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PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS BUSINESS

ECO-FRIENDLY IDEAS FOR TODAY'S COOLEST BUYERS 46

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FEBRUARY 2016 pubs.ppai.org

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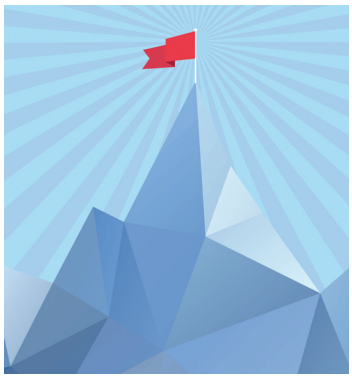

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Promotional Products Business: The Official Business Monthly Of Promotional Products Association International

PERSPECTIVES

Tom Goos, MAS PPAI Chair of the Board

Creating Awareness And Validity Around Promotional Products

PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS HAVE BEEN AROUND FOR DECADES. Through good times and bad, economic ups and downs, promotional products have remained a viable and important part of the advertising mix. As many advertising mediums are declining in revenue, our industry's sales continue to grow and now exceed $20 billion annually. So why aren't promotional products seen as one of the top advertising media by advertising agencies and the rest of the market? Perhaps they do not recognize the possible creative product solutions that solve marketing needs, or they lack access to the amazing case studies and campaigns that our industry delivers. In order to continue to increase sales and market share we need to create relevance around our creative promotional product campaigns. PPAI has a vision to deliver on that mission.

Before we address the issue and opportunity, let me tell you a little bit about my story. I started in this great industry several years ago—19 to be exact. I began my career just a few years after college and worked as a distributor in the Seattle area. Just like many of you, I built my book of business by cold calling, developing relationships and selling cool promotional products to companies who wanted to market their brands. During my first few years in the industry, I worked for Adventures In Advertising, Idea Man and HALO. Since 1999, I have owned my distributorship, Image Source. I still keep a personal book of business that I developed over the years but most of my day is dedicated to being an entrepreneur and advancing my team of 40 promotional products marketing professionals.

I believe I have a unique perspective that helps me serve you as your chair of the PPAI Board of Directors. I have been through the trials and tribulations of struggling to sell a few hundred thousand dollars a year, and over the years I learned how to become a top producer. While I have had many successes, I have also had many failures. The failures help define a person in both character and resilience. I am sure many of you have similar stories of falling down and getting back up. For an entrepreneur, that is just part of the journey.

While I have learned what it takes to be a successful salesperson and business owner, more importantly I recognize the value of promotional products to the advertising industry. The stronger our medium, the better we will all be positioned for success. This is why I feel PPAI's recently announced Industry Branding Initiative (IBI) is so important. Promotional products have often been the stepchild of advertising media, and while the media category is one of the few still making gains, it has lagged in budget considerations and been absent in research reports measuring the effectiveness of various advertising media. The IBI is dedicated to changing this.

The IBI is a five-year campaign approved by the PPAI board in May 2015 and introduced to the industry at last month's PPAI Expo. It is a first-of-its-kind initiative designed to increase awareness around the effectiveness of promotional products, improve the perception of promotional products as an important part of the marketing mix and drive share of wallet for the medium.

To help execute this initiative, PPAI has enlisted Saxum, a PR firm focused on gaining earned media as well as placement of paid media. The IBI also utilizes industry engagement, meaning

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FEEDBACK

The PPAI Expo 2016 Earned Its #BestExpoEver Hashtag

On January 10-14, the promotional products industry's largest and longest-running trade show brought exhibitors and attendees together for extensive education sessions, networking opportunities and a world-class show experience.

The best Expo ever. That's what was promised by PPAI and wow, did you ever deliver. The combination of having all the exhibits on one floor and having the SAGE mobile app activated made this show the most enjoyable and hassle-free show I've ever attended in 30 years of Expos. I could plot where I was going, set my goals for the day and see it all on the app, live in a great floor plan right in front of me.

The energy in the show hall and in the hotel itself was high with a tremendous positive anticipation for the year ahead. Thank you PPAI staff for all the hard work. It paid off. I won't intentionally miss this show ... ever. It's all there. Always has been. But now it's just gotten better. Best Expo ever. You did it. Thank you.

Wayne Greenberg, MAS
President
JB of Florida, Inc./Geiger
Tampa, Florida

The Ease And Value Of Attaining Product Aware Status

The PPAI Expo 2016 was also the first to require all exhibitors, sponsors and advertisers at the show to have attained Product Safety Aware status. This means that each company (regardless of membership category) has designated a roster employee who completed a minimum of four hours of product safety education in advance of the show and serves as the company's Product Safety Ambassador.

PPAI's Product Safety Awareness (PSA) program was originally announced during The PPAI Expo 2014 and went into effect at Expo East in March 2015. The program is designed to foster an industry-wide commitment and culture where companies are not only educated about product safety but engaged in the discussion.

I completed the three mandatory webinars and the one elective webinar for Stuffed Tees' participation at The PPAI Expo. They were all very well presented and the information contained in

> *PPAI continues its mission to articulate, educate, motivate and translate advertisers' messages, again and again.*

each was keenly important to learn about. Am I an expert in any of those arenas? No, but I am much better educated and aware of things that prior to these webinars I was not.

Thank you for all of the work to make this happen. I cannot imagine how much time and effort has been devoted to these issues. My hat is off to you.

Bruce Crumbliss
General Manager
Custom Stuffed Tees
Chattanooga, Tennessee
UPIC: stuffedt

PPAI's Industry Branding Initiative Leads The Way

In May, the PPAI Board of Directors approved the Association's Industry Branding Initiative, a five-year plan to position promotional products as a top-of-mind and preferred advertising and marketing tool among professionals responsible for branding, advertising, media planning and media buying. PPAI developed the branding initiative aided by research on buyer purchasing habits and preferences, and in collaboration with industry leaders, PPAI's Public Relations Advisory Group and the Chairman's Roundtable Work Group.

Just as a digital device is now carried by almost everyone, 24/7/365, advertisers would be hard pressed to find anyone without one, if not multiple, logoed promotional products on their person at all times. If it's for me, and free, the general public's gotta have it!

Props to PPAI for promoting the cost-effective benefits of this long-time advertising medium. In a crowded market of media choices, even advertisers need reminding of what really works to promote their brands' visibility and accessibility amidst targeted markets and buyers. PPAI continues its mission to articulate, educate, motivate and translate advertisers' messages, again and again.

John Michael Hudicka, CAS
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Send feedback on articles in *PPB* or opinions on industry issues to JamesK@ppai.org.

PROFILE

FASHIONABLY LATE

HOW SUPPLIER SCULLY FINALLY FOUND THE PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

BY JULIE RICHIE

IF DAN SCULLY'S GRANDFATHER HADN'T lost a bet in 1906, Scully Inc. (UPIC: S174962) might never have come to be the successful apparel, accessory and Western wear company it is today.

"My grandfather had started his own glove manufacturing company in Napa, California, but there was another glove manufacturer in town and the two business owners quickly realized there wasn't enough business for both of them," Scully says. So they flipped a coin to see who would stay and who would go.

After being on the losing end of that coin flip, Scully's grandfather relocated to Los Angeles, where he expanded his company's product line to include leather jackets and flying helmets in addition to gloves, and his business thrived. The company outfitted Rear Admiral Richard Byrd's team for its famed 1928 expedition to Antarctica to establish a scientific research base camp on the Ross Ice Shelf—"I still have the original certificate of appreciation," Scully says—and supplied aviator jackets and flying helmets for WWI and WWII pilots. Both items are on display at The Smithsonian Institute.

Dan Scully (third from left), his wife, Laney (second from left), their sons Brian (left), Dan IV (third from right) and Kevin (fourth from left) and their families celebrate the Fourth of July in Scully shirts from the company's Patriot collection.

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Fast forward to 1967. Scully was 24 when his father, who had taken over from his grandfather and who was in poor health, persuaded him to take over the family business. At first Scully expected to just close the business after his father died. But then he met up-and-coming fashion mogul Fred Segal, who asked if he'd be interested in manufacturing red, white and blue leather pants for Segal's new concept store. Scully did, and the leather business took off.

Two of his sons, Brian and Dan IV, both work for the company as vice president of production and vice president of sales, respectively. Scully's third son Kevin is a psychologist. As for Scully himself, "I like to say I'm the equivalent of Ronald Reagan in the second year of his presidency. He was 72 … . So I've got six more years before even thinking about retirement," Scully says.

Through The Back Door

Scully added accessories and Western apparel soon after he took over the business, and in 1993 he acquired an Old West-style clothing company, Wahmaker, from bankruptcy. Wahmaker made turn-of-the-century cowboy apparel, and Scully expanded the line to appeal to the more mainstream Western market. It has become a major part of the business and its products are often chosen to outfit employees at themed casinos and restaurants.

The entrance into the promotional products arena came about organically rather than purposefully. "We came into the promotional products industry through the back door. Until recently, we weren't seeking out that business. But because we were well known [in the retail industry], distributors came to us and asked us to design apparel or items for golf tournaments and other events," Scully says. "We can make just about anything because we have both domestic and offshore manufacturing, so we have the ability to do quick turnaround and can do proprietary manufacturing to accommodate anybody in the promotional products industry. We just weren't being proactive about it beyond retail."

Dynamic Duo

Multi-line reps Dale Jalovec and Sherry Maresh encouraged Scully to become more proactive in the industry. "They came to me about 18 months ago and said, 'You've got a lot to offer. Why aren't you actively soliciting in the promotional products industry? Let us do it.' I agreed and left the door wide open for them. I told them I'd pay for any show they wanted to do. They were really excited," Scully says.

"They do quite a few shows now. And they make sure we're properly represented on all the industry websites. We should have done this much earlier."

Even though they are now pursuing promotional products business, Scully is quick to point out that "we're not doing anything different on the inside. We already had all the mechanics and the infrastructure, and the know-how, to make anything in leather—and fabric, too. It's just that now we're screaming, 'Here we are!' and within a short period of time, distributors in the promotional products industry were coming to us for quotes. We've had a tremendous response," he says.

Full Circle

Scully sometimes accompanies his wife, Laney, on shopping excursions to thrift shops like Goodwill, where he invariably finds old Scully leather jackets that he was responsible for creating decades earlier.

"It's fun to find things that I made, like a 48-year-old jacket. I buy them and bring them back to the office. Ten years ago I started buying old Scully flying helmets. I have quite a collection. I should probably stop now," he jokes. PPB

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

Scully's Four Tips For Trade-Show Success

1. Be at the important trade shows.
2. Set up your display to tell your story.
3. Hire professional models for your catalogs.
4. Make sure your sales presentation is polished and professional.

EYE ON APPAREL

MATERIAL MATTERS

PROMOTIONS FEATURING ECO-FRIENDLY APPAREL APPEAL TO TODAY'S BUSINESS BUYERS

BY JULIE RICHIE

IF YOU'RE PITCHING GREEN PRODUCTS to clients as if green is its own category, it may be time to rethink your approach.

"Today's buyers, in particular Millennials, are too smart for that," says Danny Braunstein, vice president of sales and business development for Canadian distributor Talbot Marketing (UPIC: TALB0001). "They want to purchase locally sourced and eco-friendly products because it makes sense and they legitimately care about the environment. Treating green products as if they are a category like writing instruments is a mistake."

Distributors can bring value to clients by keeping the environment in mind with every promotional campaign. "The earth is a closed, living system with finite resources that must be protected. A radical paradigm shift is necessary in order to heal the health of our planet. Choosing organic and sustainable apparel and accessories is among one of the many things we can do to co-create a thriving planet," says Kriya Stevens, brand manager at supplier econscious (UPIC: Econ). "Collectively, our choices act as a vote for more responsible agricultural practices and the kind of world we want to leave for future generations," she adds.

Whether you're creating promotions using apparel and accessories made from recycled plastic bottles (RPET), organic cotton, hemp, bamboo or any other recycled or earth-friendly material, you're not just being green, you are aligning your clients with what many of today's business customers want—to show that their brand respects the environment.

JULIE RICHIE IS ASSOCIATE EDITOR FOR *PPB*.

Clients Approve Of These Eco-Friendly Apparel and Accessories

Not only is this soft **t-shirt** made in the U.S., it's also made of 50-percent organic cotton and 50-percent recycled polyester made from plastic bottles (RPET). **Royal Apparel** *UPIC: Royal992 wwwroyalapparel.net*

Rayon bamboo **stretch fleecewear** is made from 70-percent rayon bamboo, 25-percent cotton and five-percent spandex. Softer than the softest cotton, bamboo contains a natural agent that prevents the growth of bacteria, helping to keep you odor-free. Bamboo is grown without pesticides or chemicals, requires little water and is 100-percent biodegradable. It has been found to show no reduction in its antibacterial nature even after 50 washes. **Brandwear** *UPIC: brndwear www.brandwear.ca*

The products in this **hemp collection**—a hemp mesh trucker hat, a hemp baseball cap and a hemp market tote—are made from 55-percent hemp and 45-percent organic cotton. The mesh in the trucker hat is made from 100-percent recycled polyester. **econscious** *UPIC: Econ www.econscious.com*

Eco-Friendly (Yet Controversial) Hemp Comes Home

Five *Fascinating* Facts About Hemp

1 It used to be illegal *not* to produce hemp in the American Colonies because of its importance in making sails and ropes for ships.

2 The word canvas is rooted in the word *cannabis*.

3 Thomas Jefferson drafted The Declaration of Independence on hemp paper.

4 Hemp is legal to grow in 30 industrialized countries, including Canada.

5 Fabrics made of at least one-half hemp block the sun's UV rays more effectively than other fabrics.

Source: North American Industrial Hemp Council, Inc.

WHILE HEMP IS A VARIETY of the cannabis plant, it is not the same thing as marijuana. Hemp contains 0.3 percent or less of the psychoactive component THC. (By contrast, marijuana plants contain five to 20 percent THC.) Even though you can't get high from hemp, U.S. drug laws—greatly influenced by propaganda campaigns developed by financial tycoons whose holdings in plastics, oil and paper were threatened by the wide-ranging uses of industrial hemp—doomed the production of hemp with high taxes starting in 1937. In the 1950s, the Federal Bureau of Narcotics lumped industrial hemp with marijuana and banned its production. While the U.S. couldn't produce hemp, it could legally import hemp products made in other countries such as China, Romania, Hungary and India, as long as the products contained no THC.

Compared to cotton, hemp is much more eco-friendly to produce, growing in a variety of climates and soil types and using only half the water of cotton and requiring no pesticides or herbicides. A provision in the 2014 farm bill signed by President Obama removed hemp grown for research purposes from the federal Controlled Substances Act, leading the way for the farmers to import hemp seeds and begin limited cultivation here at home. In 2015, a bipartisan group of U.S. senators introduced the Industrial Hemp Farming Act of 2015, which would allow American farmers to produce and cultivate industrial hemp. The bill would remove hemp from the controlled substances list as long as it contained no more than 0.3 percent THC. You can follow the bill's progress at www.govtrack.us.

The long-sleeve version of American Apparel's best-selling **t-shirt** is made from 100-percent organic fine jersey cotton. It is unisex and features a durable rib neckband and superior screen printing results. Choose from five colors including black, white, natural, galaxy and cinder. **alphabroder** *UPIC: BRODER www.alphabroder.com*

Choose this **convention tote** for its high-quality recyclable, eco-friendly, biodegradable, 10-ounce, 100-percent cotton canvas with recycled content. It has a large imprint area on both sides that's perfect for logos or graphics. Choose from five different handle colors including black, red, blue and natural. **Indicusbag** *UPIC: INDICUS www.indicusbag.com*

This soft, smooth **t-shirt** is crafted from five-ounce, 100-percent organic ring-spun cotton and has a removable tag for comfort. It's available in a variety of colors and in adult sizes S - 4XL. **SanMar** *UPIC: SNMR www.sanmar.com*

CASE STUDY

Pictured from left are Alex Wong, Redwood Classics; Danny Braunstein, Talbot Marketing; Jason Brandes, Dairy Farmers of Manitoba; The Dueck Family (event hosts); and Kathy Cheng, Redwood Classics.

Staying Local

EVERY FALL, DAIRY FARMERS of Manitoba hosts an exclusive "farm to fork" event on a dairy farm called "Grazing in the Field." After meeting the farm family and touring the barn, guests enjoy a locally sourced seven-course dining experience celebrating Manitoba agriculture and food processing. At the 2015 event, in keeping with the "stay local" theme, the organization tasked Talbot Marketing (UPIC: TALB0001) with finding a high-quality, locally produced promotional apparel item for guests. Talbot partnered with Redwood Classics Apparel to provide a locally manufactured, premium promotional t-shirt that was sure to stay in recipients' wardrobe rotations for years to come. "As the longest-running promotional products company in Canada, it has always been a mandate of ours to support local—even before it was fashionable. It really just makes sense from an economic and environmental standpoint," says Danny Braunstein, Talbot Marketing's vice president of sales and business development.

"As the longest-running promotional products company in Canada, it has always been a mandate of ours to support local—even before it was fashionable."

These polyester-fiber fleece **zipper gloves** are made from 100-percent recycled plastic bottles. Available in black, maroon, royal blue and hunter green, they can be easily embroidered in the two-inch-square maximum imprint area. **Wolfmark** *UPIC: WOLFMARK www.wolfmarkties.com*

This **polo shirt** is made with 25-percent recycled plastic bottles, is snag free and can be decorated with partial or full sublimation, direct embroidery or screen printing. You can choose color placement, and orders can be mixed, using men's and women's sizing up to 5X. **HTT Headwear and Apparel** *UPIC: HTT0002 www.httapparel.com*

The **Champion® Double Dry Eco® Pullover Hood** incorporates recycled polyester fibers from plastic bottles, making this nine-ounce, 50/50 cotton-polyester fleece comfortable, durable and environmentally conscious. Other features include a two-ply hood with a dyed-to-match drawcord. **Hanes/Champion** *UPIC: HBIINC www.hanesbullseye.com* PPB

QUESTION

PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY STEP BY STEP

A Distributor Asks:

As a small distributor, I feel a bit overwhelmed about product responsibility and where to start with a product responsibility program. It seems like there's so much to know and I'm not sure where to start or how to scale up, and I can't afford to hire someone specifically for this purpose. How have other small distributors approached or started product responsibility programs?

George Jackson
Owner
George Jackson Promotions
UPIC: GJPRO

The first place to look for information and assistance is your regional association. Most regionals have a legislative chairperson, someone on the board or a volunteer who monitors the PPAI Law emails and assists in helping members with product safety and other legislative issues. They can be a distributor or supplier, and they have had the training necessary to assist you in whatever changes and adaptations you may need to make concerning your website, your employees and overall product safety.

The second place to look is the PPAI Government Relations Advisory Committee (GRAC). The members of this committee are the direct contacts with PPAI concerning product safety and legislative issues. We are both distributors and suppliers, and we work together for all regional and PPAI members. The contact info is available from PPAI. I am both a legislative chairman for Three Rivers Advertising Specialty Association (TRASA) and a GRAC member, and I am always available to assist and answer any questions for all PPAI and regional association members. The third place to get information is through Tim Brown at PPAI, as he is the "product safety guru" and will be able to answer your questions.

Nancy Pomerantz
Owner
Lasting Impressions Promotional Products, Inc.
UPIC: L602909

Product responsibility has been a big issue for us. We retained an expert consultant in product responsibility and corporate responsibility. This is a huge area for a small business to manage, and retaining the consultant has helped us immensely. As far as what we have learned, we implement policies and procedures based on suggestions of the consultant. For example, we will not source any products from Bangladesh, as we know there is a history of poor corporate responsibility in that country. So [a consultant] is helpful since some of our clients require us to maintain corporate and product responsibility policies and procedures.

Glen D. Eley
Owner
Eley Imprinted Products
UPIC: ELEYP001

From a guy who has learned sales, product data and growing a company from the very ground up for three decades, I say all you need to do is join PPAI today. All the answers to your questions can be found on the PPAI member website regarding product safety. Another simple way to approach it is to only sell products with no (or minimal possible) liability. These products are out there.

