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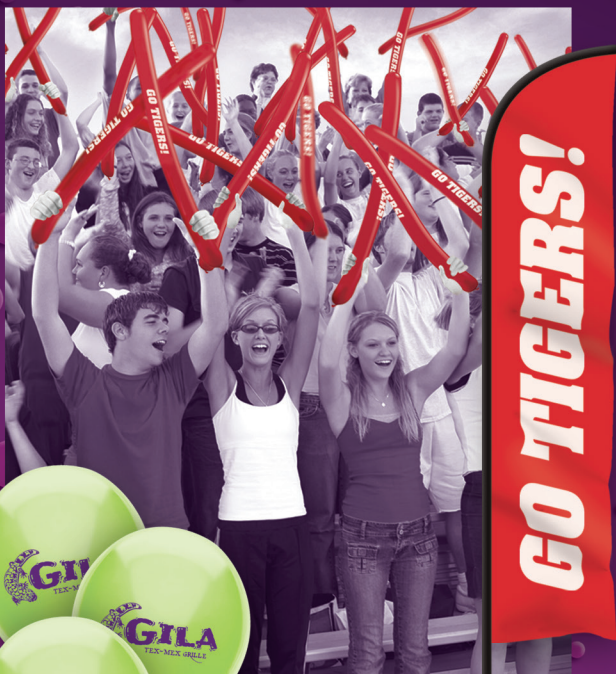


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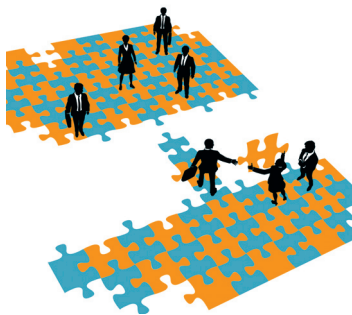
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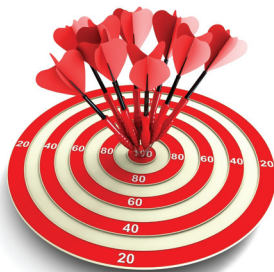
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The Official Business Monthly Of Promotional Products Association International

ON THE COVER: Cover illustration by Palto





PERSPECTIVES

**Rick Brenner, MAS PPAI Chair of the Board**

# Experience. Pass It On.

**HAVE YOU REACHED OUT TODAY TO HELP SOMEONE IN THE INDUSTRY?** Mentored a newcomer? Volunteered at your regional association? Presented on a panel at an industry meeting? There's no better way to protect the future of our industry than to share your expertise with your peers.

We're all the lucky beneficiaries of the wisdom and foresight of the industry legends who built this industry over the past 100-plus years. From the many PPAI Hall of Fame recipients to the hundreds of unsung heroes who have long since retired, all paved the way for our success today. They understood that by sharing experiences and helping each other learn they were enabling the industry to become more professional and well respected. They formed regional associations, shared experiences with colleagues, created industry education programs and built the strong PPAI education and certification program that we have today.

If you question the value of any of this, ask yourself how you learned the business. Who taught you the ropes—the basics, the nuances and the technical aspects of this industry? It didn't happen in college. There is no degree in promotional products. Other than experience, and trial and error, it's almost 100-percent guaranteed that you learned what you know from industry colleagues at your company, at

regional association meetings, in webinars taught by peers and at PPAI events during the year. You learned from people like you and me who offered their time and shared their expertise.

Everyone has important skills to share no matter their age or experience, or whether they have a lot of industry knowledge or very little. Even 20-somethings right out of college can teach their colleagues some valuable skills. Aside from their major field of study, most know how to shoot and edit video, enhance images in Photoshop, create PowerPoint presentations, and use Google Docs and other cloud services. Many are experts in the techniques of reaching and engaging an audience through text and social media, and most are masters with YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and Pinterest, along with other social media tools. If they share this expertise, it makes us all stronger.

At the other end of the spectrum, industry veterans have years of hard-

fought skills and experiences to share—and usually a fair number of battle scars to prove it. Ask any successful person how he or she became successful and you'll likely hear story after story about how their knowledge was acquired—these are all building blocks from one experience to another. Every experience is important. Success is cumulative. Share these life lessons with others and you'll help them succeed.

Whatever your skill, whatever your age, be willing to pass your expertise on to others. Offer to teach a class, sit on a panel at The PPAI Expo, join an online forum, mentor a colleague or start a networking group in your area. Whether you're an information technology expert, a whiz at market demographics, a master at sales presentations or a passionate professional in any other field of study—even, dare I say, product safety and regulatory compliance—pass that expertise, knowledge and experience on to your colleagues. You'll get great personal satisfaction and do a great service toward moving our industry forward for the next generation. **PPB**



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# FEEDBACK



## An ADvocate Program Success Story

*Produced by PPAI and ASI, the ADvocate program is a speaker training and local marketing initiative designed to train promotional products professionals on how to make presentations to end buyers about the power of promotional products and how to demonstrate why industry professionals are the most effective resource for their communications and marketing solutions.*

The ADvocate program has always interested me. So, at The PPAI Expo in Las Vegas, I took an education program on becoming an ADvocate and was

directed to a lot of support material through the Association.

As if the stars had aligned, I received an offer to be part of a panel at a charter school in Newark, New Jersey, and decided to try the ADvocate training I had taken. Would it be worth using several valuable hours of my workday to advocate for PPAI? I was not sure, but it was an opportunity to give back. I was to be on two panels, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. PPAI sent some promotional items, such as some stuffed bees and a few other things, and I brought a few items of my own.

It was inspiring! One student asked me to be her mentor. I gave out the bees and apologized that I could only give bees and that their teacher would need to give out the A's. But the big question: Did I waste most of a business day? Well, I could not solicit for my company according to the rules, but my panel and lunch included several others who ran major companies. They were happy to get my promotional material and cards after our panel was over, and most of them also wanted some of the ADvocate promotional material as well. One week later, I had an appointment with one company, a quote for a second and three



other prospects that represent very large organizations.

On my second panel, I was joined by three of my existing clients, so my opportunities for new business were limited. But the experience really helped us bond. Advocating for PPAI turned out to be a great opportunity to help some kids, make some connections and relate in a different way to some of my clients. It would have been difficult to achieve all of this any other way. Becoming an ADvocate has been a win-win situation.

**Ian Miller, Ed.M, MAS**

President  
I Miller International & Co.  
South Orange, New Jersey  
UPIC: IMILLER

**The Value Of Knowing Your Company's Value**

*The April issue of PPB featured a column by Jeffery Meyer, MAS, CEO of Certified Marketing Consultants, on benchmarking the value of an industry*

*company. Meyer's article looked not only at quantifying the current worth of a company but also on identifying its future earnings.*

Thank you for publishing the article "What's Your Company Worth?" Creating and building a distributorship that has value and is sellable is a real challenge. The article provides a good framework for what I need to do and how to prepare for the sale of my business, but I'd like to learn more about this topic.

**Avery Manko**

President  
The Manko Company  
Mendenhall, Pennsylvania  
UPIC: manko

I read with great interest and approval last month's "What's Your Company Worth?" by Jeff Meyer of Certified Marketing. Someone in Jeff's role would also raise these issues to business owners: 1. What is the realistic target market of buyers for your business, (financial or strategic? If strategic, what

is the strategy?); 2. In what ways do your business and your skills have different values to different buyers?; 3. Post-sale, what are your aspirations and continuing compensation needs, and what is the highest and best use of your talent?; and 4. Most importantly, how does one address the total destruction of equity value that ensues if the tipping point is reached and liquidity distress shakes the confidence of our supplier community? I say "most importantly" because as an active acquirer of distributor businesses, we have chosen to not consummate transactions that would not pay the trade in full.

**Marc Simon**

CEO  
HALO Branded Solutions  
Sterling, Illinois  
UPIC: HBS 

Send feedback on articles in PPB or opinions on industry issues to [JamesK@ppai.org](mailto:JamesK@ppai.org).



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# INNOVATE

PROFILE

## REFLECTIONS

SELCO'S LARRY ABELS LOOKS BACK ON A GLITTERING 50-YEAR CAREER

BY TAMA UNDERWOOD

**T**HOUGH HE SITS 1,350 MILES AWAY from his Tulsa, Oklahoma-based company, Larry Abels isn't far from the action.

From a company-issued phone in his home office in Naples, Florida, the chairman of watch supplier Selco (UPIC: SELCO) can quickly dial the extension of any of the company's 40 employees and speak with them as easily as if they were in the same building, or in the same state. He can even hear pages as they're broadcast on the company intercom.

"I get better information on the internet and through email—daily, anywhere I am in the world—compared to when I was sitting there running the company," Abels says. "It's more accurate, faster, more complete and the detail is great."

Abels introduced watches to the industry in 1965, when "the cloud" was an approaching rain storm, not a seamless system for remote data storage. He discovered that he loved the industry and the people in it, eventually dedicating himself to the promotional products business, serving on PPAI committees, creating the supplier networking cohort The Summit Group and hosting hot-ticket parties during The PPAI Expo.



### A Pleasant Surprise

Abels' career began at his father-in-law's chain of nine retail jewelry stores. To learn and grow in the company, he acquired all of the knowledge he could about diamonds and became an expert in precious stones of all sorts. When an oil company—there were a lot in and around Tulsa at that time—came looking for 200 watches to use as service and recognition awards, Abels was intrigued.

**LEFT** Larry Abels (left) handed the day-to-day operations of Selco to his son, Mark (right), 15 years ago, but still checks in on the Tulsa-based company daily.

**ABOVE** Members of The Summit Group gather 'round during an off-site meeting in 1989. Larry Abels (second from left) stands behind his wife, Felice (Faye) Abels.



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“Well, we had no idea what they were talking about, but we loved the idea of selling 200 watches,” he recalls.

A bit later, when a distributor representing Phillips Petroleum Co. inquired about creating sell sheets for the company’s eight different divisions, Abels’ interest grew even more.

“He said ‘Can you fulfill?’ We had no idea what he meant by that, but we said ‘Sure, we can fulfill,’” Abels says.

The order resulted in Abels supplying approximately 5,000 watches to Phillips’ employees.

“They sent us orders, and we sent each person a watch,” Abels says. “It turned out to be a great thing, and we were doing it by accident.”

Eventually, the company opened a separate division called Motivation, Inc., dedicated to selling jewelry to the industry. In its heyday, Motivation, Inc., had a showroom in Dallas, Texas, and for 30-35 years it produced items for Coca-Cola’s catalog.

Abels and his team started exhibiting at industry trade shows and joined the Association in 1965. “There were other watch suppliers that came and went, but once we hit it in 1965 we never left it,” he says of the industry.

### Big Business

In 1968, Abels’ jewelry business had become a publicly traded company with 50 retail locations, lease departments and precious jewelry salons in specialty stores such as Dillard’s and J.C. Penney, and others now gone that were on par with luxury retailer Neiman Marcus. By 1975, Abels was president.

“I became president of the company on my 36th birthday,” he says. “When I think about that, I think they were crazy to make a 36-year-old president of a public company. But I guess it worked.”

Abels oversaw both the retail and promotional products divisions, managing between 800 and 900 employees and living the high life of a jewelry executive.

“Have you ever seen *The Devil Wears Prada*?” he asks. “That’s the jewelry industry as well.”

Abels attended jewelry trade shows in New York and was lucky enough to be invited to black-tie “24-karat dinners” for industry insiders. These men-only events featured world-class entertainment and were held at the Waldorf Astoria.

“I thought I’d just be in the jewelry business for the rest of my life when I got in it,” Abels says. “It’s not that I didn’t like it. I liked it. I just loved the promotional products industry.”

### A Graceful Exit

By 1980, Abels was approached by the owners of Zales Corporation about merging the two jewelry companies. He agreed to the deal with one caveat: He would keep the incentive division and the Selco name.

So Selco became a privately owned company once again. Abels was the sole owner and kept the name, the customers, any inventory he wanted and an 18,000-square-foot office space in Tulsa.

“Retail was very, very tough,” Abels says. “It was not near as much fun as the promotional products business, and I still feel that today. In promotional products, we became very good friends with our customers. Some of my best friends have come out of the industry.”

With more time to focus on selling incentives, Abels launched The Summit Group. “I wanted to learn from what other people were doing because my background was retail jewelry. I had been in promotional products a long time, but I never had a lot of time to spend in it.”

The Summit Group began with seven owners of supplier companies and met twice a year, once at a different manufacturing plant and again in a resort setting. “We’d literally be like a board, telling each other all of our problems and asking what we were doing right or wrong and so forth,” he says.

Abels also brought a bit of his retail background to the industry. Inspired by the 24-karat dinners he attended as a jewelry exec, Selco hosted its own parties at Dallas’ Bank of America Plaza before Expo moved to Las Vegas. “It was a blast, but it got to be too expensive for one company to do,” he explains.

So he paired up with Mark Gilman, CAS, of Gill Studios, Inc. to host industry shindigs during Expo. They formed a group of approximately 30 other companies and called it The Club of Specialty Advertising, hosting hot-ticket parties with live entertainment.

### All Work And No Play

Like all good parties, Abels’ time leading Selco came to an end. He handed the reins to his son, Mark, 15 years ago but still keeps an eye on the business from his home in Florida, where he spends the winters, and his other home in Tulsa. When in Oklahoma, he reports to Selco four to five days a week, spending anywhere from two to six hours per day in the office.

Though it sounds like quite the life, Abels advises entrepreneurs to forget about vacation homes on the beach and to focus on their businesses instead.

“At 76 years old, it’s been a fantastic and mostly fun time,” he says. “Let’s hope it continues, and I look forward to seeing everyone in Las Vegas at The PPAI Expo 2016.” **PPB**



EYE ON APPAREL

# IT'S NO SWEAT

DRESS THE PART OF A TECH MOGUL WITH HOODIES AND SWEATSHIRTS **BY TAMA UNDERWOOD**

**W**HAT DO THE MEGA-SUCCESSFUL entrepreneurs of this century all have in common? It's not youth, fame or fortune. (Though they have these, too.) The one attribute they all share is a love of hoodies and sweatshirts.

Tech titans such as Facebook's Mark Zuckerberg and Snapchat CEO Evan Spiegel are known for sporting hoodies and sweatshirts at work and during public appearances. While not traditional sartorial indications of success—or even of a spot in the workforce at all—this mode of dressing serves as a status symbol, telling the world the wearer may break whatever rule he or she likes because they have earned the right to do so.

Researchers from Harvard Business School have found people who intentionally under-dress are frequently judged to be more successful when viewed in an environment where one would expect formality, such as an Ivy League classroom, an expensive boutique or a black-tie fundraiser.

But startup wunderkinds may also gravitate toward fleece because breaking “rules” in life helps them break barriers in their work. Employers have historically believed office workers behave more professionally when they stick to the company's dress guidelines, but who knows what could happen if staffers are allowed to wear what they want? Companies that are pushing boundaries must give employees freedom to think, and dress, differently.

If your clients are ready to dial back their employee dress codes, here's what they should know from Ty Cannon, national business development manager at Seattle, Washington-based supplier Cutter & Buck (UPIC: CUTT0001).

**When it comes to hoodies, pullovers are king.** Men and women of all ages and genders love to snuggle into hooded pullovers. They're also a great value tool for marketers because the lack of a zip-up front makes them easy to decorate.

**You can't beat screen printing.** It's the most common form of decoration for sweatshirts, but heat transfers, embroidery and woven appliques work equally well.

**Sweatshirts are always a good investment.** They're having a heyday right now, but sweatshirts and hoodies are not trends. Sweatshirts aren't going away anytime soon.

TAMA UNDERWOOD IS AN ASSOCIATE EDITOR FOR PPB.







**Fleece Crew Neck** A comfortable basic that stands out in crowd, it's made of soft, air-jet yarn and available in an assortment of colors.

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**Not only do they look good, but hoodies are practical, too. First Lady Michelle Obama often uses a hoodie to shield herself from the paparazzi while exiting her gym in Washington, D.C.**

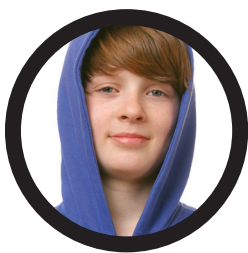
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## EYE ON APPAREL

**French Terry Crew** Clients with eco-focused brands will appreciate the soft, lived-in look of these garment-dyed crew-neck sweatshirts made of 100-percent cotton French terry.

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*UPIC: Blanks* [www.jamericablanks.com](http://www.jamericablanks.com)

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## HOODIES & SWEATSHIRTS



### Fleece Pullover Hood

Recycled plastic bottles are the basis for this cotton-poly hooded sweatshirt with a two-ply hood and durable cover-stitching throughout. **Hanesbrands**

UPIC: [HBIINC](#) [www.championlocator.com](http://www.championlocator.com)

### Heather-Fleece Crew Neck

This classic cotton-poly sweatshirt style looks fresh with garment-dyed colors and extra soft 30-singles face yarn. **Comfort**

**Colors by Chouinard** UPIC: [ComfortC](#) [www.dyehouse.com](http://www.dyehouse.com)



**Raglan Crew** Designed for softness and comfort, this cotton-poly sweatshirt has reverse cover stitching and comes in seven colors. **Independent Trading Co.** UPIC: [Trading](#) [www.independent-tradingco.com](http://www.independent-tradingco.com) **PPB**

## CASE STUDY

# EMPOWERING PRODUCTS

BLOGGER ERICA DERMER RECEIVED a custom sweatshirt advertising her gluten-free diet as a gift and decided to mass-produce the item for sale on her website, *Celiac and the Beast*. The logoed shirt featured images of a skull with wheat and read “Gluten Free For Life.” After successful sales, the website went on to offer adult and children’s clothing, tote bags and bumper stickers with gluten-free messaging.

“Wearing a hoodie with our skull and cross-wheat logo and our slogan ‘gluten-free for life’ makes me feel empowered, and dare I say it—cool,” Dermer says. “I didn’t think I could feel that way about being gluten-free. I have started so many conversations just wearing this shirt. I get to tell people about celiac disease and urge people to get tested if they show symptoms.”



PHOTO BY CELIAC AND THE BEAST





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# ART SMART

## A Distributor Asks:

One of our distributor salespeople was previously with one of our competitors. While with our competitor, she submitted artwork to a supplier for an order. After joining our company, she received another order with the same artwork. Who owns the artwork after an order has been placed and paid for, the end customer or the distributor?

### Susan Carter

Owner  
Ed M. Carter & Associates  
UPIC: EDMCP001

As long as the distributor has the supplier's order or reference number for

the previous order, then the distributor should be able to get a repeat order done for the end user, if the end user is contacting the same distributor. If not, then because the end user has paid for the order in the past, which included the

set-up or art charge, they should own the artwork and the distributor should supply them with the art file to use with whomever they prefer.

I have had this question come up on digitizing. If an embroiderer offers free digitizing, then they keep the file, but if the customer has paid for the digitizing, they should be able to keep the file to use with any other embroiderer they prefer.

### Mark Bennett

Senior Account Executive  
HALO Branded Solutions  
UPIC: HBS

I switched companies two and a half years ago. My clients gave me letters authorizing my new company, HALO, to use the existing artwork on file. The artwork belongs to the clients.



**Kippie Helzel, MAS**

Vice President, Sales  
Custom Plastic Specialties, Inc.  
UPIC: keystone

When a repeat order is placed by a distributor who did not do the original order, we ask the distributor to provide a letter from the end user authorizing the use of that same art for this “new” order. With that, we produce the order with a reorder set-up charge; or, if it is a co-op-program item with us, without a set-up charge according to our program guidelines.

**Joanne Worrall**

President  
JPR Consulting, Inc.  
UPIC: jprconsl

It depends if and how the art was billed in the first place. When a distributor uses a customer’s logo, trademark or provided graphic for a promotional piece, they are “licensing” the logo for that specific job or piece. The customer is not selling their rights to that logo, they’re just permitting its use on a specific product they’re ordering.

On the other hand, if the distributor creates a unique design for a customer, doesn’t use an actual logo, trademark or trade name, *and* if the distributor doesn’t charge the customer separately for the design, artwork or set-up, then I believe the distributor who did the initial creation owns that art. If the distributor has charged the customer for set-up or art, then the customer owns the design.

**Glen D. Eley**

Owner  
Eley Imprinted Products  
UPIC: ELEYP001

The quick answer is the end user supplies the logo or art and owns it.

Even if new art was created for this order by the distributor salesperson when he worked for another distributor, it should never be used for other client companies’ orders. So your new employee got a reorder from the same

company. He owns no art. The original client should merely provide the art or logo in question to your employee and place the reorder.

Now that this salesperson works for you, he or she brought you new business from past clients, so the client must give the salesperson the art or logo, which they own, to use on this order. Your salesperson owns nothing, unless they created something special. It’s possible your new salesperson brought this art file with them and now you both want to use it. Well, it’s done all the time, but I don’t think it’s kosher.

**Dawn Ruler, MAS**

Promotional Consultant  
Cedric Spring & Associates  
UPIC: CEDR0001

I have run into this issue in the past. Most suppliers will release the artwork with a release signed by the end customer stating they approve use of the artwork for an order. I usually supply a copy of the letter to my client and ask him or her to print it on their own letterhead before signing and returning it to me to send to the factory. I have not had any clients take issue with this.

**David MacMurdo**

Director, Marketing & Business Development  
Wilson Dunn Promotions Ltd.  
UPIC: WILS0001

The artwork is ultimately owned by the client. The more relevant question likely brings us back to the ethics of this particular scenario and refers back to the proper channel being used for processing the initial order and its artwork. The distributor that initially processed this artwork and order for the client holds title to that artwork, assuming he or she paid the artwork charges and did not pass them along to the client. If the salesperson moves on to another distributor and maintains the same client, then the new distributor should process

future orders for this client after paying full set-up charges again to re-establish the same artwork under the new distributor banner. This is fair to the past distributor and shows great ethics from the new distributor processing this business. This also keeps the supplier from being placed in a difficult situation.

The supplier ultimately wins on this as there is no guarantee they will not merely use the same artwork; however, this is out of the distributor’s control.

One stipulation: if the client actually paid the set-up charges to create the initial artwork for the first distributor, one could argue the client owns it, fully allowing the second distributor to use the existing supplier artwork. Again, to avoid any moral or ethical issues, it is likely better for the new distributor to take the high road and start the process as if it were new and pay the charges the first time. The fact they have gained the new client should be enough.

**Susan P. Kopperman**

President  
Careerlook  
UPIC: CARE8384

I read this question with a smile on my face. I always tell my customers they own their artwork. I charge them an art fee and set-up fee. When they place an order with me, it is using their artwork they have paid for. It doesn’t matter where I am. It is their proprietary artwork. I do the same with an embroidery tape. My fee is a one-time fee and the customer owns the tape. If they choose to order from another distributor, they can contact me for their artwork and I am happy to send it to them.

**Lee McCubbin, CRM**

Co-Owner  
McCubbin Trophy & Engraving  
UPIC: mctrophy

In order to fairly answer this question, I need more information. Did the customer submit the artwork? Did the distributor develop the art? Was a third-

party designer enlisted to help create the art and by whom? If the customer provided the artwork themselves or with the help of a third-party designer, I would consider that art to be theirs. If they asked the salesperson to develop the art, with or without third-party help, I would lean toward the developer as having the rights to the art. That may, indeed, be the distributor.

If the salesperson were to use that same art for any other customer, or while working for a different distributor, I would sincerely question the business ethics of that salesperson. If they were working for me, I would have to consider whether or not they just cast my company in the same questionable ethical position and whether or not they are worth the risk to employ. Granted, we all share a lot of graphic art ideas in this business. Some are generic while others are very specific. If my sales staff does not know the difference, they will be off my staff before they cost me any legal fees or hard feelings between companies in my industry. **PPB**



## DO YOU HAVE THE ANSWER?



### A Distributor Asks:

A supplier shipped a sample directly to us instead of to our customer. It was a good thing because they inserted literature from our competitor offering a discount. A month later, the same thing happened with a different supplier. When we complained, the supplier said it would not happen again. Yet a few months later, the same competitor's literature was inserted into the packaging again. Other than this snafu, the manufacturers in question are respected industry suppliers. We anticipate repeat orders, so we don't want to discontinue business with them. Other than paying more to have all shipments come to us first, what should we do to prevent this?

