

PPB

The Magazine For Empowering Promotional Professionals

APRIL 2016 pubs.ppai.org

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GOLF PRODUCTS
AND PROMOTIONS
FOR MAXIMUM IMPACT

PAGE 46

THE SECRETS TO
EARNING A
**MILLENNIAL'S
LOYALTY**

PAGE 66

DRIVEN

PAGE 24

To Succeed

*Where the rubber meets the road:
six top multi-line reps share their stories.*

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INDUSTRY

PAGE 40

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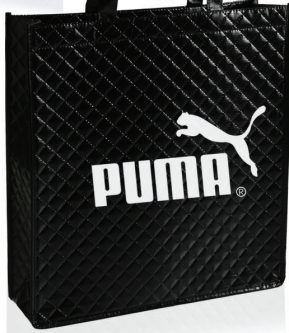
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PPB BEST MULTI-LINE REPS 2016

Driven To Succeed

By Tina Berres Filipski

PPB BEST MULTI-LINE REPS 2016

With their vast networks and almost infinite product knowledge, multi-line reps are in business to generate more demand and more sales on both sides of the industry. **PAGE 24**



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THE POWER OF AN INDUSTRY VOICE



Paul Bellantone, CAE
PRESIDENT AND CEO

I F YOU'VE HAD YOUR EYE on industry social media or industry news recently, you may have read about the pending launch of a new membership-funded industry lobbying group. I've been tracking the comments of dozens of engaged industry professionals supporting PPAI's legislative and advocacy efforts, and have had dozens more direct emails and calls looking for an official PPAI response.

For longer than I've been associated with PPAI, we've had a strong, industry-driven and collaborative lobbying presence in Washington, D.C. From the beginning, PPAI's lobbying efforts have focused on the core issues related to independent contractors, tax reform and small business, as well as industry-critical issues we identify as we monitor thousands of bills on a day-to-day basis. We continue to invest heavily in this strategic initiative. This is in addition to our ongoing and significant efforts to increase understanding and acknowledgement of promotional products as key branding tools that help advance brands, and to position promotional consultants as strategic partners and trusted advisors.

As a result of our stellar reputation and long-standing presence in D.C., we are a sought-after coalition partner. As an industry that represents advertising, media and marketing, as well as manufacturers, importers, resellers and decorators, we are able to strategically align with partners who focus on specific issues, including the Small Business Legislative Council, the American Advertising Federation, the Association of National Advertisers, the American Alliance


for Innovation, the Partnership to Protect Workplace Opportunity, the Coalition to Save Local Businesses, the National Association of Manufacturers and many more.

Our government relations work is built upon a firm foundation of industry engagement from the smallest to the largest members—including engagement by Advertising Specialty Institute's (ASI) senior management in PPAI's Government Relations Action Council and our Legislative Education and Action Day (L.E.A.D.), taking place this year on May 25-26. I mention ASI here because they have been an increasingly engaged colleague in our legislative efforts and, in my view, seem to be receiving some undeserved scrutiny for running the recent story.

Thanks to these engaged stakeholders, PPAI has a well-oiled machine in place. From our D.C.-based lobbyist's boots on the ground, to L.E.A.D. at the federal, state and local levels, to the "virtual fly-in" digital advocacy (generating more than 7,500 industry emails to legislators) as part of our Promotional Products Work! Week efforts, to our dedicated government relations team, we make sure federal and state lawmakers understand the value, economic contributions and employment opportunities offered by this

vital and growing industry. As part of our mission to grow and protect the industry, we—PPAI, together with its expansive and engaged constituency—continuously educate members of Congress—at their D.C. and home offices—and other government entities on the value of the industry.

I will continue to respond to individual member inquiries regarding the potential launch of a new legislative advocacy group, letting them know that while I am pleased to see that the prospective group's agenda is consistent with PPAI's long-standing efforts in this arena, it would be unfortunate if the industry's progress is divided or diluted as a result of two separate efforts. The irony isn't lost on me that I am reviewing this article as I sit in the Small Business Legislative Council (SBLC) board of directors meeting in Washington, D.C. This group influences legislative and federal policy issues related to the small business community, and thus directly impacts our industry. PPAI's standing seat on the SBLC board assures us a driving force on the relevant legislative agenda.

To learn more about PPAI's advocacy efforts, I encourage you to visit www.ppai.org and take the opportunity to become more engaged in these efforts so that we can all protect and grow this industry to which we owe so much. 



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The PPAI Expo 2016 Continues To Draw Attendees' Applause

THE PPAI EXPO 2016, or as it was known on social media, #BestExpoEver, has drawn praise from attendees for its new layout, process improvements and fresh features.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! Send feedback on articles in *PPB* or opinions on industry issues to JamesK@ppai.org.

I HAVE BEEN GOING TO PPAI shows for about 15 years and this was by far the best show. Seth Godin was perfect for our industry, but there were also many large and small improvements I

noticed that made everything easier. The coat check was right where it needed to be to minimize steps, the check-in process worked very smoothly and even the FedEx shipping was the fastest I have ever experienced.

Certainly having the show on one floor made many things easier. After every event we host, we always sit down the very next day and debrief what went well

and what could be improved, and it certainly seemed as though people were on top of improving everything that could be improved. Please pass on my thanks to your team. Thank you for a great show.

Kathy Finnerty Thomas
Stowebridge Promotion
Group
Chandler, Arizona
UPIC: STOWE



Coming Next Month

PPB's May issue shines the spotlight on a topic everybody is talking about—industry consolidation—by examining the trend toward acquisitions and what the activity means for the industry's future. Who thought that print catalogs would still be around in 2016? They are and they continue to be a strong selling tool. How can you make yours fresh and relevant? Read this article, plus what's trending in woven apparel, the real estate market's client potential, and get a closer look at what's taking center stage next to this year's presidential candidates: political campaign products. Watch for the issue available May 1 at pubs.ppai.org.

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TRAIL IN
BUSINESS



Driven To Succeed

2016's *PPB* Best Multi-Line Reps are in business to drive more sales on both sides of the industry.

Read why they're this year's best in the industry on page 24.