August Wittenberg
Chief Operating Officer
SayNoMore Promotions
UPIC: SNMP

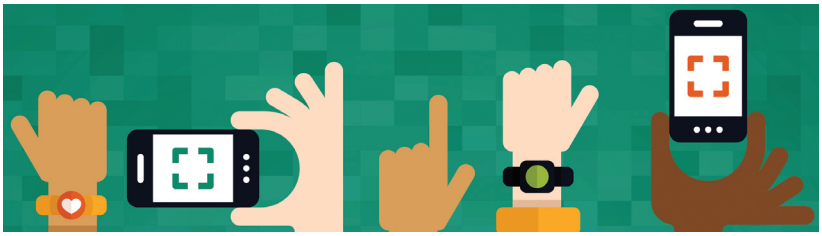
Like anything, when you are overwhelmed, take your big project and move it into many little projects. I would start by simply taking the required courses so you at least have a big-picture understanding. Once you have a basic education, make sure you are aware of who your client's target market is or if the item your client has chosen can be considered a children's item. If you fall into this category, reach out to PPAI; they have an amazing team. Work with PPAI on a case-by-case basis as you build your knowledge. Finally, make sure you are communicating to your client how you are working to protect them by making sure anything they order is in compliance with the new federal regulations. Trying at least a little is going to be much better than just closing your eyes and hoping you don't have any trouble.

Matt Kaspari, CAS
President
Kaspo Inc.
UPIC: Kaspo705

As a small distributor—or any distributor—you can't afford not to wrap your brain around product safety and compliance. It is a daunting area that can be simplified and understood if you become Product Safety Aware. I require my whole team to take the product safety classes through PPAI. We have incorporated this information into the business in a few ways. One way is communicating our knowledge at the beginning of our relationship with clients so they know that we source responsibly. Another way is taking compliance into account when deciding what suppliers to work with. Many suppliers are doing compliance very well and make it easy for us smaller distributors to get the proper documentation to provide to our clients. So do your homework. In addition to product safety, there are also social and environmental compliance issues that you should make sure the people you are buying from are complying with. As distributors, we have a responsibility to our clients and brands we work with to do our due diligence to ensure the products we are sourcing for them are made responsibly.

Tom Goos, MAS
President
Image Source, Inc.
UPIC: IMAGESCE

Product safety and social responsibility is a big issue and an opportunity to differentiate as a distributor. It is impossible to know everything, but education is the key. I would suggest looking to PPAI and their webinar education to gain some knowledge on what those issues are so you can have knowledgeable conversations with your suppliers and customers. PPAI also offers a guidebook that you can purchase which can help you develop a program for yourself. This can all be done at little to no cost and you can put as much or as little time as you want into it. You can do it in four hours as a start, or dozens of hours if it is important to you. PPB



DO YOU HAVE THE ANSWER?

A Distributor Asks:
As a Baby Boomer, how can I best engage with Millennial buyers? What strategies have other distributors found to break in with this generation?

What's your answer? Email answers along with your name, title and company name to Question@ppai.org by February 15 for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue of *PPB* magazine.

With More Than 50 New Arrivals in 2016...

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NAVIGATING THE TIGHTROPE

11 UNMISTAKABLE TRAITS FOR ASPIRING WOMEN LEADERS

BY KATHY FINNERTY THOMAS

AGGRESSIVE, ASSERTIVE, BOSSY, brusque, calculating, careerist. These are some of the ABCs often used to describe powerful women. That list leaves out ice queen, emotional, weak, tough, masculine and more. Male leaders are seen as commanding and in control, strong, decisive, confident and outspoken—all traits of effective leaders—but the negative stereotypes continue to exist for women in leadership roles. Labels and unrealistic expectations can get in the way for followers as well as for women attempting to move up through the leadership ranks.

"Women are being judged more, even by other women," says Valerie Young, Ed.D., author of *The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women*.

Leadership is hard work, and the glass ceiling thrives in corporations and sometimes in our heads as well. Self-doubt and fear of new titles and heightened responsibility prevent many women from stepping up to leadership roles.

With so few female leaders at the top of organizations, there are not enough great female leadership role models. Many women fear they will not be taken seriously unless they emulate traits so commonly found in male leadership. However, dressing, acting and talking like a man only ignite those stereotypical comments, no matter how competent a woman may be. In an attempt to be strong, some women leaders do actually earn those negative titles.

Great Leaders Are Authentic

This statement has never been truer than for today's female leaders. Women can and do make great leaders. However, they do not become great leaders by imitation or by trying to be someone they are not. They become great leaders when they are authentic to who they are, what they believe and what they value.

Faking who you are is hard work and completely unproductive. It can lead to a loss of identity and a deteriorating professional confidence that is critical to the success of female leaders. When leaders try to hide their true values, it creates an inner conflict that makes it difficult to truly lead.

The 11 Traits Of Successful Women Leaders

Women who do achieve leadership roles often are better, on average, than men in the same roles because they must work harder than their male counterparts to be noticed, respected and seen as successful.

Certainly, different business cultures require different leadership skills, but several studies of high-performing female leaders found that they are assertive and in control but they also temper their style with traits more commonly held by women. Among the similarities in traits and styles of successful women leaders are these:

1. Collaborative and empathetic with a democratic style of leadership
2. Competitive, but often they compete with themselves to achieve higher and higher goals
3. Persuasive and inspiring. They create an excitement and loyalty that comes from relationship building. They persuade without being threatening.
4. Motivating and encouraging of team performance
5. Possess an ability to delegate and empower others but still stay in charge
6. Use humor and empathy to build rapport and soften assertiveness
7. Often are more aware of group dynamics and unspoken culture that underlies an organization, situation or project
8. Explain multifaceted tasks and concepts without being threatening
9. Are well-rounded and authentic, and not afraid to be themselves
10. Are entrepreneurial
11. Approach leadership from the point of view of service to others

Transformational Leaders: The Gold Standard

Transformational leaders are inspirational individuals who lead with a strong vision and values. They lead rather than manage people, develop skills and foster creativity. Studies have shown that this leadership style leads to the highest levels of productivity and employee engagement. Greater innovation is also possible and enhances competitiveness. With transformational leaders, employees are empowered to look at problems in new ways, challenge the status quo and create new solutions. They are comfortable opening up to management and are not afraid to express their thoughts and ideas.

"One of the surprises of research on transformational leadership is that female managers are somewhat more transformational than male managers," says Alice H. Eagly, professor of psychology at Northwestern University. "In particular, they exceed men in their attention to human relationships. Also, in delivering incentives, women lean toward a more positive, reward-based approach and men toward a more negative and less effective threat-based approach. In these respects, women appear to be better leaders than men, despite the double standard that can close women out of these roles."

In several studies, women have rated higher on some of the core principles of transformational leadership. For example, they tend to lead with more transparency and are more likely to mentor and nurture followers rather than the command-and-control transactional type of leadership. Female leaders are also more likely to be open communicators and involve others in core decisions.

Becoming A Transformational Leader

Transformational leadership revolves around four key traits:

1. **Idealized Influence: Communicate an inspiring vision, leading with purpose and value-based management.** Transformational leaders walk the talk. They inspire their staffs around a common purpose and vision, allowing them to act in the best interest of the customer.
2. **Inspirational Motivation: Demonstrate visible enthusiasm, confidence and optimism for the future.** People want to work in an inspiring, positive environment. Yes, problems will occur but a sense that the team is working together to solve problems is both motivating and satisfying. Transformational leaders involve people in solutions rather than pointing fingers or assigning blame.
3. **Intellectual Stimulation: Transformational leaders encourage cre-**

WLC 2016 Early Bird Registration Open Through February 29

If you are a woman working in the promotional products industry or if you employ or manage women in your business, you've probably heard of the industry's premier education and networking program—the PPAI Women's Leadership Conference. This year it will be held June 27-29 in Atlanta, Georgia, immediately followed by Promo Marketing Power Meetings. Since its inception more than 10 years ago, WLC has played a pivotal role in challenging professional women who share a common vision to achieve greater success. Register at www.ppai.org/wlc before **February 19, 2016**, to secure a spot and to take advantage of discounted pricing.

> *When women lead as a coach and from a mindset of service rather than authority, they build loyalty.*

ative solutions as well as differences of opinion. They encourage people to challenge the status quo to improve organizations. They allow people to be authentic so they can truly contribute.

4. **Individualized Consideration: Transformational leaders focus on mentoring and developing the strengths of their employees.** They treat everyone as an individual and draw out their uniqueness for the good of the organization. These leaders truly know their staff and about their life outside of work. In the words of Theodore Roosevelt, "No one cares how much you know, until they know how much you care."

The Balancing Act

Leadership for women is a balancing act of confidence, knowledge and skill. It's tricky to maintain that equilibrium because as an authority figure you must often be the deciding voice on decisions. But when women lead as a coach and from a mindset of service rather than authority, they build loyalty.

While men can succeed with domineering leadership styles focused on control, it is the source of those dreadful stereotypes when the same style is used by women. In addition, leaders of both sexes are more successful when inspiring and motivating teams to work collaboratively to achieve success rather than ordering others to perform, and this style plays especially well for female leaders.

Many women have an innate ability to be transformational leaders. They need to step forward to lead, not in a style that mimics men, but in their own authentic style. Furthermore, women leaders have the responsibility to mentor and assist younger women to do the same.

In the words of Sasha Pirrie, vice president of sales for supplier Logomark and one of the 2015 *PPB* Rising Stars, "Be yourself. It is important to know the product line, your company's message and your customer's business—but always be yourself." PPB

Kathy Finnerty Thomas is president of Chandler, Arizona-based distributor Stowebridge Promotion Group. She leads a company culture based on a strong vision and values which can only happen with authenticity, integrity and trust.

Her passion is public speaking and working with companies to train and facilitate programs on leadership, building a values-based culture and delivering exceptional customer service. She also actively volunteers at the university level speaking to and mentoring students.

The Top Campaigns Of The Year

AN INSIDE LOOK AT 21 PYRAMID AWARD-WINNING PROMOTIONS

BY TINA BERRES FILIPSKI

WHEN CREATIVITY, IMAGINATION AND INSPIRATION are matched with perfect products and flawless execution, the resulting campaign can spark spectacular success for the client—and the distributor and supplier partner. Last month, at The PPAI Expo, PPAI presented its coveted PPAI 2016 Pyramid Awards to 29 companies to recognize outstanding promotional campaigns in nine program categories.

For decades, the PPAI Pyramid Award has recognized the creativity and the exceptional use of promotional products by distributor members in a variety of client programs and campaigns. Read on to see who took home the prized trophies this year at the gold and silver level, and explore these award-winning campaigns to ignite your own imagination.

PPAI Pyramid Award™

Gold Winners

Category: Not-For-Profit Programs
Distributor: Advantages
Type of client: Non-profit, education organization
Target audience: 150 committed and traditional Jews who are not observant, work 80-90 hours per week on Wall Street, earn $1 million annually with a six-figure bonus and donate to welfare causes.
Timing: Direct mailer sent to target audience prior to Hanukkah 2014
Other media used: Direct mail, print ads
Program's primary objective: The program focused on securing donors to make financial contributions to an organization representing Hebrew schools.
Total program cost (including promotional products, media, printing, packaging, etc.): $33,325
Strategy and execution: Advantages sought to identify wealthy potential donors working in the financial sector who had a Jewish upbringing and convert them into donors by bringing them back to childhood memories and re-awakening their Jewish identity. The first set of ads relied on bold headlines to pique the curiosity of the reader. By invoking the names of universally-recognized business leaders such as Warren Buffett, and placing ads specifically in *The Wall Street Journal*, the client's new brand was launched into a fresh marketplace filled with untapped potential. The second series of ads showed the value of a Jewish education by showcasing people who attended the supported day schools, and went on to become titans of industry and leaders in their respective fields. This approach offered hard evidence of the client's importance as a nurturer of future leaders. With the client's new brand identity firmly established, it was time for a direct appeal. Armed with a select list of high net-worth prospective donors, the distributor designed two novelty mailings. First, a Hanukkah-themed gift box that included a menorah, candles and a dreidel; and second, a limited edition bottle of vintage Kosher for Passover wine encased in custom packaging.

Results: The budget was set at a maximum of $65,000 and the program came in roughly 50 percent lower, generated a 15-percent response rate (the client's goal was 10 percent) and built seven significant relationships (the client's goal was five).

Category: Not-For-Profit Programs

Distributor: Business Impact Group

Type of client: A non-profit 501(c)3 organization with the mission of raising capital funds for the renovation and preservation of Iowa's historic fairgrounds.

Target audience: 1,800 fairgoers of all age ranges representing middle- to upper-income households within an 80-mile radius of the Des Moines metro area.

Timing: July 12, 2014 in the William C. Knapp Varied Industries Building on the Iowa State Fairgrounds.

Other media used: Web, email, direct mail, print and large signage, radio, television and social media.

Program's primary objective: To break a record in both attendance and money raised by building an even more cohesive and interesting campaign auction theme from previous years.

Total program cost: $39,634

Strategy and execution: The intent of the campaign theme, "Rock'n Round the Grounds," was designed to target the majority of the attendees by drawing on the sentiment they feel for the Iowa State Fair. Past data suggests that creating a fun, engaging event where attendees can emotionally attach themselves to a nostalgic theme increases support for giving. The campaign team developed a unifying musical look and brand that was incorporated and advertised in all printed materials and social media. All components worked in sync, from the letterhead, envelopes, media kit (which resembled an album cover) and invitation, to the auction book, game bandana, volunteer t-shirt, guitar-shaped hand fan, miniature guitar, etc. Strategic distribution of the pieces included mailings, e-blasts, Facebook posts and blogs beginning in April and continuing through to the week of the event.

Results: The event drew more attendees than previous events and raised a record $424,000.

Category: Internal Communication Programs

Distributor: Gephart Marketing Solutions, LLC

Type of client: Private, independent biomedical research foundation

Target audience: 250 board members, employees and volunteers/supporters

Timing: The kickoff was in San Francisco/Half Moon Bay, California in April 2015, and the final celebration gala was at Research Triangle Park near Durham, North Carolina in May 2015.

Program's primary objective: To celebrate the 60th anniversary of the fund and to energize the board, staff and volunteers for the next 60 years.

Total program cost: Approximately $185,000 including travel and entertainment

Strategy and execution: The kick-off celebration was a whale-watching outing in California for the board of directors that included warm hoodies for the boat trip and special waterproof binoculars to bring the action closer, as well as a journal to keep notes, a special watertight cooler bag and a lunch kit for refreshments. For the outdoor dinner in North Carolina, guests received a goodie bag—a messenger bag containing a custom, three-inch anniversary coin, multi-charger connector cord, mini AC wall charger and first-aid kit including Neosporin. As guests left the dinner, they were presented with an 18- by 12-inch poster featuring the dates 1955-2015. The items were chosen to relate to the foundation's history that includes pharmaceuticals and high tech employees and board members.

Results: Attendance of 100 percent at the kick-off in California (85-90 percent was expected) and standing room only at the May dinner. After the word got out about the fun and gifts from the April kickoff, tickets to the May dinner became a most sought-after item.

Category: Internal Communication Programs

Distributor: Hillary's, LLC

Type of client: The analytic testing lab and consulting service of a major consumer brand

Target audience: 100 employees and 15 contract employees of the lab, and 100 employee families

Program's primary objectives: To acknowledge and thank the employees' families for support during an upcoming extended and intense work period, and to introduce a new logo and show appreciation, create goodwill and celebrate the move to new space.

Total program cost: $20,269

Strategy and execution: Hillary's developed a big picture comprehensive strategic plan (with a detailed timeline) for the lab as it launched a new logo and built a new, $14 million wing on its building. The distributor also developed a strategy for messaging, delivery of product collateral and a timeline for the employee/contractor tool kits and family gifts. The family gift was designed to give the employees' families an enjoyable evening together with either a take-out dinner and a movie or dinner in a restaurant. The employee tool kit was designed to help acclimate them to a new, open work environment.

Category: Consumer Programs

Distributor: Progressive Promotions, Inc.

Type of client: Major food and beverage manufacturer

Target audience: More than 200,000 consumers who frequent the brand's website and those who shop at select grocery stores in Canada

Timing: The program took place across Canada from 2014 until July 2015.

Other media: Web, video

Program's primary objective: The goal was to bring the iconic Peanut Butter Bears, who represent the company's peanut butter brand, to life. The program was part of the company's "Stick Together" campaign, which aims to build stronger emotional connections with Millennial families.

Total program cost: Promotional products and packaging: $2.5 million; media: more than $1 million. This was the company's largest campaign in its history.

Strategy and execution: The company's team approached Progressive Promotions to create two custom teddy bears ultimately named "Crunchy" and "Smoothy," the company's top-selling peanut butter flavors. Due to the company's strict regulations on testing, Progressive Promotions paired up with the most well-known brand name for plush toys: GUND. The distributor delivered a superior product that matched the signature visual of each bear in an extremely tight timeline by rolling out the entire program, from ideation and sample creation to final product delivered in-hands within three months. Due to the success of this program, the company re-ordered more of the products and is looking toward additional re-orders in 2016.

Results: Once the bears were placed in the market, 115,000 sets sold out in an astonishing two weeks, hence the reason for the re-order of bears for 2015. The program has been extremely successful and this may be an ongoing program for years to come.

Category: Consumer Programs
Distributor: Shumsky
Type of client: Minor league baseball team
Target audience: Approximately 5,500 season ticket holders
Timing: The program took place during the 2014-2015 baseball season.
Program's primary objective: To inspire loyalty among season ticket holders and create a buzz for the upcoming minor league baseball season.
Total program cost: Approximately $20,000
Strategy and execution: Brainstorming began in November 2014 to find a fun way to package season tickets. Previously used concepts included a custom home-plate box, metal tin/lunch box and a wooden cigar box all designed and printed with the team's branding. It was decided to design an imitation of a Wheaties cereal box using the team mascot, Heater, on the front of the box and to call the product "Heaties." The box contained a sample of the Limited Edition cereal, season tickets and owner's manual, a magnet and pocket schedule, and a "free prize" (custom promotional keychain). The full imprint on the box was jam-packed with information such as the opening date, team social media icons, serving sizes (of fun!), alumni players, QR codes, "best if used by date" (the date of the last home game in the 2015 season), and six puzzles and quizzes. All the giveaway promotional materials were delivered by March for final distribution to the season ticket holders.
Results: The program helped drive a 92-percent retention rate for season ticket holders. The impression this promotion made set the tone for opening day and increased overall game attendance, too.

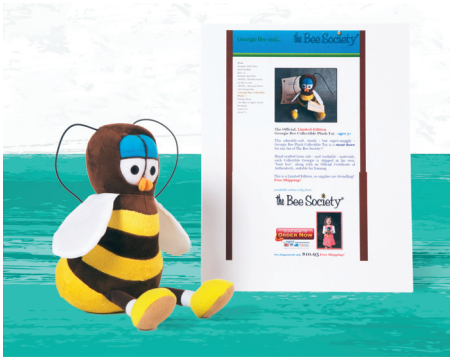
You Won!

Now Let The World Know

CAROL GAUGER, MAS, PPAI DIRECTOR OF member engagement and regional relations, shares 13 ways winners can maximize their achievement. For assistance with the materials cited here, contact her at CarolG@ppai.org.

1. Send the PPAI-provided news release to local newspapers as well as any professional groups you belong to—remember your regional association.
2. Add the win to your LinkedIn or Facebook profile.
3. Update your company website.
4. Update your email signature with the provided logo.
5. Use the logo on other collateral, i.e. business card, catalogs or other online or printed company materials.
6. Celebrate the win! Have a party in your office, or in your client's office if it's a PPAI Pyramid Award.
7. Host an event or open house.
8. Add a winner's tagline to customer quotes "Another award-winning idea from Mary Smith …"
9. Add your award-winning status to your elevator speech.
10. Display your award in your office or showroom.
11. Send a thank-you note to anyone who helped you with the project.
12. Take a photo of your trophy or award certificate and post it on all social media—add the photo to your personal profile.
13. Run an ad picturing the trophy or photos from the event in one of PPAI's print or digital publications.

