

Short Interest

Compliance Roundtables: Have You Joined One Yet?

By Craig Watanabe and Lorna A. Schnase

Compliance professionals often look for simple, cost-effective ways to stay current and further their professional development. One way is to participate in a compliance roundtable. This article explains what roundtables are and how to find one to join.

What are Compliance Roundtables?

Compliance roundtables are groups of industry compliance professionals who meet periodically to discuss legal and compliance developments, network and learn. Roundtables are a valuable resource for staying on top of the ever-changing regulatory landscape. They also offer participants the opportunity to meet peers from other firms who face similar challenges. Most roundtables meet quarterly, although some meet more frequently and others less.

Who Can Join a Roundtable?

Roundtables are usually open to any industry compliance professional, such as CCOs and other compliance personnel, lawyers, auditors, consultants and other service providers with an interest in compliance matters. Although roundtables focus on the securities industry, some include participants from the commodities, banking, insurance, real estate and other industries as well.

What Advantages are Offered by Roundtables?

- *They are more intimate.* Roundtables allow participants to really get to know one another by meeting together periodically over many months or years. This enhances opportunities for learning and networking.
- *They are more interactive.* Most roundtables promote interaction among participants. They often use meeting-style table seating rather than the lecture-style seating used at most conferences. This difference may seem subtle, but it makes roundtables more conducive to discussion and exchange of ideas.



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- *They can explore in greater depth.* Some roundtables focus an entire meeting on one or two topics, allowing for a more in-depth discussion than might be possible at an ordinary conference or other industry event. Roundtables can also make sample materials available to their participants, providing useful, concrete tools that can be adapted for use.
- *They are more economical.* Many roundtables are free, while others charge a nominal fee to join or to cover meeting costs (such as food). This makes roundtables more cost-effective than most conferences and seminars.
- *They are fun!* Not only will you enjoy the meetings, roundtables are a great way to visit with old friends and make new friends.

What Kinds of Things are Discussed at Roundtables?

Some roundtables organize their meetings around a formal agenda and feature guest speakers who are experts in specific topics. Other roundtables use a more informal discussion-style format with a moderator following a loose list of topics suggested by participants. Still others follow a combination of both approaches. While participants are not expected to discuss confidential, privileged or sensitive information at meetings, they often share actual, real-life experiences when appropriate and offer their insights based on those experiences. Occasionally roundtables help to coordinate open meetings between firms and local and national regulators to help foster a dialog between industry and government on issues of common concern.

Topics that have been discussed at many roundtables include annual reviews, monitoring and testing, risk management, training, electronic communications (such as social media, email and the like), regulatory priorities, examination experiences, due diligence, supervision of personnel, techniques for staying current, valuation, trading practices, anti-fraud, AML and new regulatory forms (such as Form PF), just to name a few.

How Can I Find a Roundtable to Join?

There are dozens of existing compliance roundtables around the U.S. A list of known roundtable locations appears at the end of this article. There may be others as well.

More information about each listed roundtable is posted under the Roundtables tab on the National Society of Compliance Professionals (NSCP) website at nscp.org, including

contact information to find out how to join. You do not have to be an NSCP member to access this information or to participate in a roundtable. NSCP does not organize or sponsor roundtables, but it does provide helpful information about roundtables and has formed a Roundtables Committee to help promote roundtables throughout the country.

What if There Isn't a Roundtable in My Area?

If there isn't a local roundtable you can attend in person, look for a roundtable that offers the option of participating remotely by conference video or telephone. The roundtables in Chicago, Houston, Southern California and South Florida all offer the ability to participate via conference call. In addition, NSCP has a virtual roundtable for service providers that meets quarterly via teleconference.

Or, consider starting a roundtable in your area. NSCP can help by providing sample agendas, leads and advice from members of its Roundtables Committee, regardless of whether you are an NSCP member.

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Participating in a compliance roundtable is a simple, cost-effective way to help compliance professionals stay current, network and learn. Finding a roundtable to join is as easy as looking on the NSCP website referenced in this article.

Locations with Compliance Roundtables

Note: Go to the Roundtables tab on nscp.org for more information on listed roundtables.

This list is based on information available and believed current as of July 2013. This list will vary over time as new roundtables are organized and old ones disbanded.

Atlanta, GA	Nashville, TN
Austin, TX	New York, NY
Boston, MA	Philadelphia, PA
Charlotte, NC	Pittsburgh, PA
Chicago, IL	Portland, OR
Dallas-Fort Worth, TX	Richmond, VA
Denver, CO	San Francisco, CA
Fairfield County, CT	Seattle, WA
Hartford, CT	Southern California
Houston, TX	Southern Florida
Louisiana	St. Louis, MO
Milwaukee, WI	Washington, DC
Minneapolis, MN	

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