**What's your answer?** Email answers along with your name, title and company name to [Question@ppai.org](mailto:Question@ppai.org) by May 31 for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue of *PPB* magazine.



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# ARE YOU THE NEXT VICTIM?

BE ALERT, BE VIGILANT TO BE SAFE FROM SCAMS

BY TINA BERRES FILIPSKI

**I**N LATE JANUARY, LISA PARKE, owner of Advertising Specialties, LLC (UPIC: A330798) in Lexington, Kentucky, was busy with a client when she received a phone call from a woman named Valerie. The woman wanted to collect the \$100 she said she earned from a job listed by Advertising Specialties on Craigslist. The problem was that Parke had not posted a job. Suddenly both women realized they were part of a scam.

Unfortunately, scams are nothing new and, as technology has become more ever-present in our daily lives, opportunities for criminals looking to pull a fast one have become more pervasive and more elaborate.

In Parke's case, the scammers posted a listing on Craigslist offering an easy \$100 to anyone willing to go to a local mail store, sign for two boxes shipped there, re-label them and ship them to a Las Vegas address. Valerie bit.

She was told to pretend to be Parke's secretary and she completed the deed. When she didn't receive her \$100 as promised, she looked up the phone number for Advertising Specialties and made the phone call to Parke that revealed the scam.

Parke immediately called police who investigated and found out the scammers had gone to the Kentucky Secretary of State website, paid a \$10 filing fee and changed Parke's company address to the P.O. box. Then they opened a Verizon account with 15 phones listed under Parke's name. Three days later the perpetrators went back to the state website, paid another \$10 filing fee and reversed the address



change to try to avoid detection. It was also discovered that the two boxes shipped to the mail store contained cell phones and cases. Although the motive remains unknown, police think Parke was used as a middleman for tracking and Parke guesses this was a trial run. If the scam had not been detected, she thinks future shipments could have contained drugs.

Identity theft is one of the fastest-growing crimes with 19 people falling victim every

minute, according to credit reporting agency TransUnion. Parke faults the state's website for not having password protection. "We are living in a world of identity theft and there's no password protection on the Secretary of State's website," Parke says in dismay. "They are just putting our information out on a silver platter as if to say, 'Change anything you want for just \$10!'"

Although police have kept the post office box open in case the scammers decide to send

more packages, Parke is hopeful that her involvement is over. While she was fortunate not to have incurred any material losses, she is working to clear her name on a Verizon bill for \$4,051 for the 15 phone lines, despite her notification to the company that a scam was in the works.

Her mission at this point is to alert other small-business owners to check their state's Secretary of State website to ensure their information is password-protected and to watch for suspicious activity. Parke is proud of her efforts to effect some change. As a result of her actions, the state now emails business owners if any action is taken on the site regarding their company information. She has also been told that late this summer the state will add password protection to its website.

### Other Crimes To Watch For

Identity theft is just one type of a growing list of white collar crimes to which businesses can fall victim. Have you seen this email or one like it?

*Hi,*

*We will like to make a quote request on below items*

*a) 2500pcs 4GB USB FLASH DRIVE*

*b) 2500pcs 2gb micro sd card with adapter*

*c) 2000pcs 8GB usb flash drive*

*Regards*

*Matt*

*Purchasing manager*

*delta created*

*deltacreated@gmail.com*

This is an actual email that popped into my PPAI inbox as I was preparing to write this article.

"A lot of email scams are easy to spot," says Allison Schaffer, CAS, formerly the director of sales and marketing for technology products supplier Pingline and now a regional sales rep for TK Cups-Sorgs. "Scammers are typically looking for four or eight gig drives, and for external hard drives. Ninety to 95 percent of the emails are in broken English, may be addressed to Sir or Madam, have a lot of grammar mistakes and misspellings, and the emails often are from a gmail account."

## 18 Ways To Avoid Scams

1. Be alert to anything out of the ordinary. Lisa Parke says she should have become suspicious when she received several business calls asking for someone named Linda. Linda was the contact name given in the Craigslist ad.
2. Make sure your state's Secretary of State website is password protected. Companies located in Kentucky can call 502-564-3490 to ensure their email address is on file for activity alerts.
3. Be vigilant in checking your credit reports as often as possible and note any unfamiliar activity.
4. Check your personal credit card statements regularly for unauthorized charges.
5. When setting up a new customer, ascertain that the card holder name matches the name to whom the products are being shipped.
6. When shipping offshore, be wary of a shipping address that is an individual's home.
7. Research the address on Google Maps, which often provides snapshots of what a building looks like. Sometimes this step can help filter out fraudulent orders.
8. Make sure the address and phone number on the order match the information on the company's website.
9. Scammers almost always pay by credit card. When you establish open credit for an unfamiliar company, look it up in Dun & Bradstreet.
10. Double check the "Bill To" name on the order. Ascertain the credit card is not stolen.
11. Google the name of the company and call it to make sure it's genuine.
12. Be wary if you get an order from an unknown customer for promotional products that are normally decorated. Products with a high retail value such as undecorated t-shirts, USBs and other electronics are the products most often ordered in scams.
13. Be alert to emails with poor grammar and frequent misspellings. Business professionals likely have a better way of phrasing a request for pricing.
14. If the email address is a "generic" domain (Hotmail.com; google.com; msn.com), check out the order thoroughly.
15. Use caution if the requester offers to pay immediately by credit card or requests immediate shipment. This is often a red flag of a scam.
16. Be alert if the order "ship to" address does not match the "bill to" address.
17. Know the person or company to whom you are selling. If you don't know them, find someone you know who does.
18. Don't go for the easy buck. Chances are you won't collect.

Unfortunately, Schaffer is familiar with a number of situations where distributors fulfilled bogus orders and did not get paid. “The emails have been coming around for years but are more common now—and more frequent,” she says. “There are distributors who look at these emails and hesitate—with good reason. These emails are sent directly to suppliers and distributors—100 people at a time—hoping someone will bite. Fortunately, as a supplier, I do my due diligence to help my customers. If you are unsure, send the email to a supplier. Most suppliers who deal with tech products have probably gotten the email, too.”

She recommends distributors also do their due diligence by researching the email sender. If the email has an address for shipment, look it up on Google Maps and see what exists at that address. Call the phone number—if your call goes to a nondescript voicemail, that’s your first clue the order may not be legitimate. “I got an order by email with a ship-to address in Hackensack, New Jersey—but they spelled it wrong,” says Schaffer, a Jersey native. “The website was nondescript, so I Googled it and found the company and its address matched the one in the email but the phone number wasn’t working. I Googled the address, called the company and asked for the person in the email—there was no one there by that name,” she says. “Don’t take an order just because it looks good on paper. You may be out thousands of dollars.”

HALO Branded Solutions (UPIC: HBS) is one distributor on high alert to these types of scams and trains its employees and account executives to know what to look for. “We were lucky to catch on to the scams fairly quickly several years ago,” says Terry McGuire, CAS, executive vice president. He adds that the company started to notice a pattern in 2011. “We had challenges with a couple of orders and a couple that actually went through, but the person whose card was charged challenged the charges. We realized it was creating vulnerabilities with our credit card merchant services agreement.” The company looked at the pattern of fraudulent orders and sent a notice to its sales force to point out the characteristics of these fraudulent orders and has since eliminated them. HALO’s



## How An Apparel Supplier Filters Go From No-Go

Kevin Shea, manager of the inside sales team at SanMar (UPIC: SNMR), shares his company’s best practices to avoid order scams.

### Is there an email scam situation you can recall? What happened and when did you discover the order was fraudulent?

**Shea:** SanMar only sells to authorized customers, so we were unaware that they were involved in a scam until they let us know they had trouble with payments from some of their end users. Our customers mentioned that they had accepted and shipped orders, but were unable to collect payment once the products had been delivered because the end user supplied stolen credit card information. After a few of those calls, we realized that there might be a connection.

### What characteristics do these orders have in common?

**Shea:** We looked into the orders that our customers flagged as part of a scam and noticed some commonalities between the reports. The orders were generally for large quantities of t-shirts (all in one or two sizes and in one or two colors) and were shipped to common addresses and had common names associated with them.

### What steps is SanMar taking to prevent scams?

**Shea:** If our inside sales team notices a suspicious address or name we make it a priority to contact the customer that placed the order and share our concerns. We also have a dedicated inside sales team member who monitors the names and ship-to addresses that had been identified as suspicious by our customers. Scammers are always changing their tactics, but we do our best to provide our customers with the latest information we have if we think their order might be part of a scam.

### How is SanMar advising its customers?

**Shea:** We believe that it is a best practice to only accept orders from known or verified end users. We advise our customers to trust their instincts and if something seems odd about an order, ask more questions to verify the legitimacy of the customer and the order. A quick internet search can also be useful if other businesses have reported problems with certain addresses or end users.

Similar to what we recommend to our customers, we train our staff to pay attention to any orders that are strange or inconsistent with the typical customer order. If we discover an unusual order that seems like it may be part of scam or if we recognize that the ship-to address is one of the addresses flagged by customers, we share that information with our customers so that they can make the best decision.



“There are people who make it their mission in life to take advantage of people who aren't paying attention. We are always looking for what could be the next thing. The difference between now and four years ago is the ability for people to get large numbers of valid credit cards.”

—DAWN OLDS, HALO SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF OPERATIONS

internal accounts receivables area also adopted changes aimed at flagging questionable orders.

McGuire points out that the issue is more than about getting paid. “Just because the credit card goes through does not mean there won't be repercussions for distributors,” he says. “You risk the ability to work with the credit card companies in the future if you process payment that you suspect is not legitimate.” Dawn Olds, HALO senior vice president of operations, adds, “If the customer refuses the charge and they show they didn't authorize the charge, you will be charged back, and too many charge-backs will raise your rate with the credit card companies. Eventually, you will lose your ability to charge any customer cards.”

She also adds that if companies routinely accept bad cards, the news can quickly spread on social media and hurt the company's reputation.

HALO's stringent procedures have paid off, but companies can't let down their guard. “There are people who make it their mission in life to take advantage of people who aren't paying attention,” says Olds. “We are always looking for what could be the next thing.”

“The difference between now and four years ago is the ability for people to get large numbers of valid credit cards,” adds McGuire.

McGuire had a recent personal experience where the business credit card he uses for international travel was stolen while in China. A few weeks later, he noticed a \$6,000

charge on his statement from a printing company located about an hour away. “It was for a shipment of printed materials to India,” he says. He called the printing company and asked who authorized the charge. “They said, ‘We thought it was strange that someone with that accent was named Terry McGuire but we processed the card anyway,’” says McGuire, with a sigh. “The key thing is to have a written protocol on how to identify these types of scams and how to deal with it within your organization and distribute the information throughout your organization. You can't assume that it's as obvious to everyone else as it is to you.” **PPB**

Tina Berres Filipski is editor of *PPB*.



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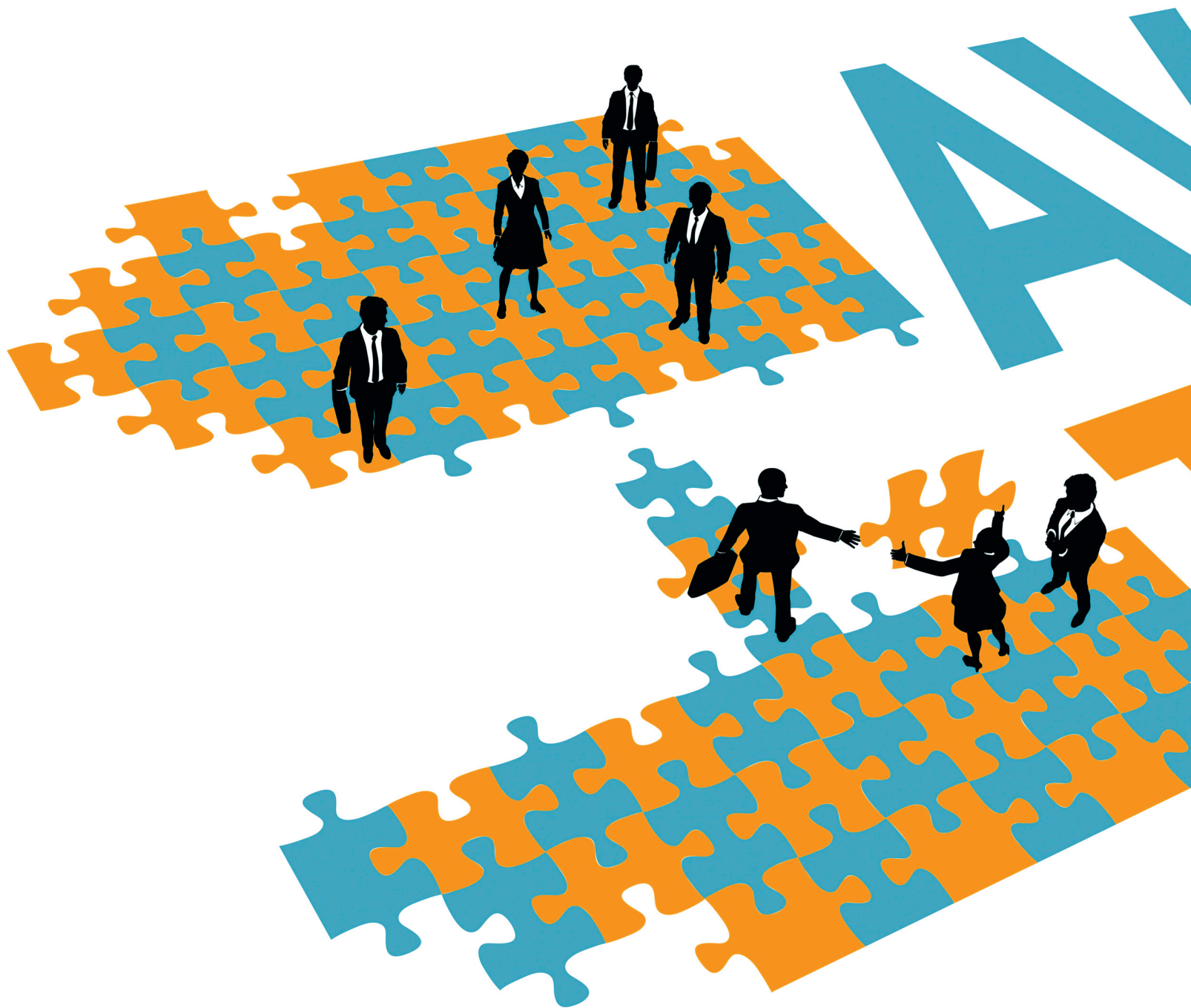
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# VERT THE Talent GAP



CULTIVATE THESE SIX CRITICAL SKILLS TO  
SUCCEED IN A NEW MARKETING ERA

BY MICHELLE M. SMITH, CPIM, CRP

BUSINESS LEADERS ARE GROWING more concerned about talent shortages every day. More than 63 percent of chief executives who responded to a PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) survey last year said they were concerned about the availability of key skills; and the majority of HR and other business leaders participating in a Hewitt Associates study rated the attraction and retention of skilled and professional workers as their top workforce challenge.

These concerns are heightened by escalating developments in technology and substantial shifts in workplace demographics. The challenges posed by Baby Boomers retiring are equaled by those of the Millennials' impact on the workplace. A seismic organizational shift is afoot—one that requires companies to redefine traditional mechanisms of employee recruitment, engagement and knowledge transfer.



## AVERT THE **TALENT GAP**

### Marketers At The Center Of Corporate Strategy

These realities represent a significant opportunity for marketing professionals, as they are uniquely positioned to build corporate alliances and develop new approaches that can drive organizational success amid these changes.

Armed with data-rich customer insights and collaborative tools, marketers can become strategic advisors to sales, IT, HR, product development and customer service—not to mention the entire executive suite. Their internal and external collaborations can create strong relationships with colleagues and customers that could dramatically inform these workforce issues.

### Nurturing The Talent Pipeline

Marketers who partner with human resources and other departments stand to significantly elevate their strategic value within the organization, and this isn't as far-fetched an idea as it may initially seem. Marketers are masters at tailoring the customer experience, but if they approach the workforce as a pool of high-value internal customers, they can also help tailor the employee experience.

This idea holds great promise—but it also demands that marketers integrate traditional competencies with new skill sets and explore talent management strategies to help recruit, engage and train the workforce, as suggested in the September 2014 research study, “Is Your B2B Marketing Department Tapping the Right Talent?” by Dr. Frank Mulhern of the FORUM at Northwestern University.

### Engaging A Multi-Generational Workforce

Millennials will dominate the workforce within the next five years, and their technology preferences demand their employers engage them through nontraditional forums. Corporate social networks and other platforms can provide a centralized place to communicate with peers, get information about company benefits, or learn about new organizational policies.

That's not to say that businesses can adopt a one-size-fits-all culture for talent management. The work environment instead needs to be customized for a diverse, four-generation constituency. These generations often approach work and consume information very differently, and that diversity can represent a profound internal communications challenge.

Businesses need to modify their talent acquisition, career planning, and a host of protocols for engaging and motivating a variety of employees. As a matter of fact, a majority of CEOs

from the PwC survey said the current shift in workplace demographics would have a significant impact on the way they do business over the next five years.

The same skills that marketers use to customize the customer experience can yield substantial benefits here. By partnering with HR, marketers can help create approaches that appeal to the unique characteristics of each segment of this diverse workforce.

In their own departments, marketers need to take an inventory of workers who are nearing retirement age in the next few years. Identifying the skill sets retirees will take with them can

help leaders foresee skill gaps and spur conversations about recruiting and training new and existing employees. Hearty succession plans and training programs are more important than ever.

### Sharing Skills And Knowledge

The transfer of existing knowledge stands as a key priority for marketers. “Among the issues affecting the ‘next generation’ workforce are impending skill shortages, an increasingly cross-generational and diverse workforce, the need for knowledge transfer from retiring Baby Boomers, and significant leadership gaps,” Hewitt researchers wrote in the report.

The learning curve of the digital era requires marketers to find ways to share knowledge not only within their own departments, but also among the clients they advise. The access to data and real-time tracking that empowers marketing departments also requires a commitment to continual employee training.

Marketers should add database management and analysis skills to their toolboxes, and help sales professionals understand and leverage the gains of these new capabilities. They also need to learn to engage audiences via mobile channels and to communicate with IT as they develop those channels. These types of knowledge exchanges require strong communication skills and can be facilitated by partnering with HR and IT to build innovative learning programs.

### Affecting Talent Acquisition And Management

Marketing leaders, armed with data and new technologies, have a significant opportunity to contribute to their company's cultivation and retention of a skilled workforce. Business leaders overwhelmingly report concerns about managing changing employee demographics and impending skill gaps, yet they also admit that talent management is an area in which their

*“Marketers who partner with human resources and other departments stand to significantly elevate their strategic value within the organization.”*



*Continued On Page 30*

AVERT THE **TALENT GAP**

# New Marketing Competencies And Skills

## Competency To Be Developed

## Critical Skills Needed



### 1. Become the corporate brain trust

- Strategic thinking: Envision pathways to achieve broad organizational goals.
- Leadership: Reach across silos. Work with HR, IT and sales to drive results.
- Analytics: Crunch the numbers, or manage analysts who provide that insight.



### 2. Develop deep customer insights

- Research: Harness data that helps you understand and connect with customers.
- Social media: Monitor social chatter and leverage insights as you shape strategy.
- Buyer journey: Map the paths your buyers follow. Deliver quality experiences.
- Leadership: Share insights with other departments and become a change agent.



### 3. Build a social brand

- Brand monitoring: Listen to online channels to understand brand perception.
- Communications: Research marketplace needs and develop relevant content.



### 4. Carry internal and external messages

- Communication: Develop strong speaking, writing and video production skills.
- Leadership: Be a role model. Share insights and set the tone of communications.



### 5. Bridge the gap with IT

- Management: Learn to guide the experts. Collaborate with IT.
- Technology: Explore new tools, and commit to a lifetime of learning.
- Analytics: Extract insights from data. Build long- and short-term strategies.



### 6. Bridge the gap with sales

- Data management: Identify prospects and monitor their paths to purchase.
- Communication: Collaborate with sales. Identify and ameliorate pain points.



## AVERT THE **TALENT GAP**

*Continued From Page 28*

organizations regularly fall short.

Avoiding talent gaps in marketing means keeping employees satisfied on a level beyond the paycheck. Employees want to be proud of the brands they represent, a focus that can be found among all four generations of the workforce. So strategic marketers are collaborating with HR to ensure that brands appeal to employees just as they do to customers, and this is possible because employees respond to the same types of branding campaigns that galvanize customer loyalty.

### **A Promising Evolution**

Global corporate leaders are looking for colleagues who can help them manage the digital learning curve. More than 80 percent of CEOs in the PwC survey said new technologies—social, mobile, analytical and the cloud—are transforming the way they operate. “For businesses, having a digital strategy will no longer be enough,” writes Bob Moritz, PwC U.S. senior partner. “Instead, they’ll need a business strategy fit for the digital age.”

Marketers are uniquely qualified to design and advance these new strategies too. The modern marketing department holds a talent mix that allows it to implement new technologies but also to place the gains of those systems in context. A well-designed department brings traditional marketing competencies to the table, as well as technical, analytical and leadership skills that allow organizations to benefit in a rapidly evolving digital environment.

But to thrive in these expanded roles, marketing departments will have to develop leadership programs to build the following six competencies, which the FORUM research found to be essential for current and future marketing success.

**1 Become the Corporate Brain Trust** Marketing transactions involve a diverse array of constituents. Businesses must be prepared to communicate with entire teams of buyers and clients—and to tailor communications to suit each individual role in a purchase. Moreover, department leaders across the enterprise must collaborate to build a cohesive engagement strategy that spans the customer experience.

This represents an opportunity for marketers who have the ability to extend their influence beyond their traditional function and into sales, IT and customer service. Successful marketers use automation platforms, social media listening pro-

grams and other digital tools to interact with customers and build customer insights. Those insights allow them to construct an overarching strategy and tailor the customer experience, providing them the opportunity to become the brain trust of the organization, pulling the levers that activate the best channels and strongest messages to create audience engagement.

**2 Develop Deep Customer Insights** Marketers need to home in on the digital body language of buyers who increasingly delay interactions with the sales force. They need to track clicks and listen to social media channels to determine the most effective pieces of content to serve next. And, as they work to pull prospects further along the sales pipeline, they gain much more than an understanding of marketing preferences.

Marketers have become the stewards of the overall customer experience. This relationship requires a substantial upgrade of traditional market research skills. It also requires marketers to understand the new talents they need to develop and how those new talents can serve the entire customer experience. To optimize their value, customer insights marketers gain must be applied beyond the borders of the marketing department.

And marketing technologies can increase the potential for communicating with audiences. Marketers can develop content to establish thought leadership or to gain new leads. Social media interactions can net new customers or reveal unmet needs that become opportunities for the product development team. New software can generate lists of

potential customers based simply on social media behavior.

These examples demonstrate both the challenge and the opportunity of detailed customer insights. Marketers may no longer be able to control the progression of customer interactions, but they can tap into multiple channels to uncover insights that help them shape a unique and successful approach to those same customers.

**3 Build A Social Brand** Many buyers have lost faith in carefully crafted marketing messages—a fact that will become more and more pronounced as Millennials gain influence. Millennials rely instead on their own research, often entering the relationship well into the buying journey.

To contend with this, marketers must adapt their approach.

