

## Contacts Made at Winter Meeting are Keepers

Steven Babechenko is vice president and critical facilities manager at First Citizens Bank. New to the Carolinas 7x24 chapter, the winter meeting held February 26–27 in Durham, NC, was his first. He’s not new to these kinds of conferences, but he found the opportunities presented at this local chapter meeting to be particularly beneficial.

“Most of the people at this event do what I do or are vendors who provide things I need and deal with. The people there understood what my role and responsibilities are. They know how to build and run data centers. I collected business cards I will keep rather than throw away.”

Babechenko found the meeting to be “an opportunity for good networking. You have top-tier professionals who do the work. For example, the electrical people I met were the best–in–class.” And he found another benefit: Everyone there is local. “There was local talent, which is what I’m looking for. It’s nice to meet colleagues in our own community.”

Board member Robin Aron said the meeting was a success from the chapter vantage as well. “We had more than 160 attendees at the meeting, which is a very successful number for us,” she said. “Our networking session included just about everybody who was attending the conference, and a lot of business was done, I’m sure.”

The tour of the Sentinel Data Centers’ Durham facility was also a big hit. As North Carolina’s first premium wholesale data center, it caters to large-footprint users. Aron said that nearly all of the attendees went on the tour, which garnered a lot of positive feedback.



Presentations dealt with trends poised to challenge data centers. Speakers from IBM, Syska Hennessy Group, and 451 Research discussed infrastructure implications of the cloud, big data, and mobile computing; emerging technologies; and data infrastructure dashboards. A slideshow of all the presentations is available for viewing and download on the Carolinas [7x24 Exchange website](#).

If you missed the winter meeting, fear not. The summer meeting is a joint collaboration with the Atlanta chapter and will be held in Charleston, SC, August 15–16, 2014. “A lot of people in the Carolinas do business in Atlanta and vice versa,” according to Executive Director Jeff Farlow. “People are looking forward to this opportunity, and so am I.”

As for Babechenko, he says he plans to “keep the network going,” and will attend future chapter events.