Silver Winners



Category: Consumer Programs
Distributor: All That Jazz, an iPROMOTEu affiliate
Type of client: Book publisher
Target audience: Those who read the author's books, website and daily posts
Program's primary objective: To increase retail sales of the author's book series and increase brand awareness for the publisher.
Total program cost: The product cost was approximately $5,300.
Strategy and execution: A custom bee plush toy, George The Bee, based on a character in the book series, was created and sold through special packaging as a stand-alone item as well as bundled with the purchase of one or two books. This was an online promotion through the website and social media sites where the books are sold.
Results: There were 750 plush toys produced and about a third were sold as of the Pyramid award deadline. The client is considering creating other plush items for the other characters in the book.

Category: Diversity & Social Responsibility Programs
Distributor: Concepts & Associates, Inc.
Type of client: Athletic fundraiser for a homeless and veteran recovery program/non-profit
Target audience: Fundraisers (60-70 competitors), 500-plus donors, 10-plus corporate sponsors, friends, family and employers of competitors
Timing: May 2015 at Georgia Tech's Griffin Track in Atlanta, Georgia
Other media: Web, email, local television news, newspapers, various social media outlets and word-of-mouth.
Program's primary objective: To raise money for the organization from a diverse donor base and to encourage others live out its motto while creating a fun, athletic event/combine in hopes this event will continue for years to come.
Total program cost (including promotional products, media, printing, packaging, etc.): Approximately $35,000, which included equipment, venue, insurance, uniforms, promotional bag, PR firm, DJ/audio, tent and stage.
Strategy and execution: Those helped by this program grow from coming in at rock bottom and being transformed and healed with a newly rekindled faith, and stronger family and community atmosphere. A Nike designer created a logo featuring three green dots in the shape of a triangle, representing growth and the Holy Trinity. The slogan was established—"Empower Atlanta's homeless and veteran community to transform their lives by transforming yours" which conveyed how this event not only helps homeless men and women, and veterans, but also helps those who compete to transform their lifestyle through the training and nutrition needed for participation. Competitors paid a $100 registration fee and were pleasantly surprised when they received an ultra-high-quality promotional goody bag featuring items they could use at the event and in training while helping promote the event and brand, thus recruiting more competitors and encouraging participation year after year.
Results: The goal was to recruit 60-70 participants with each expected to raise $500 plus a $100 entry fee, for a total of $36,000-$42,000. Corporate sponsors were expected to contribute $10,000-$20,000. The promotional bag helped double the number of participants and expectations for a total amount raised of $103,000.

Category: Diversity & Social Responsibility Programs
Distributor: Geiger
Type of client: Hotel/resort
Target audience: A total of 713 existing customers who held or booked events at one or more of the seven Caribbean and Mexico resort locations.
Timing: This was a direct mail program sent by USPS Priority Mail in the first week of December 2014.
Program's primary objective: The mailing was sent as an appreciation/goodwill gift to express thanks for the customers' loyalty from the resort salespeople.
Total program cost (including promotional products, media, printing, packaging, etc.): $25,697
Strategy and execution: The company has a philosophy of giving back, so "Spirit to Serve" was developed as the slogan for the outside of the mailer. Inside, the tagline "Giving Service, Giving Thanks, Giving Back" followed the theme of the mailing to thank customers and provide them an opportunity to donate. The mailer included a card that allowed recipients to go online and make a $20 donation to the charity of their choice as a way of giving back during the holidays. A business card was also inserted into each package. Each card included a redemption code on the back.
Results: As of June 2015, 33 percent of the donation cards had been redeemed. Based on the client's previous surveys and Direct Marketing Association stats that say the average rate of return on direct mail campaigns is 4.4 percent, the customer deemed this campaign to be a huge success.

The mailer included a card that allowed recipients to go online and make a $20 donation to the charity of their choice as a way of giving back during the holidays.

Category: Distributor/Supplier Collaboration
Distributor/Supplier: JR Resources/Milano Worldwide Corp.
Type of client: TV show
Target audience: The cast and crew members of Comedy Central, and team at Viacom and the New York City Mayor's Office of Film—a total of 250 people.
Timing: The packages were drop-shipped between Christmas 2014 and New Years 2015.
Program's primary objective: The show's host wanted to send a snow globe as a thank-you to those who worked on the show and to provide a lasting memento of the show's set in miniature.
Total program cost (including promotional products, media, printing, packaging, etc.): $65,000, which also included logoed apparel for the client.
Strategy and execution: The show's host had a vision and the distributor's job was to bring that vision into a tangible reality. The timing of the distribution of the product was perfect—to arrive on the doorstep of every staff member's personal residence after the completion of the final show and in the span between Christmas and New Year's Day, to say thank you and best wishes for the start of a new year and their next career journey.

Category: Employee Incentive Programs

Distributor: Bamko Promotional Items (UPIC: Bamko783)
Type of Business: Satellite television provider
Target audience: Approximately 2,700 internal call center employees, mostly men ages 18-30.
Timing: Nationwide, ongoing, launched in April 2015
Other media: Web, email
Program's primary objective: To drive employee engagement and incentivize increased sales. The client wanted to do so in a way that promoted the brand, increased employee loyalty and boosted both morale and performance among employees. The goal was to create effective employees who were proud to serve as brand ambassadors.
Total program cost (including promotional products, media, printing, packaging, etc.): The cost was still ongoing by the Pyramid Award deadline but was in excess of $250,000 at the time of submission.
Strategy and execution: The client's system of rewarding employees was missing the mark. The program felt transactional and did nothing to develop brand loyalty. They were looking for something transformational—a program that would make employees proud of the company and motivated to perform. Bamko's programming team developed an online shopping portal where employees could redeem branded "bucks" for custom-branded products. Bamko maintained the online store, updated the products monthly, and oversaw warehousing and fulfillment.

Bamko dove in deep to get a thorough understanding of its target audience. That analysis of a largely male, Millennial target demographic led Bamko to a heavy emphasis on branded tech-related products. Products selected leaned toward cutting-edge, trending and cool products with a sprinkling of apparel and wearable items to help develop brand awareness and company pride. Those included were Bluetooth speakers, headphones, water bottle, touchscreen gloves, a waterproof case and an amp charger.
Results: Monthly call center volume has risen, on average, by nine percent across the board. Internal employee surveys reflect a 13-percent improvement in employee engagement. Customer satisfaction surveys reflect a seven-percent improvement since program inception.

This campaign also won a silver 2016 Pyramid Award in the category of Sales Incentive Programs.

Category: Health/Wellness Programs

Distributor: Geiger
Type of Business: Healthcare
Target audience: Pregnant women in the greater St. Louis, Missouri area who had previously delivered one preterm baby.
Program's primary objective: To educate expectant mothers who experienced premature childbirth and place them on a regimen that would facilitate a normal gestation period.
Total program cost: $107,980
Strategy and execution: The women were referred to the program when they were prescribed a medication. Once they signed up and completed the first telephone assessment, they began to receive the promotional mailings. The first was a welcome kit that included a welcome letter, an injection schedule, yoga towel, journal book, two-ounce candle tin and yoga tag referencing an online video. Also included in the kit were educational materials. Participants continued to receive the education material mailings at weeks 21, 25, 28 and 35 of gestation. After childbirth the participants were sent a post-delivery assessment, a graduation letter and a newborn branded bib.
Results: Of the 54 women referred to this program, 48 patients actively participated. This achieved a 90 percent participation rate, which far exceeded expectations.

Category: Goodwill Programs
Distributor: Freestyle Marketing
Type of Business: Advertising agency
Target audience: 150 Reebok athletes affiliated with Crossfit
Timing: The program rolled out in July 2014 for the 2014 Reebok CrossFit Games in Carson, California and ended in September 2014.
Program's primary objective: In honor of the Reebok CrossFit Games, Reebok served up some "ReebokBacon" and sent a special box to Reebok athletes so they would tweet about the experience and alert their followers at #reebokbacon. A few social media winners also received this gift after the games to keep the buzz going.
Total program cost: $16,000
Strategy and execution: The agency created a campaign called ReebokBacon to promote attendance and excitement for the Reebok CrossFit Games. A lot of CrossFit athletes are on the Paleo diet, meaning they do not eat any processed food. One treat they are allowed to indulge in is bacon. Freestyle sourced and created a Paleo-friendly bacon box for influencers to enjoy and spread the buzz via their social media followers. The bacon itself was made of only pork and salt. They created a custom box identical to a Reebok shoe box with a special die-cut shape of the Reebok logo to show the bacon. Since raw bacon is perishable, the distributor sourced special packaging to keep the product cold for 24 hours during the shipping process. The product sourcing, design work, production, fulfillment and delivery was completed within a three-week period.
Results: More than 100 million impressions were achieved across all social media channels.

Reebok served up some "ReebokBacon" and sent a special box to Reebok athletes so they would tweet about the experience and alert their followers.

Category: Goodwill Programs
Distributor: Geiger
Type of Business: Veterinary clinic
Target audience: Approximately 1,500 clients were part of this mailing program, representing 2,119 pet clients.
Timing: The program took place in December 2014.
Program's primary objective: To create loyalty among clients and make them feel connected with their pets' health care provider.
Total program cost: $3,883
Strategy and execution: The clinic wanted to provide its clients with something unique. A photo was taken of each pet during clinic appointments and kept in a database. Using variable data printing, a personalized calendar card was created featuring the pet's name and a photo. Using the card's calendar feature, scheduled follow-up appointments were included as well. The response from the pet owners was overwhelmingly positive.
Results: This program resulted in strong community buzz. Clients have shared stories of how they have seen these cards shared at social events and public settings. Most clients returning for appointments still thank the doctor for his thoughtful gift.

Continued On Next Page

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Continued From Previous Page

Category: Internal Communication Programs
Distributor: Summit Group, Inc.
Type of Client: Airline
Target audience: 23,000 employed flight attendants and 100 trainers educating the primary group on new technology
Timing: The rollout commenced in June 2015 at the hub airports around the globe.
Program's primary objective: Create a packaging solution plus relevant products supporting rollout of iPhone 6+ for all flight attendants. Requirements: it must fit in company-issued totes and protect all the pieces as one unit, be useful to ensure the devices are charged for work duties and have a unified brand presence.
Total program cost: $445,000.
Strategy and execution: Two months prior to rollout, the airline realized it needed a single unit for the iPhone 6+, credit card device and chargers. The bag/case had to fit in the company-issued tote. The solution was a custom zippered case with elastic and mesh to organize the items within stringent safety and compliance parameters. Also included was an international travel adapter; custom case to protect the phone when not in flight; custom dual port USB adapter to charge devices, uniform shirts for trainers and journals for note taking.
Results: The package design was successful, fitting into the existing tote. The rollout was highly successful, trainers were easily visible and the airline was pleased with the products and is now making them available on their intranet catalog.

Category: Internal Communication Programs
Distributor: The Planet Group, an iPROMOTEu affiliate
Type of Client: Shopping center
Target audience: Approximately 250 representatives from each store along with mall management and administrative staff.
Timing: An invitation went out two weeks prior to the event to each store, inviting them to attend the annual retailers breakfast meeting.
Other media: Email, hand-delivered invitation
Program's primary objective: Mall management wanted to thank its 220 retailers for their support in 2015, and share the 2016 marketing and construction initiatives. The meeting had to leave the retailers with a feeling of recognition and ensure they were excited for how manaagement would spend its 2016 marketing fund.
Total program cost: Approximately $30,000
Strategy and execution: To create excitement for a fun and lively morning-show-themed breakfast meeting, printed invitations were inserted into ceramic coffee mugs that were hand-delivered to the 220 retailers. At the event, a custom-made marketing binder was given that included informational tab inserts for quick reference and easy filing of future correspondence.

Guests left with a logoed bag filled with a glass iced-tea infusion water bottle, a pen, two mobile phone silicone card holders and a 4GB USB, all color-matched to their fashionable new branding colors of black, purple and white. Since guests have limited opportunity to use personal items while at work, these items were chosen for their personal mobility and non-competitive nature to the retailers.

To create excitement for a fun and lively morning-show-themed breakfast meeting, printed invitations were inserted into ceramic coffee mugs that were hand-delivered to the 220 retailers.

Category: Not-For-Profit Programs
Distributor: Gephart Marketing Solutions, LLC
Type of client: Military veterans foundation
Target audience: Businesses and individuals near Raleigh, North Carolina.
Program's primary objective: To incentivize people to give more money and become more involved in the organization. To reward sponsors, donors and hosts for their contributions.
Total program cost: $35,000
Strategy and execution: Gephart was asked to help provide buzzworthy incentives to raise awareness, donor participation and fundraising and target diverse audiences who would attend rallies at Harley-Davidson dealerships, chamber events and black-tie galas. It chose a black bandana for motorcycle events featuring sponsor names and the logo; a hat, lapel pin, dog tag, oval magnet and a t-shirt for staff, which were later reordered and sold as a fundraiser.
Results: The project resulted in a 30-percent increase above targeted fundraising goals and a 40-percent increase in volunteer recruitment goals.

Category: Not-for-Profit Programs
Distributor: The Planet Group, an IPROMOTEu affiliate
Type of client: A nonprofit organization to encourage daily physical activity
Target audience: 770,000 adults and children across Canada through schools, community groups and events
Timing: Event kits were sent to approximately 1,200 schools, athletic associations and clubs, and community centers three weeks before the event.
Program's primary objective: The organization's goal was to draw 600,000 Canadians at 1,000 community events leading up to the RBC Sports Day in Canada, a nationally televised event viewed by millions, which celebrates the power of sport while helping to build communities and get Canadians of all ages moving.
Total program cost: Approximately $1 million
Strategy and execution: Three months prior to the event, school coordinators, community organizers and sports groups registered their local events leading up to the nationally televised event. Kits in English or French were sent to the target audience and included items such as t-shirts, jerseys, foldable water bottles, mini basketballs, posters, banners, bookmarks, clothing stickers and temporary tattoos.
Results: More than 1,250 kits were shipped to community events, which attracted 750,000 attendees.

Category: Sales Incentive Programs
Distributor: Grapevine Designs, LLC
Type of client: Financial
Target audience: 750 financial advisors who attend an annual internal sales meeting
Program's primary objective: To develop and provide an attendee registration kit that represents their brand well and is functional in servicing client needs
Total program cost: $75,000
Strategy and execution: This project involves six months of intense weekly planning sessions with the client to engage and work with not only internal staff but other supplier partners to coordinate efforts for the entire logistics of the event. It begins with a planning and consultation phase to develop custom product solutions and solidify a sophisticated fulfillment road map, project management and oversight.
Results: Grapevine has been providing the client with its annual meeting materials for the past 12 years, and attendees consistently give favorable responses about the materials.

Category: Tradeshow/Exhibit Traffic Programs

Distributor: Hillary's, LLC

Type of client: The analytic testing lab and consulting service of a major food manufacturer

Target audience: Approximately 600 trade-show registrants who are producers of ingredients or finished products in the grain industry

Timing: Strategy planning began mid-June 2014; the active trade-show marketing campaign began in September 2014 and the event was held on October 5-7, 2014.

Program's primary objective: To secure 14 scheduled meetings with qualified prospects for appointments to take place during the show. To convey that a testing lab can be a true partner beyond "testing."

Total program cost: $13,076

Strategy and execution: With a messaging and missing-puzzle-piece campaign, Hillary's conveyed how a testing lab can be a partner by developing two taglines: "Sometimes it only takes one piece to pull it all together" and "[company name] is our missing piece." It also designed a four-week, pre-show, multi-touch campaign with all touchpoints centered on the messaging. All products carried the "missing piece" (puzzle piece) message and supported the client's brand through colors, graphic icon and fonts. The distributor also developed new business cards and eye-catching booth collateral to support the pre-show campaign.

Results: The program generated 126 leads, 30 appointments at the show (the goal was 14) and came in within the client's budget. Some products (business cards, apparel) were planned for use beyond this one event.

Category: Tradeshow/Exhibit Traffic Programs

Distributor: Threadmasters

Type of client: Medical equipment manufacturer

Target audience: Approximately 1,000-1,200 dental/oral surgeon sales staff at a national sales meeting

Program's primary objective: The client wanted to create a buzz at a trade show and encourage attendees to stop by the booth to see a new nasal mask.

Total program cost: Approximately $25,000

Strategy and execution: The client reached out to Threadmasters in advance of a trade show and requested a teddy bear on which a specific nasal mask would fit. They wanted to show the usage of the mask by fitting it on the bear's nose and then giving the bear to the attendee to take back to their office. A bear was researched and selected, and bags were ordered in which to insert the bear along with a marketing information flyer.

Results: The bear successfully created excitement at the booth allowing the opportunity to introduce the new product line, and booth attendance doubled over the prior year's event. PPB

Tina Berres Filipski is editor of PPB.

Editor's Note: *Total program cost includes all costs associated with the program, such as promotional products, media, printing, packaging, etc.*

Enter PPAI's 2017 Pyramid Awards Competition

Entries for PPAI's 2017 Pyramid Awards can be submitted starting June 13, 2016. The deadline for entries is July 15, 2016. Self-promotion campaigns should be submitted for an Image Award; the competition opens February 1, 2016 and closes March 4, 2016. Find details for both competitions at www.ppai.org/awards.

GROW

MARKET TO MARKET

DISHING OUT SUCCESSFUL PROMOTIONS

CREATIVE PRODUCTS AND INNOVATIVE IDEAS WILL HAVE RESTAURANT AND BAR CLIENTS COMING BACK FOR SECONDS. **By Jen Alexander**

THAT T-SHIRT WITH THE tongue-in-cheek slogan earned a rightful place in your closet when you won the chili contest; the neon shot glasses on your shelf conjure a fond, if somewhat hazy, memory of the best spring break ever. And neither of these treasured souvenirs might have made their way into your hands without the aid of a creative promotional consultant.

Bars and restaurants fight for loyal patrons with every happy hour, holiday promotion and grand opening. Promotional products are an ideal way to keep customers coming back, but getting the right products into the right hands is the first step to serving up success.

"The biggest area of concern is making sure you have the decision maker in front of you," says Brad Bartlett, vice president of supplier Optigraphics (UPIC: OPTI2000) in Dallas, Texas. "You must ask, 'Who makes the final decision on promotional items for your restaurant?'"

Once the person in charge has given you their full attention, Bartlett says the key to keeping it is to offer something singular and uniquely suited to the client's business. "The challenge is always what you can bring to the table that is unique," Bartlett says. "Make sure you really know the business; you do that by being a customer there—even just once."

Kelly Bird, account manager at distributor Quality Logo Products (UPIC: qualityl) in Aurora, Illinois, says, "The best thing I can advise to a client in any industry who isn't sure what to buy is, 'Buy something you would want to use yourself. Make sure you choose an item that is pertinent to your business and use a clever imprint that will help the recipient remember your brand.' Do your best to make the item really practical and unique."

Bartlett says his customers are always seeking unusual items, such as his company's OPTIchrome signs, Magic Motion lenticular coasters and Water Reveal placemats—and even high-end options. "[Give them] things they can't get anywhere else," he says. "They

want to stand out from the crowd."

To make typical items more appealing to clients and their customers, Optigraphics creates prize promotions with its Water Reveal coasters. "Even low-level prizes like a free drink work marvelously," he says.

Bartlett recommends taking a mental inventory of what's already in use at the restaurant, especially at the bar. "Napkins, coasters, signs, swizzle sticks … all of it you can supply them with their logo. … Make sure—make triple sure—you ask about upcoming holidays. An incredible amount of spending goes into these events."

Bird says one thing that sets bar and restaurant clients apart from other industries is the frequency in which they order. "They often don't have the storage available to hold thousands of different items [at once], so they order smaller quantities—sometimes monthly, or bimonthly. Popular items are uniform shirts, pens, cups, bottle openers, can coolers, coasters and mints."

Bird says consultants should be mindful of the client's budget, but also be prepared to show the value of promotional marketing. ""The biggest hurdle to get any client over is the cost. Bars and restaurants tend to be very budget-conscious, so their promo items need to be inexpensive," she says.

"You have to spend money to make money, and promotional products have to be looked at as an investment in your business. In the long run they are a really affordable way to get your name in front of clients and help them remember you. Provide your clients with a really useful item that they carry with them and use again, and you are also advertising to an unlimited amount of future clients as well."

