throughout the United States and Canada. CMA has achieved solid growth by developing mutually rewarding, long term relationships with its clients. Their success is based on consistently meeting and exceeding client expectations through excellence of design and timely project delivery. CMA continues to promote and develop a staff who demonstrates the special blend of imagination, experience, technical expertise and consistent performance that is reflected in over three decades of superior design solutions for an ever-broadening client base.

Guest Article

HOLIDAY SALES TO GROW 3.4 PERCENT IN 2013

reprinted from ICSC

Holiday spending is likely to inch up this year despite economic concerns, according to ICSC Research. The organization is forecasting a 3.4 percent year-over-year GAFO sales increase for the November-December period, slightly stronger than the 3 percent increase of a year ago.



ICSC anticipates positive growth in two other measures of U.S. industry holiday sales. Shopping-center-inclined sales (which include food- and service-oriented tenants at shopping centers) are expected to grow by 3.4 percent versus a year ago and chain-store sales by 2 percent. Shopping-center-inclined sales grew by 2.7 percent and chain-store sales by 1.3 percent for the holiday season last year.

Though the industry and the economy have gone through a slowdown in the past three quarters, there are indicators of growth this season, despite a mixed retail outlook, according to Michael P. Niemira, ICSC's chief economist and vice president of research. Although consumers have faced some political and economic uncertainty — higher payroll taxes, concern about a federal government shutdown and the uncertain costs of the Affordable Care Act — this year's sales are likely to be better than last year's, he says.

"We're going to see a more subdued spending mood from consumers, but what counts is that we're on track to have a better holiday sales season than last year," Niemira said. "With leaner inventories, retailers can expect their prices and margins to remain stable, which is another good indicator of stronger sales."

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Keep an eye out for the membership renewal blast email that will be sent out in November!

Legislative News

EXPENDITURE TYPE REPORTING

by **Leah Maurer**,
Cushman & Wakefield/NorthMarq



The MSCA Legislative Committee is continuing their efforts, in conjunction with NAIOP, to promote Expenditure Type Reporting within the public sector. MSCA and NAIOP's initiative is to advance transparency in the budgeting processes of local taxing authorities, and thereby gain a better understanding of the forces and cost factors that drive changes in property tax and local city budgets.

We have already partnered with NAIOP to work with the city of Edina, which has resulted in a very positive experience for all involved. Next, NAIOP has asked us to partner with them again in continued expansion efforts to work with Dakota County. These efforts will begin this fall and we are very excited to continue this work to show that Expenditure Type Reporting can be very informative and helpful for residents and

municipalities in terms of understanding and creating collaborative budgets.

If you would like to read the media coverage on the **Expenditure Type Reporting** projects or learn more about the Legislative Committee, please visit the [legislative page](#) on the MSCA website.



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2013 STARRSM awards



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4 p.m. Registration & Networking

5 p.m. Year End Ceremonies & Awards Presentation

6 p.m. Holiday Party

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