NEXT ADVENTURE: EXTREME EDITION

TOTAL PROMOTIONS GROUP, INC. PRESIDENT JOHN W. PATTERSON, MAS,
GLIDES INTO RETIREMENT **By Julie Richie**

MANY PEOPLE SEE RETIREMENT as a chance to slow down, relax and maybe hit more golf balls after all those years of bringing home a paycheck. John Patterson, on the other hand, is one of those rare people who, in his retirement, can still run circles around people half his age. A longtime triathlete, skier and adventurer, Patterson, 73, views retirement as the time to explore the world, and help those with physical challenges do it with him.



John Patterson and his wife, Judith, enjoy a day of skiing in 2013

Patterson stumbled into the promotional products industry almost 20 years ago after a layoff from a corporate job. “I looked for another job while I was selling promotional products for the first three to four years. But then I went to a GAPPP (Georgia Association of Promotional Products Professionals) expo and realized ‘I can do this,’” he says.

Though his business, Grayson, Georgia-based Total Promotions Group, was small, it provided for him, his two grown children, Shirsten and Justin, and his wife, Judith Tope, and it continues to provide for them in their retirement. Patterson recently moved most of his remaining business to Tucker, Georgia-based distributor Eagle Recognition (UPIC: Caras), but will remain the salesman of record for one of his former customers.

“I’ve just been so blessed. I’ve had a wonderful life,” Patterson says. “I still have two legs that work relatively well and Judith hasn’t changed the locks, so I’m a

Patterson at a 2014 charity bike ride at the National Ability Center in Utah.



grateful, happy guy,” he says, laughing.

Apart from complications relating to the broken femur he suffered in a bicycle accident last June, Patterson sees few obstacles in accomplishing his extensive retirement travel goals—although Judith may beg to differ. “For the next 18 months I’ll be doing all the honey-dos I haven’t done for the past 18 years,” he jokes.

The Other Side Of The Mountain

But even the honey-dos won’t get in the way of his passion for helping people with disabilities enjoy one of his favorite activities—downhill skiing. Patterson enjoys skiing so much that he started a side business in 1992 called SkiMore Tours. In 1999, when Judith became unable to ski standing up due to the effects of fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue syndrome, they found a supportive adaptive skiing environment at Challenge Aspen in Snowmass, Colorado. After their first experience, which Judith loved, they decided to make adaptive skiing available to others.

He and Judith approached the Shepherd Center, a world renowned rehabilitation and research facility in Atlanta that specializes in spinal cord and brain injury rehabilitation, about leading an adaptive ski trip. They received an enthusiastic reaction

and were soon leading ski trips with paraplegics, quadriplegics, amputees, and those with brain injuries and other physical challenges down the mountain in places such as Snowmass and Breckenridge, Colorado and Park City, Utah.

In February, the pair completed their 15th trip for people with disabilities. “These are not only trips for people who have the injuries, but also for their family members. These trips help those with injuries see that life’s not over. There are still fun things they can do,” Patterson says.

Life Changing Travel

He is constantly inspired by those who come skiing with them. One 70-year-old first-time participant, who had become a quadriplegic after a cycling accident, told Patterson that the ski trip changed his life. “I thought I was going to be looking out a window for the rest of my life,” the man said. He ended up going on cruises and remodeling his Florida condo to accommodate his needs after gaining inspiration from the ski trip. The participant passed away last year, but his legacy continues to inspire Patterson. “Every time I get frustrated putting these trips together,” Patterson says, “I remember the impact the trips have on the people who go.”

Travel has had an impact on Patterson’s own life, starting when he was 16 and spent a year

as a foreign exchange student with a family in Sweden. He only spoke to his parents by phone once in the 13 months he spent there. During that year he gained four Swedish “brothers,” one of whom spent the year with Patterson’s family at home in Ohio while he was in Sweden. The brothers remain close and share a love of adventure travel. In March 2015, Patterson joined one of his Swedish brothers, Jörn, a retired pediatrician, on an eight-day cross-country ski trip in the remote northwest corner of Sweden, above the Arctic Circle.

“We had no electricity, no heat, no running water, no internet; we were completely off the grid skiing hut to hut,” Patterson says. They carried all their supplies and food with them in 36-

pound backpacks and didn’t shower for eight days. “It was grueling, harrowing, scary, and took a lot of effort and endurance. But I’d do it again in a heartbeat. It was a trip of a lifetime.”

Patterson’s idea of a trip of a lifetime might differ from less adventurous travelers. He’s the type of guy who reminisces fondly about his 5,000-mile solo driving and camping trip to take part in a charity bike ride in Utah in 2014 that raised funds for the National Ability Center.

No Slowing Down

In his spare time during retirement, Patterson hopes to travel to the maritime provinces in Canada, the national parks in the Southwest and go on a European river cruise. And that’s just for starters. “My goal is to take Judith to all the places we’ve talked about. But if I win the lottery, I’m going to Antarctica.”

He’ll have to squeeze all that retirement travel in around his duties as president of his homeowner’s association, his role singing in a local choir and his frequent efforts to help his older neighbors by giving rides to medical appointments in the city.

“How did I ever have time to work?” he laughs. **PPB**

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

Comfort Is Key.

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Show you understand what women want in your next sales presentation.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

TODAY'S WOMEN KNOW WHAT THEY WANT FROM THEIR CLOTHES

By **Julie Richie**

WHO SAYS WOMEN CAN'T HAVE IT ALL? Well, actually, a woman did. Anne-Marie Slaughter, the first female director of policy planning at the U.S. State Department, concluded in her 2012 article in *The Atlantic*, "Why Women Still Can't Have It All," that when it comes to high-powered careers, marriage and motherhood, it's almost impossible to do it all well at the same time.

WHILE COMPLEX SOCIETAL FORCES mean women may feel they must temper their expectations, they won't compromise when it comes to what they wear. Women want clothes that

work as hard as they do—and look and feel great as well.

Marcus Davis, product development manager with Hanes (UPIC: HBIINC), says, "Women expect more from



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their apparel. They want comfort, style and performance—including sun protection or wicking.”

And since the athleisure trend continues to dominate the apparel industry, according to Davis, “Women want apparel that can go with them throughout the day. And fabrics with a soft hand are increasingly important.”