Jen Alexander is associate editor for PPB.

A set of six brushed stainless steel **MoMA coasters** in a brushed nickel container will dress up any lounge or cocktail bar. These coasters are padded with a felt bottom and can be laser engraved for customization. Each set comes packaged in a black gift box. **Bonica Precision (Canada) Inc.** *UPIC: BONICA www.bonicatime.com*

Brighten up the bar with U.S.-made **pint glasses** imprinted in full color, or delicately decorated 12.75-ounce wine taster glasses with a footed stem, balloon body and wide mouth. **ADG Promotional Products** *(UPIC: ADGPROMO) www.adgpromo.com*

Appease thirsty patrons quickly with the flat stainless steel **bottle opener**. Add a company name or logo to customize it, and pass it out to staff or gift it to loyal customers.
Beacon Promotions *UPIC: BEACONP*
www.beaconpromotions.com

Keep patrons' drinks cool with a classic collapsible **KOOZIE® can cooler**, made with post-consumer recycled material.
BIC Graphic USA
UPIC: BIC
www.bicgraphic.com

CASE STUDY

Laissez les bon temps rouler!

A LOCAL BAR HELD an annual Mardi Gras festival in the winter months to chase away the winter blues. The bar gave away the plastic Brew2Go drinking glass to the first 100 people who joined the event. The glass is a memorable, functional gift that builds name recognition for the bar every time it is used.

Source: Beacon Promotions

Bartenders and waitstaff appreciate having the **Eon corkscrew** on hand. This uniquely designed, easy-to-use, two-step corkscrew is compact enough to carry in an apron or pants pocket. The opener features an integrated foil cutter to help remove the foil, and with the integrated leveler, any wine bottle can be opened in three easy movements.
Starline USA, Inc. *UPIC: STAR0009*
www.starline.com

Q&A With **Patrick Black**

PRESIDENT/CEO, DISTRIBUTOR PERFECT IMPRINTS (UPIC: PERFIMPR) TALKS TRENDS IN RESTAURANT AND BAR PROMOTIONS

***PPB* What do you recommend to bars and restaurants that want to use promotional products?**
Black I typically recommend three types of products for restaurants: products that bring new customers into their establishment, products that reinforce branding of their restaurant, and products that help bring patrons back to their restaurant.

***PPB* What challenges do you face when working with these clients?**
Black The biggest challenge when providing ideas to clients is educating them that promotional products are much more than a simple commodity. Many clients call to order items with no real plan of how they will distribute the items. I like to help my clients work out a plan to use their items for maximum effectiveness so their promotional items will help attract new customers as well as strengthen relationships with their existing customers.

***PPB* What characteristics set bar and restaurant clients apart from other industries?**
Black Restaurants typically have a larger number of competitors than other industries. Because of this, being creative to entice patrons to visit and frequent their restaurant is extremely important. Creative marketing campaigns coupled with promotional products can help those restaurants stand out boldly among their competitors.

***PPB* What's hot with clients these days?**
Black Some of the most popular items with bars and restaurants are ones you would expect, such as pens, coasters, feather flags, banners, yard signs, menus, aprons, t-shirts and drink tokens. Many of these "staple" products are often ordered two to three times per year. We also have a large number of clients who order beer buckets so they can offer "Bucket of Beer" specials to their customers, and several clients who offer an extraordinary hot sauce, salad dressing, salsa or other great food product they like to bottle and sell. We assist these clients in creating a retail look for their packaging to help them sell more of those products.

***PPB* What's not so hot anymore?**
Black Matchbooks used to be a big seller for bars and restaurants since they are such low-cost giveaways; however, since many states have banned smoking in restaurants and bars, matchbook sales have declined for the industry.

Toast to a great giveaway promotion with the BPA-free **Manhattan double-wall tumbler**. It features a slider lid and holds seven ounces covered, or 10 ounces uncovered. Choose from aqua, blue, clear, red or smoke, and add a single-color imprint. **Crown Products, Inc.** *UPIC: CROWNPRO www.crownprod.com*

Outfit restaurant staff with a full-length 22-inch-by-30-inch **apron** that's adjustable at the neck and features two seven-inch patch pockets, as well as 24-inch waist ties. The 45/55 poly-cotton twill apron comes in white, natural, black, forest green, red, navy blue and royal blue. **Aprons, Etc.** *UPIC: APRONS www.apronsetc.com*

America's Appetite

IN 2015, ONE MILLION RESTAURANT locations employed roughly 14 million people—10 percent of the nation's workforce—and recorded just over $709 billion in sales in 2014. (That's four percent of U.S. GDP!)

In 2015, the top states for restaurant growth were Arizona, Florida, North Dakota, Texas and Colorado.

Exploring the world, one plate at a time

Americans love ethnic cuisine. Three in five consumers consider themselves worldly diners, while two-thirds report eating a wider variety of cuisines than they did five years ago. Diners prefer to go out for sushi, Thai, Vietnamese, Brazilian/Argentinean, Greek and Southeast Asian; for dining in, they prefer to order Chinese, Mexican or Italian for takeout or delivery.

Digital Dining

Smartphone-savvy consumers are more likely to use restaurant tech options to get their grub on. Twelve percent of Millennial diners order takeout or delivery at least once a week through restaurant apps, compared to just eight percent of Baby Boomers. But both generations pay for meals via a smartphone app at least once a week in equal proportion—10 percent.

Source: National Restaurant Association

Prep and store secret recipes in a set of **nesting mixing bowls**. The five stainless steel bowls come with snap-on lids and a set of five measuring spoons. The largest bowl measures 7.25 inches in diameter.
The Premium Line *UPIC: PREM0018*
www.premiumasi.com

The eye-catching stainless steel used to craft this **table tent** puts clients' best dishes on display.
Menu Solutions, Inc. *UPIC: Menu*
www.menucovers.biz

Food Trends Of 2016

Seaweed Takes Shore Leave

The ocean veggie that's sustainable and nutrient-rich is predicted to supplant kale on consumer plates.

Grocery Delivery Battles Heat Up

Target, Costco and Whole Foods are joining the ranks of the grocery-delivery services, currently led by Fresh Direct and Amazon Fresh. Walmart continues to expand its pick-up service as well.

Frankenfish Swims To Market

Genetically modified salmon received FDA approval last year, and while roughly a third of Americans surveyed say they aren't concerned about modified food, groups opposed to genetic modification aren't likely to clam up any time soon.

Ramen Experiences A Revival

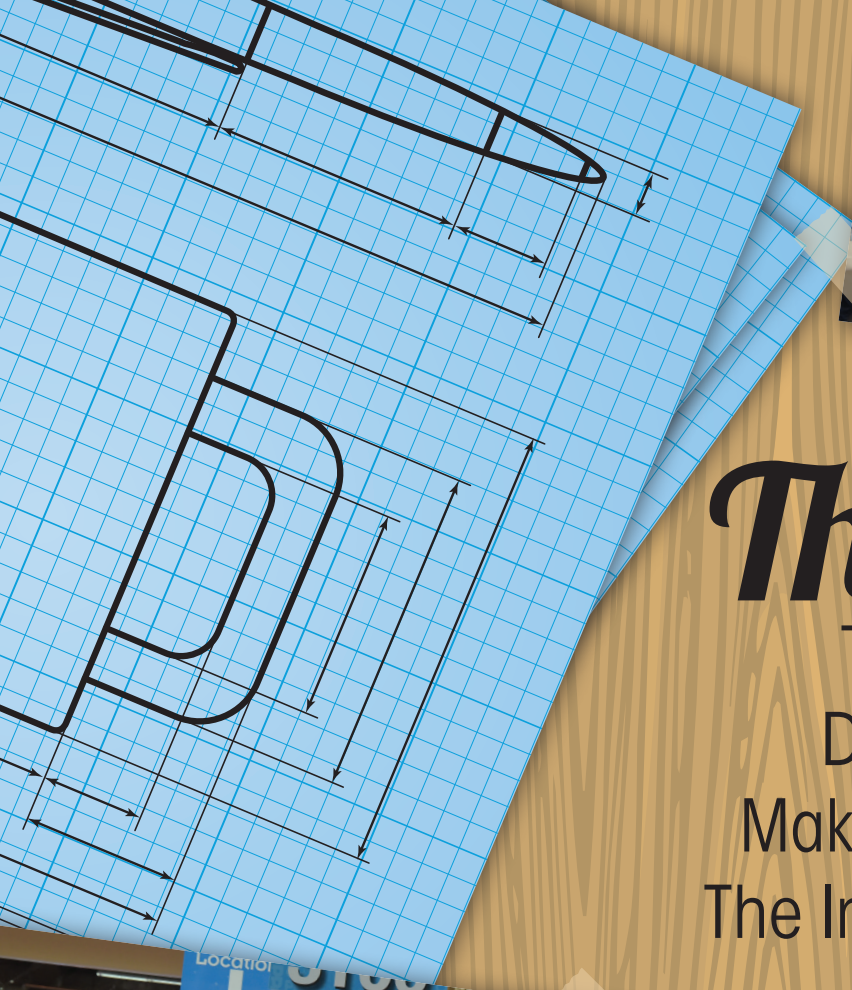
The college student's best friend, ramen soup, is predicted to be the fuel for pop-up noodle shops around the globe.

Source: CNBC.com

Make a toast to warmth with the **Huzu TAILGATE Hoody**. The hooded sweatshirt features an insulated neoprene pocket that keeps drinks cold and hands warm, and it doubles as a padded security pouch for smartphones, wallets or other valuables. With the attached metal bottle/can opener, it's a smart choice for waitstaff at craft brewery-themed restaurants or casual pubs. Choose from black, charcoal heather, oxford and navy in sizes S – 3XL. **J. America Wholesale Blanks Div.** *UPIC: Blanks www.jamericablanks.com*

Exquisitely stitched fronts and inside pockets ensure these **check presenters** will last, and a custom imprint on the front will ensure a lasting impression with patrons. **Fey Promotional Products Group** *(UPIC: FEY) www.fey-line.com*

Brands tag along with tasty extras in a 24-ounce microwaveable, reusable **takeout container**. The black container is made in the U.S. and can be imprinted with a logo or name. **Diversified-Adtee** *UPIC: DAPADTEE www.diversified-adtee.com* PPB



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EDITOR'S PICKS

Going, Going Green

THE MAINSTREAMING OF ECO-FRIENDLY PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS AND CAMPAIGNS

By Julie Richie

BUSINESSES THAT HAVE EMBRACED sustainability and eco-friendly products and practices—and effectively promoted their efforts—have been reaping the financial rewards from ever-more-conscious consumers.

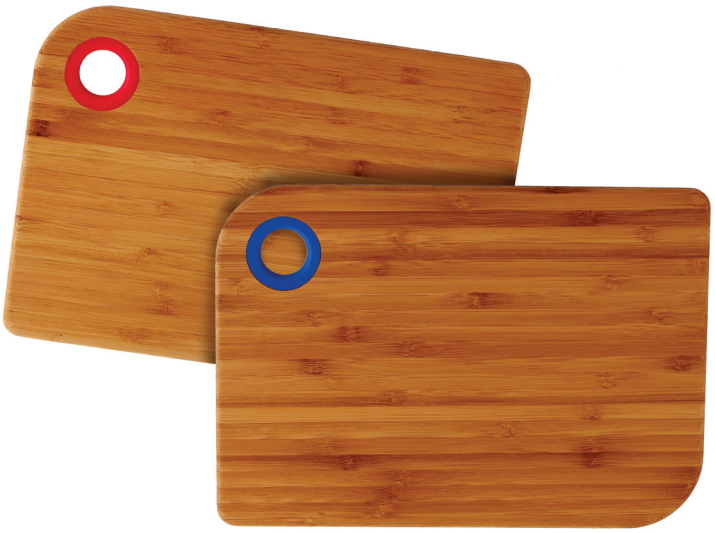
With Nielsen's 2014 Corporate Social Responsibility Survey reporting that more than half (55 percent) of global respondents are willing to pay extra for products and services from companies that are committed to positive social and environmental impact—an increase from 50 percent in 2012 and 45 percent in 2011—it just makes good sense for suppliers to offer more eco-friendly products and for distributors to keep environmental impact in mind when creating promotional campaigns and recommending products.

So what is the definition of an eco-friendly product? There's no hard and fast rule on this but, in general, eco-friendliness refers to any product that does not harm the environment through its production, use or disposal, or any product that facilitates or encourages the conservation of natural resources. Products made from recycled plastic bottles (RPET), are great examples of green products.

Read on for eco-friendly product and promotion ideas to help your clients market their efforts to be kind to the environment.

Companies Love These Eco-Conscious Products

1



2

3

1. This **mini bamboo cutting board** is the ideal size to leave on kitchen counters—keeping your client's brand front and center in the heart of the home. It's great for slicing fruits, cheese or vegetables, and the sustainability of bamboo makes it earth-friendly. **Fey Industries, Inc.** *UPIC:FEY www.fey-line.com*

2. You can feel good about carrying this **document bag** made from 65-percent recycled plastic bottles. With an adjustable shoulder strap, the bag has one main zippered compartment with a side Velcro® pocket and an ID pocket on the back. It's available in three color combinations: black/gray, black/royal and black/red. **Kati Sportcap** *UPIC: KATI www.katisportcap.com*

3. Made from all natural ingredients, these 100-percent pure, therapeutic-grade **Zen Collection essential oils** are made from seven proprietary aromatic botanical blends and three single, natural ingredients. The oils are a great way for brands to promote health and wellness with an eco-friendly message as well. **SnugZ USA** *UPIC: SNUGZUSA www.snugzusa.com*

(E)co-branding Opportunities

ALMOST EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT Earth Day (April 22, 2016)—it's a natural co-branding event pick for environmentally conscious companies. But for clients who want to take advantage of more opportunities to promote their sustainability initiatives, or position their brand as earth-friendly during the rest of the year, what about suggesting promotional campaigns around some of these other less-well-known 2016 environmentally themed events?

March 12: Plant a Flower Day

Product idea: Custom seed packet or shaped seed paper

June 8: World Oceans Day

Product idea: Custom temporary tattoos with ocean-friendly image

March 22: World Water Day

Product idea: Recycled BPA-free sports bottle

September 4: National Wildlife Day

Product idea: Recycled tire pet food placemat

November 15: America Recycles Day

Product idea: RPET structured cap or RPET reusable bag

4

5

6

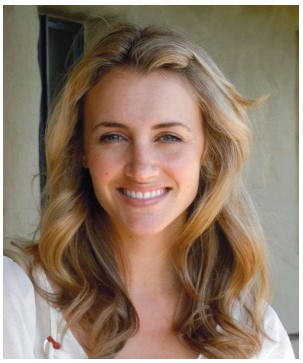
4. With quality German ink and a two-mile write out, the **Nature Plus Pen** will last a long time. And when the ink does eventually run out, the pen's corn plastic barrel will ultimately biodegrade. It's available in blue, forest green, lime green and white.
Beacon Promotions *UPIC: BEACONP www.beaconpromotions.com*

5. Attach this handy **shower timer** to your shower wall and start conserving water. It's a great product for residents of drought-ridden areas, as well as hotels, resorts and conservation associations. The timer counts up to three minutes. **Essef Distributors** *UPIC: 7414140 www.lincolnline.com*

6. Be kind to the planet by writing in the **BIC® Ecolutions® Chipboard Cover Notebook**, which is made of 87-percent post-consumer recycled fiber and consists of 100 sheets of lined, 55-pound paper. **BIC Graphic USA** *UPIC: BIC www.bicgraphic.com*

Strategic Product Picking

ECO-CONSCIOUS DISTRIBUTOR SAVANNAH MUDGETT, president of Malibu Marketing Group (UPIC: MMG) and a member of the Millennial generation, believes in an overarching less-is-more strategy when it comes to picking promotional products. "Product selection is key. Even the most environmentally friendly product isn't good for the environment if it ends up in a landfill," she says. "Before I was brought in, one of my clients ordered 3,000 unfortunate-looking eco-friendly tote bags that no one wanted. They couldn't get rid of them. That's not eco-friendly. My job is to prevent wasteful spending. If I can help a client allocate dollars toward a better quality product that gets used for years to come, it's good for their brand and their budget—and the environment."



Here Mudgett shares the four eco-conscious questions she considers before picking any product for a client's promotional needs.

1 **Does the product meet the client's marketing objectives?**

2 **Would I use this product? "My rule of thumb is that I never sell anything I wouldn't use," Mudgett says.**

3 **Is this a quality product that will be kept and used for years or will it end up in a landfill?**

4 **For mass-ordered items like trade-show giveaways, is the item manufactured from eco-friendly, sustainable or biodegradable materials, and what is its disposal plan?**

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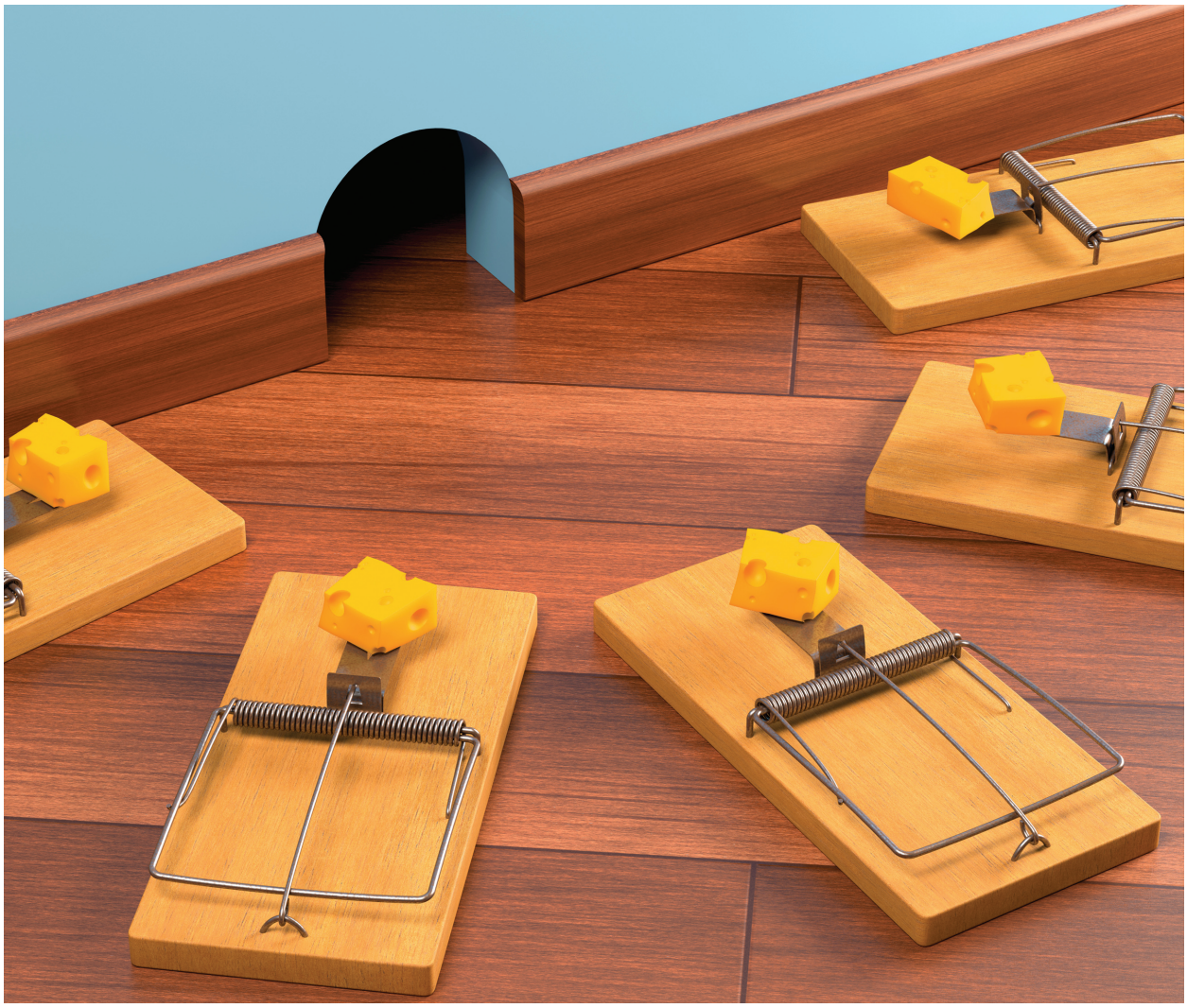
7. Manufactured in the USA, the **Earthstamp** is made of durable, lightweight, flexible and abrasion-resistant polyurethane rubber. Imprint sand, freshly poured concrete, snow and other soft surfaces over and over again for brand awareness. With proper care and storage, an Earthstamp will last virtually forever. **Earthstamp** *UPIC:E518245 www.earthstamp.com*

8. This heavy-duty, all natural, biodegradable and compostable non-woven **reusable bag** is made from 100-percent plant starch. It is machine washable, non-toxic, contains no petroleum and is available in a variety of material colors printed with water-based inks and sewn with cotton thread. While it comes with generic hang tags, custom tags are also available. **Earthwise Bag Company** *UPIC: EarthBag www.earthwisebags.com*

9. ReTreads® Recycled Tire Hard Surface Mouse Pads are printed in vibrant four-color process. A brilliant image is protected under a durable, textured plastic surface, ensuring the promotion has a long life. The pads are built on 100-percent post-consumer recycled tire rubber and are a great green promotion for auto or other transportation industries. **Digispec** *UPIC: DIGISPEC www.digispec.com*

10. This **click-action pen** with colored accents is made from recycled paper, recycled plastic and recycled wood so you can feel three times as good about handing it out to your clients. **Lungsal** *UPIC: LUNG0001 www.lungsal.com* PPB

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.



