The Gulf States Region CSI Specifications Competition
Product Binder Category

Have you noticed there are numerous competitions to award design professionals for outstanding architectural designs? But when it comes to recognizing excellence in product literature, you'll find only one such competition — the prestigious Gulf States Region (GSR) CSI Specifications Competition.

CSI realizes the quality and professionalism your product literature contributes to the success of projects. Well-written product binders are essential to effective specifications and promote clear communication among all parties involved in building design and construction. The effort, experience, and depth of knowledge required to prepare effective product literature and to coordinate the technical, administrative, and procedural requirements comprising the product binder are skills to be acknowledged — and rewarded.

Show your peers how to do it — the right way. Demonstrate the level of excellence possible in presenting product literature as well as your ability to develop an in-house standard. Take advantage of this opportunity to demonstrate to your colleagues and your clients what a truly exceptional product binder looks like.

The benefits of entering are numerous — and if you win there's even more!

- Learn ways to improve your Product Binder — each entry receives a thorough written evaluation.
- Enhance your professional reputation with design professionals, contractors, and owners.
- Demonstrate your technical excellence in producing exceptional product literature.
- Help your sales representatives build business with award-winning sales tools.
- Bolster your company's credentials and visibility in the construction industry.
- Add a meaningful accomplishment to your professional resume.
- Be honored by your peers at an Awards Ceremony during GSR CSI's Annual Conference.
- See your winning entry on display in the GSR CSI Showcase at GSR CSI's Annual Conference.
- Receive an Honorable Mention or Merit award certificate to display in your office.
- Receive an Honor Award - there is only one awarded!

Evaluation Procedure and Criteria:

Entries are judged by the Specifications Competition Committee. Awards are determined based on point scores assigned to entries by evaluation teams under the direct supervision of the judges. A general evaluation is provided to each entrant upon completion of judging. Individual entry scores are not disclosed and the judges' decisions are final.

Scoring System

The Specifications Competition Committee judge entries in accordance with the guidelines in CSI's current Practice Guides. The criteria for evaluation and scoring are as follows:

Stage One — Preliminary Evaluation

The Specifications Competition Committee determines whether the entry merits further consideration for an award. Judges note significant deficiencies, such as:

- Omission of manufacturer's identification on binder spine and cover.
- Omission of guide specifications.
- Non-substantial binder or loose literature.
- Compliance with MasterFormat™, SectionFormat™, and PageFormat™.
- No Table of Contents, indexing or tabs.
- Outdated information
- No contact identification

Stage Two — Detailed Evaluations

Evaluation teams score entries based on the following:

Binder Concept

Does the binder have the information necessary to:

- Evaluate the product(s)
- Evaluate the product(s) Warranty
- Select the product options
- Incorporate the product into the design
- Draw and detail the product
- Write a product specification
- Order, install, and maintain the product?

Guide Specifications

Does the binder have complete guide specifications written in accordance with current SectionFormat™, PageFormat™, and MasterFormat™?

Technical Content

Does the binder include the following items:

- Technical product information
- Testing information
- Sample warranties
- Related information
- Samples

Presentation Techniques

- Are the product and manufacturer's name on cover and spine of binder?
- Is the binder substantial enough for filing and ease of use?
- Is the binder assembled for easy retrieval and updating of information?
- Is the MasterFormat Division or Section Number included on binder spine?
- Does the binder contain a Table of contents and proper indexing?
- What is the appearance and organization of the binder's components?
- Is company name, address, and phone number on product informational pages?

Text

Is the method of preparation and writing adequate, including consistent editing and syntax, proper grammar and sentence structure, and correct spelling?

Rules of Entry

1. Entries shall be submitted and prepared for the competition in the same format as presented or distributed to the construction industry and cannot be custom-designed for the competition.
2. Entries shall be in the English language.
3. Submit two complete binders per entry.
4. If the entries include electronic media, submit two hard copies of electronic media output along with the binders.
5. Entries shall be consistently bound in one or more volumes. Multiple volumes are considered as a single entry.
6. Individual, unbound, or loose brochures and samples are not acceptable and are grounds for disqualification.
7. Entries must be current publications, having been developed within the previous 24 months.
8. Entries shall not contain unauthorized reproduced copies of copyrighted documents.
9. Membership in CSI is not a requirement of entry.
10. Each entry must be accompanied by a completed, signed copy of the official entry application, an entry description, and an entry fee for each entry. $100 for CSI members or $200 for Nonmembers. There is no limit to the number of separate entries submitted.
11. Entries will not be returned.
12. Deadlines for entries are as follows: The first Friday in April 2019. Entries must be postmarked by this date!
13. Late entries, unsigned entry applications, no entry fee, or copyright violations are grounds for automatic disqualification.
14. Auto-installed software is grounds for automatic disqualification.

Tips for Preparing a Winning Entry

A product binder contains a manufacturer's product literature, technical data, guide specifications, test data, and related information. Because product representatives cannot always be present to advise the design professional, the product binder should allow the design professional to research, select, specify and detail products easily. Guidelines for binder format are listed in the Manual of Practice. Qualifying binders will:

1.   Follow a logical format for selecting and specifying your product.
2.   Allow for flexibility of contents, such as additions and deletions of information.
3.   Include the name of the product, manufacturer, and the MasterFormat™ Division or Section Number on the spine and cover.
4.   Include a Table of Contents and tabs.
5.   Include a registration card, a record sheet for recording dates of distribution and updates, and local contact's business card.
6.   Show company name, address, and phone number on product information pages.
7.   Secure unbound samples, brochures, and disks to prevent them from slipping out of the binder.
8.   Contain Guide Specifications written in three-part format in accordance with CSI formats and principles.
9.   Provide hard copy of information if presented on electronic media.

Awards (Tip: To limit the deficiencies in your entry, read the "Tips for Preparing a Winning Entry".)

Honor Award (Grade of 95 percent minimum)
CSI's highest award recognizes outstanding achievement in the preparation of the project binder.

Honorable Mention (Grade of 85 percent minimum)
Exceptional entry with limited deficiencies will earn this highly respected award.

Merit Award (Grade of 75 percent minimum)
Entries that use new or unusual approaches or handle specific conditions in a particularly effective manner are eligible for this honor.

Only one entry may qualify for an Honor Award. There is no limit to the number of Honorable Mention and Merit Awards. However, awards may not be given in all categories.