Women don't want apparel that looks anything like men's clothing, says Ty Cannon, national business development manager at Cutter & Buck

(UPIC: CUTT0001). “While men are generally comfortable wearing a polo shirt, most women would prefer to wear anything else,” he says, so Cutter & Buck is coming up with new women's styles that incorporate more feminine design details, like a cowl neck.

Davis says Hanes is including pastel colors and more feminine details on its women's apparel, such as V-necks rather than crew necks. And he says retail inspiration is key. “Tanks continue to be a trend-driver at retail, seen more and more as a

core style that can be easily layered.” Hanes's women's X-Temp tank, for example, is designed to cover all the bases: it's lightweight but with full coverage and feminine styling, moisture wicking and a wide variety of color options.

Steer your clients toward branding women's apparel that goes the extra mile in design, performance and comfort. Because when it comes to clothes, make no mistake—women want it all.

EYE ON APPAREL

Highland Park cowl A cowl neckline and tonal stripe set this top apart.

Add its straight hem, open sleeves and moisture wicking, and this 94-percent polyester, six-percent spandex blend is a great option for women. It's available in sizes XS-XXXL. **Cutter &**

Buck // UPIC: CUTT0001 // www.cbcorporate.com

TriTec™ racerback tank This scoop-neck racerback tank features a drop tail for extra coverage. Inherent moisture wicking keeps the wearer cool and dry, while the modern fit with feminine contour adds comfort and style. It's available in sizes XS-2XL and in seven different color variations.

Expert Brand // UPIC: Exper698 // www.expertbrand.com



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Towel Specialties // UPIC: TOWELSPEC // www.towelspecialties.com

X-Temp® V-neck t-shirt

Balancing the comfort and softness of ring-spun cotton with wicking power of polyester, the X-Temp® tee is lightweight and has a super-soft feel. The 60/40 ring-spun fabric has the softest hand in the performance category.

Hanes/Champion //

UPIC: HBIINC // www.hanes.com



Embossed polo A subtle honeycomb pattern embossed into the fabric makes this premium-look shirt stand out. Made of 96-percent dry wicking poly pique and four-percent spandex, this snag-resistant shirt also boasts the best no-curl collar in the industry. It's available in black, navy, red, French blue and hunter. **AKWA Apparel** // UPIC: AKWA // www.akwa.com

Aubrey knit funnel neck

This super stylish lightweight cotton/polyester gauze knit is ultra-comfortable. Featuring a funnel neck with a matching drawstring, it also has a pouch pocket and rib knit cuffs and waistband. It comes in sizes S-2X and four colors, graphite, lilac, mint and orangeade. **Heritage**

Sportswear // HERI0002 //

www.heritagesportswear.com



CASE STUDY

Online Store Solution

DISTRIBUTOR: Lizard Apparel & Promotions, LLC. (UPIC: L576440)

THE CLIENT: KaiaFIT, a 54-location, women-only fitness center that specializes in delivering personalized training in a group atmosphere.

THE CHALLENGE: Reinforce company branding by creating two online stores for streamlined product ordering—one store for owners to order uniforms and bulk promotional wear to give to women who complete six-week workout programs called “Brik Sessions,” and a separate store for KaiaFIT customers to order their own branded workout wear.

THE SOLUTION: The distributor curated a list of great women’s workout wear options to feature on the sites and implemented an “item of the month” promotion and baby items for future KaiaFit clients based on requests from pregnant program participants.

THE RESULT: Individual store owners appreciated having a pre-chosen selection of items and an efficient ordering system for promotional items, and the customers took advantage of the wide variety of branded items that went beyond working out, such as scarves, hats, blankets and bags.

Scoop neck sweater A modern silhouette and short sleeves give this smooth, soft cotton-blend sweater feminine appeal. It embroiders easily and is available in red, white, navy and black in sizes XS-3XL.

Edwards Garment Company //

UPIC: EDWARDSG // www.edwardsgarment.com



Unstructured licensed camo with soft mesh This bright camo cap is perfect for ladies who love to be stylish and sporty.

Unstructured with a pre-curved visor, the cap has a Velcro® closure to achieve the best fit. **Kati Sportcap & Bag** //

UPIC: KATI //

www.katisportcap.com



Ladies' fan football jersey

Women love to feel like one of the guys in retail-inspired fan shirts that are fitted and fun. Made in the USA, these 95-percent rayon, five-percent spandex V-neck shirts have a smooth touch, contrast color stripes on the sleeves and are available in more than 35 colors with any color combination.

MVP Sportswear // UPIC: M562092 // www.mvpsportswear.com



COSMIC fleece This quarter-zip fleece is constructed of 100-percent spun polyester fleece fabric with contrast-colored pocket openings and a zipper with reflective tape strip. Thumb-hole cuffs, a front pouch pocket, and an extended back length check off all the important boxes. It's available in sizes S – 2XL in seven colors.

J America Wholesale Blanks //

UPIC: Blanks //

www.jamericablanks.com **PPB**



Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

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DON'T FAKE IT

AUTHENTICITY IS EVERYTHING WHEN MARKETING TO MILLENNIALS

Q: **A DISTRIBUTOR ASKS:** As a Baby Boomer, how can I best engage with Millennial buyers? What specific communication and marketing strategies have other distributors found that work best with this generation? And is there anything I should absolutely avoid doing?

A:

A BABY BOOMER, DEPENDING ON how aged and how hip, can find it tough to be relatable. Staying up on current trends can be helpful. Acting and dressing more casually at in-person networking events can assist the older generation in being a bit more approachable. Just don't overdo it and try to be something you're not; that is a major turn-off.

In my experience, the younger generation is more interested in leisure time than in killing themselves with a 60-hour work week. Engage by asking about what your younger client or potential client is doing this weekend. Then the next week, remember and ask how it went. Ask about the person's pets if you know they have them. Be personal and personable first. Once you've developed a personal relationship it will be much easier to close deals. People do still buy from those they know, like and trust. With my older clients this trust and friendship is built in the same way; however, the personal connection seems to not be as important as with my younger clients. If you can find a common interest or hobby, make sure to exploit that to the fullest. Doing the same thing that





“Avoid seeming stodgy and old fashioned. Don’t show up to their laid-back office space in your suit.”

young people do and speaking knowledgeably about it will certainly make you more relatable.