AVOID THESE COMMON START-UP TRAPS

FIVE KEY LESSONS TO KEEP YOUNG BUSINESSES ON TRACK

BY YOSSI FEINBERG

WHILE THERE IS OBVIOUSLY no such thing as a blueprint for success, there are a number of key points that entrepreneurs should take into consideration.

1. Never neglect your target market.

Immersing yourself in your user base from the very beginning will pay

dividends. Time spent learning to empathize with the customer and really figuring out what makes them tick will help you target with a laser-like focus.

Innovative companies are often guilty of trying to execute on a big vision that is too all-encompassing for the user to fully engage with.

2. Don't try and reinvent the wheel if you don't need to.

The internet has democratized access to all kinds of information, and if a successful process or structure exists for a non-core element of your business, use it. This can be anything from administrative office functions to technical elements on the periphery of your central business proposition. If an effective solution exists, then chances are it will not add value to your business to develop it from scratch.

3. Have a solid business model from the very beginning.

Have a clear idea of the value you are creating, how you are going to capture it and how you will be able to protect it. Having clarity from the outset will provide a marker of ongoing success—or not—and allow you to make strategic business decisions accordingly.

Many Silicon Valley businesses do not take this into account until a lot of resources have been expended, taking themselves in the wrong direction and forcing an otherwise unneeded late-stage pivot.

4. Don't be afraid to learn from your predecessors, competitors and similar businesses.

You do not need to fail to gain a learning experience. I highly recommend learning from others' failures rather than your own.

But be careful: Learn, don't mimic. Success comes from applying judgment, which is drawn from experience—yours and others'.

5. As hard as it may be, try to separate your natural emotion from your business concept.

You should be passionate about your venture and committed to it, but it is easy to fall in love with your idea and ignore the signals from the market and the views of others.

Your decision on how (and whether) to take [a product, business, service] to market needs to be founded on research and data. Too many times in Silicon Valley we have seen businesses launch that should have been altered or even killed in the planning phases, purely because a besotted and charismatic founder pushed them through. This is a recipe for failure. PPB

Yossi Feinberg is the John G. McCoy–Banc One Corporation professor of economics, director of the Corporate Entrepreneur: Driving Innovation and New Ventures Program and faculty director of the Stanford Ignite program at Stanford Graduate School of Business.

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FAST FORWARD

BY JEN ALEXANDER

THE WATER COOLER

POSITIVITY EQUALS PRODUCTIVITY

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, survival for a company often means employees must shoulder more than their share of the responsibilities that make a company successful. But the side effects of pushing employees harder can do a business more harm than good—inhibiting productivity.

Shawn Murphy, a management and leadership consultant, identifies the symptoms of destructive management and shares some strategies that managers can adopt to help develop and maintain a more positive workplace.

Blind impact occurs when leaders underestimate the value of their employees and cannot connect the dots between work and organizational direction. **Antisocial leaders** are autocratic and distrustful, dictating tasks and failing to give feedback or praise. Leaders who are **resistant to change** cannot help teams remain relevant, because they are late to adopt emerging best practices or more efficient policies and protocols.

Leaders who believe profit is the only measure of success are afflicted with **profit myopia**, chasing goals that are set by shareholders, alienating employees and clients alike. **Silo syndrome** appears in managers who can't see beyond their immediate responsibilities and fail to understand what inspires or motivates employees.

To overcome these barriers to a positive, productive workplace, leaders should focus on the team as the top priority and embrace the belief that there's value in experiencing joy at work. Good managers also nurture relationships with employees and seek out ways to help them achieve goals and acquire new skills. Adopting business practices and workplace policies that foster and support employee well-being can have an enormously positive impact on output. PPB

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Five Minutes With Matthew Crownover

President, Supplier Identification Plates, Inc.

AT THE FIRST of the year, Matthew Crownover assumed the role of president at the company his parents started. Now a second-generation leader of supplier Identification Plates, Inc. (UPIC: ID-LINE), Crownover is applying the skills and leadership approach honed in his previous career as a hospital chaplain to the job at hand. He shared his thoughts on shaping the future of ID Plates in a recent interview with *PPB*.

***PPB* Your professional background has run a different path than the job you hold now. What approaches to work from your previous career will you bring to your new role as president of ID Plates?**

Crownover I spent 15 years in professional chaplaincy, which is a tough industry to get into—you have to earn certifications and go through clinical education. In my case, it was oncology and psychiatry. One of the things you learn in chaplaincy is that you can't fix all of someone's problems, but you can help identify resources and tools that will help someone. That's really what management is, so I walk around the company and listen to people. You won't survive in business, or in ministry, if you think you can solve everyone's problems. My team knows what they're doing, but what I can do is listen—and that's intuitive for me.

As my parents looked at their retirement, the question arose about what would happen to this business. The fact that we have 70 employees who count on us became a powerful thing for me to think about in terms of stewardship. In deciding to keep the

business in the family, I'm driven by that sense of stewardship. So I really haven't left ministry, I've just shifted my context.

I think it's important to help people find meaning. I

Continued On Next Page

TECH TALK

BETAMAX, WE HARDLY KNEW YE

IT LOST THE BATTLE of 1970s TV-movie recording appliances here in the U.S., but Sony's 40-year-old Betamax player enjoyed a (somewhat) long and fruitful existence in Japan, where the technology was apparently deemed worthy of the price tag. Sony announced last year that it would stop manufacturing Betamax tapes; the player itself hasn't been sold since the early 2000s.

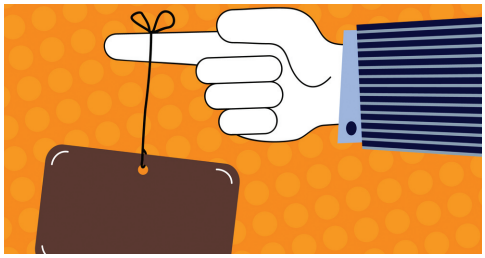
Other technologies we said goodbye to in 2015 include Windows 8, Google Glass and Apple HopStop. HopStop was available in more than 300 cities to guide users via public and private transportation, and in 2013 it was acquired by Apple—dropping support for Android devices not long after. PPB

MARKET SHARE

On Your Honor

Progressive Insurance wasn't the first company to use a "name your price" gimmick to bring customers in ... garage sales, produce stands and street hawkers have all given clients the option to pay what they feel an item is worth.

Online retailer Everlane took this approach at the end of 2015, offering customers the chance to purchase select overstocked items at one of three price points. The kicker? Everlane detailed what each suggested price point would cover in terms of labor, materials and ancillary employee costs—as well as funds for future company growth.



If you think this new kind of tiered pricing might work for a promotional products business, ask yourself these questions first: Have your customers clearly or frequently stated what they think an item or service should cost? Is the actual price much higher (or lower)? Do your customers' valuations vary greatly among each other?

If the answer to one or more of these is yes, it might be possible to implement a tiered pricing system that doesn't factor in customer order frequency, volume or credit, but instead shows the customer just what each price point accomplishes for them and for you.

Of course, the most important question to ask yourself is, do your customers know the value of what you do for them? If the answer to this is no, then it's time to become a consultant who imparts value to a comprehensive service, rather than a distributor who merely sells products. PPB

Continued From Previous Page

know that sounds generic, but it's about the sense that you're not just making a 'widget,' you're actually contributing to something much bigger. We make great products, and we make jobs and dreams for people. We have several multigenerational employees working here.

PPB What unique values or perspectives does a family-owned business bring to the promotional products industry and its clients?

Crownover We talk a lot about adding value. There's a thought that people defer to price, absent value; we see this in our personal lives. I visit a particular shop when I need something for my Vespa. I don't know if they're the cheapest, but I go because they take care of me and they've done a great job showing me what value looks like. That's the kind of business I want to be. The value proposition is real for me. Running a business well and treating people well is a real thing for me.

PPB From a business standpoint, what changes or new ideas would you like to implement at ID Plates going forward?

Crownover We want to grow. All the people who built this company are nearing retirement age. As part of my coming here I wanted to move the business forward. The purpose of our business is to bless the lives of others, starting with our customers, our vendors and our employees. But we have to grow. I've spent the last year taking our company through the Goldman Sachs 10K Small Business Program. They look at your business from all angles … the process was painful, but helpful. Not only do we have the desire, but we now have the plan and the confidence.

I'm not trying to change everything, but I want to know if we're doing the right thing or just the same thing. It's a fresh opportunity to evaluate our relationships, and we've recently hired a marketing professional who's very interested in the promotional products side of things.

PPB As a member of the community, how does staying involved benefit ID Plates?

Crownover We have a bunch of small things that are cool. We've always had a robust relationship with high school programs. Some of our long-term employees came to us that way. We have at any given time four or five of those students working here. It doesn't always turn into a home run, but you never know the seeds you plant.

We also participate in a program called Sharing Life, which operates a food and clothing bank for families. There's a 5K run that we volunteer to make the awards for, as long as our employees participate. One of the things that challenges us is that our customers don't actually live here. But the overwhelming majority of our employees live within five miles of here.

PPB What, if any, ideas do you have for getting or keeping ID Plates involved with its local community, or with charitable organizations or causes?

Crownover I'm looking at a company-funded volunteer program–I've already done this informally, but I would like to make it a company benefit. The best thing I can do for the community is to run this business well so I can hire more people. If I can give you a job, with benefits, you can send your kids to college. We are also looking at models that deliver some financial management tools to families, things like Dave Ramsey's programs, for instance. All of us could acquire better skills for budgeting, being out of debt, etc. In the end, such steps free us to be more generous in our efforts to love our neighbor, and that's what it's all about. PPB

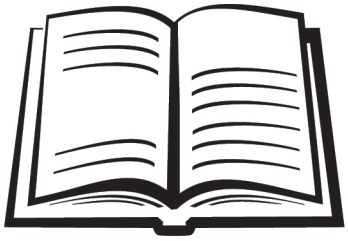
TELL YOUR TALE

YOU'VE GOT YOUR NAME ON business cards, a sign above your store and even a logo—but is this the extent of your brand? Brittany Warnock with Bluehost explains why having a brand story is crucial to creating customer loyalty, and shares some tips for how you can make your brand story sing.

A brand story, says Warnock, establishes a connection between you and your customer, and helps you craft a sense of uniqueness and scarcity about your products and services. Promotion and advertising that incorporate the brand story can evoke an emotional response and thus have greater impact.

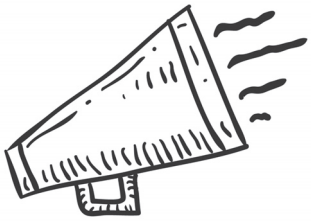
To craft your brand story, follow these tips for optimal success:

SHOW, DON'T TELL. If you want to be known for going the distance for a customer, talk about a time when you did so, and what the outcome was for the customer.

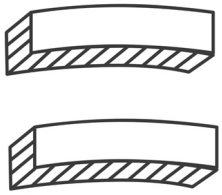


FOLLOW A TRADITIONAL STORY ARC. Introduce your brand, then share stories of challenges or obstacles, and end with the resolution.

ENGAGE EMOTIONS. Aim to evoke emotion with your story by appealing to customers' desires, sense of nostalgia, or hopes for future success. Talk about why you exist, what your mission is as a company, who your key players are, and how you hope to grow as a brand.



PROVIDE A CALL TO ACTION. Elements of your story encourage engagement, so include a call to action for customers to follow and receive the ultimate benefits of working with your brand.



BE CONSISTENT ACROSS PLATFORMS. Your story should look and feel identical, whether it's told in print, on the web or via mobile. PPB

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633-1	5/8" x 32" Lanyard with Swivel Hook & Bead	$2.07	$2.01	$1.91	$1.77	$1.63
640	3/8" x 32" Lanyard with Bulldog Clip & Bead	$1.78	$1.73	$1.64	$1.53	$1.40
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INFLUENTIAL OUTLIERS

CPSC CONSENT DECREES HAVE FAR-REACHING IMPACT

BY MATTHEW R. HOWSARE AND MATTHEW COHEN

IN OCTOBER 2015, the U.S. Department of Justice—at the behest of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)—filed suit in California federal court to prohibit two companies and three individuals from importing allegedly defective children's products. Filed alongside the lawsuits are far-reaching consent decrees between the government and parties. The agreement prohibits the companies and individuals from conducting any future business (selling, importing or distributing) involving children's products or toys until the CPSC verifies that certain far-reaching conditions are met—all of which relate to future compliance with safety requirements of the CPSC and Federal Hazardous Substances Act (FHSA).

The companies—Brightstar Group, Inc. and Unik Toyz Trading Inc., are Los Angeles-based importers and retailers of children's products and toys and the individuals named in the complaints are the companies' owners and manager. Both Brightstar and Unik Toyz are accused of repeatedly importing children's products and toys that contained high levels of lead, banned phthalates and small parts posing a choking hazard for young children three years of age and under. Some of the children's products

> *"The small companies involved in these cases allegedly spurned and ignored numerous CPSC letters of advice over multiple years notifying them that their products were not in compliance with the CPSA and FHSA."*

included art materials, fire engine sets, tea sets, strollers, marbles, toy boxing gloves, cars and trains.

According to complaints, Brightstar and Unik Toyz violated the CPSA and FHSA over multiple years as many of their respective children's products were sampled at ports of entry. In fact, between September 2013 and April 2015, the CPSC issued nine letters of advice (violation notices) to Brightstar informing the company that its products violated the CPSA and/or FHSA. In the case of Unik Toyz, the company received 21 notices from November 2011 to January 2015. The companies continued importing defective products notwithstanding the many warnings issued by the CPSC.

The Consent Decrees

The companies and individuals have agreed to settle the government's charges by binding themselves to consent decrees. The dual consent decrees are noteworthy because of their far-reaching provisions. Crucially, the agreements prohibit the companies and individuals from conducting any future business (selling, importing or distributing) involving children's products or toys until the CPSC verifies that certain detailed conditions are met. All of the conditions agreed upon relate to future compliance with the CPSA and FHSA and their implementing regulations.

Certain provisions of the consent decrees are worth noting here. They include:

- The retention of an independent product safety coordinator to assist the companies in creating comprehensive product safety plans and conducting a product audit to determine which products require testing and certification.
- A quarantine of all merchandise until the above-referenced product audit is complete.
- The creation of a comprehensive product safety plan with written standard operating procedures to ensure:
  - o future compliance with third-party testing requirements, including periodic testing;
  - o the issuance of proper certificates of conformity;
  - o appropriate cautionary and tracking labels are placed on products;
  - o adequate and timely corrections are made to any violation cited by the CPSC;
  - o the companies must respond promptly to any CPSC communications, including letters of advice; and
  - o all reports of consumer incidents are investigated thoroughly
- The retention of an independent third-party testing laboratory to perform the requisite certification testing on children's products;
- The issuance of all appropriate certificates of conformity for all the companies' children's products; and
- An inspection of the companies' facilities once they inform the agency that the above conditions have been met.

Why Are These Consent Decrees Significant?

In recent years, the CPSC has used compliance programs as an enforcement mechanism in civil penalty and recall negotiations. Many companies have agreed to implement compliance programs at the behest of the CPSC in such negotiations. The compliance programs have involved, among other provisions, implementation of written standards and policies; a mechanism for confidential employee reporting of compliance related questions and concerns; management oversight of compliance personnel; and a policy for recordkeeping, among others.

Yet, the Brightstar and Unik Toyz compliance program provisions set forth within the consent decrees are significant because they are remarkably different from those inserted into recent CPSC civil penalty settlement agreements. Rarely does the CPSC enter into a consent decree with a company alleged to have violated the CPSA and/or FHSA whereby the company must satisfy detailed conditions *prior to* conducting any future business involving children's products. Additionally, the Brightstar and Unik Toyz compliance programs must be audited and monitored by an independent third party, which is not a common requirement in other compliance programs. Not since the Daiso case in 2010 and LM Import cases in 2011 and 2012 have consent decrees been as extensive or far-reaching as the ones involved here.

Why Are These Consent Decrees More Comprehensive?

So what distinguishes Brightstar and Unik Toyz, as well as Daiso and LM Import, from other companies, mostly larger, who have entered into agreements with the CPSC that include compliance program provisions?

The small companies involved in these cases allegedly spurned and ignored numerous CPSC letters of advice over multiple years notifying them that their products were not in compliance with the CPSA and FHSA. The complaints also suggest that these violations were not just occasional occurrences, but rather systemic (i.e., numerous and different products sampled by CPSC at ports of entry violated federal product safety regulations).

On the other hand, many large companies that now face multimillion-dollar CPSC civil penalties do so for alleged late reporting of product safety issues. In many of these cases, the issue involved one or two products and the companies self-reported the issue to the CPSC as required by the CPSA (albeit later than the CPSC believed a report was required). Although intentional product safety violations and late reporting violations alike involve the potential exposure of consumers to unsafe products, the

> *Although these companies may well be outliers when it comes to fulfilling their obligations to the public to distribute safe products, all companies should take note of the stringent compliance programs agreed to by these companies.*

remedial measures taken against companies like Brightstar, Unik Toyz, Daiso and LM Import show the company practices leading to those violations are more serious in nature.

Since the Daiso consent decree in 2010, the CPSC has secured nearly 40 settlement agreements from companies who allegedly failed to timely report a potentially defective product. Many of these agreements contained the typical compliance program provisions. On the other hand, the CPSC has secured only a small handful of agreements with companies for violations that warrant a permanent injunction involving a product safety monitor and product audit. This leads to the question of whether companies such as the ones subject to these types of consent decrees, who potentially inflict serious harm upon children with repeated violations for multiple products over multiple years, are simply fewer in number or just more difficult to target.

Conclusion

Late last year, the Unik Toyz and Brightstar consent decrees were entered by the court. Although these companies may well be outliers when it comes to fulfilling their obligations to the public to distribute safe products, all companies should take note of the stringent compliance programs agreed to by these companies. Compliance programs—in whatever form—are now commonplace as an enforcement tool of the federal government for companies who do not comply with federal product safety regulations. PPB

The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the firm or its clients. This article is for general information purposes and is not intended to be and should not be taken as legal advice.

Matt Howsare is of counsel in the Washington, D.C. firm of Mintz Levin Cohn Ferris Glovsky and Popeo PC. He formerly served as chief of staff of the CPSC from 2010 to 2013 and as the chairman's senior counsel in 2009.

Matthew Cohen is an associate at Mintz Levin.

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AN HR HEADS-UP

FIVE KEY WORKFORCE TRENDS TO WATCH IN 2016

BY CLAUDIA ST. JOHN, SPHR

WHENEVER WE START THE PROCESS of closing out one year and planning for the next, it is always useful to identify and take stock of the major workforce trends for the coming year. So, as you think about your budget for the year ahead and begin implementing your annual workforce strategy, we've identified five key trends for you to consider.