*“Avoiding talent gaps in marketing means keeping employees satisfied on a level beyond the paycheck. Employees want to be proud of the brands they represent.”*



## AVERT THE **TALENT GAP**

They can no longer simply broadcast the brand message, they must embody it. Social channels offer opportunities to communicate corporate purpose and culture, and to build rapport with prospects and customers.

To do so, marketers need to develop communication skills that allow them to authentically participate in social media. As marketers move away from product-based messages, they must also build personalized interactions that address the customer as an individual. Their communications mustn't be perceived as selling, but as helpful and relevant, tapping into customers' interests and tailoring the message to deliver information that enhances the customer's engagement.

**4 Carry Internal And External Messages** Marketers can't simply focus on customers any longer; they also need to build insights to help their organizations rally workers around the brand, recruit new talent and better understand employee motivation.

Marketers will need to develop insights that allow them to understand both customer and colleague, increasing engagement on both fronts. Traditional approaches that separated these functions should instead be integrated, as the processes draw on similar marketing competencies. Corporate blogs, intranets and proprietary social networks can be places for collaboration, and social media breaks down the wall between internal and external communications.

**5 Bridge The Gap With IT** Marketers often point to the challenge of balancing left and right brain initiatives. To be successful, they need to blend art with science, but too often they let technology, data and analytics remain firmly in the domain of their colleagues in IT. This can be less than ideal because IT professionals rarely have the deep knowledge of the customer or the brand.

Marketers don't need to become analysts, but they do need to be able to guide the work of analysts, understand data and turn insights into strategy. Here they will likely need some training to develop their analytical skills and long-term strategies. Career-long learning programs will become the norm since the technology marketers utilize won't stop evolving, and it's highly unlikely that customers' expectations will do anything but increase as well.

**6 Bridge The Gap With Sales** The arc of the customer relationship has changed—lead generation and management have become increasingly complex, and access to data and real-time tracking are empowering deep insights. Sales leaders rarely have the skills or the bandwidth to take advantage of all this new technology, so they will need to rely on marketers more and more for this insight.

Changes brought on by the introduction of these new technologies will require marketers to rethink the concept of the sales funnel itself because the buying process is no longer linear. To lead this transformation, marketers must have data management skills that enable them to identify prospects and influence their path to purchase, as well as the ability to manage databases and use technology to track customers' progress.

### Marketers As Strategic Advisors

Out of necessity, marketers have become experts at navigating change. But the opportunities of the digital age exceed any simple notion of self-preservation. This is a time not to preserve, but to excel, and the FORUM research hopes to provide marketers with a path to that excellence.

Marketers must focus on the mechanics of new technologies and the strategic gains these new tools provide. They must step into the leadership role that now organically presents itself, and collaborate with colleagues across departments to shape employee and customer experiences that will drive long-term company growth. **PPB**

*"Marketers can't simply focus on customers any longer; they also need to build insights to help their organizations rally workers around the brand, recruit new talent and better understand employee motivation."*



*Named one of the Ten Best and Brightest Women in the incentive industry by Incentive Magazine, Michelle M. Smith, CPIM, CRP, is a highly accomplished industry leader; international speaker, author and consultant. A respected authority on leadership, internal branding and employee engagement, she is past-president of the FORUM for People Performance at Northwestern University, vice president of research for the Business Marketing Association, and president emeritus of the Incentive Marketing Association, among many other prestigious board positions past and present. Smith is vice president of marketing for O.C. Tanner. Reach her at michelle.smith@octanner.com.*





# FOCUS ON THE BUYER.



## WEEK

MAY 18-22, 2015

## BUYERS: Educate. Inform. Inspire. Let's Work Together.

You've met the stars of the Product Persona campaign, and now it's time for buyers to meet them. We created the Product Persona branding campaign in order to give popular promotional products a personality and voice so buyers can visualize how these products resonate with consumers.

Here's where you come in. We need your help to make this campaign a success. All you have to do is add your logo to the ads we've created, and you're ready to go. The Product Persona marketing toolkit is available to you by contacting [PPW@ppai.org](mailto:PPW@ppai.org)

There's even a buyers-only website, [PromotionalProductsWork.org](http://PromotionalProductsWork.org). Be sure to check it out and tell your buyers about it.





## The Yogi

The Yogi is tall, slim and has perfect posture. Her strawberry-lemon water is a hit at the post-yoga potlucks. When she's not at the studio, you can find her splashing near the pool or shopping at the local farmer's market. Her favorite meal? Fire-roasted vegan pizza topped with fresh avocado.

#InfuseH2O



YOUR LOGO  
HERE



## The Energizer

Every morning, The Energizer can be found hanging out in the kitchen, where he has tasted some of the world's best coffees and teas. He is known to begin his days with a jolt of energy. Don't let his size fool you; he is able to pack a strong punch that can wake up the heaviest of snoozers.

#GetSippin



YOUR LOGO  
HERE



## The Scribe

The Scribe feels most at home in classrooms, libraries and offices. A natural story-teller, the Scribe has a knack for getting everyone to pay attention to his writing. Although he's partial to ink and paper, his versatility allows him to also produce stellar work on touch screen tablets.

#ThatsWrite



YOUR LOGO  
HERE



## The Party Animal

The Party Animal is always ready to elevate the fun. His large social network gives him exclusive access to all the hottest events. His colorful personality enables him to mingle with all types of people, and he has a fond appreciation for '80s British pop.

Be warned: He loves attention, so try not to #overinflate his ego.



YOUR LOGO  
HERE





# GROW

BE A WINNER!  
**PopQuiz**  
PAGE 100

MARKET TO MARKET

**CREATIVITY**

**FOR**

**HIRE**

PHOTOGRAPHERS, GRAPHIC DESIGNERS, WRITERS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS PROFESSIONALS APPRECIATE A CLEVERLY CRAFTED CAMPAIGN.

By Jen Alexander

**C**REATIVITY IS A DRIVING FORCE behind promotional products, and there's little doubt that brands have more impact when paired with vibrant graphic design, well-crafted copy and compelling images. Of course, convincing stiff corporate culture to see the benefits of such services can be as challenging as photographing a lunar eclipse. Graphic design firms, professional photographers and creative copywriters benefit as much from using promotional products to showcase their skills and services as the clients they hope to land.

*Jen Alexander is an associate editor for PPB.*

40

Promotional  
Portability  
EDITOR'S PICKS

48

Be The  
Expert Your  
Clients Crave  
FEATURE STORY

Cart laptops and tech devices in stylish safety with a **Smart Pouch Zip case**. Part of the Smart Pouch collection, the soft-sided case is made from 100-percent microfiber cloth that cleans and polishes device surfaces. Choose from four sizes: small, for mini tablets; medium, for standard-size tablets; large, for 13-inch laptops; and extra-large, for 15-inch laptops. Brand the machine-washable pouch with a full-color logo or image. **Toddy Gear** UPIC: T516677 [www.toddygear.com](http://www.toddygear.com)



Put artistic inspiration in the hands of clients with a **paintbrush-styled pen**. Artists, writers and other creative clients will appreciate the quirky appeal of this pen, which features a twist-release design. **Essef Distributors** UPIC: 7414140 [www.lincolonline.com](http://www.lincolonline.com)

**BIC® Clic Stic®** and **Digital Round Stic®** have gotten an eye-catching upgrade with full-color, 360-degree imprinting capabilities. Personalize these writing instruments for giveaways and studio supplies with custom color graphics that pop. Full-color logos, imagery and other brand assets can easily be accommodated; or, choose from a variety of stock backgrounds. **BIC Graphic USA** UPIC: BIC [www.bicgraphic.com](http://www.bicgraphic.com)



Perk up your morning java with a **classic mug featuring custom artwork** in high-definition full color. Print one or both sides, or go for a full wrap on this dishwasher-safe, 11-ounce mug. **ADG Promotional Products** UPIC: ADGPROMO [www.adgpromo.com](http://www.adgpromo.com)





## MARKET TO MARKET



Mix up a campaign with a **customized Rubik's® Cube**. Adorned with classic cube colors—red, blue, yellow, orange, green and white—the Rubik's Cube adds a bit of nostalgia and a lot of fun to promotions. **Prime Resources Corp.** UPIC: PRIME [www.primeline.com](http://www.primeline.com)

Show off the best and most creative of client designs on **drinkware decorated with TruColor™ Direct Digital Print**. The digital technology uses a CMYK process print to apply artwork directly, without losing color impact or depth, resulting in a raised imprint with a subtle three-dimensional appearance. **Starline USA, Inc.** UPIC: STAR0009 [www.starline.com](http://www.starline.com)



## ABOUT THE INDUSTRY

### CREATIVE SERVICE JOB MARKET: U.S. EMPLOYMENT OUTLOOK

Field	Estimated employed*
Graphic Designers	259,500
Public Relations Specialists	229,100
Photographers	136,300
Writers and authors	129,100
Craft/fine artists	51,400

\*Estimates measured in 2012, the base year for 2012-2022 employment projections made by the U.S. Labor Department's Bureau of Labor Statistics

# Know The Niches

GET TO KNOW THE CREATIVE SERVICES industry in your community, and strike up a conversation with potential clients doing work in these niche areas.



### Writing

Web content  
Copywriting  
Technical writing  
Ghost writing  
Publishing



### Graphic Design

Web  
Packaging  
Print  
Illustration



### Photography

Portrait  
Wedding/Event  
Boudoir  
Fashion  
Landscape/Aerial  
Wildlife  
Action/Sports  
Advertising



### Public Relations

Publicist  
Media Affairs  
Public Affairs  
Community Relations

# What Would You Do?

PPB ASKED PERRY WEHRLE, PRESIDENT of PAW Marketing, Inc. (UPIC: PAW), in Des Moines, Iowa, how he would approach a prospective client in the creative services sector with a hypothetical marketing challenge. Here's what he shared.

## Promotional Challenge #1: Branding

**A public relations firm wants to rebrand itself in order to more accurately depict what it can do for clients. What questions would you ask the decision maker(s) in order to craft a message that best reflects the client's offerings and choose a product that fits the campaign?**

The key questions are:

- What is the demographic you are targeting?
- Do you have a focus "niche" market you cater to or do you consider your firm one that covers all markets?
- Who are your competitors?
- What have you done in the past; what worked and what did not work for you?
- Is there anything "off-limits"?



## Promotional Challenge #2: Self promotion

**A graphic design agency wants to attract more clients. What promotional products would you recommend they use, and how would you recommend they distribute those products and follow up?**



I would recommend using a journal or notebook, to which I would add custom pages that reveal some of their case histories and successes. Then I would put alternating copy headers on the fill sheets to inspire creativity, as we would want to encourage the recipient of the book to be creative and journal their own thoughts, ideas and direction. Perhaps the headings could be something like 'Creativity, Vision, Resourceful, Innovation, and Concept.' I would then do a follow-up mailing using a USB flash drive imprinted with these words and pre-loaded with other projects the firm has created.

## Promotional Challenge #3: Trade-show participation

**A wedding photographer is exhibiting at a large bridal show, where other photographers will also be exhibiting. What items would you recommend for use as giveaways, and how would you recommend they follow up with interested attendees to ensure maximum impact?**

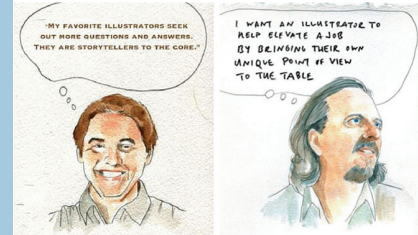
At the trade show I would have a table throw and display branded with recent images of weddings. Since this is a visual, 'happy' market, clients will want to see what the photographer's work is about. I would carry the same visual concept to the giveaway item. For starters, I might suggest a full-color, imprinted nail file. The filing side would have various images, and the reverse side would have a mirror. Since the majority of guests at the event will be women, this would be a very appealing and affordable item to use.

I would also make sure the photographer's website is up-to-date and uses the latest smartphone/tablet-based technology. At the event the photographer could request email addresses and ask for permission to include them in a mailing list. Once the email addresses are captured, the photographer can send a follow-up email with a popular digital gift such as a music download, movie tickets or an e-book.



## HOW THEY DID IT

CHECK OUT THE CAMPAIGNS THESE CREATIVE FOLKS CREATED FOR THEMSELVES USING CREATIVE PROMOTIONAL METHODS.




## Drawing A Solution

Illustrator Dawn Schreiner wanted to hear it from the horse's mouth: what do art directors want from illustrators? So she sketched a portrait of herself asking that question, and asked art directors to send their responses and a photo, and she promised to create a sketch of them answering the questions, and post the sketches on social media. About 70 percent of the individuals she contacted sent in responses; what's more, her experiment resulted in job offers. Source: [flauntydesign.com](http://flauntydesign.com)



## A-C-T-I-O-N

Jens Lennartson is a commercial and travel photographer based in Denmark who came up with a way to sell himself—literally. He produced action figures of himself as a self-promotion. The figure, called GI Jens, not only introduces potential clients to his work, but proceeds from sales go toward a good cause—Lennartson's own nonprofit, EYE AM. The nonprofit works to teach youths in developing countries how to tell their stories through photography. Source: [jenslennartson.se](http://jenslennartson.se) 





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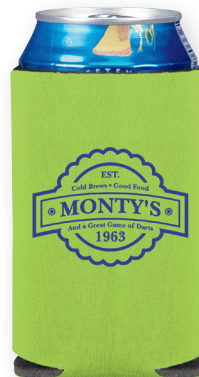


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## EDITOR'S PICKS

By Jen Alexander

# Promotional Portability

BRANDS GET MORE MILEAGE WHEN  
THEY'RE PAIRED WITH GREAT BAGS.

**W**HAT TWO HANDS CAN'T CARRY, a bag will surely hold. The evolution of vessels for transporting food, goods and treasures is a long and fascinating journey, one that has seen form, function and fashion converge in numerous ways, including the bag's role as one of the most popular promotional products to date. Virtually every campaign or program imaginable can be made more memorable with a promotional bag. Here's just a sample of what's turning heads and toting goods in 2015.



## EDITOR'S PICKS

1



2



3



4



1. This round **printed utility tote** has five laminated pockets for storing all the essentials. Its 25-inch handles make it easy to carry. (Pitch this for: gardening clubs, craft conventions and pet boutiques.) **Vitronic Promotional Group** UPIC: [ACHIEVER](http://ACHIEVER) [www.vitronicpromotional.com](http://www.vitronicpromotional.com)

2. The **Metro Basket** is a lightweight, fully-collapsible, insulated basket that can be used for many occasions. It's made of durable 600D polyester canvas and features a water-resistant interior and expandable drawstring top, and sturdy aluminum frame from

which the canvas detaches. (Pitch this for: School booster clubs, community-supported agriculture co-ops and farmers' markets.) **Picnic Time, Inc.** UPIC: [PICN0001](http://PICN0001) [www.picnicpromotions.com](http://www.picnicpromotions.com)

3. The **Mason Canvas Duffel** is a carry-on sized bag with one large main compartment and several smaller pockets. It features two 20-inch handles and an optional detachable or adjustable shoulder strap. Decorate it with a subtle imprint and a full-color domed medallion. (Pitch this for: athletic club memberships, travel agencies

and health spas.) **Beacon Promotional Products** UPIC: [BEACONP](http://BEACONP) [www.beaconpromotions.com](http://www.beaconpromotions.com)

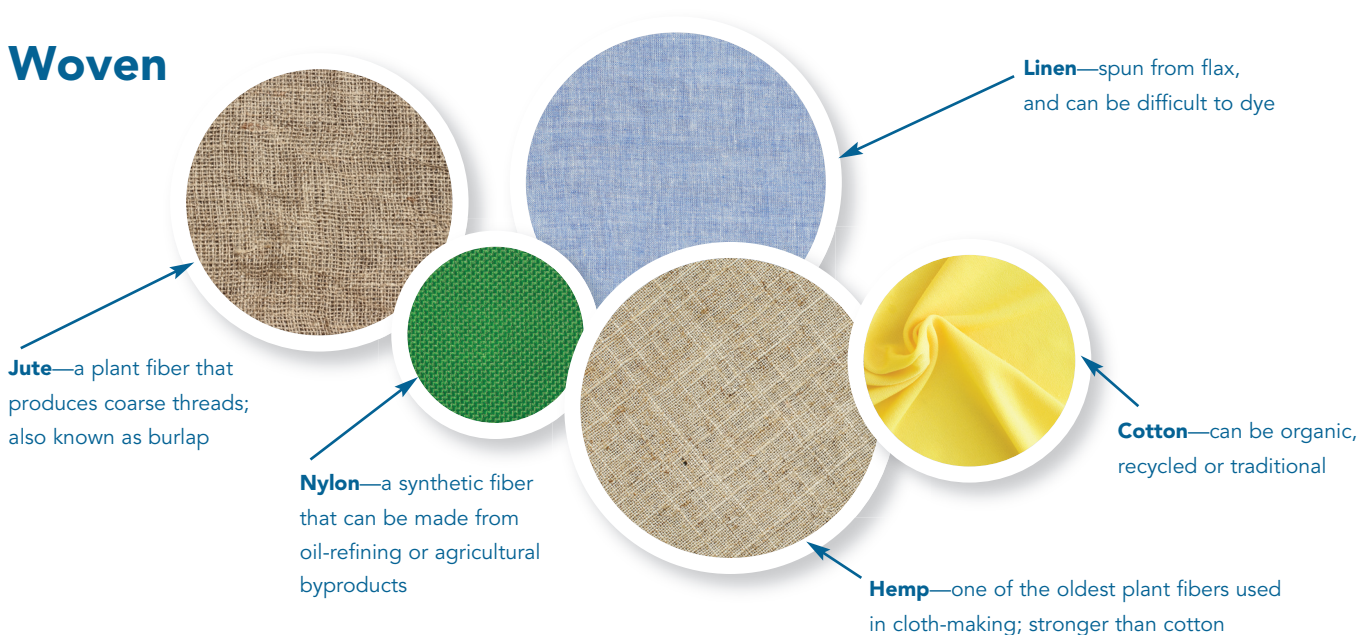
4. Emerge victorious with a **Winners Take All backpack**, which features a zippered main compartment, front slip pocket and side mesh pocket. Reinforced stitching and a grommet loop for keys or sunglasses adds functionality. Choose from red, apple green, black or royal blue. (Pitch this for: neighborhood sports teams, health and fitness fairs and wellness programs.) **BIC Graphic USA** UPIC: [BIC](http://BIC) [www.bicgraphic.com](http://www.bicgraphic.com)



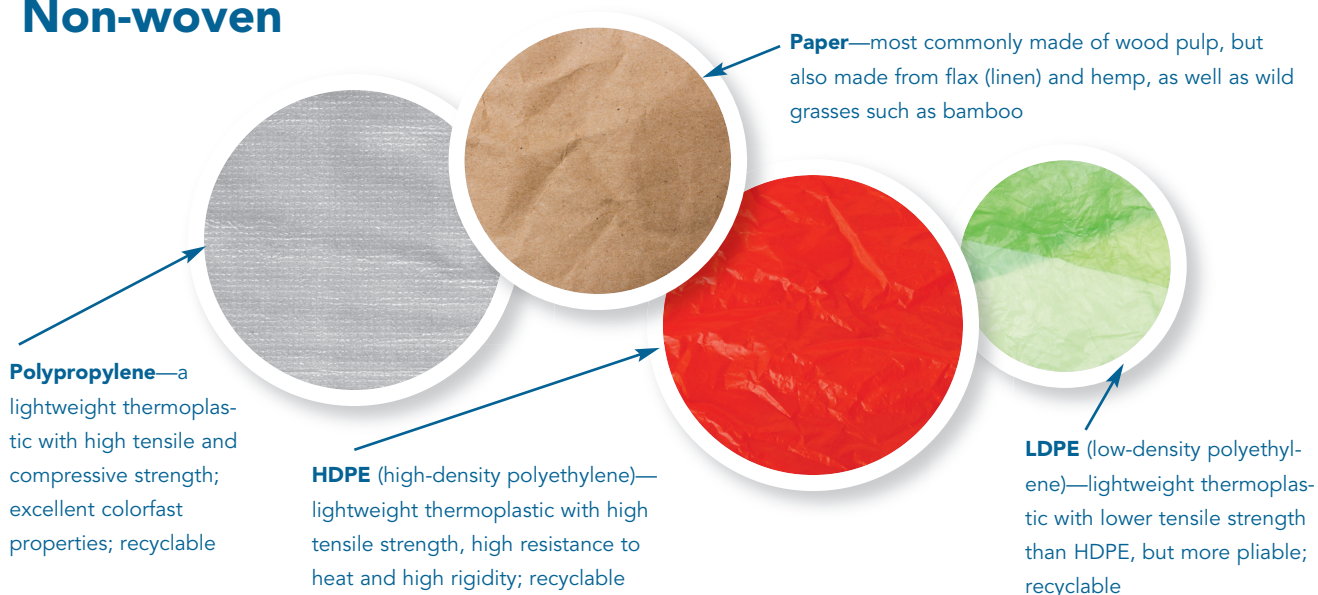
# Material Makeup

BAGS TODAY ARE MOST COMMONLY MADE from natural fibers, petroleum-based raw content and recycled or repurposed materials. Their durability, strength and feel are based on a number of factors. Not sure which bag type works best for your client? Start with the basics: Ask what the bag will be used to carry, and who will be carrying it. Decorating preferences also determine the type of bag a client will want to purchase—some materials are more suited to screen printing; others, embroidery or appliqué.

## Woven



## Non-woven



**5. Outfit a group with the Team 365™ Convertible Sport Backpack.**

The convertible straps feature stow-away pockets and the pack comes with a removable, adjustable shoulder strap. Back panel mesh means easy access to equipment, and a separate space holds shoes or wet clothes.

Choose from nine colors: white, black, sport dark navy, sport forest, sport graphite, sport maroon, sport red, sport royal and sport silver. *(Pitch this for: school sports teams, corporate fitness programs and collegiate intramural teams.)*

**alphabroder** UPIC:

**BRODER** [www.alphabroder.com](http://www.alphabroder.com)

5



**6. Carry away all you can in the Grandé Mesh Panel Tote,** which features a mesh panel that can be imprinted with a logo. The bag is secured with an over-the-top Velcro® strap closure, and a combination of 100 GSM premium non-woven polypropylene and mesh material ensure maximum breathability. *(Pitch this for: employee gifts, fundraising events and corporate conferences.)*

**BAG MAKERS, Inc.**

UPIC: **BAGMAKRS**

[www.bagmakersinc.com](http://www.bagmakersinc.com)

6



**7. Set sail with a small cotton boat tote.** Made with 10-ounce cotton canvas, the tote features a main compartment and front pocket, and a color-contrast handle. Choose from navy blue, green, red or black. *(Pitch this for: sailing clubs, women's events or summer-fun giveaways.)*

**Pro Towels** UPIC: **PROTOWEL**

[www.protowels.com](http://www.protowels.com)



7



## EDITOR'S PICKS

8



9



10



11



8. Everyday errands are more stylish with a **100-percent recycled leather shopping bag** in one of nine colors. The shoulder tote features an open top, metal magnetic closure, an interior side pocket for phone storage and complementing color cotton lining. (Pitch this for: loyalty programs or gifts with purchase.) **International Merchandise Concepts** UPIC: IMC1 [www.imc-miracles.com](http://www.imc-miracles.com)

9. The **Y2K wine and grocery bag** has your bases covered with four interior bottle holders and two pockets. The sturdy 110 GSM material comes in royal blue, navy blue, black, red, tan, lime and teal. Decorate it with a one-color screen print on the front or

back. (Pitch this for: wine and spirits retailers, and grocery stores.)