Marketing and outreach must be as fun and eye-catching as it always has been. Include pictures of a younger person using the product you're presenting to make the ad more relatable. Use bright colors, which are in style right now (especially neon).

Stopping in to their office with a little gift, unannounced, then leaving quickly so as not to be annoying or take up too much of their time seems to work well. That way you know the person got your message and received your smile.

Avoid seeming stodgy and old-fashioned. Don't show up to their laid-back office space in your suit. Yesterday's news isn't interesting so be sure to be innovative and think differently; bring a new idea even if it seems weird—at least it'll give you something to talk about. Don't try too hard; just be you, try to be relaxed and find out about the person. Millennials like talking about themselves just as much as anyone—if not more—so get them talking about themselves. Lots of info and insight will be revealed.

Tom Gudekunst, CAS

Sales Manager
MARCO Ideas Unlimited
UPIC: MARCO

BY THE END OF 2015, Millennials officially took over the Baby Boomer generation as the largest living consumer population in the U.S. By the end of 2017, they will carry the bulk of the spending power.

They have come of age just as ecommerce, cell phones, social media and instant messaging have become pervasive technologies that this generation understands and, more importantly, uses daily in their business and personal buying decisions.

In our category of promo and apparel, a great number of them have become the buyers and decision makers for imprinted promo and apparel items. If you are not a person of this generation and mindset presenting to them, then automatically you are at a disadvantage and need to shift your sights to get on their level quickly.

Millennials' view of products lends itself more to the perception of what is valuable and authentic. This is a big reason why the technology category within promotional products has grown so quickly and will continue to do so in the coming years. This group views technology products as valued and authentic in their day-to-day lives.

In addressing the Millennial marketplace, both suppliers and

distributors need to do so in a different way. They should not just sell them products but sell them experiences.

Reaching them needs to be different as well. As my father once said to me, “Fish where the fish are.”

In the case of Millennials, go to their fishing holes—social media sites such as Pinterest, Instagram and Facebook—in order to reach them with ideas that engage them.

Don't do that, and the smarter distributor that does will catch the fish.

Forrest Fairley

Director, Channel Support,
Promotional Products
Safeguard Business Systems
UPIC: SAFE0003

FIRST THINGS FIRST: Believe it or not, many younger buyers do not like to be called or considered a Millennial. Some of my younger friends, colleagues and clients have communicated to me that they like to be considered innovative and progressive leaders—instead of being labeled a demographic category. Regardless of the age group, it's unrealistic to think we all communicate the same way. One of the key components in successful intergenerational engagement is really in the communication style. Many

DO YOU HAVE AN ANSWER?

A DISTRIBUTOR ASKS: I'd like to sell a client on a gift incentive program for their sales team. However, my client says that I need to prove to her bosses that an incentive program is worthwhile in order for them to spend the money. What's the best way to present a sales incentive program's worth? What research can I use to back up my presentation?

WHAT'S YOUR ANSWER?

Email answers along with your name, title and company name to Question@ppai.org by **April 29** for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue of *PPB* magazine.



QUESTION

distributors, including me, have made the mistake of expecting younger buyers to respond to phone messages or face-to-face communication. The Millennial generation prefers technology. Reach them where they reside: on their mobile devices and workstations. Use short, concise emails and consider Skype for conferencing. Regardless of the generation, any professional utilizing technology to its fullest will become quite proficient in conducting business.

Fast facts about younger buyers:

1. Do not try too hard to relate. It's more about respecting the style of communicating.
2. Stay up-to-date and trendy but don't try to mimic them.
3. Understand needs, consult with straight talk, and steer with facts and value.
4. Never sensationalize or embellish (this is a good rule of thumb for anyone at any age).
5. Regardless of age, never complain about taking a sales order from a text. It doesn't matter if it's digital or on a bar napkin. An order is an order.

Embrace and appreciate the differences of communication with any generation. Understanding how a potential buyer communicates and responding accordingly is the first step in closing the sale.

Dan Livengood, CAS, BASI, ATM-S

Senior Account Executive
Brand Management Division
Business Impact Group
UPIC: *Busin946*



“The Millennial generation prefers technology. Reach them where they reside: on their mobile devices and workstations.”

I THINK THE FIRST ISSUE is that everyone is spending so much time assuming that Millennials are very different than other generations. The basics are still the same; we want to have a relationship with people we work with. While it may look like a different relationship on the surface because so much is done virtually, it is still a relationship.

One thing I work on with all of my account managers is get to know a buyer on a personal level. You don't need to friend them on Facebook, but see if you can find their profile. What do they like? What do they dislike? Is there something you have in common? I buy from many sup-

pliers because they “get” me. Some I have never met but I still feel a connection with them. Some know what university I went to and send me items featuring that logo, or they know I have a new baby and ask to see pictures or hear stories. I, in turn, try to have the same relationship with my clients. So they know I get them.

The second thing to think about is “why?” Our generation is not only focused on what we are doing but why are we doing it. I find that many of my clients are interested in the research behind why one product is better than another. Why is there value in buying the travel mug with the vacuum feature? Why should I consider ring-spun cotton? We are a generation that has known little or no time without technology or the internet. If you can't answer the why question, we will find someone who can. Make yourself the expert. Whether you are using blogs or just sending over an interesting fact sheet, create that value so if someone just “Googles it” they find you and then seek your knowledge.

Finally, when something goes well, throw it out there. “I loved that idea you had to kit the items together for your show. I'm going to recommend it to another client,” or “I saw on LinkedIn you posted an article about attending the trade show. I thought it was really interesting.” We are a generation of the participation trophy, and with the good, bad and ugly of social media we are all seeking some validation. Ask for pictures of the trade-show booth

or of their team wearing the shirts. Help them feel like they are doing well. And if they are doing really well, think about sending a note to their boss. They would do it for you.

There is an element of human vs. internet, but I think that line is shifting a little. More buyers are preferring to interact on some level with an actual person when they are making their decisions. Be ready to create that relationship and add value and recognize successes and you will find a loyal customer who will Yelp about you.

Jessica Gibbons-Rauch, CAS, BASI

Director of Sales
Club Colors Buyer, LLC
UPIC: *CLUBCO*

MILLENNIALS CAN'T BE STEREOTYPED any more than Baby Boomers can. However, most Millennials do have these characteristics in common:

They don't consider their job to be a long-term commitment. They are quite tech savvy. Consequently, providing them with cutting-edge technology is very important.