1. Millennial Leaders

In March 2015, the number of Millennial workers (otherwise known as Generation Y employees—those between the ages of 19 and 35) surpassed Baby Boomers, and they now account for the largest generation in the workplace. In fact, one in every three workers today is a Gen Y employee. More than half of all Millennials in the workforce are already in leadership positions and 41 percent have four or more direct reports. Unfortunately, the majority of Millennial leaders feel unprepared for their role. A report by Deloitte notes that 64 per–

Q&A WITH CLAUDIA ST. JOHN

Send your human resources-related questions for Claudia St. John to ppb@ppai.org. Select questions will be answered in future issues.

Q. We have an employee who keeps showing up late or not calling in when she is going to be absent. We've spoken to her about it twice already and now feel we need to write her up. We've never had to write someone up. What is involved?

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"Writing someone up" is typically the second step in a progressive discipline process. After you have verbally warned someone about a behavior or policy violation, it is a good practice to provide a written warning after the next infraction before a more serious discipline is necessary (such as suspension or termination). In your written warning, it is best to: 1. Describe the behavior or policy violation that has occurred (including details such as date and time); 2. Restate the policy that applies (in this case the process and timing required for "calling-in"); 3. Explain what will likely happen if the behavior is repeated in the future.

Have the employee sign the document—remember, this doesn't mean she agrees with your write-up. It just means that she has read and understood the warning. If she won't sign, having someone sign that they witnessed her reading the warning is a sufficient substitute.

Q. My customer service representative checks her work email and often wraps up loose ends from home. She hasn't asked, but should I be paying her for that time?

In a word, yes. Presuming she is non-exempt, as most CSRs are, she is entitled to pay for every hour worked, whether from home or elsewhere. Moreover, if this work totals more than 40 hours in a work week, she is entitled to overtime pay as well. She may not be asking for pay, but legally, you are required to pay her. Given the difficulties of tracking off-premises work,

Continued On Next Page

cent of current Millennial leaders surveyed "felt unprepared when entering their leadership role." Lack of training and mentorship are the key reasons cited for this finding.

Our recommendation: Now is the time to review your succession plan and to ensure that your new and future leaders have the formal and informal training necessary for the positions they may be taking on in the near future.

2. Tight Labor Market Continues

Anyone who tried to hire experienced talent in 2015 already knows that the labor market for skilled workers is very tight. The national unemployment rate has sunk to five percent below pre-recession levels, and the unemployment rate for skilled labor is even lower. This trend is likely to continue this year. Companies, in an attempt to attract new talent, are increasingly offering significant sign-on bonuses and elevated pay rates. And, all too frequently, employees who may be tempted to accept a better job offer are receiving sizeable pay increases to remain in their current positions, thereby driving up pay and keeping the labor market tight. Also driving up pay is demand for recent college graduates. Starting salaries for those without experience but with college degrees are up 5.2 percent in just the past year, to $50,651, according to a survey from the National Association of Colleges and Employers.

Our recommendation: Focus on employee engagement as a means of keeping your current talent and be prepared to act quickly to offer the higher wages/bonuses that new talent will likely demand in 2016.

3. Boomerangs, Retirees And Generation Z

Given the difficulty of finding and retaining skilled talent, many companies are eliminating their boomerang policies, which prohibit the rehiring of employees who leave for another job and reapply at a later date. As a result of the frequency with which employees change jobs these days, and the benefit to hiring someone who already has the skills and training needed for the job, many employers are making it a policy to re-recruit their ex-employees and to stay in close contact with them through social media and other measures.

This need for skilled workers is also driving the trend of "consulting" employment for Baby Boomers, who are staying connected with their former employers and are continuing to work well past retirement age, typically in some form of part-time, freelance or consulting arrangement.

The coming year will also welcome the first of the Generation Z employees to the workforce, those high-school graduates who also may have some college hours. The good news is that it is anticipated that Generation Z workers are likely to be private, multi-tasking, cynical, entrepreneurial, loyal, hyper-aware of cultural events and technology driven.

Our recommendation: With all these generations in the workplace, invest some time in building relationships, mentorships, reverse mentorships and other programs to ease the tensions and miscommunications that will likely crop up.

4. The Continued March Toward A Freelance Economy

The number of workers turning to freelance work has increased by approximately one million per year over the past two years. Current trends indicate that by 2020, 40 percent of the workforce, or 60 million workers, will be independent workers, defined as freelancers, independent contractors or temporary workers. This is fueled largely through technology platforms that enable job and project sharing, a desire for increased independence among highly skilled workers and an effort by businesses to reduce overhead and labor costs.

In response to this, the Obama Administration is pushing to tighten the rules on who can be considered an independent contractor. It is motivated to do so because freelance and independent workers lose certain workplace benefits based on their non-employee status (workers' compensation, unemployment and benefit deductions, for example).

Our recommendation: Be sure your freelance and temporary workers are appropriately classified based on new federal standards released in 2015.

5. Increasing Federal Regulations

In addition to introducing new independent contractor standards in 2015, the Obama Administration also released a new minimum salary threshold for who could be exempt from overtime. In late 2016, the Administration is expected to implement

these new rules, which are expected to increase the minimum weekly pay from $455 to $970. The Administration is also expected to expand "ban the box" policies which require that public sector employers and federal contractors delay inquiring about the criminal background of job seekers until they are well along in the hiring process. All of these initiatives are within the administrative authority of the presidency and are not subject to congressional approval. You can expect that they will be implemented in 2016.

Our recommendation: Regardless of who wins the presidential election this year, many of the regulatory provisions promoted on the federal level do not require congressional approval and are likely to be implemented in 2016. Therefore, it is best to make sure your policies and practices are up to date and compliant. PPB

Claudia St. John is president of Affinity HR Group, LLC, PPAI's human resources affiliate. Affinity HR Group specializes in providing human resources assistance to associations and their member companies. www.affinityhrgroup.com

Continued From Previous Page

many employers opt to not allow their non-exempt employees to work from home.

Q. We have an employee who was terminated for poor performance. Now she is applying for another job and they are calling and asking for a reference. Honestly, she was terrible and I would never hire her again. Can I tell the new employer that?

The current "best practice" is to provide only verification of employment dates and salary when providing a reference. In most cases, this is a good practice, but if your ex-employee was fired for a serious incident—violence, theft and discrimination, for example—it's better to be honest about your reasons for termination. This is because if an employer hires the ex-employee based in part on your reference and the employee goes on to do harm, you could bear some responsibility in that negligent hire.

Q. We want to require our employees to read, speak and write English at work. Is such a policy legal?

A policy like this would need to be strictly scrutinized. For example, let's say you are hiring a cleaning crew for your building. Given the chemicals that they use and the interactions that they may have with the tenants, it may be appropriate that they be sufficiently fluent to speak, read and write in English to perform the duties of the job. However, it is hard to imagine what the business case would be to require that they speak English with one another instead of their native language while performing the duties of their job.

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A Refreshing Approach To Catalogs

SUPPLIER ETCHING INDUSTRIES CRAFTS A CATALOG THAT FUNCTIONS AS A STUNNING CONVERSATION PIECE

BY JEN ALEXANDER

FEW COMPANIES SEE THE GLASS AS half full the way that Etching Industries Corp. does. Established in 1979 as a promotional supplier of decorated wine and spirit bottles, Indianapolis, Indiana-based Etching Industries (UPIC: ETCH0001)—also known as Etching Wines—narrowed its focus to wine bottles and related products after it was acquired in 2013 by the St Regis Group of Companies, simultaneously expanding its portfolio of products.

To reflect the change in focus, Etching Industries leaders came together to discuss rebranding. "We looked at the whole brand and found it hadn't changed in roughly a decade," says Guy Malk, vice president of marketing at St Regis Crystal. "We had to take it from scratch, so we started with the catalog."

To create the right aesthetic, the photography for Etching Wines' product line needed to reflect the perception that customized wine gifts carry, Malk explains.

"The challenge was to make the products shine on the page. I can't tell you how many times we moved products around, trying to get the right look."

The new catalog for Etching Industries also needed to capture the elegance and sophistication that give wine gifts their high-perceived value, so the team decided to create a piece that would also serve as a coffee table book.

"Our photographer spent nearly two months photographing each product in the catalog," says Malk. "The gray mottled background was specifically chosen to showcase the clarity of our crystal while providing an interesting textured background to contrast with the products."

The detail incorporated into the catalog/coffee table book didn't end with photos. Details that were taken into great consideration included the font choices, sizes and colors—fonts for readability and timeless appeal, and colors to mirror the rich shades of Etching Industries' cabernet.

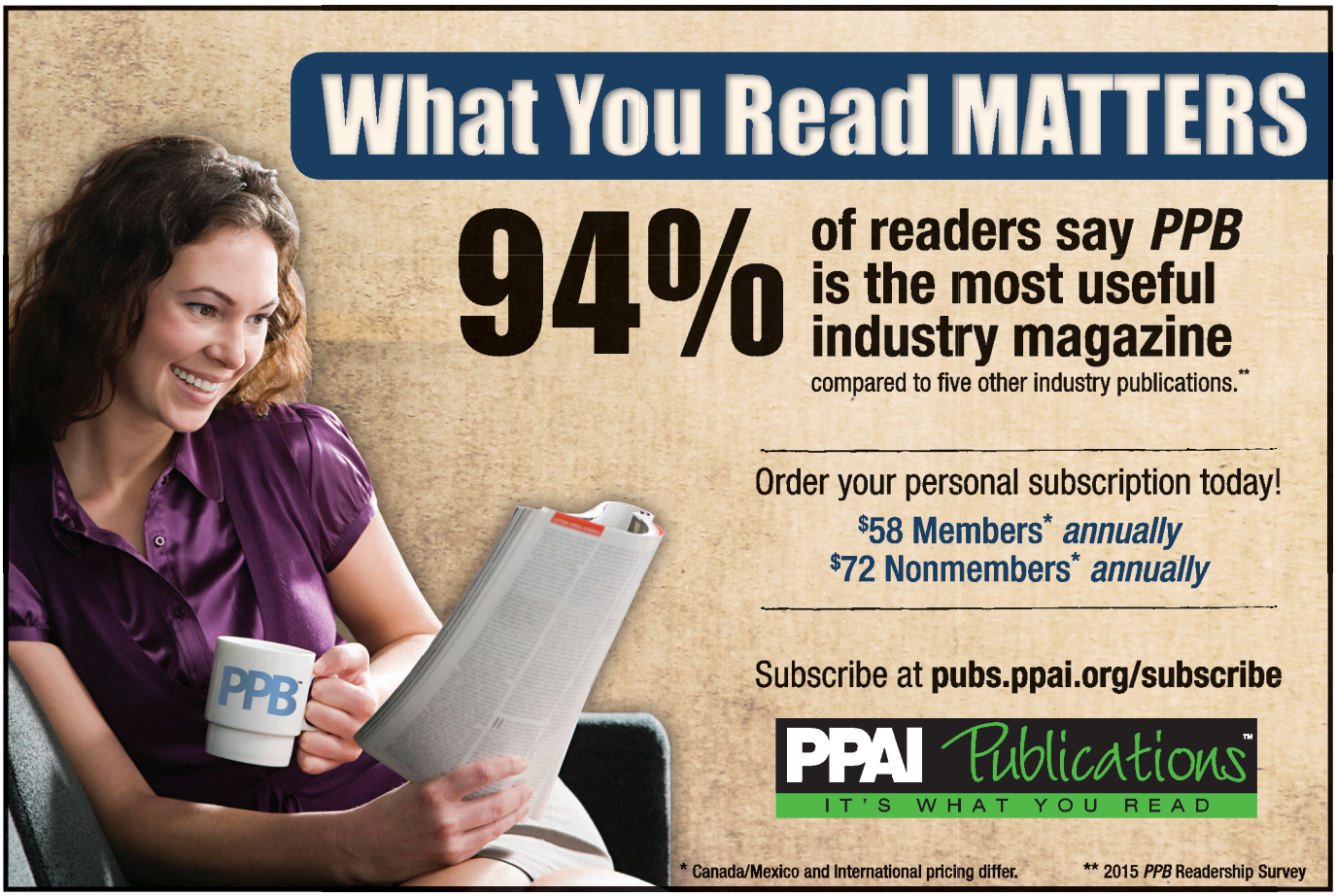
As part of the effort to streamline Etching Industries' new image, a website was developed and launched that included elements of the catalog, such as photography and color scheme. "The previous site had very little product information, pricing and additional fees were difficult to find and the overall style was very busy and chaotic," says Malk. "The new site is much easier to navigate, and new filtering options were added to allow the user to narrow down a search."

The rebrand included a new logo for Etching Wines, which Malk says was designed "to capture and embody the elegance and allure of wine. We decided on a logo that resembled a stylish, elegant label that could be found on a high-end vintage."

The entire rebrand, from conception to launch, took approximately four months and launched in September 2015 with the shipment of the new Etching Industries catalog. Malk says the response has been fantastic. "We have had so many customers request art, catalogs and banners for their sites."

In a surprising twist, the packaging Etching Wines offers with its custom products is also drawing more attention. "We always knew people liked to give wine bottles as gifts, but the focus has come to be on the presentation itself." PPB

Jen Alexander is associate editor for PPB.



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INSIDE PPAI

EXPO EAST AND ISS MEET AGAIN

EXPO EAST BRINGS FRESH SCHEDULE, SAME EXCELLENT SHOW EXPERIENCE TO ATLANTIC CITY

EXPO EAST RETURNS TO ATLANTIC CITY next month, running March 16-19 in conjunction with the Imprinted Sportswear Show (ISS) at the Atlantic City Convention Center. Expo East is a collaboration between PPAI and the Specialty Advertising Association of Greater New York (SAAGNY), and is gearing up to again bring to the East Coast a show experience similar to that of the highly successful PPAI Expo in Las Vegas.

The Atlantic City event adopts a new show pattern this year, with an education day on Wednesday, March 16, and the show dates shifting to Thursday through Saturday, March 17-19. The change was made to better meet exhibitor and distributors' needs.

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In conjunction with the ISS show and the latest technology, developments and services in the decorated apparel industry, Expo East offers attendees access to more than 1,000 booths to find new ideas for their clients and campaigns. The Expo's popular Product Pavilions—Top Sellers, Green Products, Made In The USA and Express Ship—will also be part of Expo East. Early birds will get a first look at what is available on Thursday, March 17, with the Product Pavilion Sneak Peek at 9 am.

Diane Ciotta

Expo East attendees will have more than 50 education sessions to choose from on seven tracks—Strategies & Solutions, Corporate Responsibility, Industry Essentials, Marketing & Advertising, Decorate, Sales & Service and Technology—as well as insightful keynote sessions. Speaker and sales coach Diane Ciotta highlights how to get and stay motivated in a sales-based business in Wednesday's keynote luncheon, and acclaimed PPAI Expo 2016 speaker Seth Godin joins Expo East as Thursday afternoon's Keynote & Cocktails speaker.

Registration for the four-day event is now open and special Expo East room rates are available at a number of area hotels, including the Tropicana, Borgata and Sheraton Atlantic City.

Find the full schedule and register at expoeast.ppai.org. PPB

PHOTO BY BRIAN BLOOM
Seth Godin

PPAI And SAGE Extend Power Of Two Relationship

PPAI AND INDUSTRY technology provider SAGE have announced an extension of their Power of Two strategic alliance to deliver one comprehensive association and business management solution to promotional products distributors. The renewal agreement extends the $495 SAGE credit for PPAI distributor members. PPAI and SAGE will also be introducing a new streamlined process for membership renewals and credit redemption to be announced in March and rolled out in April.

"The Power of Two alliance has been a significant benefit to our members," says Paul Bellantone, CAE, president and CEO of PPAI. "SAGE has provided them with direct access to full product and supplier research and much more, and we are pleased to continue this relationship as our exclusive technology partner."

Through this alliance, all new and renewing PPAI distributor members receive a $495 credit toward a SAGE Total Access subscription, which completely covers the cost of the first user for the year. Additional user licenses are $95 per year. SAGE Total Access provides distributors with access to SAGE Online, SAGE Web and SAGE Mobile, SAGE's premier suite of product research, presentation, CRM, order management and virtual sampling tools.

"PPAI has long been the leading authority, advocate and voice in this industry," says David Natinsky, president of SAGE. "By providing our subscribers with direct access to

PPAI member benefits like legislative action tools, product safety initiatives, professional development and thousands of dollars in business savings, we are giving them the opportunity to develop as industry leaders."

As part of the new agreement, SAGE Mobile served as the official show planner app for The PPAI Expo 2016, and will do the same for Expo East 2016 in Atlantic City, New Jersey. With SAGE Mobile, attendees can view complete event schedules, create walk lists, navigate the show floor using an interactive floor plan, add notes, pictures, videos and voice memos as they visit booths, and more. For more information on using SAGE Mobile at shows, visit go.sageworld.com/planexpo.

"I'm a huge supporter of both SAGE and PPAI and I am glad to hear that the Power of Two relationship is continuing," says PPAI member Suzan Bolski, president/CEO of distributor Anything Goes Promotions, Inc. "SAGE's technology has made my business more efficient and PPAI's resources and professional development have helped me bring my company to the next level. We know we can always count on both SAGE and PPAI for help and support. For the distributor community, this is great news because access to SAGE Online, plus the unequaled value we receive from PPAI membership, means we will more than cover our cost in dues, making it a profitable opportunity for us."

For more information on PPAI's member benefits and savings opportunities, call PPAI at 888-I-AM-PPAI (426-7724) or visit www.ppai.org/join. For questions regarding SAGE services or the $495 SAGE credit, please call 800-925-7243 (SAGE) or visit www.sageworld.com. PPB

PPAI Signs On Public Relations Agency For New Industry Branding Initiative

In May 2015, the PPAI Board of Directors approved the Association's Industry Branding Initiative, a five-year plan to position promotional products as a top-of-mind and preferred advertising and marketing tool among professionals responsible for branding, advertising, media planning and media buying. In one of the first concrete steps of the plan, PPAI selected Saxum as its agency of record for the initiative in December.

PPAI developed the branding initiative aided by research on buyer purchasing habits and preferences, and in collaboration with industry leaders, PPAI's Public Relations Advisory Group and the Chairman's Roundtable Work Group. Oklahoma City-based Saxum will work with PPAI to implement an integrated communications plan, including strategic brand positioning, media relations, integrated creative content and a paid media campaign launching the promotional products industry's first cohesive awareness and branding initiative.

"PPAI chose Saxum because of its unique approach to integrated communications, which we are confident will complement and enhance our ongoing efforts to raise awareness of the industry among promotional products buyers and the media," says Paul Bellantone, CAE, PPAI president and CEO. "As we continue to work toward bringing the industry together under one mission, one purpose, and one voice, partnering with Saxum will help us meet the challenges of the market and create a powerful voice for the industry.

"Our industry represents one of the oldest forms of branding and advertising; we are sixth among traditional and digital advertising expenditures, and we are the eighth-fastest-growing medium, but many marketers and advertising agencies have yet to take full advantage of promotional products," adds Bellantone. "PPAI and Saxum will work together to drive key messaging and elevate the fact that promotional products deliver the highest rate of reach, recall and response among major forms of advertising."

Along with national and trade media outreach, Saxum will work with PPAI and the promotional products industry to develop the industry's first multimedia evidence-based promotional products case study campaign library as a resource to media and buyers.

"As an integrated marketing communications firm, we understand the importance of identifying and maximizing all of the marketing tools that make up a balanced campaign, and that includes promotional products," says C. Renzi Stone, founder and CEO of Saxum. "We're excited about working with PPAI to expand understanding of how and why promotional products should be critical and strategic components of every organization's marketing strategy, right from the start." PPB

Seth Barnett Named PPAI's First Diversity Development And Engagement Manager

SETH BARNETT, who for more than three years has served as PPAI's government relations manager, has transitioned to a new role at the Association: diversity development and engagement manager. Part of the member engagement and regional relations team, Barnett's position is a new one at PPAI and will focus on the strategic integration of demo-

graphic diversity in the Association's programs, messaging and outreach within and outside the industry.