**American Ad Bag Co.** UPIC: ADBAG [www.adbag.com](http://www.adbag.com)

10. Carry all the tools for success in the **Urban Messenger**. Crafted in a contemporary mix of heather and two-tone, 600D poly canvas, this messenger bag offers a plethora of storage options, including a padded vertical zip pocket for a tablet, a spacious main pocket, a padded sleeve for a 17-inch laptop and an interior zip pocket for accessories. A mesh pocket on the side holds bottles and an adjustable shoulder strap makes it comfortable to carry. (Pitch this for: professional conferences and sales

meetings, tech companies and business organizations.) **Preferred Nation, Inc.** UPIC: PN467131 [www.preferrednation.com](http://www.preferrednation.com)

11. This **100-percent polyester backpack** with synthetic suede accents does its duty with rugged flair. The large main zippered compartment sports a padded laptop sleeve that fits most 17" laptops, and a front pocket organizer keeps precious possessions in place. The fleece-lined media pocket adds a luxury touch. Choose from burnt olive or black. (Pitch this for: Employment agencies, career centers and recruiting fairs.) **Kati Sportcap & Bag** UPIC: KATI [www.katisportcap.com](http://www.katisportcap.com)

PHOTO BY LEPOW



## BRAINY BAG

ISING TO THE LEVEL OF SMARTPHONES and smartwatches, the HiSmart satchel from Chinese design group Lepow, is shifting into high gear. The strap of the messenger bag/backpack hybrid is equipped with a HiRemote, a pair of bluetooth chips that communicate with a phone-based app and allow the bag's user to answer calls, take photos and record voice memos without actually retrieving the phone from the bag. The bag is still in the production phase; the designers have launched a fundraising site on indiegogo.com. *Source: Wired magazine*

# The Award Is In The Bag

PPAI PYRAMID AWARD-WINNING DISTRIBUTOR CAMPAIGNS OFTEN INCLUDE A BAG IN THE PRODUCT MIX. CASE (STUDIES) IN POINT:



**Chilli Promotions (UPIC: Chilli)** in Port Melbourne, Australia, put together a multi-product package for an Australian horse-racing club that included a nonwoven tote and a soft-sided cooler bag. **Silver Award: Consumer Programs**

**AB Unlimited (UPIC: ABUNLTD)** in Los Angeles, California, sourced a backpack with a unique pattern meant to mimic dragon scales for a client who requested the bag as a promotional gift for the animated feature *How To Train Your Dragon: 2*, to be distributed to attendees at the Cannes Film Festival. **Silver Award: Business to Business**



Holland, Ohio-based **The Image Group (UPIC: IMAGEGRP)** crafted a program for a client that produces linerless labels featuring a two-tone duffel bag emblazoned with the client's logo and tagline. **Gold Award: Business To Business**



## EDITOR'S PICKS

12



13



14



15



**12.** Keep dry gear dry, and wet gear away from it in a **Flow 25L Dry Bag**. This lightweight bag, made from 190T polyester, features a roll-top closure with buckles to ensure a waterproof seal and a large main as well as front zippered pocket for additional storage. (Pitch this for: outdoor groups, scouting organizations and parks departments.) **Starline USA, Inc.** UPIC: STAR0009 [www.starline.com](http://www.starline.com)

**13.** Be a better friend to the environment with a **reusable tote bag** made from non-woven poly and designed

with a sturdy gusset bottom. (Pitch this for: beach resort guests, library fundraisers and bookstores.)

**Essef Distributors** UPIC: 7414140 [www.lincolonline.com](http://www.lincolonline.com)

**14.** Draw up compliments with a **nylon drawstring backpack**. The right-sized backpack features color-matched hardware and comes in 17 colors. (Pitch this for: employee recognition events, health fairs and college event giveaways.) **Heritage Sportswear+Virginia T's** UPIC: HERI0002 [www.heritagesportswear.com](http://www.heritagesportswear.com)

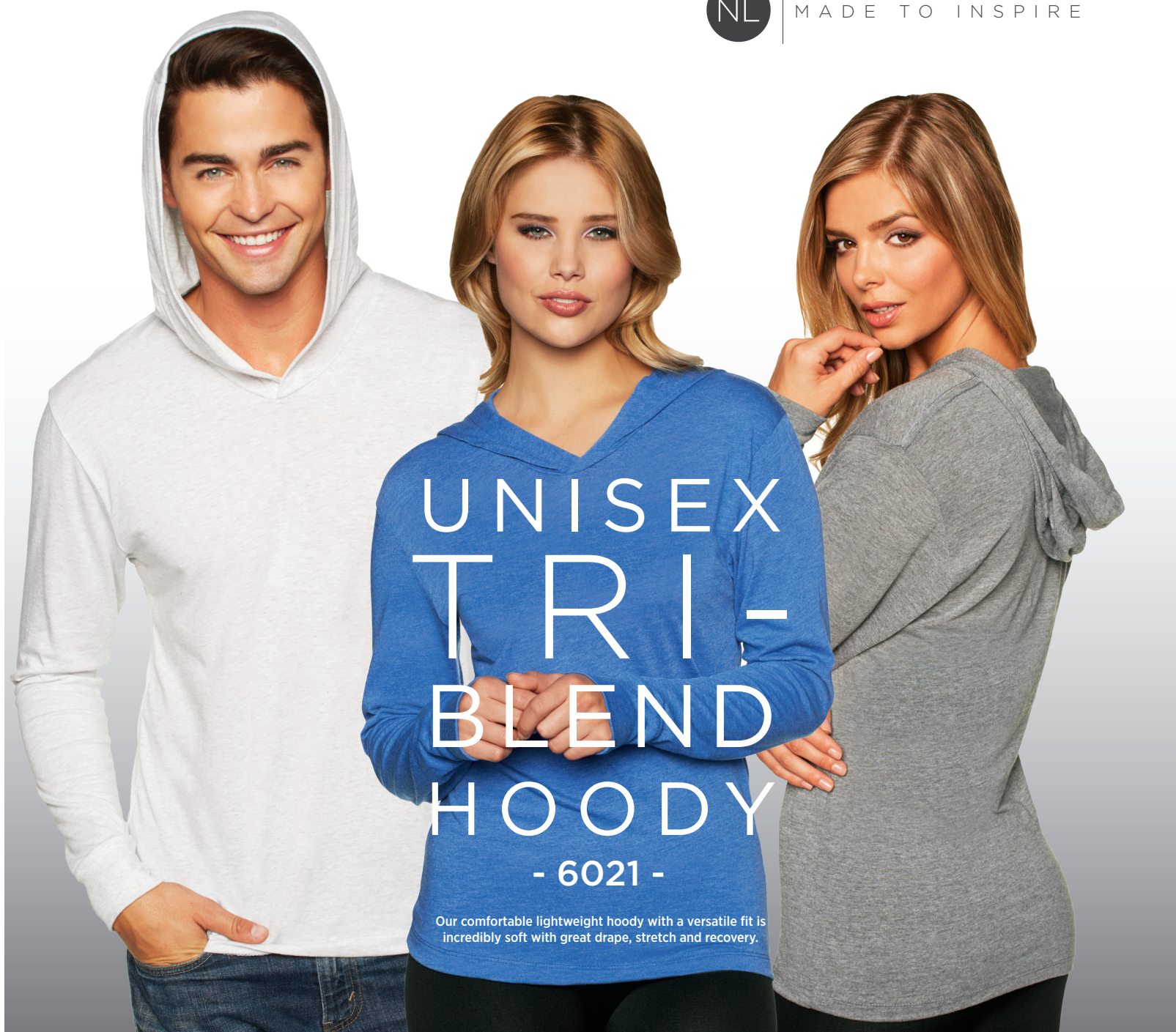
**15.** There's always room for one more treasure in the **Skipper bag**, a durable cotton-poly blend bag with fashionable rope handles and bright stripes. Choose from turquoise, lime, red, orange or navy, and personalize with ColorFusion or embroidery. (Pitch this for: sailing clubs, golf resorts and casinos). **Towel Specialties** UPIC: TOWLSPEC [www.towelspecialties.com](http://www.towelspecialties.com) 

*Jen Alexander is an associate editor for PPB.*





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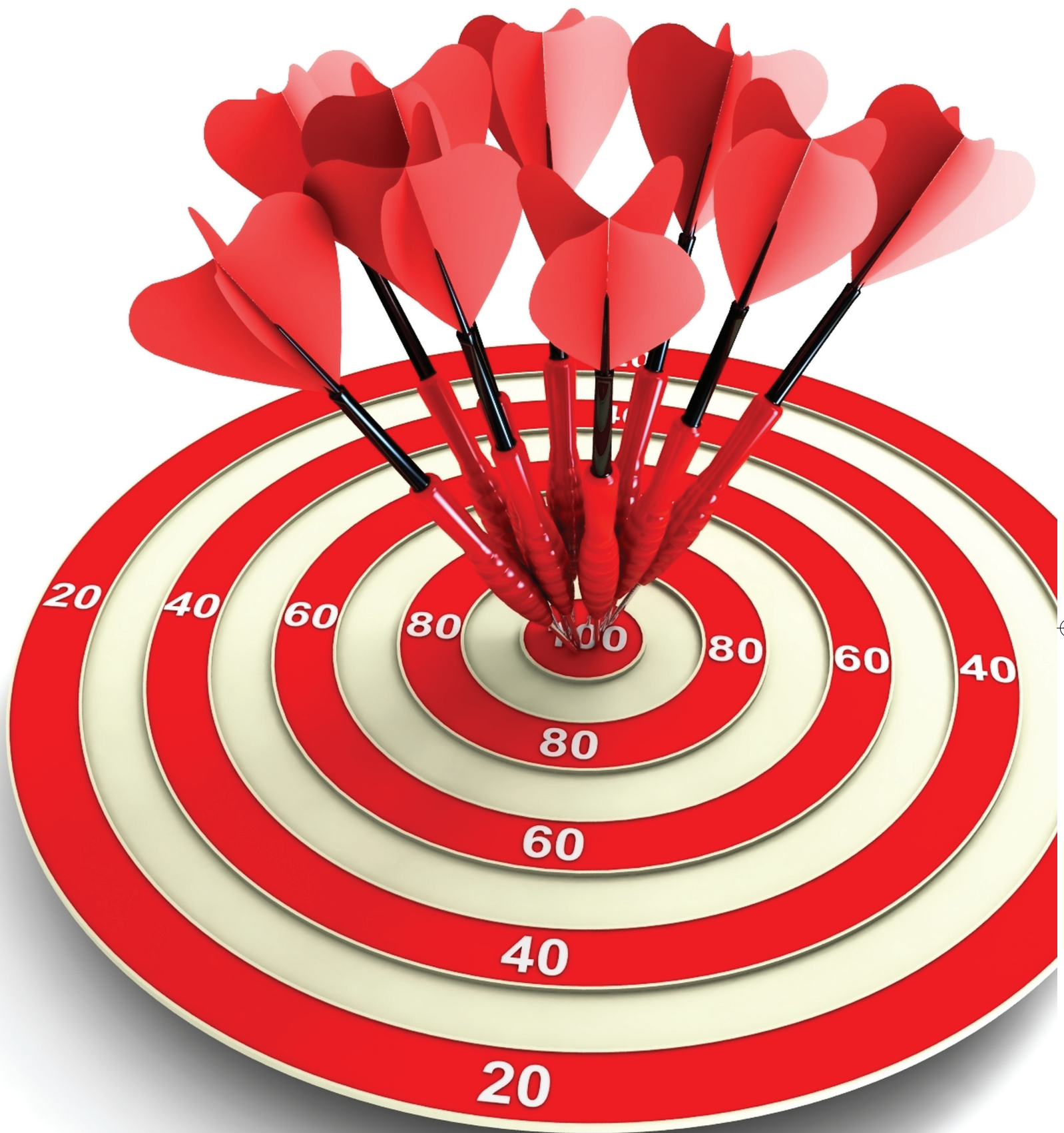
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FIVE BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IDEAS FOR PROMOTIONAL CONSULTANTS

# Be The Expert Your Clients Crave

ARE YOUR CLIENTS TARGETING TRADE SHOWS?  
YOU SHOULD TOO.

*Fourth in a five-part series*

BY PAUL KIEWIET, MAS+, CIP, CPC

20

**L**OOKING TO BUILD MORE BUSINESS? Your customers have plenty of problems for you to solve if you position yourself as the expert. The key is to get out of the product-selling business and into the problem-solving business. Problem solvers are always in demand.

In the past three issues, this series has explored techniques to help you become an expert in delivering employee engagement programs, wellness programs and loyalty programs. This installment will focus on how you can be the expert on trade-show marketing to get your clients the most bang for their buck and make them memorable long after the show floor has gone dark.

BE A WINNER!  
**PopQuiz**  
PAGE 100



## Be The Expert Your Clients Crave | FOURTH IN A FIVE-PART SERIES

Today's companies are spending more and more of their marketing budgets on trade-show marketing and they need to show a positive return on this investment. Trade shows are one of the most valued and utilized marketing strategies in the United States, receiving the greatest share of the business-to-business marketing budget. Annual spending on trade-show marketing is more than \$24 billion, and just over 10 percent of promotional products sales in 2013 were for trade-show programs, according to PPAI research.

### Face-To-Face Interaction

Trade-show marketing derives much of its success from the personal aspect of the marketing tactic. Both exhibitors and attendees cite face-to-face personal interaction as an important reason to exhibit and attend shows. As more and more business is conducted virtually, through email, web conference and telephone, 48 percent of event attendees say face-to-face interactions are more valuable today than two years ago. Your clients may be spending more than 21 percent of their marketing budget on this strategy. It can be an excellent area for distributors to specialize in and to become well-versed in the language and art of effective trade-show marketing.

### Multiple Benefits

Trade shows provide marketers with unique sales opportunities that can generate new leads; provide a chance to check out the competition, do some networking and get some publicity; and build relationships with the right buyers. A marketer can accomplish at one trade show what might take weeks or months to accomplish through direct sales efforts. Closing a lead generated at a trade show costs 62 percent less than closing one that originates in the field, according to the Center for Exhibit Industry Research (CEIR). The same research study estimates that an organization saves \$943 by meeting a prospect at a trade show versus in the field.

Trade shows are highly valued in helping to:

- Reinforce brand awareness
- Build and expand brand messages
- Introduce new products or services
- Target specific business segments
- Promote existing products and services

### Clarify The Show Objectives

Your customers have to choose the right shows for their industry, market niche and segments they are attempting to reach. To make the best decisions, they should be asking their customers to find out what trade shows they attend since those are the ones where they will likely find similar prospects. Your customers should also pay attention to the shows where their competition is exhibiting.

To make the best recommendations to your customers, it is critical to know their trade show objectives. Help them clarify their objectives by asking them about what is most important.

#### • Write sales orders

If writing orders is a key objective, perhaps you can suggest a gift-with-purchase that becomes a show special and incentive for the booth visitor to buy now. You may also recommend sales incentives for the booth staff for sales made at the show.

#### • Research the competition

If researching the competition is an objective, hire a mystery shopper to visit competitors' exhibits, pick up literature and take notes on what they are offering.

#### • Increase their visibility within the industry

If your clients want to make their presence known in their industry, recommend a larger trade-show booth and show them the wide variety of trade-show signage and graphics you can offer.

#### • Generate publicity and press mentions

Suggest your clients send news releases describing their participation in the show and the new products or services they will introduce while there. Send notes to local radio and television stations to pitch a story. Your clients should also make several one-minute video clips depicting the show's excitement, and post them regularly on their social media channels.

#### • Spot new trends

Tell your client to challenge everyone working the show to walk the floor and submit a list of the three top trends that they've spotted in their industry.

## Be The Expert Your Clients Crave | FOURTH IN A FIVE-PART SERIES

- **Generate leads for future sales**

Recommend that your client offer a great promotional product related to the story they are telling in their booth and offer it to show attendees who will answer a short (not more than five questions) survey. Use the name and address capture along with the data to start the sales cycle with these new prospects.

- **Generate excitement for their new products**

If new product introductions are the focus and objective for the show, make sure that they are prominently displayed with a strong benefit message to the user. Create a show special for the new products being introduced.

- **Build rapport with current customers**

Offer a special, upscale promotional product with a high perceived value for current customers who visit the booth. Also, consider a special evening out or client entertainment offer as well to build and grow an existing relationship.

- **Build their mailing list with quality and qualified names.**

Rather than giving away inexpensive items to everyone who walks by the booth, suggest nicer items that are only given to those who stop and provide their follow-up information and answer a question or two to assure that they are genuine prospects.

# THE MISSING PIECE

**HILLARY FEDER, MAS**, president, Hillary's LLC, shares this trade show case study:

**Client Industry**

**Sector:** Testing lab

**Goal:** To set meetings with qualified prospects during the trade show. Results from previous years: No more than 10 prospects had signed up in previous years.



**Strategy:** A trade show micro plan was developed that included pre-show, at show and post-show activity. Because of space constraints, this case study discusses only the pre-show activity. It began by creating two campaign messages:

- No. 1: Sometimes it only takes one piece to pull it all together.  
No. 2: Medallion Labs is your missing piece.

**Implementation:** About 80 prospects in the "A" group got a four-inch-tall canister (pictured at left, top) fully branded on the outside with message No. 1. Sent as a self mailer, it got attention as very

lumpy mail. Inside the canister was a puzzle with a magnetic back (which would be important later) with art and message No. 2. One piece of the puzzle was left out of the canister and the puzzle asked recipients to make an appointment to get their missing piece.

Prospects in the "B" and "C" lists (about 500) received a lenticular postcard (pictured at left, bottom) with the same messages but with no missing piece. The message was also tailored a bit to account for this difference. The mailings were sent four weeks prior to the show. About 10 days later the client began a calling campaign,

using a prepared script, to all prospects on the "A" list who had not responded and to as many "B" prospects as they could reach. About a week later the client sent an email blast to those they had not heard from with the same message.

Prospects who responded promptly received an email confirmation of their scheduled appointment and a reminder five days before the trade show started. At the show, the client's booth displayed a magnetic whiteboard with the campaign art across the top. The puzzle pieces that were left out of the canister were on the white board. This did two things:

1. It made the puzzle pieces available for those who made appointments.
2. People on the trade-show floor stopped to learn more.

This very simple piece stood out in a trade show designed for geeky scientist folks.

**Results:** From this effort, 29 scheduled appointments were made before the trade show, and numerous prospects reached out to say they couldn't meet at the show but did set up virtual conference meetings or physical meetings outside of the trade show. The client was thrilled.



## Be The Expert Your Clients Crave | FOURTH IN A FIVE-PART SERIES



### THE RIGHT FIT

Supplier **HARVEY MACKLER, MAS,** at supplier Gempire/GWI, shares a successful trade-show idea also using puzzle pieces:

“Many years ago I created a puzzle set of logoed pushpins. The overall puzzle formed the logo of the show. Then I mailed one piece to targeted guests, inviting them to get the entire limited-edition set. Of course, the mailed piece had the show dates on it, so when they used it in their cubicles, it was a constant reminder. And the entire set is a functioning set of pushpins.

It was a great show-traffic tool, and we won an award that year for best trade-show traffic builder.”

### What Goes Into An Effective Trade Show Exhibit?

The goals and plans for the exhibit should be carefully developed and then communicated to those staffing the booth and those responsible for show follow-up.

Trade-show marketing should focus on two or three key ideas or messages. Graphics, pre-show promotion, literature, giveaways and advertising should all be integrated to communicate these clear messages. Suggest your client complete the branding through the use of color-coordinated apparel for those working the show.

Recommend that your client touch all five senses to attract their best prospects. The exhibit itself should encourage people to not only see what’s new, but to touch, feel, hear and taste. Review their booth plan and make recommendations of how they can make it more interactive and engaging. Promotional food such as logoed cookies, logo-imprinted wrapped candies and mints in decorated tins can add several sensory touch points.

Brainstorm promotional products that the client’s trade-show prospects will find clever, amusing and want to display, talk about or even brag about during and after the show. Help your client’s exhibit go viral by thinking creatively and finding products that are truly buzzworthy. From a practical standpoint, you might also suggest a journal with an insert page that contains all of the pertinent information about the show, the logistics, the company’s key communication messages, the objectives and recommendations for success.

### Promoting Your Client’s Trade Show Presence

Research indicates that three-quarters of show attendees know what exhibits they want to see before they even get to the show, so pre-show promotion is another important service you can provide your customers.

Recommend a creative direct mail piece your clients can send to pre-registered attendees and to key prospects and customers. The mailer should reinforce the theme and main message points and the chosen colors, and include the booth number and contact information. A very effective tactic is to send a Match and Win offer. In this promotion, the show attendee brings the mailer to the show to

receive a gift and get a chance to win a higher-value prize. Another effective promotion to guarantee booth visits is called Complete a Set. You select a high-end item such as an expensive packaged writing instrument, pair of gloves or pair of sandals and mail the pen package or single glove or sandal. The show attendee then brings the item to your client’s booth to complete the set.

A month or two before the show, your client should personally call and set up meetings with key customers and prospects. Key buyers’ schedules fill up quickly, so it’s important to get on their calendar. It’s also important to reconfirm the meetings a week or so before the show.

It’s important that your clients focus on quality conversations with key prospects and top customers. For this reason, make sure that you’ve suggested a couple different levels of gifts for prospects who spend time at the booth. Personalization is a great way to make their key buyers feel special. The promotional products industry is full of incredibly fun, valuable and highly coveted items that become even more special when they include the name of the prospect or customer. The personalized item will never go to waste, either. If the intended recipient does not come to the booth, the salesperson has the perfect reason to call him or her immediately after the show.

### Post-Show Promotion

Your ability to solve problems doesn’t stop with the show. Research from CEIR shows 80 percent of show leads aren’t followed up. The best way for you to help your customers solve this problem is to help them plan a follow-up strategy at the beginning of the planning process.

Follow-up should be priority; this is where the return on investment comes from. Lead follow-up should take precedence over nearly everything else. Too often, catching up on what was missed while they were out of the office puts the critical follow-up on hold until the leads turn cold. Here’s how you can help with that.

- Create a post-show mailing before the show. It should relate to the theme and messaging used in the pre-show mailing and in the booth, and ideally it should be a promotional product or contain one.

## Be The Expert Your Clients Crave | FOURTH IN A FIVE-PART SERIES

- Remind them of what they saw at the exhibit and give them a reason to engage one more time. This is an ideal time to suggest a follow-up premium that can be offered with a follow-up sales call or action that moves them further along the sales cycle.

### Resources For Trade Show Knowledge

Trade-show giveaways and direct mail are two of the biggest uses of promotional products. Successful trade-show marketing incorporates both. You will find that many of your existing suppliers have a great deal of expertise in this area

that they would love to share. Our industry also has a number of suppliers who specialize in trade show exhibit components which allow you to provide everything from pop-up displays, floor graphics, retractable banners, table covers, table-top displays, prize wheels and all of the things your clients need to have a successful exhibit. [Find a list by searching product keywords in PPAI's UPIC directory at [www.upic.org](http://www.upic.org).] Contact these suppliers and tell them you want to become a trade-show specialist. Set an appointment to meet with them at a trade show and spend some time learning what works and tips for effective selling.

## THREE IDEAS TO BUILD A BETTER SHOW

These three effective trade-show traffic builders are provided by **MARY DOBSCH, MAS**, at supplier The Chest:



An international contractor company that specializes in building restaurants and was exhibiting at the National Restaurant Association Show in Chicago wanted a unique mailer that made it clear what they did. The MB-100 Mail Bag, measuring 5-½ x 7-½ inches and secured with a drawstring tie, was selected. The bag was screen printed with the client's customer copy, and The Chest inserted an oversized, customer-supplied LEGO® and a

custom-printed card. The Chest then mailed each bag to recipients on the mailing list provided by the distributor. The printed card invited the recipient to the international contractor's booth at the show and included a reminder to bring the LEGO. As show attendees brought in the LEGOs, they built a structure out of them in the booth. It was a successful tool to reinforce what the company does.