Transparency is highly valued. They want to know that what they are doing matters, and they want to be recognized for it. Millennials tend to be very cause-oriented. They are more concerned about improving the world than they are about their employer's bottom line.

Millennials represent the future, and they can teach you how to market to their peers. **PPB**

David J. Hawes, MAS+

Brand Architect
Geiger
UPIC: *geiger*

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To

With their vast networks and almost infinite product knowledge, multi-line reps are in business to generate more demand and more sales on both sides of the industry. Read how they can help your business.

By **Tina Berres Filipski**

T

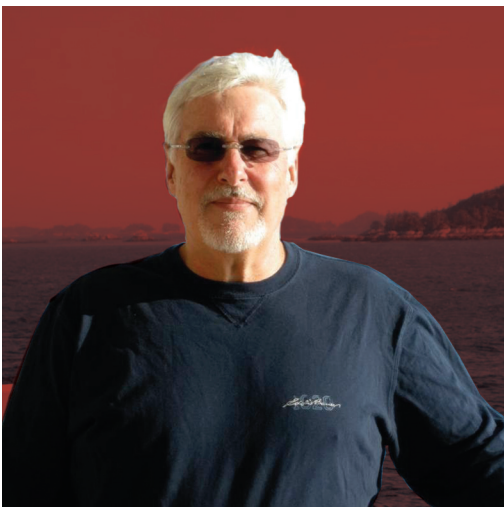
TOGETHER THESE SIX MULTI-LINE REPS rack up more than 158,000 miles a year from Alaska to New England bringing samples, promotional ideas, case studies, information and solutions from select suppliers to distributors and their clients. For decades, these individuals and those like them have shared their expertise through countless personal visits, end-user meetings and trade shows. Even in today's world of mobile devices and instant communication their work fills an essential role in seamlessly bridging the gap between factories and distributors. The industry couldn't run without them.

PPB recognizes the valuable contributions of the promotional products industry's multi-line reps with its annual spotlight. The individuals, selected by an in-house panel as *PPB*'s 2016 Best Multi-Line Reps, were nominated by industry suppliers and distributors for their ability to be creative, knowledgeable, dependable, in two places at once and prepared for just about anything.

Each will receive a custom, silver-plated lapel pin generously designed and donated by PPAI supplier member Gempire/gwi (UPIC: GEMPIRE).

2016 *PPB* BEST MULTI-LINE REP

John Bennis President, Sequel, Inc.



FEW PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

MULTI-LINE reps have a background as broad in scope and as rich in diversity as John Bennis. By the time he founded his own rep firm in 1981, Bennis's career was in full throttle. After graduating from the University of Illinois, he was hired to teach scuba diving at the Playboy Club in Jamaica but was wooed away by his father's best friend to become a premium rep. Over the next few years he was a national sales manager for apparel lines Swingster and Modern Jacket. Before launching his rep firm, he opened a hat manufactur-

ing business and later a clothing firm that manufactured NASCAR apparel. The latter began his

long sales relationship with the racing industry, where he learned the ins and outs of NASCAR sponsorships and product licensing.

His interest in the track waned in 1992 when his son, Max, was born. He decided to call it quits with his NASCAR clients because he didn't want to spend 20 weeks on the road and every weekend at the races. Bennis went back to his roots selling for Klouda-Lenz, the national sales division for what was then the clothing manufacturer Munsingwear. The company later became Premiumwear and eventually was acquired by River's End Trading Company.

Today Bennis travels about 30,000 miles annually throughout Virginia, Maryland, Washington D.C. and Delaware. In addition to representing six lines, he also considers himself a consultant helping customers with their marketing campaigns and educating them and their clients about promotional

products. Bennis relishes this consultative role because he believes that's where the rubber hits the road. He's fortunate to get to spend time together with the end buyer (along with the distributor) about 20 percent of the time. It's the people, he says, both on the customer and supplier side that get him up every morning.

"I'm not your typical rep," he explains. "My diverse background allows me to provide solutions on many levels. For example, if the company is going to sponsor an event or become a licensee, I know the questions to ask. And I've always loved the idea of being able to take one product and market another product or service by combining the two," he says of his experience selling on-pack promotions with RJ Reynolds.

Up Close With John Bennis

The Changing Role Of MLRs:

"With the research tools available today, we must become proactive and really get to know our customers. Suppliers want reps to go out and see distributors four days a week and then spend one day in the office. But distributors are busy and their customers want to see them too. It's getting very congested out there with everybody competing for the distributors' time. We have to be more proactive on how we, as reps, ask questions to get the information from distributors, and then give them the creative solutions."

The Future Of MLRs: "The future is consultative selling, so I'm not just selling products but presenting solutions. I've developed a form for my distributor customers to fill out so that I can be proactive with what they need, who their top customers are, what they do and their price points. When I come into a meeting with all the distributor salespeople, I can first give the 30,000-foot view of what our lines provide, and then schedule one-on-one meetings with each individual rep with solutions for their customer."

The Biggest Issue Affecting MLRs Today: "It's the lack of having a true partnership with distributors. The hardest part is understanding who their customers are and their core business. That's a moving target also, because distributors lose customers and gain new customers."

What He Wants Distributors And Suppliers To Know: "I have always said we are lobbyists; we

Bennis has also lectured at the University of Georgia business school in the areas of sports marketing and events, and he holds two patents acquired in the 1980s for a handheld credit card transcriber used by Mary Kay, Tupperware and Avon.

"John always has very specific ideas for clients as he takes the time to get to know you and your client base," says nominator Donna Majewski, promotional products specialist with distributor Target Marketing Group in Virginia Beach, Virginia. "He has a wealth of knowledge and will do anything he can to help me secure an order [including] end user calls, bringing samples for my customer with their logo and creating flyers with customer logos that are specific to their needs. He is an outstanding multi-line rep."

are fence sitters. On one side, we have manufacturers we have to please, and on the other side, we have customers to please—and we have to do both exceptionally well. My major concern is my customer's customer; if I keep them happy, I keep my customer happy. The philosophy is, 'Let's solve the problem now and worry later on where that problem falls.' That is going to keep the end customer happy."