As government relations manager, Barnett has supported the ongoing success of PPAI's Legislative Education and Action Day (L.E.A.D.) as well as the development and growth of L.E.A.D. Local. He trained industry advocates, wrote legislative briefs, monitored updates to industry law and tracked legislative matters at both the state and federal levels.

He recently spoke with *PPB* about his new role at the Association, the challenges it was established to address and his plans going into the position.

***PPB:* This is a new position at PPAI. What needs of the industry and Association was it designed to meet?**

Barnett: The diversity challenge of our industry primarily focuses on generational demographics. The global economy is at a crossroads where, within the next 10 years, most of the workforce will be nearing retirement and there will be a tremendous need for young leadership. Our industry is no stranger to this demographic challenge as it primarily employs Baby Boomers and Gen Xers.

Seth Barnett

During my time at PPAI, I've written articles and recorded podcasts about the generational issue and the ways our industry can meet this challenge. When PPAI's Board of Directors began incorporating generational diversity within the industry in its strategic plan discussions, I wanted to take this idea to the next level and presented it as a new role for PPAI. This role will take this global economic challenge and simplify it in ways our industry can tap into to ensure continued success in the marketplace.

***PPB:* What will be your primary responsibilities in this role?**

Barnett: There are two primary challenges that this role will seek to address. The first is our industry's broad generational divide between the large number of Baby Boomers and Gen Xers, and the insignificant number of Millennials in its workforce. We will look at how companies both within and outside our industry are attempting to recruit and retain Millennials. We are a unique industry with unique opportunities for younger people to get involved and stay involved, and we will find ways for businesses to diversify their workforce and create leadership opportunities that ensure success into the future. The second challenge is to better understand the changing marketplace and find ways for our industry to meet the new demands set forth by the younger generation of consumers. This will help businesses compete as the market continues to trend toward younger consumers.

***PPB:* How does this position work with other stakeholders in the Association and industry?**

Barnett: This position works with supplier and distributor members at all levels. The success of the industry is made possible through a continued common understanding among all stakeholders. It is my hope that the information we will be providing will be useful to everyone in some way. We will also be developing ways to educate young people about the industry and what value it holds. This will not only inspire those seeking new opportunities to join our industry but also educate future consumers about the value of promotional products as part of the advertising mix. So in that regard, we are attempting to create new stakeholders through education and marketplace optimization.

***PPB:* What will be the focus of your first 90 days in the position? Any longer term goals?**

Barnett: During the first 90 days I will work to establish a foundation and begin to help those in the industry have necessary conversations about their employment demographics and their visibility in the marketplace. It is our goal to establish long-term plans that address potential future industry demographic shifts as this position progresses. Many industries have begun to forecast the ways demographics will affect business several years down the road. It is my hope that as the research, conversations and education about this issue continue, we will be able to better predict economic and demographic challenges. PPB

PERSPECTIVES

Continued From Page 4

your participation is critical to its success. The IBI will make significant strides in bringing promotional products out of the back room and into the boardroom where marketing decisions are made. Our goal is to create an impact on the end buyer that increases sales for our members and advances our industry. Who doesn't want that? In the second year of the plan, a national industry spokesperson will be added. It is an exciting time and an extraordinary initiative designed to remove the afterthought stigma once and for all. I'm proud to be a part of it.

Of course, none of this was possible without previous leadership recognizing the need for change. I am blessed to have served with prior PPAI chairs Rick Brenner, MAS+, Mark Jenkins, MAS+ and Marc Simon who all gave so much to PPAI and this industry. The time and talents they offered to advance the Association and our industry have made significant impact. Together they moved the IBI initiative forward from concept to board approval to where we are today: the launch. By creating big picture initiatives like IBI, all of us will benefit in this great industry.

As your 2016 PPAI chair, I am happy to carry this torch as we move ahead. I look forward to working with all of you on this and so many other important initiatives. PPB

Tom Goos, MAS, is president of Image Source, Inc. Reach him at tom@imagesourceteam.com.

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WHEN IT COMES TO SELLING SUCCESS, TUMI'S MIKE LANDRY CREDITS HIS FAMILY FIRST

BY JULIE RICHIE

IT'S NOT VERY OFTEN that you meet someone who is the oldest of eight children. Native Bostonian Mike Landry is not only the oldest of eight, he's also married to a woman who is the oldest of eight children. It's clear that he and Bridget, a nurse and his wife of 34 years, were meant for each other.

"I'm lucky to be married to the love of my life, and I have two wonderful kids—Catherine, a first-grade teacher and Philip, an ecommerce category manager—and they all make me very happy," he says. "[My kids] are two amazing people and I am immensely proud of them."

In addition to his family, Landry is also passionate about both his home state and his house—a 1906 classic American Craftsman, which he calls "the fifth member of our family" because of the time and effort it takes to maintain it. "Massachusetts is very dear to my heart and, aside from a short stint across the border in Rhode Island, I've never lived anywhere else." His job as vice president of special markets for supplier Tumi (UPIC: tumi), a position he's held for 12 years, means he's away from home for 45 weeks of the year. But when he's home, he likes to work on projects around the house. "The last big project was a free-standing garage that matched the existing structure. I helped design it," he says.

And when he's not working on his house, he loves to follow his beloved Patriots, Red Sox, Bruins and Celtics. "Keeping up with the Boston sports scene is a part-time job in and of itself," he laughs. "But when I'm really off duty, I like to sail. We charter sailboats in the winter and travel port-to-port in tropical locations. I'm happy to say that I've sailed most of the Caribbean," he adds.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

The people. Our entire sales channel is incredibly relationship driven, and some of my very best friends are people that I only see on the road. Plus, at our company headquarters, I work with some of the most creative, professional and hardworking people that I've ever met. They execute brilliantly and make me look good.

What was your first job, and what lessons did you learn?

One of my first jobs was waiting on tables. It was an upscale casual restaurant where you could be serving a couple who had arranged a babysitter for their only romantic night out that month, or a family running in for a quick dinner. Those are obviously two completely different experiences. My success was driven by my ability to accurately and quickly assess the customers' various needs, and then do everything possible to meet them. It taught me a great lesson about the importance of clearly understanding each customer's objectives and then executing specifically to that expectation.

> *Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity. I've been fortunate enough to have been prepared when luck came my way.*

What was your first job in the promotional products industry?
I worked at a sports apparel company back when licensed sports products were just coming into their own. I was a key account manager and was responsible for my company's relationship with the four professional sports leagues. I found that I was writing orders for league sponsorship premium programs thousands of units at a time, while my colleagues serving the retail trade were writing individual units. I knew that I had found my niche.

What motivates you in business and in life?
I try to do the very best job I can with every task I take on. My dad passed away last year and he ingrained in me that if it's worth doing at all, it's worth doing well.

What is your greatest professional accomplishment?
If personal success is the foundation for professional success, then I have the best possible base to work from with my wife and kids. And I love selling. It's all I've ever done. Plus, I have the honor and privilege of selling a world-class prestige brand—the very best you can buy. My challenge is to communicate the Tumi brand to our promotional products distributor base. Some get it and sell the brand very well. We broadcast the Tumi brand at trade shows and other educational opportunities. At Expo we demonstrate our products at **brand.**, the incentive products showcase. We invest in a 20- by 20-foot booth, one of the biggest at the show. It is a massive undertaking. Seven or eight years ago I would stand there in the Tumi booth and people would wonder what I was even doing there. At last year's Expo, by contrast, distributors were coming up to talk to me with specific questions about recognition programs, price points, incentives, and bringing some great opportunities with them. Tumi and many other well-known prestige brands are slowly but surely making progress with distributors.

What advice would you give to an industry newcomer?
I would advise any newcomer to get involved with the brands that operate in our supplier space. There are more brands than you can imagine that are incredibly eager to assist you with incentive, recognition and corporate gifting programs. They can drop ship, add logos and typically offer a wide variety of additional services. If you don't have brands in your selling portfolio, you are missing out on a huge opportunity to add significant value to your client relationships, block your competition and do some purely incremental business.

What is your secret to success?
I've been very lucky. There are a lot of ways to define luck, but I'll use the definition of luck that's related to effort. Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity. I've been fortunate enough to have been prepared when luck came my way. PPB

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

Mike with his wife, Bridget (far left), son, Philip and daughter, Catherine.

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Hitting The High Notes

SOUND LINE LLC GREETS PROMOTIONAL CLIENTS WITH NICHE PRODUCTS

BY JEN ALEXANDER

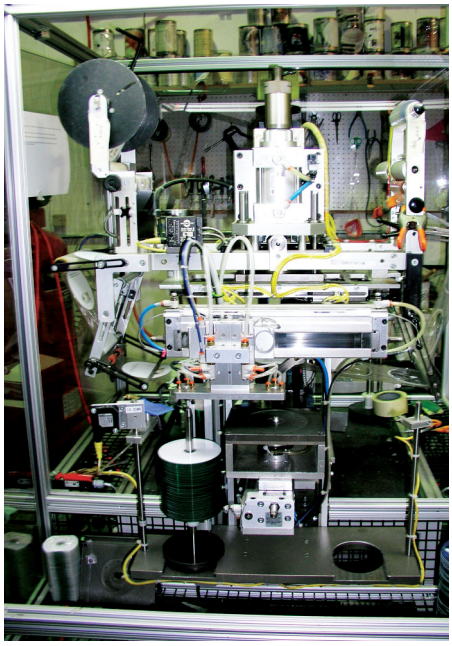
JOEL SCHAFFER, MAS, knows the benefits of keeping his ear to the ground. As CEO of Rockaway, New Jersey supplier Sound Line LLC (UPIC: 1SOUNDLN), he's been able to hear the trends coming before many others in the promotional products industry. Sound Line makes its mark by combining traditional greeting cards with audiovisual technology such as USB drives, CDs and DVDs—and content includes everything from music to software programs.

"As a small supplier, Sound Line fills a niche market," says Schaffer. "We were the first to introduce audio to our industry on a cassette in the mid-1980s. Now we've moved on to CDs, DVDs and USBs. To deliver the music, we fused print and technology in the form of a CD greeting card and, more recently, a USB greeting card and digital-download greeting card."

Read on to learn how Soundline combines traditional greeting cards with functional, mailable technology.

Jen Alexander is associate editor for PPB.

"The process starts with a design that is modified to fit a CD face and match a printed greeting card," Schaffer explains. The CD can start out as a raw bag of polymer; 90 percent of all orders start with a blank CD.



A transfer film with four-color art is fused to the surface of the disc on a robotic machine that applies heat and pressure, thus transferring the image in a thermal process.

ABOUT SOUND LINE LLC

Founding date
1986

Principals
Joel Schaffer, MAS, CEO
Elyse Schaffer, CAS, President

Notable accomplishments
First promotional products supplier to provide audio products, and first to produce DVDs and CDs for the industry

Size of production facility
6,000 square feet

Number of employees
14 full time, plus additional part-time staff

Types of specialized equipment
CD/DVD decorating equipment, screening, digital printing

Specialized training
Print and digital-media production

Top Three Products:
CD greeting cards
Custom CD duplication
Variable data printing

The card is printed on digital equipment then cut and scored, and the two products are then assembled to provide a greeting card with a gift. American-made cardstock is printed in-house to craft the greeting cards, says Schaffer.

"The credit-card USB flash drive is made in China, but decorated and loaded in our facility. The card delivers greetings while the USB, which can be used for future storage, delivers music or even a medical information storage program." PPB

SNAPSHOTS

PHOTO: PSI TRADE SHOW

Booths from European-market suppliers, including Prodir, PF Concept, SENATOR, elasto form, Giving Europe, Pelikan and INSPIRION filled the PSI Show's exhibit hall.

Growing European Promotional Products Market Fuels 2016 PSI Show

The 54th PSI Show reported a strong performance and increased attendance at its most recent event, which ran January 13-15 in Düsseldorf, Germany. Organizer **Reed Exhibitions** attributes the show's performance to an eight-percent year-over-year increase in exhibitors and a 3.7-percent increase in visitors, and on the share of international attendees climbing to 55 percent. Reed Exhibitions recorded 932 exhibitors, up from 878 in 2015; and 16,810 visitors, up from 16,218 last year.

PHOTO: PSI TRADE SHOW

The centerpiece of the show's Textile Area was the catwalk, where models showed off the industry's latest apparel.

PHOTO: PSI TRADE SHOW

A new addition to the show for 2016, the Competence Area, concentrated show floor information, networking and technical resources for exhibitors and distributors.

The SAGE Conference Draws Audiences Eager To Learn

The **SAGE Conference**, coinciding with The PPAI Expo at the Mandalay Bay Convention Center in January, drew distributors and suppliers to view the latest developments in SAGE products and services, learn about industry trends, receive business guidance, attend personal training sessions and more.

SAGE President David Natinsky, CAS, welcomed attendees at the start of the SAGE Conference.

The conference offered attendees one-on-one consultations on SAGE's technology and services.

YOUR PHOTOS HERE

Send us your company or industry organization photos for possible inclusion in Snapshots in an upcoming issue. Email high-resolution images to *PPB*'s News Editor James Khattak at JamesK@ppai.org and be sure to include a description, plus your name and contact information.

IMA Presents Lifetime Achievement Award To Norma Jean Knollenberg

At the reception honoring Knollenberg's accomplishments, fellow IMA volunteers Sean Roark, CPIM, owner of PromoPros/IncenPros (left), and Spencer Toomey, CPIM, senior vice president of Luxury Lines by MMSC and president of IMA, joined her in celebrating her tenure with the association.

Norma Jean Knollenberg, CIP, CPIM, was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award and a lifetime membership by the **Incentive Marketing Association** (IMA) at a reception in her honor during The PPAI Expo 2016. Knollenberg, former president and owner of Top Brands, Inc., recently sold the business and announced her retirement to spend more time with her husband, Gus, and family. She also recently completed her term of service as a member of the PPAI Board of Directors.

skucon workshop leaders and presenters on stage during the event's first day at the Inspire Theatre.

skucon Adds commonsku's Own Brand Of Education, Connection To The PPAI Expo 2016

commonsku's second annual skucon was held January 10-11 in conjunction with The PPAI Expo 2016. The two-day event began at downtown Las Vegas' Inspire Theatre, offering collaborative workshops for industry principals and senior managers. On its second day, skucon moved to the Mandalay Bay Convention Center alongside Expo, where education focused on the best practices of the platform and catered to an audience of sales reps, coordinators, and administration and operations staff. PPB

YOUR PHOTOS HERE

Send us your company or industry organization photos for possible inclusion in Snapshots in an upcoming issue. Email high-resolution images to *PPB*'s News Editor James Khattak at JamesK@ppai.org and be sure to include a description, plus your name and contact information.

Workshop participants tackle some of the themes of skucon's first day, including entrepreneurship, business and personal growth, and elevating the medium.

One of skucon's keynote speakers, Paul Kiewiet, MAS+, spoke on discovering purpose and creating meaning.

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PEOPLE NEWS

By James Khattak

Esmeralda Anaya

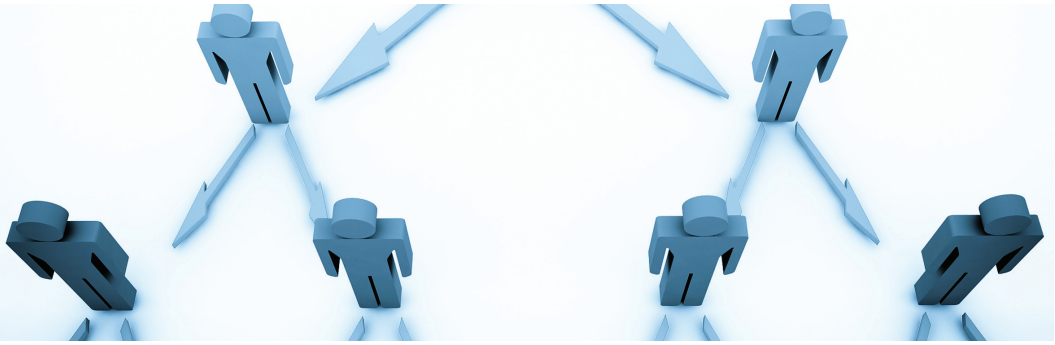
Ian Brudenell

Eric Gorghuber

Alisha Kallappa

Kyle Krause

Larry Krause



See who has moved in—and up—in the promotional world.

BUSINESS SERVICES

DistributorCentral (UPIC: DC)—**Alisha Kallappa**, support specialist

ZOOMcatalog (UPIC: Zoom-cat)—**Chris Reida**, supplier solutions consultant

DISTRIBUTORS

AIA Corporation (UPIC: advinadv)—**Clay Hall**, director of field sales management

American Solutions for Business (UPIC: AMER0005)—**Eric Gorghuber**, promoted to IT senior director

The Flesh Company (UPIC: FRD02)—**Cathy Shiflett**, Parsons, Kansas, sales support team

Summit Group, LLC (UPIC: summit)—**Louis Guzzo**, project delivery director; **Kenneth "KD" Wittenberg**, client solutions manager, and **Eleanor Andres-Cruz**, senior merchandiser

SUPPLIERS

Ads On Magnets (UPIC: ADmagnet)—**Julia Moerman**, customer service and sales manager

Fields Manufacturing (UPIC: FIELDS)—**Larry and Kyle Krause** of LDK Marketing to represent the company in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas

Gemline (UPIC: GEMLINE)—**Ross Dohrmann**, director of account management

Halls & Company (UPIC: IDLINE)—**Joe Eberz** of Joe Eberz & Associates to represent the company in the north central U.S., **Tony Tuso** of Tuso Marketing for the Southwest, **Joe Keely** of Select Lines Marketing for the south central U.S., and **Scott Hareid** of Promo-Connections, Inc. for the upper Midwest

Hirsch Gift (UPIC: HIRGIFT)—**Scott Blankenship** of Blankenship Marketing Group to represent the company in Arkansas, Oklahoma and North Texas; **Sharon Wohlleber** of The Integrity Sales Group for Louisiana and South Texas; **Anne Piotter** of Cannon Marketing Group for Eastern Iowa and Eastern Missouri; **Charlie Burnett** of Focus Marketing for Western Iowa, Kansas, Nebraska and Western Missouri; and **Mark Shinn, MAS**, for Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, Oregon and Washington

Hub Pen Company (UPIC: HUBPEN)—**Ian Brudenell**, inside sales executive for the West Coast; and **Gerard Schifano** of The Schifano Group to represent the company in New Jersey, New York City and Long Island

Innovation Line (UPIC: INNOV8)—**William Pardue**, vice president of operations

Mike Brothers Emblematic Solutions (UPIC: MikeBros)—**Joe and Jennie Eberz** of Joe Eberz & Associates to represent the company in Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan and Ohio

Pentel of America, Ltd. (UPIC: PENTEL)—**Sonia Long**, customer service manager for the Pentel Imprint division

Pro Towels (UPIC: PROTOWEL)—**Jenell Sankey**, promoted to director of customer service

Proinnovative (UPIC: PROINNOV)—Incentives West (UPIC: IDEAWEST) will represent the company in the Western region; **Steve De Mars** will serve the SAAC and AZPPA regional markets, **Mark Shinn, MAS**, will serve NWPMA, PMANC and RMRPPA markets, and **Mary Jo Bieker** will be available in a support role

Terry Town (UPIC: TERRYTWN)—**Esmeralda Anaya**, marketing coordinator

IN MEMORIAM

Don Lafferre, CAS, owner of **Priority Promotions**, a St. Louis-based distributor, and the 2014 PPAI Hall of Fame inductee, passed away on Tuesday, December 22. He was 87.

Lafferre attended Indiana State University after serving in the U.S. Navy. While Lafferre was a senior, an associate professor recommended him for a position with a local promotional products firm, Terre Haute Advertising (THADCO). Although he was an accounting student, he accepted the interview and took a position with THADCO as a sales manager. Lafferre continued in the promotional products industry for 64 years.

For most of his career, Lafferre worked to support the progress and success of the industry, including as a member of the PPAI Board of Directors, PPAI committees and advisory councils and for landmark legislative actions. He was a consummate ambassador, writer and activist, and was one of the most fervent speakers in the PPAI ADvocate program, speaking in support of the promotional products industry to educate businesses, community groups and schools on the power of promotional products.