### It's A Puzzle

The National Association of Home Builders wanted to promote its certification program at the National Home Builders Show. They joined with six

companies on the Remodelers Strategic Partner Council and split the cost of the promotion. The product selected was the PZ-600 Tray Puzzle Traffic Builder. As attendees registered at the show, they were given the tray with the details of the promotion printed on the back. Individual puzzle pieces were divided up and given to each company for distribution at their booths. The incentive was that the first 50 attendees who completed the puzzle and



delivered it to the Remodelers Council booth were allowed to take the "PREP" (a certification test) at no charge (a \$195 savings). As a result, traffic at the six participating exhibitor's booths was strong and, in addition to the 50 who won a free test, 107 builders/remodelers signed up for the test.

### Cook Up A Winning Campaign

Jack in the Box was exhibiting at a large trade show along with many other fast-food restaurants. The theme of the show was baseball and there were famous baseball players on hand to give autographs. The fast-food innovator, known

for its quirky marketing approach, chose The Chest's MB-100 cotton bag and imprinted it with the copy: "I learned to use one of these 'cause the players kept signing my head." —Jack



Each bag included a baseball with the Jack in the Box head on it and a Sharpie pen. These were handed out to the attendees to collect the players' autographs. Jack in the Box was very happy with the reception of the product and felt the promotion was "very successful."



## Be The Expert Your Clients Crave | FOURTH IN A FIVE-PART SERIES

Online, you'll find the Trade Show News Network ([www.tsnn.com](http://www.tsnn.com)) has every kind of information you can imagine about trade shows. It lists the main venues around the U.S., ranks the Top 250 shows in the U.S. and Top 50 shows in Canada annually as well. You can even subscribe to the newsletter to receive tips, insights, opinions and trends in shows.

Most of the research cited in this article comes from Center for Exhibition Industry Research ([www.ceir.org](http://www.ceir.org)). This is a great resource to explore if you want to appear really smart to your clients when discussing their trade-show marketing strategies and effectiveness.

You may also partner with some of the full-service exhibit companies in your local area. These companies design, sell, store, refurbish, ship and set-up exhibits for companies. Their expertise is often in the area of the logistics of trade shows. You can bring the marketing expertise and provide some powerful synergy by offering the services of

show promotion, direct mail campaigns and show giveaways that ensure the highest return on trade-show marketing investment.

You'll be helping clients and become more valuable and indispensable when you choose to become an expert trade show marketer. It will require additional study and learning on your part, but it can pay big dividends. **PPB**

*Paul A. Kiewiet, MAS+, is an industry speaker, writer and consultant, and the executive director of the Michigan Promotional Professionals Association. He is a former chairman of PPAI and was inducted into the PPAI Hall of Fame at this year's PPAI Expo in Las Vegas.*

**Next month:** This series continues as Kiewiet explores techniques to help you turn strangers into friends, friends into customers and customers into raving fans.

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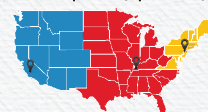
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# THINK

FAST FORWARD

## ABOUT THAT BUSINESS MODEL ...

TRADE SHOWS INTERVENE IN THE WIDESPREAD USE OF "BOOTH BABES"

BY TAMA UNDERWOOD

W

HAT'S WRONG WITH scantily-clad booth babes, er, promotional models?

A lot, if you're exhibiting at the RSA Conference, an annual show for information security professionals. Producers for this year's event in San Francisco added dress code guidelines to exhibitors' contracts that all but ban the practice of hiring provocatively dressed booth attendants.



The guidelines instruct exhibitors to wear business or business-casual attire and restrict excessive displays of cleavage; tank tops, halter tops, camisoles or tube tops; miniskirts or dresses; shorts; Lycra or other second-skin clothing; and objectionable or offensive costumes.

Linda Gray, event manager for RSA Conferences, told NetworkWorld.com: "We felt that including this language in the exhibitor contracts was the best way to ensure all exhibitors were made aware of these new guidelines. We thought this was an important step towards making all security professionals feel comfortable and equally respected during the show."

The RSA Conference isn't the first to make moves against promotional

models. The Penny

Arcade Expo in the

U.S., Eurogamer Expo in England and the China

Digital Entertainment Expo & Conference have all instituted exhibitor dress codes.

The Consumer Electronics Show (CES) has for years been under pressure to limit promotional models at its show—the world's largest—but has so far only issued warnings advising exhibitors that promotional models may reflect poorly on their exhibits.

A CES representative told the media: "We do not want to create and impose arbitrary or unenforceable rules, or worse, inch our event towards a Talibanesque ban on exposure of skin."

While trade shows debate the merits and logistics of cracking down on revealing clothing, brands may naturally start drifting away from the practice. Aside from arguments that they objectify women, a PPB Reader Poll found half of respondents don't even notice promotional models at shows. **PPB**

### PPB READER POLL

How do you feel about promotional models, aka "booth babes"?

**0%** They're essential to the trade show experience.

**50%** I don't really notice them.

**50%** They're totally unprofessional.



**TRADE SHOWS**

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Take A Closer  
Look  
PRODUCT SAFETY

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Pricing In The  
Promotional  
Products  
Industry  
FEATURE STORY



## Five Minutes With Donna Novitsky

### CEO Of Yiftee

**Y**IFTEE IS A high-tech way to target and track promotions, letting corporations and consumers quickly send thoughtful, unexpected gifts via email, text or Facebook. CEO Donna Novitsky calls it a 2.0 solution for anyone who gives gift cards, promotional products, coupons, discount codes or other rewards. It also takes the guesswork out of defining one's audience. If recipients don't redeem their Yiftee gifts, the money is returned to the marketer.

"With Yiftee, marketers save their back, the environment, their budget and, best of all, can easily measure their ROI," Novitsky says.

Read *PPB's* interview with Novitsky to learn more about how Yiftee works.

#### **PPB** How did you recognize a need for this service?

**Novitsky** It came from two angles. We saw businesses and consumers wanting to buy from their favorite local shops and restaurants but needing a convenient way to do that by mobile phone and

the web. And we saw merchants wanting to have an online and mobile presence but lacking the time or technology to create it. So we married the two needs and

drinks from the hotel bars or cafés, their services or product offerings, or even trade association memberships. Sports Marketers use Yiftee to engage fans in-venue with

marketers can send virtual gift vouchers to prospects, consumers, employees, fans—anyone. For example, if a company wants to thank a group of event attendees

*"The personalized message reminds the recipient of the gift giver, potentially delivers their product into the hands of the consumer, and gets them into their store. That is the point of promotions, right?"*

came up with Yiftee. What surprised us was the myriad ways people have found to use the service, including marketing promotions.

#### **PPB** How is Yiftee changing the way marketers promote their brands?

**Novitsky** Yiftee provides a way for marketers to directly engage prospects in a measurable way that saves their back and conserves their cash. Brand and event marketers use Yiftee as promotional gifts at trade shows and events. They e-deliver

fun text-based contests and e-deliver sponsored gifts to winners.

Since gift recipients are reminded of the gift weekly until it's redeemed or expired, they remember the gift and who sent it long after the event is over. It also gives the sales team a reason to follow up with a prospect.

#### **PPB** Can you suggest ways of integrating promotional products with Yiftee?

**Novitsky** Since Yiftee gifts can be redeemed at any location that accepts MasterCard,



Donna Novitsky

(trade show, webinar, conference, customers, etc.) they simply send them a Yiftee for their own product, if applicable, or for something from a local or national merchant. Either way, the personalized message reminds the recipient of the gift giver, potentially delivers their product into the hands of the consumer, and gets them into their store. That is the point of promotions, right? **PPB**



## FAST FORWARD

## BIZWORDS

**Price Coherence**

*noun:* Paying the same price for a given product or service, whether buying it directly from its source or through an intermediary.

Credit cards and travel-booking websites are classic examples of price coherence, where sellers pay intermediaries a fee to provide consumers with values such as convenience or discounts. The downside of price coherence is that it drives up costs for everyone, whether or not they use the additional service. If everyone stopped using intermediaries, the price hikes associated with price coherence would likely disappear.



**A PEMCO INSURANCE** poll discovered 49 percent of drivers in northwestern states personalize their vehicles with group, club or sports decals. Second-most popular were auto stickers revealing something personal about a car's occupants. Least popular were humorous and political messages. Who's using these stickers? Mostly women, young drivers and people with children.

**WHICH CELEBRITY DESIGNED THESE TRAVEL MUGS?**

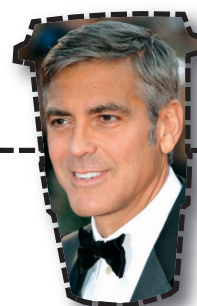
UK-based charity Whatever It Takes raises money for poverty, environmental and children's causes by partnering with the world's famous to sell promotional items with their exclusive, custom designs. *Can you tell Clooney's doodles from Charlize's script?* You're about to find out.



Which celeb drew it? —————



Pierce Brosnan



George Clooney



Phil Collins

CELEBRITY PHOTO CREDITS, FROM LEFT: SEBASO, NICOLAS GENIN, PEXCORNEL FROM CATALONIA, LIAM MENDES, JOELLE MASLATON, GAGE SKIDMORE, DAVID SHANKBONE



## What Your Browser Says About You

Employees who take the time to download alternative internet search browsers such as Firefox and Chrome typically turn out to be better, more loyal team members, according to Cornerstone On Demand, which sells employee recruitment and retention software. Through analyzing job assessment questionnaires it found staffers who stick with default engines Internet Explorer or Safari tend to be less informed consumers and more likely to job hop. **PPB**



Daniel Craig



Penelope Cruz



Charlize Theron



Kanye West

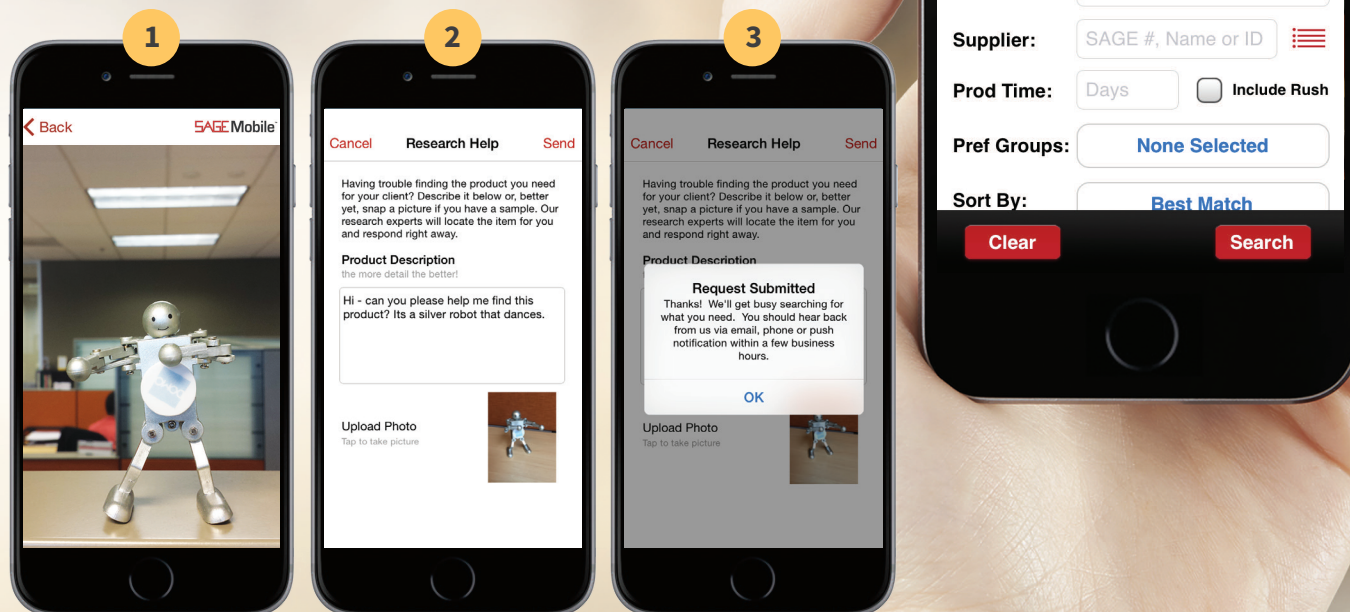
**Answers** 1. Kanye West 2. Penelope Cruz 3. Pierce Brosnan 4. George Clooney 5. Charlize Theron 6. Phil Collins 7. Daniel Craig



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# TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

WHY THE CPSC MANDATES ENHANCED SAFETY PROGRAMS

BY KENNETH ROSS

**S**INCE ITS INCEPTION, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has encouraged companies to implement active product safety management programs. Since 2010, however, the CPSC has made this a bit more official. This article will examine the CPSC's previous guidance on safety programs, describe the new requirements and proposed rules and discuss what they might mean.

## Prior Guidance On Safety Programs

Shortly after it was created in the 1970s, the CPSC published the *Handbook for Manufacturing Safer Consumer Products*. The most recent edition of the handbook came out in 2006 and discusses product safety policies, organization and training as well as all

aspects of design, manufacturing, quality, corrective actions, etc. In other words, it discusses safety procedures that the commission believes are appropriate for any company making consumer products.

At the beginning of the handbook, manufacturers are encouraged to adopt "a comprehensive systems approach to product safety, which includes every step

from the creation of a product design to the ultimate use of the product by the consumer."

In addition, the CPSC's *Recall Handbook*, in existence for many years but most recently updated in March 2012, has had sections on the appointment of a recall coordinator, development of a company recall policy and plan, and extensive



suggestions for the creation and retention of records to support a recall.

The safety processes advocated in these handbooks are just suggestions and not legal requirements. In addition, they are similar to those procedures employed by companies that have a well-functioning safety effort. So, there is nothing particularly new here that a company with a comprehensive safety program shouldn't already be doing.

### New Requirements For Safety Compliance Programs

Recently, however, new requirements for safety compliance programs have been inserted by the CPSC into various documents.

#### • Factors To Consider For Civil Penalties

In 2010, the CPSC published in the *Federal Register* a final rule of factors that the staff will consider when deciding whether they will seek civil penalties. The rule (16 CFR §1119.4(b)(1)) clearly states that product safety programs are one of the factors to be considered.

In addition, the commissioners released a statement dated March 10, 2010, concerning these new factors that said, in part:

*"The safety/compliance program factor takes into account the extent to which a person (including an importer of goods) has sound, effective programs/systems in place to ensure that the products he makes, sells or distributes are safe.*

*Having effective safety programs dramatically lessens the likelihood that a person will have to worry about the application of this civil penalty*

*rule. Any good program will make sure that there is continuing compliance with all relevant mandatory and voluntary safety standards. This is not the same as saying if one's product meets all mandatory and voluntary standards that the Commission will not seek a civil penalty in appropriate cases. The Commission expects companies to follow all mandatory and voluntary safety standards as a matter of course."*

#### • Consent Decrees

At the same time the new civil penalty factors were being finalized, for the first time, the establishment of a product safety management program was included in a consent decree for civil penalties. In a March 4, 2010, agreement, Daiso Holding, a U.S. subsidiary of a Japanese company, agreed to pay just over \$2 million in fines for violating various laws and regulations concerning the sale of toys and children's products.

The consent decree required Daiso to hire a product safety coordinator who was approved by the CPSC to do, in part, the following:

- Create a comprehensive product safety program;
- Conduct a product audit to determine which of defendants' merchandise requires testing and certification of compliance with the FHSA, CPSA and any other act enforced by the CPSC;
- Establish and implement an effective and reasonable product safety testing program in compliance with the FHSA, the CPSA, and any other act enforced by the CPSC;
- Create guidance manuals for managers and employees on how to comply with product safety requirements;
- Establish procedures to conduct product recalls;
- Establish systems to investigate all reports of consumer incidents, property damage, injuries, warranty claims, insurance claims and court complaints regarding products under the jurisdiction of the CPSC that defendants imported into the United States.

The consent decree contained more specific requirements and included monitoring requirements.

#### • Safety Requirements In Civil Penalty Settlement Agreements

The CPSC did nothing further to impose safety requirements until they were

inserted into civil penalty settlement agreements starting in February 2013. In the first agreement, Kolcraft, a manufacturer of baby products including strollers and bassinets, agreed to pay a \$400,000 civil penalty. In addition, the company agreed to implement and maintain a compliance program that contains the following elements:

- a) written standards and policies;
- b) a mechanism for confidential employee reporting of compliance-related questions or concerns to either a compliance officer or to another senior manager with authority to act as necessary;
- c) effective communication of company compliance-related policies and procedures to all employees through training programs or otherwise;
- d) senior manager responsibility for compliance;
- e) board oversight of compliance (if applicable); and
- f) retention of all compliance-related records for at least five (5) years and availability of such records to CPSC upon request.

Then-Chairman Tenenbaum and Commissioner Adler issued a joint statement in connection with this agreement saying they were concerned that Kolcraft had been the subject of a dozen recalls since 1989 and that some further action was required. The commissioners also made it clear in their statement that having an adequate safety program does not get a company off the hook for failing to timely report a safety problem.

Every settlement agreement for civil penalties since May 2013 has had some compliance requirements. Based on this history, it is virtually certain that future settlement agreements will contain some type of requirement for the establishment of more robust safety compliance programs. It is still an open question as to how compliance will be audited and monitored and when the CPSC will require that additional processes and procedures be established. In addition, it is unknown what the CPSC would do if the firm never fully complies with these requirements after they have agreed to them.

#### Safety Requirements In Corrective Action Plans

The last CPSC action concerning compliance programs is contained in a notice of

### What's Inside ISO 10377?

Take 60 minutes to learn more in a free, on-demand webinar, "ISO Consumer Safety Suppliers," presented by UL's Robert Pollack and Haley Sprague. Topics cover the new standards of ISO 10377:2013 and how they will have a significant impact on the entire supply chain for suppliers, distributors and consumers. Find this webinar under the Education and e-Learning tabs at [www.ppai.org](http://www.ppai.org).

Order a copy of ISO 10377 at <http://webstore.ansi.org> or [www.iso.org](http://www.iso.org).

proposed rulemaking published in the November 21, 2013, *Federal Register*. This rule deals with voluntary recall notices, but also allows the CPSC to mandate compliance programs as part of corrective action plans (CAP). The requirements for safety programs are the same as those in the civil penalty settlement agreements described above.

This proposed interpretative rule also provides that the corrective action, including an agreement as to the establishment of a safety program, is legally binding. Therefore, if this rule is approved, the CPSC would be able to legally enforce the compliance program if the company does not comply.

It is unclear how the CPSC will be able to evaluate the procedures and controls of the manufacturer or product seller and determine whether they are insufficient or ineffectual. Who will do it? When will they have time to do it? What is the basis of their determination? Will the recall be postponed until this analysis is done?

The comment period ended in February 2014 and all that remains is to wait until the staff and commissioners decide what to do.

### A Final Caution

It is certainly possible for a company to have a robust safety program and to have information that the CPSC believes should be reported, but not to report it because the company does not believe there is a defect or substantial product hazard. So, reasonable minds may differ. But, that doesn't justify imposing new procedures on a manufacturer who may already have sufficient programs in place.

Manufacturers should consider all of these requirements and evaluate their own programs. They should also consider the new ISO standard (ISO 10377), which sets forth some best practices in safety management as well as other studies and reports on what is an effective product safety management program. (See articles at [www.productliabilityprevention.com](http://www.productliabilityprevention.com) regarding the new ISO standard and other product safety management best practices.)

Most companies don't do a sufficient job, especially as they begin to sell globally and have to monitor safety issues and incidents around the world. Therefore, it would be prudent for any company to pull their safety pro-

gram out of the file cabinet and take a look at it with fresh eyes.

Being proactive about complying with these requirements before you have a safety problem is the prudent and responsible thing to do. Dealing with these issues after a problem arises increases the risk of it turning into a huge problem for your products and your company anywhere the product is sold. **PPB**

Kenneth Ross is a former partner and now Of Counsel in the Minneapolis, Minnesota, office of Bowman and Brooke LLP where he provides legal and practical advice to manufacturers and other product sellers in all areas of product safety, regulatory compliance and product liability prevention including safety management, recalls and dealing with the CPSC. He can be reached at 952-933-1195 or [kenrossesq@comcast.net](mailto:kenrossesq@comcast.net). Access his other articles at [www.productliabilityprevention.com](http://www.productliabilityprevention.com).




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## PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

In this column I intend to share a glimpse of my yoga journey and pilgrimage to India, and reveal how my practice has significantly improved my overall well-being. Although quite overwhelmed initially, my time away allowed me to gain a deeper appreciation of my yoga practice, develop a love of India while in the Mysore community and take time to live fully in the moment. Breathe in, breathe out.

Since my return, I've been asked numerous questions about my journey and yoga in general. One that comes up most frequently is how yoga can help change how you feel about yourself and others. I can only speak from personal experience and what I've learned from others who practice with me. From my perspective and daily practice, I can truly say the impact of yoga has been transformational. It has helped me become more focused and alert. Residing in the present, I am more engaged with people, activities and work. I also believe I've become more grounded, more humble, more relaxed and more patient. Other practitioners echo my thoughts. How cool is that?

The practice of yoga is a process, not a quest for perfection, and I now have the tools to keep me headed in the direction I need and want to go. As I spotlighted in the title of this piece, yoga is so much about your breath, and this purposeful breathing actually calms my mind. In concert with the physical practice, the movement and breath also cleanse the body. The meditation, for example, during my practice helps clear away the clutter and provides more space so I can accomplish what I need for my family and for my career.

I'm often surprised by the expectations people have of a yoga practice. Don't be fooled; yoga is not just about the postures or twisting like a pretzel. It is a path, a union of mind and body, and a way to assist the brain to let go of the constant chatter. Although the more

# BREATHE IN, BREATHE OUT

WHAT YOGA HAS TO OFFER US ALL

BY RONI S. WRIGHT, MAS

**I**T WAS 5 AM. Bundled up on a chilly December morning with my flashlight in hand, I began my one-mile walk to the shala (the authentic name for a modern-day yoga studio). However, this shala was not just any shala, but the K. Pattabhi Jois Ashtanga Institute in Mysore, India. That's right, the country of India. As I nervously headed for my first practice, all I could think about was how I ended up halfway around the world, away from friends, family and work, to begin a month-long yoga pilgrimage.



advanced poses are challenging and fun, most people who come to the mat do so comfortably and safely. No ego. No expectations. No judgments. Breathe in, breathe out.

Okay, back to India. Although it was magical, the first few weeks were definitely a challenge. Power outages were commonplace; the air was difficult to breathe because of

burning trash; scooters shouted their passing incessantly with horns blaring all day and all night; and when the horns did finally cease, then the dogs began their noisy dialogue. And don't forget about the sacred cows wandering along at the most inopportune moments!

Then one day, on a particularly scary rickshaw ride, the words "surrender and

accept" popped into my head. I grabbed on to them as my personal words of wisdom and everything changed. During that 20-minute ride, all I wanted to do was flee. In fact, I documented the ride in a short video because I wanted proof that I was actually living this unbelievably frightening yet exhilarating adventure.

## BREATHE WRIGHT

Roni Wright recommends these books for the mind, body and soul:

### ***The Healing Power of the Breath: Simple Techniques to Reduce Stress and Anxiety, Enhance Concentration, and Balance Your Emotions***

Softcover, 240 pages

List price: \$17.95

Here's a drug-free, side-effect free solution to common stress and mood problems—developed by two physicians. Millions of Americans suffer from mood problems and stress-related issues including anxiety, depression, insomnia, and trauma-induced emotions and behaviors; and most would prefer not to take medication for their conditions due to troublesome side effects, withdrawal symptoms, and disappointing success rates. Drs. Richard P. Brown and Patricia L. Gerbarg provide a drug-free alternative that works through a range of simple breathing techniques drawn from yoga, Buddhist meditation, the Chinese practice of qigong, Orthodox Christian monks and other sources. These methods have been scientifically shown to be effective in alleviating specific stress and mood challenges such as anxiety, insomnia, post-traumatic stress disorder, and many others. The authors explain how breathing practices activate communication pathways between the mind and the body, positively impacting the brain and calming the stress response. The enclosed audio program guides readers through the techniques and helps make these breathing practices an ongoing part of daily life.