Help Him Do A Better Job:

"There's an elephant in the room—our products are now being seen as commodity items to which anybody has access.

They are not seen for what they really are—marketing tools. I think PPAI is doing a tremendous job to educate people that it's not just a pen with their name on it, it's a marketing message. How can reps and distributors help to get that message out to the end user? How do we join forces together to go out and educate? How do we understand why they are using this product at their events? It's not about the price, it's about the outcome. If our products become commodity items, then we have lost the ability to make money and execute properly. And this is what is happening today."

"My major concern is my customer's customer; if I keep them happy, I keep my customer happy. The philosophy is, 'Let's solve the problem now and worry later on where that problem falls.'"

Lee Ellen Coscia Partner, Themco LLC



LEE ELLEN COSCIA WAS WORKING in the admissions office at Lasell College in Newton, Massachusetts when it dawned on her that she was not really in education or academia as she had planned—she was in sales. And she was darn good at it! Why not make it her career? She approached her uncle, the late Tom Monahan, Jr., who was a longtime industry multi-line rep, to learn more about selling. One opportunity led to another and she was offered a job at supplier ARC Glass selling premiums. She took it, became district sales manager and later joined

Themco LLC, the group that represented the premium side of the company, as a multi-line rep. Now, 28 years later, she's a partner in the company. *(Fun fact: Themco is an acronym based on the name of her uncle, who founded the company: Thomas Henry Eugene Monahan. Now you know!)*

Coscia travels about 20,000 miles a year representing six suppliers throughout New England. She makes her home in Marshfield, Massachusetts.

She believes her greatest strength as a rep is the customer follow-up she provides, and nominator Amanda Clay, MAS, vice president sales and marketing for Walker-Clay, Inc., explains why. "Lee always goes the extra mile and strives to educate our team on all of her lines. She also looks to learn about our business and brings ideas on how we could position her lines to our clients. In fact, if there are items she does not have, she will refer us to other industry friends who may be able to help."

Coscia likes being an MLR because of the exposure she gets to new lines, new products and new opportunities. "It's always great to find a new line that you know your customers will get excited about and have it be profitable," she says. And Coscia knows her customers' hot buttons. For her clients at Walker-Clay, it's costumes at Halloween. "The first time Lee called on us it was Halloween and she wanted to drop samples by," says Clay. "Since we are pretty serious about Halloween here, we said, 'Sure, come on by, but you must dress up.' Well sure enough Cowgirl Lee showed up to deliver the samples [riding her 125-pound yellow lab as her trusty steed] and we allowed her to come in for a full meeting after that."

Up
Close
With
Lee Ellen
Coscia

The Changing Role Of MLRs:

"The role of the multi-line rep is cyclical. We go for a handful of years, and suppliers realize the enormous advantage of having a multi-line rep. Then there's a paradigm shift where suppliers think they'll have more success managing a company person, then there's a shift back."

The Future Of MLRs: "I have no 'quit' in me, so I have to believe that the future is bright for multi-

line reps. We open a ton of doors with our bag of tricks that a supplier with one gig may not be able to open. We're here to stay."

The Biggest Issue Affecting MLRs Today:

"Mergers and acquisitions. You can have a line and be enormously successful with it. You have widespread placement, great numbers, profits and, bam, it's gone. We get up, we dust off; but for that moment, it hurts."

What She Wants Distributors And Suppliers To Know:

"I am representing the supplier. I have the same knowledge, skill set, training, access and ability as any direct company employee (and often more experience). I am not a middleman; there are no advantages to 'working direct.' When I am wearing my Supplier A hat, I am Supplier A, and so forth. The language is inclusive. I say 'we' when referring to the supplier, not 'they.' I am the supplier."

Help Her Do A Better Job:

"Distributors can be open to considering new vendors/vendor presentations because there's always something new to learn. Every supplier is evolving and often changing strategies on how they are coming to the market. If distributors assume that they already know a supplier, they may be missing out. Suppliers are upping their game. Give me the work, give me the project and let me run with it. More often than not, we've been asked for a similar profile of a project. Let us use our suppliers, our experience, and our successes to present the right items with the right secondary applications in the right packaging for that target audience.

"Suppliers can continue to be responsive to customer needs by staying up to date on market trends, new product development, and streamlining information delivery to both the sales force and customers. Information access is key. Equally important is to establish a market brand identity through advertising, press releases, show attendance (both regional and national) and social media outlets. Staying in front of the customer is crucially important at this time. Suppliers can be present through industry channels on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, and MLRs can present on-site as often as necessary."

"I try to be as informative but also as entertaining as possible. If I can't keep their attention during a presentation, then they won't want me back."

2016 PPB BEST MULTI-LINE REP

Tim Rosica President, Rosica Marketing

"TIM'S SIGNATURE IS MAKING people laugh," says nominator Dan Pigott, CAS, of supplier Stromberg Brand. "It is a huge component of who he is and what he does. His best material is self-deprecating and that is what endears him to his account base."

For Rosica, it's all about keeping his clients' attention. "I try to be as informative but also as entertaining as possible," he says. "If I can't keep their attention during a presentation, then they won't want me back."

Getting and keeping customers is a hallmark of Rosica's work—and has been for the past 21 years. "His strongest business asset is that he tenaciously works his territory," says Pigott. "Many reps stop making as many calls after they've been in the market for several years, but not Tim. He understands the extreme value of face-to-face meetings. Few multi-line reps know the details of their supplier's products better than Tim."

Working from his home base in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, Rosica was a sales rep for Gallo Wine Sales of New Jersey before being introduced to the industry in 1995 by fellow MLR Paul Sprunk of PWS Associates. He was hired as a sub-rep and in 2006 formed his own rep company, Rosica Marketing.

What he likes best is the variety of people and projects he works with on a daily basis. "Every day is a new project; every project is a new adventure," he says. While the upside is the variety, the downside is the travel (about 28,000 miles annually) and time away from family. "That's where Facetime becomes more than just a phone call," he says.



Continued On Next Page

Continued From Previous Page

Up Close With Tim Rosica

The Changing Role Of MLRs: “I don’t think the role of the MLR is changing, but rather technology has increased the forms of communication. When I started, I would drive up to a pay phone to call a client. Now I can email, text, tweet, Instagram, Facebook, etc., to follow up or convey a promotion or special. While these forms of communication are fast and easy, the greatest form of communication, for us, is still face to face.”