While serving on the PPAI Board of Directors, Lafferre contributed to the formation of the Regional Association Committee and the recommendation to move the Association headquarters from Chicago to Irving, Texas, and helped facilitate the acquisition of the industry's premier trade publication now known as *PPB*, and the creation of a fair dues structure. Lafferre was inducted into the PPAI Hall of Fame at The PPAI Expo 2014.

Don Lafferre, CAS

"Don was humbled, honored and appreciative of the award, and to be recognized among people who were icons, pioneers and mentors to Don in his early years in the business," says Dave Lafferre, his son. "Did you ever see a child at Christmas looking at the gifts under the tree? Don had that same inner child 'glow' every time someone mentioned his Hall of Fame status."

Outside of the promotional products industry, Lafferre's passions included the city of Florissant, the St. Louis, Missouri suburb he moved to in 1960. At the mayor's request, he joined the first Florissant Senior Commission Board, and for the past 15 years worked to improve activities for senior citizens in the community. His efforts were rewarded last year, when Florissant was named the No. 1 small city in America to retire to by Movoto.com. Lafferre was also active in the Knights of Columbus, a Catholic men's fraternal service organization that supported church and local communities with service and philanthropic efforts.

Lafferre is survived by his wife, Dennise; daughter and son-in-law, Jean and Brian (Lafferre) McFerron; son, Dave; brother, Tom Lafferre; granddaughter and grandson-in-law, Alyssa (Lafferre) and Tylor Lampkin; and great-grandson Rigby Jax Lampkin.

Services were held for Lafferre at St. Norbert's Catholic Church in Florissant. The family asks that donations be made in his honor to the Promotional Products Education Fund (PPEF) or to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital.

In August 2012, the PPAI Board of Directors voted to create a Hall of Fame Memorial Program utilizing PPEF's Named Scholarships to honor Hall of Fame members for their lifetime contributions to the Association and industry. The PPAI Board will match donations up to $2,500 to fulfill the $5,000 commitment needed to create a Named Scholarship through the PPEF. To date, HOF Named Scholarships have been created in memory of Gene Cesario, Marvin Spike and H.D. Joe Stratton. PPB

To make a gift to establish a scholarship in Don Lafferre's name, send a check payable to PPEF mentioning Lafferre in the memo line and mail it to PPEF, 3125 Skyway Circle North, Irving, Texas 75038. Gifts can also be made online at www.ppef.us. Click on Donate and enter the gift as a Memorial/Honorary gift.

Sonia Long

Chris Reida

Jenell Sankey

Gerard Schifano

GOT NEWS?
We'll share it. Send your people news, including high-resolution images, to *PPB* News Editor James Khattak at JamesK@ppai.org.

DATEBOOK

FEBRUARY

February 8-9
PPAMS MidSouth PromoShow
Promotional Products Association of the Mid-South
Nashville, Tennessee
www.ppams.org

February 9-11
ASI Dallas
Advertising Specialty Institute
Dallas, Texas
www.asicentral.com

February 10-11
GAPPP Expo/University
Georgia Association of Promotional Products Professionals
Atlanta, Georgia
www.gappp.org

February 15-19
Southern Showcase
LDK Marketing
New Orleans and Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Little Rock, Arkansas; and Tulsa and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
www.LDKmarketing.com/southernshowcase

February 22-23
NEPPA Season Opener Expo
New England Promotional Products Association
Foxboro, Massachusetts
www.neppa.com

MARCH

March 2-3
TRASA Expo
Three Rivers Advertising Specialty Association
Mars, Pennsylvania
www.trasa.net

March 7-8
CAAMP Carolinas Connection
Carolinas Association of Advertising and Marketing Professionals
Concord, North Carolina
www.caampers.org

March 8
UMAPP Fire & Ice Show
Upper Midwest Association of Promotional Professionals
Shakopee, Minnesota
www.umapp.org

March 9
PPAW Spring Fever
Promotional Products Association of Wisconsin
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
www.ppaw.org

March 9-10
VAPPA Spring Expo
Virginia Promotional Products Association
Richmond and Roanoke, Virginia
www.whymappa.org

March 10
PPAChicago New Product Ideas Show
Promotional Professionals Association of Chicago
Arlington Heights, Illinois
www.ppachicago.org

March 29
CASA Tropical Show
Caribbean Advertising Specialty Association
San Juan, Puerto Rico
www.casapr.org

APRIL

April 8
HPPA Cool Stuff Show
Houston Promotional Products Association
Houston, Texas
www.houstonppa.org

April 13-14
GCPPA Success Summit
Gold Coast Promotional Products Association
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
www.gcppa.org

April 21
PMANC Showcase
Promotional Marketing Association of Northern California
Monterey, California
www.pmanc.org

April 26-27
NWPMA Spring Showcase
Northwest Promotional Marketing Association
Portland, Oregon
www.nwpma.org

MAY

May 3 & 5
Southern Showcase
LDK Marketing
Denver, Colorado
Albuquerque, New Mexico
www.LDKmarketing.com/southernshowcase

May 12
CPPA NoVA Showcase
Chesapeake Promotional Products Association
Springfield, Virginia
www.cppa.biz

May 19
MiPPA "Ideas in Bloom" Show
Michigan Promotional Products Association
Grand Rapids, Michigan
www.mippa.org

May 20
UMAPP Room Show
Upper Midwest Association of Promotional Professionals
Bloomington, Minnesota
www.umapp.org

May 23-27
Promotional Products Work! Week
Promotional Products Association International
www.promotionalproductswork.org

May 25–26
PPAI L.E.A.D.
Promotional Products Association International
Washington, DC
www.ppai.org

To scope out other events, visit www.ppai.org and click on the industry calendar.

NEW MEMBERS

New Members Joining In November 2015

BUSINESS SERVICES

MIDSOUTH DESIGN GROUP
PPAI# 577448 UPIC: M577448
Tucker, Albin, & Associates
PPAI# 655078 UPIC: TAA

DISTRIBUTORS

3 Day Promo
PPAI# 655787 UPIC: 3655787
90 Point, LLC
PPAI# 654664 UPIC: 9654664
Abform, Inc.
PPAI# 187526 UPIC: ABFO8336
Ad-Wear Advertising of Colorado
PPAI# 103411 UPIC: ADWE0002
AIA/GF Advertising Services
PPAI# 524639 UPIC: GF1274
All-N-One Screen & Pad Printing
PPAI# 508641 UPIC: allnone
American Branding Group
PPAI# 196493 UPIC: GALLADV
American Solutions for Business
PPAI# 655329 UPIC: A655329
Beacon Of Light
PPAI# 655491 UPIC: B655491
Big Rhino Screen Printing
PPAI# 654270 UPIC: B654270
BP Promo
PPAI# 655821 UPIC: B655821
Branded
PPAI# 653800 UPIC: B653800
Branding Impact
PPAI# 386388 UPIC: MYAWARDS
C&S Enterprises
PPAI# 553210 UPIC: C553210
C2 Design & Development, LLC
PPAI# 598358 UPIC: C598358
Calloway Promotions
PPAI# 653802 UPIC: C653802
Campaigns and Promotions USA
PPAI# 350722 UPIC: CPUSA
Cesium Creations
PPAI# 653551 UPIC: Cesium
Corporate Image, Inc.
PPAI# 655018 UPIC: C655018
Corporate Impressions, Inc.
PPAI# 655217 UPIC: C655217
Corporate Promotions, Inc.
PPAI# 655309 UPIC: C655309
Elite Branding
PPAI# 654653 UPIC: E654653
Extreme Awards & Engraving
PPAI# 624245 UPIC: E624245
Fit Gear
PPAI# 625064 UPIC: fitgear
Futura
PPAI# 654673 UPIC: F654673
Grand Designs
PPAI# 384031 UPIC: GD91
Groggy Dog Tees of Montgomery
PPAI# 655402 UPIC: G655402
Hadu Projects
PPAI# 611256 UPIC: Hadu
Happle Printing Partnership, Inc.
PPAI# 655300 UPIC: H655300
Hunter Licensed Sports Distributing Corporation DBA Hunter Canada
PPAI# 570202 UPIC: Hun2204

NEW MEMBER Spotlight

Mascorro Leather
Yamina Mascorro
Owner
Commerce, California
PPAI# 385455 UPIC: Mascorro

How did your company get its start? We're a family-owned and operated company that has been in business for about 40 years. My parents founded it as a grassroots operation that started in our family's garage, selling to flea markets and swap meets. Eventually, we started going to trade shows. We've catered to the Harley-Davidson market for 30 years, and we do private label for a number of companies. Today, we have about 65 employees and everything's done at our facility in Commerce, California.

What led your company to enter the promotional products market? We started getting calls from clients in the promotional products industry asking for our products. We saw that we were missing some opportunities and decided to get a better hold of them. We pride ourselves in offering "Made in USA" products at a competitive price.

What's your favorite thing about being in the promotional products industry? I like all of the different projects and companies that you get to deal with. Some are tiny, some are huge. It's the diversity of the industry. And I like seeing our products tied to some big names out there, especially when they are American companies.

Why did you join PPAI? We were doing a lot of work without being a member, and thought it made sense to actually join. It also gives us more visibility into this market. —*James Khattak*

ICMP, LLC
PPAI# 655334 UPIC: ICMPLLC
Imagine Unlimited Promotions
PPAI# 651878 UPIC: I651878
In Time Graphic Signs & Tees
PPAI# 477535 UPIC: intimems
Infinity Signs North West
PPAI# 655609 UPIC: I655609
INKMINDED.COM
PPAI# 465158 UPIC: I465158
Inkpressive Promotional Solutions
PPAI# 654436 UPIC: INKPROSO
IPROMOTEu/Promo Xperts, LLC
PPAI# 235329 UPIC: pxperts
Jezpromo
PPAI# 544132 UPIC: jezpromo
JH & Associates
PPAI# 186655 UPIC: JHAS0001
Jolin Promo
PPAI# 655228 UPIC: J655228
Kosicks Keepsakes
PPAI# 350256 UPIC: kkevents
M & M Graphics, Inc.
PPAI# 183249 UPIC: MMGR0002
MacPS
PPAI# 645235 UPIC: M645235
Madtown Laser
PPAI# 646807 UPIC: M646807
Magnet Marketing Services
PPAI# 653529 UPIC: M653529
Master Monogram
PPAI# 647947 UPIC: M647947
Metro Printed Products
PPAI# 283099 UPIC: METRP003
Minuteman Press
PPAI# 655220 UPIC: M655220
Mojave Copy & Printing, Inc.
PPAI# 655506 UPIC: M655506
Netherton Promotions, Inc.
PPAI# 383193 UPIC: netpromo
OC Imprints
PPAI# 654146 UPIC: oci2015
OKimprints
PPAI# 651663 UPIC: O651663
One to One Marketing, LLC
PPAI# 652577 UPIC: O652577
OPACS
PPAI# 651665 UPIC: O651665
Oswald Marketing
PPAI# 101579 UPIC: OSWA0001
P.J. Desrosiers - High School Promotions
PPAI# 478048 UPIC: AIMPRO
Parker Promotions
PPAI# 351648 UPIC: 1267
Partners N Promotion
PPAI# 438412 UPIC: vickic
Preferred Marketing Apparel
PPAI# 655331 UPIC: P655331
Prime Time Sports
PPAI# 655036 UPIC: P655036
Promo 330, Co.
PPAI# 198286 UPIC: T198286
PS It Matters
PPAI# 655607 UPIC: P655607
Quinn Strategies
PPAI# 655617 UPIC: Q655617
Redding Company
PPAI# 654920 UPIC: R654920
Rock, Paper, Scissors
PPAI# 316446 UPIC: Rockpap
Signature Print & Promo
PPAI# 654041 UPIC: S654041
Smile Keepers
PPAI# 650316 UPIC: S650316
SRC Connextions
PPAI# 485746 UPIC: S485746
Starboard
PPAI# 655020 UPIC: S655020
Sterling Promotional Advertising
PPAI# 182508 UPIC: STERLING
STEWART PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS
PPAI# 421163 UPIC: S421163
Stubbies Promotions
PPAI# 655759 UPIC: S655759
SUCCEED MARKETING AND PROMOTIONS
PPAI# 651113 UPIC: S651113
Sunflower Promo
PPAI# 654941 UPIC: S654941
Synergize Sports Marketing
PPAI# 655785 UPIC: S655785
Tabookai International
PPAI# 654319 UPIC: tabookai
The Apparel Depot
PPAI# 652532 UPIC: A652532
The Foundry Brand Services Group
PPAI# 655141 UPIC: F655141
The Print Group
PPAI# 655504 UPIC: P655504
The Rock Promotions
PPAI# 563069 UPIC: V563069
TicketPrinting.com
PPAI# 650341 UPIC: T650341
Top of the World
PPAI# 654379 UPIC: T654379
Triple E Mfg & Design, Inc.
PPAI# 520459 UPIC: TEMFD
Uniform Solutions Plus
PPAI# 621095 UPIC: U621095
Victory Designs
PPAI# 429022 UPIC: ViDesign
Volleyball Anarchy, Inc.
PPAI# 655344 UPIC: V655344
Xico
PPAI# 654839 UPIC: X654839
Zillen Business Solutions
PPAI# 653843 UPIC: Z653843

REPRESENTATIVES

Shawn Naeter and Associates
PPAI# 654775 UPIC: SNA

SUPPLIERS

Cool Towel
PPAI# 654022 UPIC: C654022
Delmar Products, Inc.
PPAI# 441657 UPIC: DLMR
Devicewear
PPAI# 654876 UPIC: D654876
Double Exposure, Inc.
PPAI# 113714 UPIC: DOUB0004
Hubschercorp
PPAI# 655306 UPIC: H655306
inTransit Global
PPAI# 654641 UPIC: TRANSIT
Mayshen, Inc.
PPAI# 401359 UPIC: mayshen
MedalMinder
PPAI# 652460 UPIC: neutek
O2 BRANDS, INC.
PPAI# 655629 UPIC: O655629
Pure Fishing
PPAI# 350714 UPIC: Fishing
ReversibleSweatshirts.com
PPAI# 440582 UPIC: RevSwts
Rooster Line
PPAI# 651510 UPIC: ROOSTER
Saharacase
PPAI# 653679 UPIC: S653679 PPB

Contact Sandy Mendoza at 972-258-3019 or SandyM@ppai.org with any changes. PPAI members can download a Word or Excel file complete with contact information at www.ppai.org. Find it under the Members/Members Only tab.

The *Creative* Calendar

Special observances call for exceptional promotions. Use these designated months and dates to ignite your imagination for relevant—and distinctive—client promotions.

June

National Oceans Month
Caribbean-American Heritage Month
Dairy Month

June 14
U.S. Army Birthday

July

Hot Dog Month
Cell Phone Courtesy Month
Women's Motorcycle Month

July 26
Parents' Day

August

Immunization Awareness Month PPB

August 4
U.S. Coast Guard Birthday

PHOTO BY PHIL LOWE/SHUTTERSTOCK

August 21
Senior Citizens Day

Bel Promo.....**IFC, 1**
305-593-8728 www.belpromo.com

BIC Graphic USA.....**5**
888-446-5242 www.bicgraphic.com

Essent.....**75**
800-559-9959 www.essent.com

Evans.....**BC**
800-745-3826 www.evans-mfg.com

EXPO.....**45**
888-I-AM-PPAI www.ppai.org

EXPO East.....**62**
888-I-AM-PPAI www.ppai.org

EXPO East.....**85**
888-I-AM-PPAI www.ppai.org

Gill Studios.....**53**
888-455-4422 www.gill-line.com

Hit Promotional Products.....**90,IBC**
800-237-6305 www.hitpromo.net

iPROMOTEu.....**33-34**
800-850-3370 www.ipromoteu.com

ISS.....**72**
888-I-AM-PPAI www.ppai.org

Kaeser & Blair.....**2**
888-698-1684 www.comparekaeser.com

Next Products.....**23**
877-851-9595 www.nextpromotions.com

Onara Enterprises LLC.....**58**
844-853-1330 www.onaraenterprises.com

Panola Pepper Corp......**81**
800-256-3013 www.panolapepper.espwebsite.com

PPB Subscription.....**67**
888-I-AM-PPAI www.ppai.org

SnugZ USA.....**20**
888-447-6840 www.snugzusa.com

The Distributor Exchange.....**61,65**
844-251-8544 www.thedistributorexchange.com

Visstun.....**7**
800-331-8405 www.visstun.com

Zoo Printing.....**9**
310-253-7751 www.zooprinting.com

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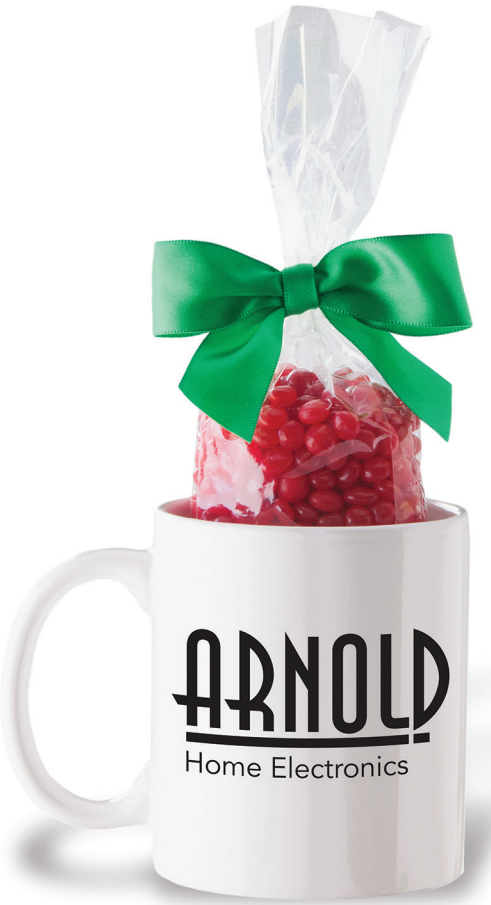
CERTIFIED QCA SINCE 2012

COUNSELOR DISTRIBUTOR CHOICE AWARDS SUPPLIER OF THE YEAR • 2011

COUNSELOR TOP 40 2015 SUPPLIER

Delivering Design on a Budget



CHOOSE YOUR MUG

CHOOSE YOUR CANDY STUFFER

CANDY STARS | CORPORATE COLOR CHOCOLATE | CANDY HEARTS | CHICLE GUM | CHOCOLATE LITTLES | JELLY BEANS | STARLITE MINTS | RED HOTS

As Low As
Ceramic Mug with Candy - Solids

Item #: **CERAMICMUG** — 3.75"H x 4.5"W	144	288	576
Empty	$3.31	2.87	2.50
Starlite Mints	$6.17	5.70	5.67
Red Hots, Jelly Beans, Chicle Gum	$7.09	6.62	6.59
Jolly Ranchers® (Bulk)	$7.88	7.41	7.38
Chocolate Littles, Candy Hearts/Stars	$8.09	7.60	7.55
Corporate Color Chocolates/Jelly Beans	$8.44	7.95	7.90

See Website For Pricing On Cobalt And Two-Tone Mugs

CHOOSE YOUR BOW COLOR

CHOOSE YOUR MASON JAR

CHOOSE YOUR CANDY FILL

STARLITE MINTS | CHICLE GUM | JOLLY RANCHERS® | CHOCOLATE LITTLES | CANDY HEARTS

RED HOTS | JELLY BEANS | CANDY STARS | CORPORATE COLOR CHOCOLATES | CORPORATE COLOR JELLY BEANS

25 oz. Mason Jar with Candy

Item #: **MASONJAR** — 6"H x 3"	180	300	600
Empty	$4.62	4.01	3.49
Starlite Mints (Bulk)	$7.48	6.84	6.29
Red Hots, Jelly Beans, Chicle Gum	$8.40	7.76	7.21
Jolly Ranchers® (Bulk)	$9.19	8.55	8.00
Chocolate Littles, Candy Hearts/Stars	$9.40	8.74	8.17
Corporate Color Chocolates/Jelly Beans	$9.75	9.09	8.52

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