### ***Yoga for Life: A Journey to Inner Peace and Freedom***

Softcover, 272 pages

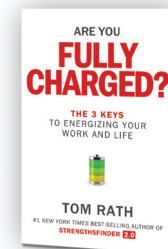
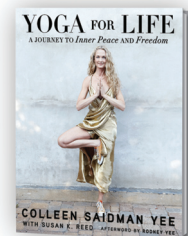
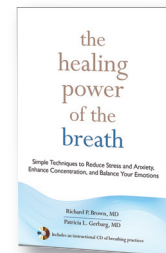
List price: \$22.99

Available June 2, 2015

*"I've learned how to extract the beauty of an ordinary day. I've learned that the best high exists in the joy—or the sadness—of the present moment. Yoga allows me to surf the ripples and sit with the mud, while catching glimpses of the clarity of my home at the bottom of the lake: my true self."*

The very first time Saidman Yee took a yoga class, she left feeling inexplicably different—something inside had shifted. She felt alive—so alive that yoga became the center of her life, helping her come to terms with her insecurities and find her true identity and voice. Approachable, sympathetic, funny, and candid, Saidman Yee shares personal anecdotes along with her compassionate insights and practical instructions for applying yoga to everyday issues and anxieties. Specific yoga sequences accompany each chapter and address everything from hormonal mood swings to detoxing, depression, stress, and increased confidence and energy. Step-by-step instructions and photographs demonstrate her signature flow of poses so you can follow them effortlessly.

*Yoga for Life* offers techniques to bring awareness to every part of your physical and spiritual being, allowing you to feel truly alive and to embody the peace of the present moment.



### ***Are You Fully Charged?: The 3 Keys to Energizing Your Work and Life***

Hardcover, 240 pages

List price: \$22.95

Available May 5, 2015

Tom Rath, author of five influential bestsellers, reveals the three keys that matter most for our daily health and well-being, as well as our engagement in our work. Drawing on the latest and most practical research from health, psychology, and economics, this book focuses on changes we can make to create better days for ourselves and others. *Are You Fully Charged?* will challenge you to stop pursuing happiness and start creating meaning instead, lead you to rethink your daily interactions with the people who matter most, and show you how to put your own health first in order to be your best every day.

Something extraordinary happened on that ride. I finally relaxed and trusted in the driver, who was laughing and asking question after question about me and my life back in America. As someone who tends to want to always be in control, this was a test in letting go. And once I let go of that sense of chaos and just let it be, I was able to find an inner peace and calm. I could not control what was happening around me but could take ownership of how it made me feel. Surrender and accept became my mantra. Breathe in, breathe out.

Ever wonder where the expression “take a deep breath” originated? My guess would be from a very insightful yogi. Paying attention to your breath releases stress, removes clutter from your mind and gives you a chance to think. It also allows you to see more clearly and focus on overcoming challenges and obstacles. Now, I completely understand that the closest many of you will get to practicing yoga is wearing yoga pants. And I acknowledge that yoga is not for everybody. However, the message about the importance of breath is where I believe everybody can benefit from yogic principles.

An important life lesson that I brought home with me from India was finding the time to sit quietly. This quiet time, or meditation, allows me to focus on how my body takes in and releases the breath. I acknowledge all other thoughts as they appear but come back to the breath. Just 10 minutes a day and I have the ability to be more clearly focused and present. My yoga journey is still so young, but I’m getting a handle on the mind-body connection. Becoming more present and genuinely living in the moment is giving me the space to live more richly and capture more nuances of the world, people and situations around me. I have always had a hard time sitting still, so I began my meditation journey with a single minute. Once I accomplished that in the course of a few weeks, I added more time. With such a busy life, I know how hard it is to find extra time, so I strive for at least 10 minutes a day (usually right after my yoga practice or right before I go to sleep) to meditate.

While in India, I met and practiced with people from all over the world. About a month after I returned home, one of my new friends shared a YouTube movie showing res-



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** Roni has been practicing yoga for the past four years. Here she practices while visiting Lake Tahoe, Nevada. • Roni waits for the rickshaw driver with her new “friend.” • Roni joins new friends, Jade and Susan, for lunch at a samosa stand. • Roni with Nina, a local shop owner in Mysore.

idents of Mysore being interviewed about their thoughts on yoga. I was thrilled to discover that another yogi inspired by her pilgrimage to Mysore made the film. As I watched the video, I felt a little tug. It was wonderful to see the streets I walked and the places I frequented.

As I was contemplating the narrative, it struck me that we all share the need to be awakened and renewed. So what if you don’t have a yoga mat? Our lives are so fast-paced today that we rarely have time to slow down and truly engage and reflect. We all live with stress. The stress from our jobs, whether internally generated or from a boss or colleague. Stress from our clients. Stress from family obligations. Yoga is not just about a

physical practice. It is so much more. Maybe, start with gentle breathing at your desk to stir up or uncover your creative energy. Enjoy the deep breath in, and the subtle release of the breath out. Now you got it.

Reflecting back on roughly four years of coming to my yoga mat six days a week, I believe in the transformative effect that a yoga practice can have on our body and mind. At the end of each session, we acknowledge the teacher and the teacher within ourselves with the word “Namaste.” Namaste loosely translated means, “The light within me sees the light within you.” Let’s all light that light within and find a way to renew and refresh. Perhaps, I’ll even see you in Mysore, India. Breathe in, *breathe* out. **PPB**

Roni Wright, MAS, vice president of supplier The Book Company, based in Delray Beach, Florida, is a 30-year veteran of the promotional products industry. In her volunteer and leadership roles, she has served on the boards of PPAI, PPEF, the Regional Association Council (RAC), PPAF and YESAA. Wright shares her busy industry life with husband, Chris, and daughter, Devon. They inspire and encourage her to be all that she can be.



## PROMOTIONS



# We ♥ Our Town

HOW DISTRIBUTORS HELP CLIENTS PROMOTE AND CELEBRATE THEIR HOME TURF  
**BY TAMA UNDERWOOD**

**T**HE U.S. IS A BIG PLACE. And while most Americans have traveled extensively in this land for fun, for work or for school, it's difficult to truly know the nation's various locales unless you've spent significant time in each.

The truth is, lacking firsthand knowledge of a city or place means we often default to pop culture and the media to provide a sense of what we're missing. This, mixed with a cliché or two, is often all some ever learn of the destinations where they didn't stay a while—or perhaps didn't visit at all.

This problem is compounded for the thousands of small cities and towns that receive virtually no media atten-

tion and enjoy no cultural awareness whatsoever. But large cities can also struggle with identifying their myriad qualities and then targeting campaigns to interested parties.

Understanding what makes a place unique and cultivating branding strategies around these qualities can bring tourist dollars, attract new businesses and promote pride among residents.

Here are some strategies PPAI member distributors have used to help communities advertise their unique attributes.

**Keeping it local.** A nonprofit representing municipal governments in Georgia wanted to honor the state at an



annual meeting of delegates from 520 of its cities and towns. The group spent more than \$30,000 on attendee gifts that were manufactured in Georgia—even the packaging was local. The distributor spent six months sourcing the items and finding ways to tie them in with industries in the state. The selections included aprons paired with regional cookbooks and coasters. Printed Solo-brand cups were also used because of their tie-in with the state.

**Building business.** To entice investors to build in downtown Dallas, Texas, the city's government gave branded chargers and flash drives to brokers, owners and representatives of high-value buildings in the area. The chargers symbolized recharging the downtown area, and the flash drives contained data the city wished to share with recipients. The distributor used the city's existing skyline logo but recast it in sleek black and white, and had a designer update it with a new bridge erected after the original design's production.

**Highlighting a niche.** To tell outsiders about its status as a go-to location for the film industry, the state of Georgia drop shipped products selected to complement three PG-13 films produced in the state: *Trouble with the Curve*, *Forrest Gump* and *Hunger Games*. Movie snacks such as popcorn and Skittles, Georgia peach and cheddar cookies, and trail mix were chosen along with sweatbands and wristbands, backpacks and waterproof ID holders, and fire starters and grilling planks.

**Celebrating the past.** Philadelphia drew tourists by promoting founding father Ben Franklin, who ran away to the city at age 17 and eventually became publisher of two newspapers and helped establish the University of Pennsylvania. The campaign used kits imprinted with city-wide events and packed in pizza-style boxes, which were mailed to members of the media. **PPB**



### FRESH IDEA

Welcome tourists to your fair city with a selfie stick printed with the community's logo, slogan and year. Add a hashtag to encourage social media shares.

**ALL OF THESE CAMPAIGNS** won PPAI Pyramid Awards for the distributors involved. By using the same tactics in campaigns for your local or state government clients, you too can help educate out-of-towners on what makes your region special.



The state of Georgia trumpeted its film industry with movie-themed promotions.



Investors were wooed by this gift pack from representatives of Dallas' downtown district.



A nonprofit for local municipal governments honored its state with made-in-Georgia gifts.



# Pricing In The Promotional Products Industry

A LOOK AT VARIOUS MODELS AND THEIR BENEFITS AND  
CHALLENGES FOR DISTRIBUTORS AND THEIR CLIENTS

BY AARON MOSCOE

PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS DISTRIBUTORS and their salespeople are wise to learn the difference between margin and markup, but for many that's where the education on pricing methods ends. Those tried-and-true methods for determining margin and markups may have been all that was needed years ago and they are still valuable tools today. However, buyers have become more sophisticated, and client relationships are often governed by specifically tailored procurement contracts. Indeed, distributors should make an effort to continuously educate themselves to understand and navigate more complex pricing models in order to better serve their clients, themselves and the promotional products industry.







## PRICING IN THE PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

### The Cost-Plus Model

Markup and margin-calculated pricing are both examples of cost-plus pricing. In the former case, the cost is multiplied by one plus the markup rate. For example, marking up an item that costs \$20 by 30 percent works as follows:  $\$20 \times (1 + 30\%) = \$26$ . Alternatively, margin refers to the percentage or amount of the selling price that represents gross profit. For example, applying a 30-percent margin to a \$20 cost base works as follows:  $\$20 / (1 - 30\%) = \$28.57$ .

A benefit of cost-plus pricing for clients and distributors is that both parties can agree upon the value of the products and services the distributor provides as a percentage of sales. Cost-plus models tend to work well when the product has been commoditized, but not as well when the client may not know exactly which products they are looking for during the contract or when value is attributed to the distributor for bringing the client the right product and execution suggestions to meet the client's desired approach. For example, if distributor A is willing to work for a lower margin than distributor B, but distributor B brings more valuable ideas which in turn helps the client achieve better results (more sales, higher margins, increased brand awareness, increased employee engagement, higher customer loyalty, etc.) and a higher rate of return on their promotional product spend, then, in the eyes of the client, distributor B may be providing better value, even if at a slightly higher price than distributor A.

There are also a number of significant shortcomings in cost-plus models. A few are listed below:

- “Cost” should be defined and understood. Cost may be defined to include the materials or item costs for the product supplied as well as in-bound freight, brokerage, duties, set-up costs, foreign exchange costs and even overhead costs.
- Not all distributors have the same cost. This can be true of both the item cost as well as the ancillary costs mentioned above. Assuming this is a commodity discussion, a buyer may rather pay a higher markup or margin to a distributor with a lower cost base as long as the total cost of acquisition for the buyer is lower and the buyer's needs are properly met.
- Auditing the distributor's compliance to pricing policies can be time-consuming, inefficient and challenging for both parties.
- Cost-plus models may create a disincentive to “buy well.” For example, if a distributor can buy an item for \$10 and can sell the item through a cost-plus business model, there may be no reason for the distributor to look for that item from an equally reliable supplier who sells the item for less. Even if the distributor finds the same item for \$9, the distributor could make more profit by buying it at \$10.

The examples above are very basic pricing concepts. Throughout the industry, there are innumerable pricing models and methods that allow this industry to foster, protect and celebrate creativity, competition and individualized client satisfaction.

### The Reasonable Pricing Model

Another model is the “trust us, we charge a reasonable price” model, which is surprisingly common even in procurement-driven contracts. Typically these contracts focus more on the type of products, scope of services and service-level deliverables each party commits to providing. These arrangements are common in e-store contracts. Ultimately, the litmus test is whether or not the client's needs and expectations are met (if not exceeded) for the price paid for the products, services and end results received. A downside to this approach is that it is difficult for the client and the distributor to institute a comparative process to ensure that reasonable value relative to a fair market price has been exchanged.

In a hybrid model (discussed below), the “trust us” approach tends to apply to spends under a reasonable threshold; for example, \$5,000. If a buyer asks, “Why should I trust you to charge a reasonable price?”, the distributor's answer may be fairly straightforward (but still perhaps lacking a comparative process), such as: “Long-term client satisfaction is my goal. If you discover that I have charged an unreasonable price, you may take your business elsewhere. I am focused on the long-term business relationship, so I will always keep my pricing sharp to ensure you receive exceptional value commensurate with the price charged.”

Sounds idealistic, I know. However, idealism can blend with more data-based models, and such hybrid arrangements may be appropriate in some cases, particularly where a buyer has significantly larger projects or a long-term promotional plan.

### The Competitive Bid Pricing Model

As previously stated, creativity, competition and client satisfaction form a large part of the backbone of this industry. A competitive bid pricing model can be helpful to provide buyers with validation that they are receiving competitive pricing, it can keep distributors honest, and it may create an incentive for distributors to buy well and maintain an efficient operating model. Many clients employ some form of a competitive bid process on orders over a certain monetary amount, which may depend on the client's budget, procurement policies or other factors affecting the client's end goal. Generally, this method is used when clients know the specific items they are looking for (i.e., they have been commoditized) or allows for discretion based on the quality of the ideas presented. In the latter case, where multiple distributors present product options with pricing, the concept is that distributors are competing for an expenditure based on the quality of their ideas, which is an additional value factor that distributors bring to the table.

When competing on ideas, distributors are wise to invest their time and resources in developing the most effective ideas for their client and to request a reasonable level of protection that any unique ideas they bring forward will not then be shopped around as commodity items. As opposed to the other models discussed in this article, when competing on ideas the approach becomes more of a budget-based model—“What can I, the distributor, provide within your budget?”—than a cost-based model: “How much can I, the distribu-

## PRICING IN THE PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

tor, add to my cost?" That said, the buyer may wish to negotiate a reasonable maximum margin that the distributor may charge.

### The Competitive Bid Scenario

A competitive bid scenario will likely include a limited number of pre-qualified vendors only. For example, those in the vendor pool may qualify based on their financial stability, labor practices, business ethics and other factors such as environmental responsibility, ensuring they align with the purchasing company's values, etc. Consider asking the client how many distributors have been invited to participate in the bid. The more information you can glean from the client or other sources (hint: ask industry suppliers), the better equipped you will likely be to respond to the bid competitively. The process should clearly articulate the evaluation criteria and requirements for success. The competitive ideas and bid methodology provide due advantage to those who buy best (not just well), who operate efficiently and who bring forward the best and most effective ideas. The process should be designed to allow significant room for creativity and competition in order to adequately differentiate similar but different proposals.

While there may be merit in a well-designed competitive bid model, two disadvantages come to mind. First, if price competitiveness is the key driver for the buyer, with enough price pressure a distributor, or its supplier or the manufacturer (sometimes unbeknownst to the distributor), may cut corners on product specifications, the manufacturing processes (i.e., running equipment at higher than desirable speeds to achieve greater cost efficiency at the expense of quality), minimize due diligence or overlook quality in order to achieve a particular price. Also, competitors looking to "buy the business" may go in at an unrealistic and unsustainably low margin on any given order. For some, this approach may be questionable in terms of ethics, and many times the "low-baller" approach leads to a brief distributor-client relationship. It may also leave the buyer with a distributor (even if just for the short term) who is unable to stand behind the sub-standard product or service delivered, whether because of the supplier's or an upstream entity's corner-cutting tactics.

There are also variations of price competitive models including: e-auctions, English auctions (also known as "open auctions"), reverse auctions and Dutch auctions. A detailed analysis of these variations is beyond the scope of this article, however, I would be pleased to discuss my views on the advantages and the disadvantages to each of these types of auctions upon request. First and foremost, however, each of these models often assume 100-percent commoditization.

### Guaranteed Savings Model

Another interesting pricing model is a guaranteed savings model. Generally speaking, this type of model can be advantageous because it can provide a measurable savings over a defined baseline. The following two particular iterations come to mind:

1. *A guaranteed savings over published pricing.* In this model, published pricing is used as a baseline against which savings on commoditized items can be measured. Generally, this model is fairly easy to administer, illustrates savings and encourages distributors to buy well and operate efficiently. Since custom products and products from other industries may not feature published pricing, this approach may be most effective for commodity items where quantities purchased are within the scale of published pricing. An argument against this model is that it encourages a distributor to suggest products from vendors they buy best from, which are not necessarily the vendors that offer the most effective products for the buyer. For any distributor interested in keeping a client long-term, a common goal is to provide clients with the most effective solutions (at a reasonable and competitive price). If a distributor is not suggesting the best products for the client's needs, then the distributor should not be surprised if the client seeks business elsewhere.

*"The more information you can glean from the client or other sources (hint: ask industry suppliers), the better equipped you will likely be to respond to the bid competitively."*

2. *A guaranteed savings over a baseline of client's historical purchases.* This is similar to the version above in measuring savings, except that the baseline is generally what the client previously paid for the same or substantially similar items. While this approach sounds attractive, it can be difficult to administer accurately unless the products purchased year over year are exact repeat orders of the same products in the same quantities with the same decoration methods and decoration particulars such as number of

colors, imprint size, etc. Even still, this model may require greater transparency into what was purchased previously, which, despite the buyer's best efforts, is not always available. This model becomes even more complex when taking into account currency fluctuations and variances in other input costs such as raw material and labor costs. This model may also fail to adequately address current market value of the items purchased. (For example, I can tell you that USB drives have more memory now than in years past and they cost less than they did a few years ago.) This model, therefore, may not be a reasonable indicator of cost savings relative to what the buyer could buy elsewhere today, which is likely a more reasonable measure of savings. Nonetheless, the guaranteed savings model may have its place in the industry.



## PRICING IN THE PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

### More Pricing Models To Consider

Other pricing model considerations may include the following:

**Blended models:** Suffice it to say, not every transaction is the same. The variables may include the value placed on ideas, design services, additional services the distributor is able to provide such as warehousing, kitting and fulfillment, size of order (and commensurate risk), importance to the business, production time, transparency through supply chain, quality, specialty manufacturing processes, access to proprietary products or intellectual property, quality control and testing requirements, and others. Accordingly, smart buyers consider the full range of their capabilities and requirements and consider a hybrid model that allows them to address the scope of requirements on each type of purchase. Distributors should work with the client to gain a thorough understanding of the purchasing expectations and requirements and to develop a suggested model that scales to the needs and wants of all purchases. As a distributor, my firm and I welcome the opportunity to interact with clients in this fashion.

**Sliding scale:** Sliding-scale models are frequently implemented in cost-plus models, in which case the margin allowed would typically depend on the dollar value of each individual order. For example, the agreement may be that for orders up to \$10,000 an X-percent margin is allowed, for orders between \$10,000 and \$25,000 a Y-percent margin is allowed and for orders over \$25,000, the margin is restricted to a maximum margin of Z-percent. These numbers are arbitrary, but the approach may be applied to any sliding scale.

**Volume rebates:** This can be a sensitive area. Procurement folks are often measured on the amount of rebates they negotiate. While rebates can be valuable, the discussion on rebates should be balanced with all of the other needs of both the buyer and the distributor. That is not to suggest in any way that the financial aspects of procurement are not important. Here are a few reasons why rebates can be misleading or even dangerous to the relationship with a client:

- Rebates are only one element of cost. I have seen, firsthand, a client award business to another distributor for a seemingly irresistible rebate program. However, after the program was implemented, the client discovered that any savings from rebates were lost in other areas of the model, thereby making sales and marketing budgets less effective. After regaining the client's business, the client disclosed that too much emphasis was put on the rebate, which may have blinded the client to other significant cost factors.

- At some point, the distributor should make a reasonable net return. If rebate structures are too high, they either must be reflected in base costing (in which case the client may pay too much up front) or the distributor stops making any money on servicing the client, which is clearly not a sustainable business solution for either party.
- If rebate rates are so onerous that they need to be reflected in a distributor's pricing, it may make the distributor uncompetitive with the non-authorized vendors that rogue employees may like to use. This can be punitive to the contracted distributor and can create misperceptions about how well procurement is buying.
- Excessive rebate requirements may lead to rogue spending, which may open the door to vendors with questionable business practices.
  - Rogue spending can also limit procurement's ability to mitigate the risk of unsafe, non-compliant and even counterfeit goods.

On the other hand, a modest volume rebate can encourage compliance to spend with authorized vendors. This is most effective when the rebate accrues internally to the budget holders versus procurement. This is not often the case, but definitely a best practice to motivate functional buyers in sales, marketing, operations, HR and other departments. Indeed, rebates may play a key role in the market, but I have seen sometimes subtle and sometimes blatant disadvantages of the rebate model.