The Future Of MLRs: “If you are a hard worker and get out to see clients often, then your future is great. Half of the MLR business is

being there in front of your clients. The other half is creativity, follow-up, knowing your products and providing great customer service.”

The Biggest Issue Affecting MLRs Today: “Trying to convey the value of the MLR to a company that has never used one. The idea of someone selling your products along with other suppliers’ products on a single sales presentation becomes disconcerting until those companies see results.”

What He Wants Suppliers And

Distributors To Know: “MLRs provide a multitude of products, ideas, case studies and information that can help distributors sell to their clients with confidence.”

Help Him Do A Better Job: “Distributors can help by buying more of my products (laughs), however, it’s my job to make them happy. I can influence distributors to purchase more of my products by providing great customer service with the help of my suppliers. My suppliers and I need to stay proactive and keep my customers happy. If all of this works, everyone is happy.”

2016 PPB BEST MULTI-LINE REP

Rod Williamson Partner, MW Reps



THIRTY YEARS AGO, ROD WILLIAMSON met a guy on a golf course who invited him to join his premium rep group and open a promotions division for the company. Williamson deftly made the transition from selling paint supplies to home improvement centers to launching the promotions company’s first line of promotional apparel. With the learning curve tucked firmly under his belt, in 2008 Williamson opened his own rep firm, Drake Marketing (the name pays homage to his love of duck hunting; a male duck is called a drake).

Six years later, Williamson joined forces with fellow rep Bryan Mercer to launch MW Reps. The pair now represents six supplier lines across Kansas,

Nebraska, Missouri and Iowa.

Much of their time is spent exhibiting at trade shows in major markets; the two do 30-35 shows a year including table tops and distributor user shows, and they share the load—literally. “I haul a carload of catalogs to the shows and Bryan takes all the samples,” he explains, with a laugh. “We both help set up, work the show and tear down.” And Maddie, Williamson’s red golden retriever, always rides along to keep him company.

What he loves about the job is that every day is different. “There’s never a week that’s the same—I make calls, do shows, organize all the samples in my garage. There’s not the repetition that so many jobs have.” To manage all the samples and catalogs—one of the most difficult aspects of his job—Williamson had to build a barn on acreage near his home, an old farmhouse he bought and remodeled in Pleasanton, Kansas, an hour south of Kansas City.

Despite the occasional challenge, Williamson thrives on the many business relationships and friendships he's built over his three decades in the industry. "I have customers I've been calling on since 1986," he says proudly.

It's that ability to forge lasting relationships that caught the eye of nominator Michael Dustman, vice president of sales at supplier Meridian Metal Works. "Nobody in any sales position is as relational to their customers as Rod is," he says. "He hasn't allowed dependence on technology to stop him from continually making face-to-face calls on his clients while attending all the shows where he can best represent his supplier lines."

Williamson says he didn't even realize this strength until a friend pointed it out one day. But he knows exactly what it takes to build those alliances. "I meld into that person to make them feel comfortable," he explains. "I use humor. I am honest. I underpromise and overperform. You've got to do what you say you are going to do."

Nominator Andy Arruda, MAS, national sales manager at supplier Hub Pen Company, adds, "Bryan and Rod are fantastic; they have a terrific rapport with their clients and do a fantastic job of representing us in front of both their largest and smallest accounts—they are up almost 30 percent this year over last."

"I use humor. I am honest. I underpromise and overperform. You've got to do what you say you are going to do."

Williamson is proud of what he's achieved for himself, his partner and his business, but he's still looking to the future and that next opportunity. "We bring long-term relationships to this industry; relationships that can get us immediate results because we've earned people's trust."

He's been told that one day something will click and he'll say to himself, "This is enough ... time to move on," but until that time he'll keep doing what makes him happy.

Up Close With Rod Williamson

specials, links and such. That's the way we are attacking the younger market."

The Biggest Issue Affecting MLRs Today: "Everybody is trying to figure out how to increase their business. We have lines that are focused. If a line decides to diversify and add say, pens, sometimes there's an uh-oh and we have to give up a line to avoid having our products overlap. Diversity is what's going on out there, conflict with lines."

What He Wants Suppliers And Distributors To Know: "What both sides need to understand is that we are a direct conduit and liaison between the factory and customer. Either can come to us with an issue—if they are looking for great pricing or a great program, for example, I can immediately put them with the right people who do program business. We are trying to be that common point to bring customers and distributors together."

Help Him Do A Better Job: "I'd like for distributors to honor our meetings but I do understand when they are cancelled. People are so busy today. One thing the factories do well is to support us by supplying us with catalogs, self-promos and giveaways, and they help pay the exhibit fees at the shows we attend. We take care of our own travel but are able to split the cost of the show itself among the six factories. That's a big help. Trade shows can get expensive."

The Changing Role Of MLRs: "In my 30 years of being in this industry and comparing to what it was like back then, we are doing more shows today and fewer meetings. Good meetings have become tougher to get, and then getting a good turnout at the meeting is difficult as well. As a result, we are starting to do more and more drop-bys where we stop by, poke our head in the salesperson's door and see what they are working on. We've also become more show-oriented; I used to make 12 sales calls a week, now we are doing 30 shows a year."

The Future Of MLRs: "I hope it's a viable future. I don't see it changing negatively in the next five to 10 years. We don't know what's coming with new technology, but Bryan and I are doing some things to keep up with changes. I like having a 40-year-old partner whose wife is a graphic artist [she also handles the company's social media]. We are marketing our factories in other ways than face-to-face and tabletop shows. For instance, we are marketing to Millennials through Facebook and Twitter, and I'm finding out that younger people like jumping on our website to find our flyers,

Bryan Mercer

Partner, MW Reps



SOMETIMES LIFE HAS A FUNNY way of changing course and taking us on a completely different journey than we had planned. Such is the story of Bryan Mercer, partner at MW Reps, who earned a teaching degree with plans to become a social studies teacher and basketball coach. Enter his older brother, Doug Mercer, a multi-line rep in the promotional products industry, who asked him to help out for a bit after graduation. What started as a brief diversion turned into a thriving 17-year career—one that he never plans on leaving.