This article is intended to get our promotional products colleagues—distributors, suppliers and buyers alike—to think about the range of pricing options, models and opportunities. Underlying assumptions include that procurement wants to buy well from qualified distributor vendors, that a respectable and trustworthy distributor wants to work well with customers who value quality service, and that all this can occur while distributors are pushed to continually up their game, increase efficiencies and deliver more value in this creative and ever-competitive industry. **PPB**

*"While rebates can be valuable, the discussion on rebates should be balanced with all of the other needs of both the buyer and the distributor."*

*The purpose of this article is to educate and provide perspective in relation to various distributor pricing models and approaches in the promotional products industry. PPAI does not endorse any particular pricing model or approach. Any opinions contained in this article are those of the author alone and not of PPAI. PPAI has a long-standing practice of and is committed to ensuring that competition within the industry is uninhibited by any express or implied regulation of prices or quantities of goods or services provided by PPAI or through any PPAI publication provided for the benefit of the promotional products industry as a whole.*

*Aaron Moscoe is CEO of Toronto, Ontario-based distributor TPS Promotions & Incentives. Reach him at [aaron@tpscan.com](mailto:aaron@tpscan.com).*

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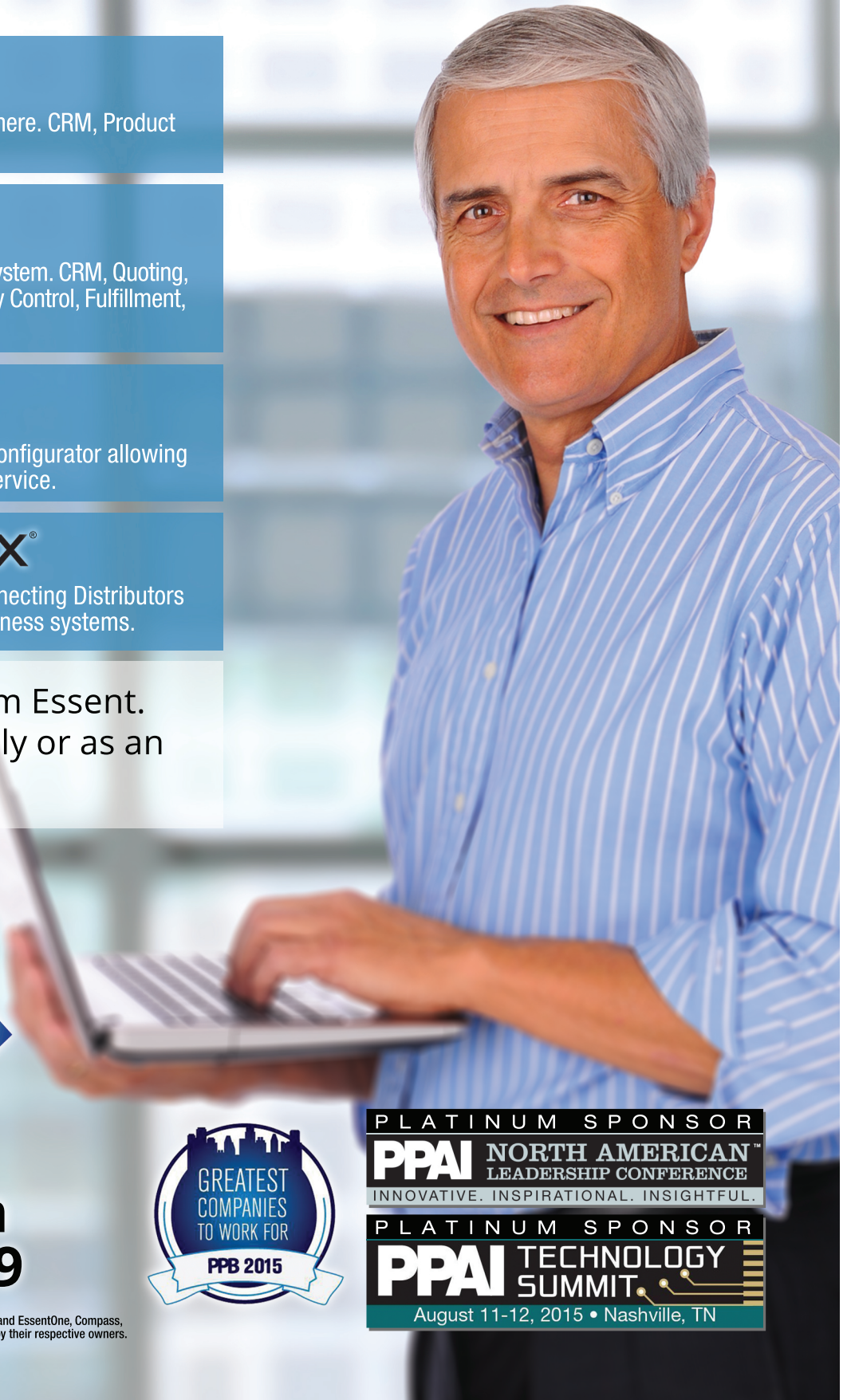
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# CONNECT

INSIDE PPAI



**ABOVE** Expo East attendees take in all the show floor and pavilions have to offer.

## SHOW AND SELL

EXPO EAST INAUGURATES ISS CO-LOCATION WITH STYLE

**E**XPO EAST 2015 BROUGHT A NEW show experience to Atlantic City, New Jersey, this year. In its inaugural co-location with the Imprinted Sportswear Show (ISS), held March 12-15, attendees from across the Northeast filled a bustling show floor featuring more than 900 booths with new products and ideas for clients, and the latest technology and services in the decorated apparel industry.

The co-location with ISS, the largest trade show dedicated to the decorated apparel industry, added exhibitions and demonstrations of that segment's equipment and production methods to the Vegas-style show production that Expo East is known for. PPAI's Product Pavilions—Top Sellers, Green Products, Made In The USA and Express Ship—and its highly regarded incentive products showcase, brand., also brought exciting elements to this year's show.

"ISS Atlantic City 2015 was a successful show for both our attendees and exhibitors," says Jeff Brown, ISS group show director. "Our participation on both overall attendance and the size of the show was increased significantly over 2014. The co-location between PPAI's Expo East and ISS

BE A WINNER!  
**PopQuiz**  
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Scott Perry, Trade  
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NEW MEMBERS

Atlantic City has given our audience the largest marketplace for promotional products and decorated apparel on the east coast. The initial reaction from our attendees and exhibitors has been nothing but positive. We look forward to continuing our relationship with PPAI in the future."

Professional education at Expo East featured 40 sessions on seven tracks—Business Management, Product Responsibility, Industry Essentials, Marketing & Advertising, Decorate, Sales & Service and Technology—throughout the show week, offering industry professionals the opportunity to further their careers and develop their business skill sets. Expo East also brought a pair of exciting keynote speakers to Atlantic City. Christina "CK" Kerley, speaker, trainer and strategist, shined a light on the smart revolution of the "Internet of Things" and how it will play into a new era of promotional products during her keynote luncheon presentation. The next day, Jeffrey Gitomer, *New York Times*-bestselling author and sales authority, was the featured speaker during Expo East's Keynote & Cocktail session and taught attendees how to differentiate themselves, their companies and their products from the competition, and to elevate their status with customers from salesperson to trusted advisor.

Expo East also marked a major milestone for PPAI's Product Safety Awareness initiative, an education-based program requiring every member company wanting to exhibit, advertise or sponsor events

in the PPAI marketplace to complete a minimum of four hours of product safety education. By the time the trade-show floor opened on March 18, every exhibitor at Expo East had achieved Product Safety Aware certification.

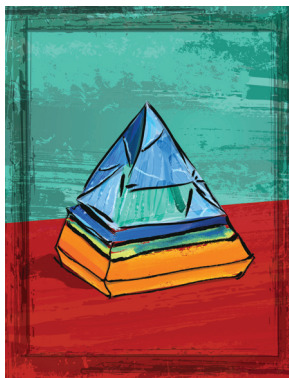
***By the time the trade-show floor opened on March 18, every exhibitor at Expo East had achieved Product Safety Aware certification.***

Product safety regulations affect nearly every aspect of the promotional products business, and PPAI has developed a program that provides free professional development and education for all industry members. To earn PSA status, member companies must designate one employee as a Product Safety Ambassador who will complete four hours of specified product safety. Expo East 2015 was the first event at which Product Safety Aware certification was required to exhibit.

Read more about Expo East, including a peek at the editors' favorite new products and highlights from Expo East keynote speaker presentations, and see video and pictures of the show in the *Expo East Daily* at [expoeastdaily.ppai.org](http://expoeastdaily.ppai.org). Recorded education sessions are also available for viewing On Demand at <http://eo2.commpartners.com/users/ppa/search.php>. **PPB**

## Making The Most Of The PPAI Pyramid Awards

PPAI'S PYRAMID AWARDS recognize the outstanding, creative use of promotional products in the client programs and campaigns of distributor members and industry regional associations. Their creativity and



ingenuity is honored each year at an awards presentation and reception held during The PPAI Expo.

Industry professionals, companies and regional associations who take home the Pyramid Award's coveted trophy bring home not only the recognition and appreciation of their peers, but also a unique calling card in the competitive promotional products marketplace.

Cliff Quicksell, Jr., MAS+, director of marketing with distributor iPROMOTEu (UPIC: IPRO9320), has won multiple Pyramid Awards over the years. "The Pyramid Awards have always been a

large part of my marketing strategy," he says. "In a very crowded market space, having a significant differentiator is imperative in order to survive and stay out in front. I believe by using my creative talents and demonstrating these to my clients it indeed creates a difference. Winning a Pyramid Award or Image Award actually validates the creative usage of what I do. I am blessed to have won 23 of these awards and honored to have helped and guided nearly 50 others in winning as well.

Bruce Felber, MAS, director of marketing and sales support for The Image



Group, has also shepherded multiple Pyramid Award-winning projects. He says, "I have been entering and supporting this award for over 25 years. Having won multiple silvers a bronze and now gold the reasons are clear. Winning an award from PPAI and your peers does give a certain amount of satisfaction that we are doing well for our clients. The fact that your client wins just elevates your relationship. It's a great way to gain additional projects and help promote you and your company to future clients."

The Pyramid Awards celebrate distributors and regional association's accomplishments in 15 different categories. Their work is judged by a panel of outside experts and members of the Awards & Recognition Action Group. Judges are looking for organized planning of the concept, effective execution, the appropriate and creative application of promotional products and messaging, and solid results.

There are several elements to a winning campaign, Quicksell says. First and foremost, it must be well thought out

and, in the case of client campaigns, it requires a distinct objective that can be measured at some level. Award-winning campaigns are built on strategies that solve problems in truly innovative and creative ways. Not only do they need an executable plan of action, he says, but also a cohesive follow-up strategy in order to gather data. Quicksell adds that campaigns that win Pyramid Awards are measurable and their results validated by a third party: "You can't just say 'client loved the program', it must be validated by a client that the projected goals were either met or exceeded."

Pyramid Award judging's central focus on results also appeals to Felber. "Pyramids are not just about using promotional products, but how to apply them to enhance and create messaging for your client," he says. "Good design, selection of products and execution are critical. It's about how you accomplish your client's goals and meet their expectations."

The Pyramid Awards and similar programs not only validate the winners but also the industry they work in.

Quicksell says, "The public needs to know that our industry is *not* a trinkets-and-trash business; rather, it is a viable medium that goes much further than just 'products.' When we can communicate that with our clients and prospects, it elevates our perception in what we do."

The benefits of taking home a Pyramid Award are extensive, and it's logical to seek out advice and assistance in putting together a winning entry. "Find a mentor who can assist you in the process," says Quicksell. "PPAI has such a program and I am one of the mentors in the group. The competition is strong but don't get discouraged if you don't win the first or second time; while I have won 23 of these awards, I have entered over 50 times. The awards committee has gone to great lengths to ensure that it is a fair and impartial judging; that's why winning to me is so special."

This year's program opens June 1, 2015 and closes July 10, 2015. Find the entry details at [www.ppai.org/awards](http://www.ppai.org/awards). **PPB**

## Summer Sales Made Easy

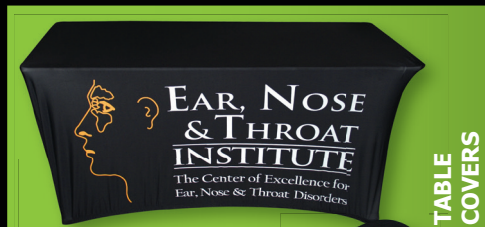


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## REGIONAL ASSOCIATION SPOTLIGHT: **NEPPA**

THIS ISSUE OF *PPB*'s spotlight on the industry's regional associations that support its companies and professionals turns to the New England Promotional Products Association (NEPPA). NEPPA supports industry distributors and suppliers throughout New England with information, professional development, networking and other services.

Recently, NEPPA's leadership has had great success with its Spring and Fall Shows, with both benefiting from the move to new venues. For 2015, it moved its Season Opener Expo to February and held it at Gillette Stadium. Carol Boutwell, NEPPA executive director, says, "We felt it would give our distributors who may have not gone to one of the national shows, a chance to see new products and work closely on projects with their suppliers."

The association has new programs in the works as well. Its Supplier Event Exchange (SEE) is a service that it offers its supplier and multi-line representative members that is intended to bring exposure to the "lunch & learn"-type events among distributors.

It has also adopted a cause as part of its NEPPA Cares initiative. It is inviting NEPPA members and their families to Angels on Horseback in Ashaway, Rhode Island, a therapeutic riding school, to help with chores and see the positive benefits that working with horses bring to disabled children. **PPB**



As part of the NEPPA Cares Initiative, members volunteered at Angels on Horseback, a therapeutic riding center in Ashaway, Rhode Island.

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CLOSE UP

# Color Your World

MELISSA MCCAULEY BRINGS VIBRANCY TO HER PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS JOB.

BY JEN ALEXANDER

W

HAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU get really good at selling someone's products? In Melissa McCauley's case, that someone invites you to come work for them. As a distributor, she showed such success selling products from Kaufman, Texas, supplier Numo (UPIC: NUMO0001), they asked her to come on board to try her hand at telling the company's story in the promotional products marketplace. "They flew me out to visit, offered me the 'Kool-Aid,' I accepted it and moved my stuff across the country!" recalls the former Charleston, South Carolina, resident.



McCauley (left) gets silly at The PPAI Expo with a friend.

Now living in Dallas with two dogs and thriving in a family that consists not just of parents, siblings and nephews but also co-workers, McCauley is focused on how she can spread the good news of Numo even farther. "I wear a few hats at the moment, but marketing director and business development would be the main two," she says.

When the work hours are over, McCauley enjoys kicking back with good food, good friends and good times. "And I love wake boarding," she says.

"It's not too accessible for me anymore, but it gives me something to look forward to when I return home."

**What was your first job, and what lessons did you learn that you apply to your work today?** I was a carhop at a Sonic Drive-in, roller skates and all. Most practical lesson learned there that still applies: "Tighten those bearings." One random pebble or bobble, and those loose wheels go flying!

**How and when did you enter the promotional products**

**industry?** July 2008—good times. I was fresh out of college with an accounting degree, a humble spirit and an offer from a family friend to start slingin' some printed t-shirts. During that economic cluster-bomb, this all made perfect sense, and it totally became a whole "it turned out for the best" thing.

**What advice would you share with an industry newcomer?**

Focus on your strengths. These are the things that you're gifted with and good at, and by using your talents as your center point and guide, you'll find ways to use the strengths to tighten up your weaknesses.

**Who do you consider to be your personal and/or professional mentors, and why?**

This is going to make me sound like I'm kissing up, but I'd be lying if I didn't say that, professionally, it's Jim Martin. He is the president of our company, and I admire so much what he brings to the table for our company, as well as for our industry.

**What motivates you in business? In life?** Motivation really comes to me in the form of creativity. The thrill for me that comes with creating something useful and effective for someone or something tends to be a driving force of its own. I definitely find myself inspired by following the work of talented marketing agencies and graphic designers.

**What promotional product do you wish you had invented?** The t-shirt!

**What professional accomplishment are you most proud of?** I've always been a junkie for school supplies—paper, pens, notebooks and just about anything found in a desk environment. About a year ago, I started working on a little sister company for Numo, based on the idea of bringing a line of bright, simply designed, affordable desk products to the promotional products industry. One of my huge goals for this line was color consistency, which can be challenging in our industry. We are still in the soft launch phase, but I am super proud of bringing this project to life and of the response it has received thus far. The line was voted most useful in the ASI Orlando product showcase, and we've also been nominated for the 2015 *Counselor* product design awards. **PPB**

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## DAY IN THE LIFE



**Scott Perry settles in for a successful show with Michelle Beaver, one of Trade Net's customer service reps.**

# Adapting To Stay Alive

SCOTT PERRY THRIVES ON THE CHALLENGES OF THE PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS BUSINESS.

BY JEN ALEXANDER

**N**OTHING SHOWS THE TRUE NATURE of a job like on-the-spot training, and Scott Perry's experience occurred in the most typical of promotional products settings—the trade show floor. His first foray into the field was as a general manager for a flexographic label printer that purchased a supplier of custom adhesive notes and cubes.

"The company's sales manager departed the day before a trade show and, with no one else to work the booth, I was sent to the front lines," Perry recalls. "I remember being perplexed when people kept asking if the products were priced on a 'C'. I just nodded my head in the affirmative—until I finally broke down and asked the person in the adjacent booth what they were talking about."

Fast-forward 10 years, and Perry knows the lingo by heart, only now he devotes the bulk of his attention to overseeing the customer service, graphic services and mail services departments, as well as sales staff, at supplier Trade Net Publishing Co. (UPIC: TRADENET) in Gardner, Kansas. "My most notable personal challenges are related to time management," says Perry.

"Everyone feels the crunch of simply not having enough hours in the day. TradeNet is essentially a 24-7 facility, so there is always something to be done or something needing attention. I can't always be available, so I work hard to staff my departments with team members who embrace the TradeNet vision of putting top-notch customer service above all else.

"At the risk of sounding cliché, I enjoy the fact that every day presents a new challenge or opportunity," he says. "Very seldom is my day the same as the day before; I identified early on that the promotional products industry is very fluid. No two customers, projects or products are the same. The ability to adapt helps keep you alive in this industry."

Now a recent empty-nester (daughter Allison left for college not long ago), Perry and his wife, Cindy, spend free time with friends and working at the family's 35-acre apple orchard—where Perry is the resident apiarist, or beekeeper.

*Jen Alexander is an associate editor for PPB.*

## Get a glimpse into a day in the life of Scott Perry.

**5 am** A lifelong early riser, I wake up and get my day started.

**5:30 am** I head out for my 30-minute commute to the office, listening to local talk radio and drinking my first cup of coffee on the way.

**6 am** I've arrived at TradeNet, where I get more coffee, fire up my computer and check emails. This is generally my most productive time of the day, as the office is still quiet and interruptions are limited.

**9 am** This seems to be the favorite time for meetings, and generally I will meet with my staff, the rest of the management team or outside vendors at this time.

**11:30 am** If no lunch meetings are scheduled, lunch is usually just a sandwich and some fruit at my desk.

**1 pm** This hour is a great time to return

calls. The East Coast and our centrally-located national customers are back from lunch, and the West Coast crowd is in the office.

**3 pm** Now is the busiest time of day for quotes, emails and phone calls. I spend time reaching out to customers, following up on outstanding projects, working with marketing on upcoming efforts and working with human resources on staffing, all while working hard to keep my inbox to a reasonable level.

**4:30 pm** I'm out the door and in the car, ready for the trip home.

**5:30 pm** As the cook in our house, I'm starting to make dinner; my wife, Cindy, is the resident baker.

**6:30 pm** With dinner done, I'm ready to sit in my comfortable chair and watch some mindless TV (I'm a DVR junkie). Of course, my laptop is usually with me so I can finish emails and quotes as well as check industry topics on social media.



**Scott Perry cherishes time with his family; daughter, Allison, (top) and wife, Cindy.**

**9 pm** I'm off to bed to watch more TV or a college basketball game until I drift off. **PPB**

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# SNAPSHOTS



(From left) PPAI Government Relations Manager **Seth Barnett** plans the day's meetings with Academy Advertising Specialties & Awards' **James Donatto II**, **James Donatto** and **Erica Fowler Foster**, and SAGE's **Dana Floyd**.

## ■ L.E.A.D. Local Texas Takes Industry's Message To Austin

In March, PPAI joined with industry professionals for **L.E.A.D. Local Texas** in Austin. L.E.A.D. Local is part of PPAI's state-level legislative outreach efforts to deliver the message of the promotional products industry to state legislators. The group met with 25 legislators and staff while in Austin, the most of any L.E.A.D. Local event. During their time on the capital, the group discussed Texas' place in the promotional products industry. Texas is home to the largest number of promotional products industry professionals, with more than 78,000 employees statewide, and the industry generates more than \$2 billion in annual revenue—roughly 10 percent of the industry's revenue nationwide. The group also noted that Texas companies represent the entire supply chain of the industry, from importers to manufacturers to distributors.



L.E.A.D Local Austin, whose participants include (from left) SAGE Director of Information Services **Dana Floyd**; PPAI Government Relations Manager **Seth Barnett**; **Dave DeGreeff, MAS**; BAG MAKERS, Inc. Regional Manager **D'Anna Zimmer, CAS**; and PPAI Public Affairs Director **Anne Lardner-Stone**, brought the message of an industry representing 78,000 Texas jobs and \$2 billion in revenue to the state capital.



Rep. **Senfronia Thompson** (center) met with **Dave DeGreeff, MAS**, and **Dana Floyd** during PPAI's L.E.A.D. Local event in Austin.

## 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](mailto:JamesK@ppai.org) and be sure to include a description, plus your name and contact information.

## Crystal D Honors Employees At Annual WOW Day Recognition Event

**Crystal D** hosted the St. Paul, Minnesota, supplier's 13th annual WOW Day event in February, recognizing the hard work and dedication of its employees throughout the year.

As part of the day's recognition activities, the company announced its new Value Champions, who embody the company's five core values—Integrity, Commitment, Respect, Quality and Passion—and handed out a number of other awards too.



**Crystal D recognized its employees' accomplishments in the supplier's 13th annual WOW Day event.**



**At its Million Dollar Club celebration, Proforma presented 27 new Million Dollar Club Jackets to incoming members. The club now has more than 150 members.**

**Proforma's annual Million Dollar Club event brings club members together with supplier partners to network and recognize members' accomplishments.**

## Proforma Hosts Million Dollar Club Recognition Event

Cleveland, Ohio-based distributor **Proforma** (UPIC: PROFORMA) hosted more than 300 owners, supplier partners and support center team members at its Million Dollar Club celebration, held March 12-13 in Rancho Palos Verdes, California. Proforma's Million Dollar Club was launched in 1990 to recognize Proforma owners who achieved annual sales of greater than \$1 million.





## SNAPSHOTS



The 37th annual AMA International Collegiate Conference drew more than 1,400 students, representing 186 universities from around the world.

In the PPAI-sponsored trade-show exhibit contest, chapters put together displays based on their activities, events and storytelling.



## PPAI Sponsors Challenges, Exhibits At AMA Collegiate Conference

PPAI is a long-standing partner of the **American Marketing Association** (AMA) and this year joined its 37th annual International Collegiate Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, as the sponsor of its t-shirt design and trade-show exhibit competitions. The AMA's collegiate conference focuses on educating undergraduate marketing students on cutting edge marketing and sales practices. PPAI supports the event to help students build core competencies in marketing, an integral part of growing the industry's next generation workforce of promotional products professionals, buyers and influencers. **PPB**



Students participating in the exhibit contest competed in the Best Educational Value, Best Use of Conference Theme, Best Communication of Chapter Activities, Student Choice Award and Best Overall Exhibit categories, while those in the t-shirt design conference were challenged to create a t-shirt design inspired by their chapter/university spirit or the conference's "AMAZe Yourself!" theme.

# Catch the Wave Back to

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SAAC Show!



Steve Parker, MAS  
2015 SAAC President

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Specialty Advertising Association of California**



# PEOPLE NEWS

By James Khattak



**Lisa Bennett**



**Michael Blatt**



**Stan W. A. Dohan, Jr., MAS**



**Linda Evans**



**Randy Evans**



**Melissa Kopf**



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

## BUSINESS SERVICES

**Technologo.com** (UPIC: techn)—**Janelle Powell**, marketing coordinator

## DISTRIBUTORS

**NewClients Promotional Marketing** (UPIC: clients)—**Khalil Hamzeh**, senior brand consultant for the Dallas-Fort Worth, Texas area; **Michelle Hurtienne**, senior account manager, transferred to Atlanta, Georgia to expand the company in the state; **Amber Reese**, senior brand consultant for the Nashville, Tennessee area; and **Allison Sisson**, senior brand consultant for the Wilmington, North Carolina area

## REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

**Philadelphia Area Promotional Products Association** (PAPPA)—**Patti Ward**, executive director

## SUPPLIERS

**The Allen Company** (UPIC: ALLEN)—**Stan W. A. Dohan, Jr., MAS**, promoted to president

**alphabroder Canada** (UPIC: BRODER)—**Robert Plante**, dedicated sales representative for western Quebec

**Fast Track Import, LLC** (UPIC: fastrac)—**Matthew Kennedy**, national accounts manager, special markets

**Goldstar** (UPIC: GLDSTAR)—**Peter Farman**, national and strategic accounts manager

**Graphco Line** (UPIC: GRAPHCO)—**Colton Bouterie**, head of the media department

**Hub Pen Company** (UPIC: HUBPEN)—**Linda Evans**, inside sales representative for Indiana, Michigan, New England and Ohio; and **Cheri Partridge** of Partridge Marketing to represent the company in Northern California and Northern Nevada

**Jetline** (UPIC: jetline)—**Melissa Kopf**, Midwest sales representative for Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri and Wisconsin

**Prime Resources Corp.**

(UPIC: PRIME)—**Randy Evans**, vice president of supply chain, and **Steve Woodburn, MAS**, Southeast regional sales manager for Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi and Puerto Rico

**Pro Towels** (UPIC: PROTOWELS)—**Lauren Slee**, marketing coordinator

**RiteLine, LLC** (UPIC:

RiteLine)—**Larry and Kyle Krause** of LDK Marketing to be the company's representatives in Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas; **Stephen Elias** of Elias Marketing, Inc., in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota; **Joe Keely, MAS**, of Select Lines Marketing, in Iowa and Nebraska; **Dan Alspaugh** of Promotional Partnering Group in Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and West Virginia; and **Mike Rubin** and **Rob Craxford** to represent it in Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and Washington, D.C.

**Seville Gear** (UPIC: SEVILLE)—**Claude Cote** of Exoset, Inc., to be the company's representative in Quebec; **Dennis Lee** of Dennis Lee Agency in southwest Ontario; **Darren Storr** of Infinity Sales Group in the greater Toronto Area; **Scott Blankenship** of Blankenship Marketing Group in Arkansas, North Texas and Oklahoma; **John Butler** of JB Solutions West in Southern California; **Marc Sabin** of Marc Sabin Marketing in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico,

Utah and Wyoming; **Scott Schaefer** of Robert S. Schaefer, Inc., in western Pennsylvania and Upstate New York; **Larry White** of Dynamic Professional Resources in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri and Nebraska; and **Sharon Wohlleber** of Sharon Wohlleber Sales in South Texas and Louisiana

**Source Abroad by Prime**

(UPIC: sourcea)—**Michael Blatt**, regional sourcing manager

**Spector & Co.** (UPIC:

SPEC0038)—**Natalia Lidovskikh**, communications specialist

**Starline Industries, Inc.**

(UPIC: STAR0009)—**Pro-Dev Strategies and Marketing** to represent the company in the Ottawa/Gatineau, Canada region

**Stromberg Brand** (UPIC:

1ASTRMBG)—**Lisa Bennett** to represent company in Illinois and Wisconsin; **Greg Jackson, Pat Dore** and **Alan Rice** of Northwest Reps to represent company in Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington; and **Cory Schroepfer, John Bugele** and **Richard Schmidt** of Bridge Marketing Services to be its representatives in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota and Wisconsin

**Towel Specialties** (UPIC: TOWLSPEC)—**Kirk Ross**, vice president of national accounts

**Zagwear, Inc.** (UPIC: ZAGW0001)—**Marty Frasco**, vice president of global supply chain, and **Rodney Watson**, sales at its Chicago, Illinois, office

**IN MEMORIAM**

**Louise Woerner Sellers, CAS**, past owner of **Sellers Advertising**, passed away January 19. She was 102. Sellers was featured in *PPB*'s October 2012 issue, sitting down with the magazine to reflect on her 40-plus years in the promotional products industry.

In that interview, Sellers said that she entered the industry in 1950 as a widow with two children hired to work as a secretary for Dallas, Texas-based J. Hugh Campbell Company, which was mainly known for flags and badges. The company was commonly called The Flag Store. After spending 12 years at Campbell and proving herself by, among other things, personally sewing 1,700 red satin garters for a film production client, Sellers was asked to become a partner in the firm.

Preferring not to share, Sellers opted to buy the company in 1962. She was 50 years old. A year later her son, industry notable Steve Sellers, MAS, joined her and the two created a new division of the Campbell Company called Sellers Advertising. This new division focused solely on promotional products and served Dallas-area advertising agencies and companies such as Southwest Airlines and Texas Instruments. Sellers continued working at the firm until she was in her eighties, and the business stayed in the family until 2011. **PPB**

**Natalia Lidovskikh****Cheri Partridge****Robert Plante****Kirk Ross****Steve Woodburn, MAS****GOT NEWS?**

We'll share it. Send your people news, including high-resolution images, to *PPB* News Editor James Khattak at [JamesK@ppai.org](mailto:JamesK@ppai.org).



# DATEBOOK

## MAY

### May 5-6

#### ASI New York

Advertising Specialty Institute  
New York City, New York  
[www.asicentral.com](http://www.asicentral.com)

### May 7-8

#### PMANC May Showcase

Promotional Marketing Association of  
Northern California  
Monterey, California  
[www.pmanc.org](http://www.pmanc.org)

### May 14

#### UMAPP Room Show

Upper Midwest Association of  
Promotional Professionals  
Bloomington, Minnesota  
[www.umapp.org](http://www.umapp.org)

### May 14

#### Lone Star Sales University

Promotional Products Association  
Southwest  
Dallas, Texas  
[www.ppasw.com](http://www.ppasw.com)

### May 18-22

#### Promotional Products Work! Week

Promotional Products Association  
International  
Irving, Texas  
[www.PromotionalProductsWork.org/Week](http://www.PromotionalProductsWork.org/Week)

### May 19

#### PAPPA Summer Preview

Philadelphia Area Promotional Products  
Association  
Springfield, Pennsylvania  
[www.mypappa.org](http://www.mypappa.org)

### May 20-21

#### PPAI Legislative Education and Action Day (L.E.A.D.)

Promotional Products Association  
International



July 27-29

### PPAI Women's Leadership Conference

Promotional Products Association International  
New Orleans, Louisiana  
[www.ppai.org](http://www.ppai.org)

Washington, D.C.

[www.ppalaw.org](http://www.ppalaw.org)

## JUNE

### June 3

#### SAAGNY Summer Showcase

Specialty Advertising Association of  
Greater New York  
New York, New York  
[www.saagny.org](http://www.saagny.org)

### June 3-4

#### GCPPA Spring Showcase

Gold Coast Promotional Products  
Association  
Fort Lauderdale, Florida  
[www.gcppa.org](http://www.gcppa.org)

### June 14-17

#### UFG 2015 World Expo

United Franchise Group  
Las Vegas, Nevada  
[ufgworldexpo.com](http://ufgworldexpo.com)

## JULY

### July 14-16

#### ASI Chicago

Advertising Specialty Institute  
Chicago, Illinois  
[www.asicentral.com](http://www.asicentral.com)

## AUGUST

### August 5-6

#### The SAAC Show

Specialty Advertising Association of  
California  
Long Beach, California  
[www.saac.net](http://www.saac.net)

### August 9-11

#### North American Leadership Conference (NALC)

Promotional Products Association  
International  
Nashville, Tennessee  
[www.ppai.org](http://www.ppai.org)

### August 11

#### HPPA Hot Stuff Expo

Houston Promotional Products  
Association  
Houston, Texas  
[www.houstonppa.org](http://www.houstonppa.org)

### August 11-12

#### PPAI Technology Summit

Promotional Products Association  
International  
Nashville, Tennessee  
[www.ppai.org](http://www.ppai.org)

### August 11-13

#### PPAMS Road Show

Promotional Products Association of the  
Mid-South  
Memphis, Nashville and Knoxville,  
Tennessee  
[www.ppams.com](http://www.ppams.com)

**August 12-13**  
**SAGE Show 2015**  
SAGE  
Irving, Texas  
[www.sageshow.com](http://www.sageshow.com)

**August 18**  
**MiPPA "Ideas In Bloom" Show**  
Michigan Promotional Professionals  
Association  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
[www.mippa.org](http://www.mippa.org)

**August 19**  
**UMAPP Holiday Showcase and End  
Buyer Expo**  
Upper Midwest Association of  
Promotional Professionals  
Brooklyn Park, Minnesota  
[www.umapp.org](http://www.umapp.org)

**August 19-20**  
**PPAF Expo**  
Promotional Products Association of  
Florida  
Orlando, Florida  
[www.ppaf.com](http://www.ppaf.com)

**August 26**  
**AzPPA Expo**  
Arizona Promotional Products  
Association  
Phoenix, Arizona  
[www.azppa.net](http://www.azppa.net)

**SEPTEMBER**  
**September 1**  
**PAPPA Fall End User Promotions Expo**  
Philadelphia Area Promotional Products  
Association  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania  
[www.mypappa.org](http://www.mypappa.org)

**September 2-3**  
**OPPA Promotions At The Bay**  
Ohio Promotional Professionals  
Association

Put In Bay, Ohio  
[www.oppagroup.com](http://www.oppagroup.com)

**September 3**  
**TRASA Fall Showcase & Client Show**  
Three Rivers Advertising Specialty  
Association  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania  
[www.trasa.net](http://www.trasa.net)

**September 9-10**  
**RMRPPA Expo**  
Rocky Mountain Region Promotional  
Products Association  
Denver, Colorado  
[www.rmrppa.org](http://www.rmrppa.org)

**September 9-11**  
**SPPA Fall Showcase**  
Sunbelt Promotional Products  
Association  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Jackson,  
Mississippi; and Birmingham, Alabama  
[www.sunbeltppa.org](http://www.sunbeltppa.org) 

To scope out other events, visit [www.ppai.org](http://www.ppai.org) and  
click on the industry calendar.



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# NEW MEMBERS

## New Members Joining In February 2015

### BUSINESS SERVICES

#### Hook Your Brand

PPAI #631139 UPIC: HYB

### DISTRIBUTOR

#### 760 Print

PPAI #629368 UPIC: 7629368

#### A. A. Advertising, Ltd.

PPAI #100169 UPIC: AAAD0001

#### aaa wholesale services

PPAI #488718 UPIC: aaaw4442

#### Ad-A-Boy, Dave

PPAI #529927 UPIC: ADABOY

#### Ads-venture Media

PPAI #633196 UPIC: A633196

#### AH Davies & Associates, LLC

PPAI #633056 UPIC: A633056

#### AIA/Ideations & Promotions, LLC

PPAI #634622 UPIC: A634622

#### All American Awards

PPAI #491967 UPIC: A491967

#### All-Print

PPAI #440836 UPIC: 4APP

#### All-Ways Advertising

PPAI #635054 UPIC: AllWays

#### AM Foil Express Awards & Engraving

PPAI #485936 UPIC: A485936

#### AMP&M, LLC

PPAI #633476 UPIC: A633476

#### Amusing Threads

PPAI #617837 UPIC: AMSNGTHD

#### Any Kind Advertising Specialties

PPAI #187579 UPIC: ANYK0001

#### Archer Promotional Products

PPAI #633462 UPIC: A633462

#### Arizona Apparel Company

PPAI #634889 UPIC: AZAPPRL

#### ASHTAR BRINDES

PPAI #633456 UPIC: A633456

#### Astro Marketing Limited

PPAI #100492 UPIC: 6453

#### Atlas Labels and Packaging, LLC

PPAI #277562 UPIC: ATLAP014

#### Barrio Promo

PPAI #634697 UPIC: B634697

#### Blowfish Embroidery, Inc.

PPAI #634610 UPIC: B634610

#### Bragging Rights

PPAI #615993 UPIC: B615993

#### Branded Promotions

PPAI #634743 UPIC: B634743

#### Bridgeport Perfect Threads

PPAI #623283 UPIC: B623283

#### Casco Bay Design and Marketing

PPAI #634575 UPIC: C634575

#### Chenango Graphic

PPAI #304316 UPIC: cgraphic

#### CMC - Computer Merchandise Corp.

PPAI #257805 UPIC: CMCdata

#### Complete Premium Service, Inc.

PPAI #629372 UPIC: C629372

#### Convention Services Promotions Corp.

PPAI #483987 UPIC: C483987

#### Copy Plus

PPAI #488636 UPIC: cpm78504

#### Creative Forms Design, Inc.

PPAI #279085 UPIC: CREAP076

#### CWC

PPAI #587303 UPIC: C587303

#### CX & B United Corp

PPAI #634688 UPIC: C634688

#### Dance N Duds

PPAI #633338 UPIC: D633338

#### East End Emblem, LLC

PPAI #621682 UPIC: EASTEND

#### EEVOLVE Enterprises

PPAI #634815 UPIC: E634815

#### Epic Litho

PPAI #634849 UPIC: E634849

#### Everyday Promo Solutions

PPAI #614729 UPIC: EPS

#### Excellent Adventures, Inc.

PPAI #633474 UPIC: E633474

#### Expressions Of Faith

PPAI #315416 UPIC: 8787131

## NEW MEMBER Spotlight

**Wayne Chen**  
President  
AfterGen Corporation  
#620299 UPIC: Aftergen

### How did your company get its start?

We come from a very humble beginning, as our company was founded in Taiwan over 20 years ago. Our motto has always been to provide outstanding service and products, and to understand our clients' needs by learning about their branding and company culture. Our business was founded at a time when the environment was dominated by companies offering low-quality products at the lowest price possible, but we understood that products represent the companies and how important quality was. Our focus has always been in the luggage, baggage and textiles industry, and today we are proud to work with some of the most renowned brands in the world and have operations across four continents. In 2012,



AfterGen President  
Wayne Chen

Continued On Next Page

**Fan Club Creations & Awards**

PPAI #609827 UPIC: F609827

**Flatwater Promotions**

PPAI #634721 UPIC: F634721

**Fly By Nature, LLC**

PPAI #634482 UPIC: F634482

**Graveldinger Graphix**

PPAI #634817 UPIC: gravel89

**GUIL MARKETING PRODUCTS**

PPAI #632976 UPIC: GUIL

**Hamilton Artists**

PPAI #634855 UPIC: H634855

**Hoopla**

PPAI #568581 UPIC: hooplaNY

**Impakt Print, LLC**

PPAI #633671 UPIC: I633671

**impressions**

PPAI #634838 UPIC: I634838

**Innovative Stitch & Screen, LLC**

PPAI #634977 UPIC: I634977

**Insidia**

PPAI #563210 UPIC: INSIDIA

**Instant Imprints Of North Raleigh**

PPAI #635057 UPIC: I635057

**Integ**

PPAI #634911 UPIC: I634911

**iPROMOTEu - Blue Rhino****Marketing Group, LLC**

PPAI #634808 UPIC: BLURHN

**J & J Promo**

PPAI #461954 UPIC: jjpr

**James Wesley Ltd.**

PPAI #633521 UPIC: J633521

**JJ Promotional Products**

PPAI #620605 UPIC: J620605

**Keeney's Office Supply**

PPAI #633648 UPIC: K633648

**L.F. Graphco**

PPAI #499763 UPIC: L499763

**Little Rock Printing**

PPAI #633497 UPIC: L633497

**Logo Graphics**

PPAI #633427 UPIC: L633427

**Macey Promotions**

PPAI #634654 UPIC: MaceyP

**Mad Media Promotions**

PPAI #620476 UPIC: M620476

**Mahogany Direct/Anatole Press**

PPAI #458039 UPIC: mdirect

**Marketrics**

PPAI #633311 UPIC: M633311

**Mix Midia**

PPAI #531034 UPIC: 8uo9768b

**Mobo Enterprises Ltd.**

PPAI #386865 UPIC: MOBO

**Momentum Promotional Products**

PPAI #622658 UPIC: MOMPP

**MRG Career Apparel**

PPAI #632811 UPIC: M632811

**MyLocker**

PPAI #633340 UPIC: M633340

**Nize Printing**

PPAI #616791 UPIC: NIZEUPIC

**Northbound Creative MN, LLC**

PPAI #629134 UPIC: NBCUPIC

**Nursing Success Unlimited, LLC**

PPAI #624957 UPIC: N624957

**On3 Promotional Partners**

PPAI #312543 UPIC: OnDemand

**One Day Masterpieces**

PPAI #633421 UPIC: O633421

**ORLO360**

PPAI #633377 UPIC: O633377

**Pacific Horizons**

PPAI #194121 UPIC: PACI0005

**PBJ & Company, LLC**

PPAI #635001 UPIC: P635001

Continued From Previous Page

we founded our North American branch, AfterGen Corporation, and we are excited to bring our experience and expertise to our clients here.

### What's your favorite thing about being in the promotional products industry?

The people and the amazing diversity in brands and industries they represent. We love meeting the people in this industry and helping them design and develop high-quality bags and luggage that they are proud to put their company's logo on.

### When did your company know that it wanted to be a part of this industry?

We have had the pleasure with working with some the world's most renowned brands from multiple industries including motor-sports, soccer, petroleum and entertainment. The luggage and baggage product category presents a great addition as a promotional product category, regardless of what industry the company is in. We are confident in our designs and products, and our clients' success with our products has proven our concept. These are products that every household has and uses, and they act as amazing marketing tools as they are carried around the world.

### Why did you join PPAI?

We've heard PPAI was a great association with great members. We

are excited to meet everyone and discuss and share ideas for this great market.



**AfterGen staff at one of the supplier's trade show booths**



**Pollock Printing**

PPAI #633650 UPIC: P633650

**Portland Badge Company, LLC**

PPAI #564931 UPIC: Badge1

**Professional Office Services, Inc.**

PPAI #285635 UPIC: SHA20723

**Promote Your Team, LLC**

PPAI #480796 UPIC: P480796

**Quality Logo Products, Inc.**

PPAI #304730 UPIC: quality1

**R&R Texas Designs, LLC**

PPAI #633568 UPIC: R633568

**Recognition Awards Mart**

PPAI #595159 UPIC: R595159

**Resources Unlimited of Lake Charles**

PPAI #633502 UPIC: R633502

**Rfocus Company**

PPAI #635062 UPIC: R635062

**RushKing Promotions**

PPAI #310087 UPIC: rushking

**Seezons**

PPAI #634650 UPIC: 1993

**Sew-Write Embroidery/ Logo Essentials**

PPAI #633323 UPIC: S633323

**Shred Threads**

PPAI #229937 UPIC: TZUK

**Signarama Orangeburg**

PPAI #633488 UPIC: S633488

**Sir Speedy Printing Center**

PPAI #492968 UPIC: S492968

**Specialty Marketing & Printing**

PPAI #633564 UPIC: S633564

**Speed Promo**

PPAI #230536 UPIC: spdpro

**SRO Prints, LLC**

PPAI #633478 UPIC: S633478

**Statewide Management**

PPAI #628529 UPIC: tdstn

**Stone Marketing & Promotions, Inc.**

PPAI #601971 UPIC: S601971

**Strategic Sourcing**

PPAI #628591 UPIC: S628591

**Super Embroidery**

PPAI #286344 UPIC: superemb

**Superior Print And Exhibit**

PPAI #633336 UPIC: S633336

**Taylor Recognition**

PPAI #633469 UPIC: T633469

**The Business Gift Company**

PPAI #633646 UPIC: T633646

**Thomson Promotions, Inc.**

PPAI #337671 UPIC: 1599

**Threshold Agency, LLC**

PPAI #622843 UPIC: TAAUS

**Tom's Trophies**

PPAI #468541 UPIC: T468541

**Tshirtxtremes**

PPAI #496056 UPIC: T496056

**UGC Supply**

PPAI #634865 UPIC: U634865

**Unique Packaging and Shipping**

PPAI #516773 UPIC: U516773

**Unlimited Grafix**

PPAI #633342 UPIC: U633342

**Urbana Promotional Products, LLC**

PPAI #634913 UPIC: U634913

**UT Print**

PPAI #633334 UPIC: U633334

**Vision Design**

PPAI #631832 UPIC: VSNDN

**Vision Screenprinting and Graphics**

PPAI #593457 UPIC: VISION15

## Do you want to sell your distributorship?

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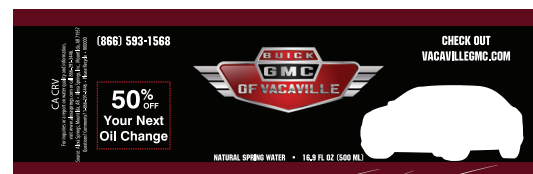


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SPECIAL ADVERTISING SECTION

# ADVERTISERS' SPOTLIGHT.....

**“What are today’s distributors asking for most and how is your company responding?”**

## Bodek and Rhodes

**Marc Held, Vice President Of National Sales**



I think that what distributors need most are fresh, innovative ways to sell their products. We work hard to educate them about the latest trends—like wearing performance wear outside of the gym—so they can pass along valuable tips and keep their customers informed.

See our ad on the inside front cover.

# Bodek Rhodes

## Essent Corporation

**Bryan Sheaffer, Vice President Sales**



As an industry solution provider, Essent has a unique relationship with distributors, decorators and suppliers. All have a different set of needs, but collectively they ask Essent for integrated CRM, order management, accounting and ecommerce to make business more streamlined and responsive. This is the same basic question we’ve been asked in various forms during our 15 years in the industry. To address the need, we released our integrated business management system in 2000, and

in 2010 acquired the OrderTrax Network from PPAI to link together and integrate distributor, decorator and supplier trading partners.

See our ad on page 75.



## OMNi Apparel

**Craig Wallace, Sales Manager**



Convenience. Today, many distributors are no longer working the traditional eight-to-five job. Add to that the numbers of distributors working from their homes at all hours of the day and then those who work in the structure of an office setting, but perhaps don’t have the staff to take care of the small details of order production and tracking. Together they’re all looking for convenience.

OMNi Apparel offers a solution to distributors in the form of a one-stop solution. Our brand collection in Zorrel provides men’s and women’s performance apparel—outfitting workers from the workplace or warehouse to the yoga studio or gym. Within our distribution facility, we offer several various decoration methods with low minimums, quick turnaround times and competitive pricing. Further, we are able to seamlessly service our distributors customers who have offices in the U.S. and Canada, all from a single distribution and decoration location. Finally, we offer a free freight program shipping to the U.S. and/or Canada.

As a one-purchase-order/one-invoice solution, we help the distributor earn more and move on to the next project instead of issuing multiple P.O.s, matching multiple invoices, chasing spoilage and losing money on fees, which creep into the process of the traditional industry model.

See our ad on page 79.



**Quinn Flags**  
**Ryan Halvorsen, General Manager**



The daily challenge at Quinn Flags is one filled with time-sensitive conversations, quotes and order processing. The old story, I believe, still holds true that distributors, along with their clients, are asking for quicker turnaround times and better communication. Quinn Flags has heard our distributors and recently invested in more production equipment, along with a new CRM system with a web-based order tracking system. Matt Quinn, owner of Quinn Flags, says, "Every day we learn and improve. We learn from both the good and not so good. We change and adjust daily. We know what our distributors

want and are continuously working behind the scenes to streamline business and make it fun again."

See our ad on page 78.



**WWW.QUINNFLAGS.COM**

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# How Are *You* Dealing With PRODUCT SAFETY?



*Becoming aware is easier than you think.*





# PPB Pop Quiz

MAY 2015



**SO YOU THINK YOU'VE READ** this issue pretty thoroughly, huh? Let's test your recall. Answer the five questions in this month's *PPB* Pop Quiz correctly and be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a **\$50 Visa gift card**.  
*Deadline: May 12, 2015.*

CIRCLE THE CORRECT ANSWER below and submit your answers by May 12, 2015 (and remember to fill in your contact information below):

**1. In the Pricing feature by Aaron Moscoe, what is the first pricing model discussed?**

- a) Cost-Plus Model
- b) Reasonable Pricing
- c) Competitive Bid Pricing
- d) Guaranteed Savings Model

**2. This month's Management column focused on how companies can avoid being victimized by scams. What category of products is most popular in email order scams?**

- a) T-shirts
- b) USBs
- c) Writing instruments
- d) Both A and B

**3. Industry supplier Roni Wright, MAS, wrote about her recent extended journey to Mysore, India. What did she study there?**

- a) Local art and architecture
- b) Samosas
- c) Manufacturing
- d) Yoga

**4. Incentive expert Michelle Smith wrote about how marketers can avert the talent gap by adding new skills to their resumes. What is one of the competencies marketers can develop?**

- a) Build a social media brand
- b) Become the corporate brain trust
- c) Bridge the gap with sales
- d) All of the above

**5. This month's Question pertains to which common industry issue?**

- a) Orders that miss the in-hands date
- b) An unfaithful client
- c) Artwork ownership
- d) Attracting and keeping good sales reps PPB



*Hint:*

All of the answers are found in articles in this month's issue.

**Congratulations to April's winner:**  
Gary Tuchler, MAS,  
Brown & Bigelow



Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**Submit your answers by May 12, 2015.** Here are three ways to respond: 1. Scan and email this page to: [PPB@ppai.org](mailto:PPB@ppai.org). 2. Fax this page to: 972-258-3004. 3. Submit your answers online at [pubs.ppai.org](http://pubs.ppai.org). Click the May cover to see the Pop Quiz logo. You will be notified if your name is drawn. One entry per person, please. There will be one winner per issue and previous Pop Quiz winners are ineligible. Good luck!



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