From his home base in Higginsville, Missouri, Mercer represents six supplier accounts with his business partner, Rod Williamson, at the rep firm they founded in 2014. Like Williamson, Mercer most likes the freedom his job brings and the ability for him to create his own destiny. “If you work hard and are successful, you have the ability to become more successful,” he says. Mercer’s wife, Stephanie, a graphic artist, recently joined the company to handle customer flyers and virtuals, as well as the company’s marketing and social media. Occasionally she travels to meet customers located within a one-hour radius from their home.

The thriving business doesn’t leave the couple a lot of extra time, especially with raising four children ages 10 to 16, but Mercer believes his job capitalizes on his biggest strength: building relationships. “My customers are my friends,” he says. “They trust me; they know that if I say I’ll do something, I’ll do it.”

Nominator Andy Arruda, MAS, director of sales for supplier Hub Pen Co., is quick to point out how easy Mercer is to work with. “The communication is two-way and we are given great feedback from the field. He and Rod are willing to put out the utmost effort on behalf of their clients and suppliers and they are engaging their customers in many different ways—social media, ZOOMcatalog flyers, story boards. They have all been successful.”

Jeff Batson, CAS, president of supplier Next Products, who also nominated Mercer, notices the innovation too. “Although Bryan is an industry veteran, he continuously thinks of creative ways to engage our mutual customers and also provide creative solutions for their clients,” he says. He’s also impressed with Mercer’s thoughtful listening skills. “On many occasions Bryan will be taking the most detailed notes and he is not flippant with his assessment of information.”

Nominator Beth Jeffries with distributor Embassy Embroidery says simply, “Bryan is the perfect sales rep!”

Up
Close
With
Bryan
Mercer

The Changing Role Of MLRs:

“When I first started, you’d get your new products and catalogs, and then sit down and go through the line with everybody. Now we have more of a consultant role. It’s a lot faster paced. People don’t want us to come in and go through item by item. Now they want case histories so it’s a personal experience.”

The Future Of MLRs:

“The industry is changing pretty quickly in a lot of ways—but there is still a place for multi-line reps. Those who want to change will be successful. To be a fit you have to be able to adapt and change as the industry changes as a whole. I have to show how I’m bringing value to the table—doing trade shows, marketing, social media.

It takes a rare breed, a certain type of individual to be a multi-line rep. You have to be self-disciplined, a self-starter, quick on your feet and able to adapt.

The Biggest Issue Affecting Multi-Line Reps:

“Consolidation. The number of mergers and acquisitions unfortunately affects the number of suppliers in the

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industry. Overall, fewer suppliers are using MLRs. If a bigger supplier buys a smaller supplier and the bigger has factory reps, as they gobble up the smaller suppliers, those multi-line reps are affected."

What He Wants Suppliers And Distributors To Know:

"There is a misconception that it's a glamorous life but that's definitely not the case. It's a lot of hard work, a lot of travel. Just to set up for a meeting can take 15-20 minutes just to bring in the samples from your suppliers. When I get home from a trip I'm in my office at 8 or 9 o'clock at night and I'm working on the weekends. It's not a 9-to-5 job. When we are out on the road, there is stuff going on back in the office that has to get done, and there is a lot of physical work too."

Help Him Do A Better Job:

"Open communication. From the distributor standpoint, the more they will share with me—the more it will help them. If they can communicate with me what they are working on and the industries they are calling on, that helps me to be a better rep for them. For suppliers, keeping us up to date on quotes when we are out in the field [is critical]. At times, there can be a disconnect. Email is the most time-convenient way to get the word out to the whole sales team but every supplier is a little bit different. One of our suppliers is based in Missouri and I'll stop in there every two or three months if I'm in the area for training, or to pick up samples. A lot of suppliers will have us come out every one or two years for sales meetings or we'll have sales meetings at The [PPAI] Expo."

Vilia Johnson

President, BrandSource Incentives

WHEN VILIA JOHNSON MADE the transition from wholesale sales in the retail channel to national sales at promotional products supplier Cross 14 years ago, she was already acutely aware of the robust power of a brand. Her years working as a vice president at L'Oreal with major retail fragrance brands like Giorgio Armani, Ralph Lauren and Paloma Picasso helped Johnson understand how brands are used to incent, reward and delight the client base.

Now, as president of her own multi-line rep firm, BrandSource Incentives in Bellevue, Washington, she enjoys finding the right items that reward, recognize and motivate customers, their clients and employees. "I love the diversity of what we offer—from great products to great on-site experiences to technology solutions," she says. Her role now as a multi-line rep plays to Johnson's strengths. "My customers know that I am devoted to their best interests and that I am not going to let them down. If something goes sideways, we work very hard to make it right."

Unlike many of her contemporaries, Johnson travels only about 10,000 miles annually, most of it by plane, to serve customers throughout Washington, Oregon, Alaska and Idaho. She says she's much more productive working with customers from her desk. The biggest challenge, then, is not driving a carload of samples and catalogs from customer to customer but the sheer diversity of products she must learn about and be prepared to present to clients.

"There are too many fun products to sell," she says. "The hundreds of retail brands we represent have so many interesting and exciting products. There is no way to talk about all of them but we know what is available when the right opportunity comes along."

Her nominator, Nancy Varner, owner of distributor AIA/C'Est Bon Creations, LLC in Seattle, Washington, admires Johnson's incredible knowledge about all of her lines and her commitment to her customers as well. "She was willing to attend an extremely large end-user show out of state for two years in a row," Varner explains. "She was the expert in her lines and the end users were very impressed with her knowledge. I've asked other multi-line reps to do the same with that show and they were all too busy. Vilia is always busy but never too busy to help out. She has a wonderful attitude on life in general which translates into her business."



Continued On Next Page

Continued From Previous Page

Up Close With Vilia Johnson

The Changing Role Of MLRs:

"Rep/distributor partnerships used to be based on personal relationships. Now they are based on responsiveness, insights and the business savvy we can offer our customers. It's not really about products. It's about finding the right solutions.

We all know that a smooth and reliable sales process beats products in the long term, and our role is to facilitate that process."

The Future Of MLRs: "It isn't an easy job but there are many new opportunities if we are willing to embrace change and innovation."

The Biggest Issue Affecting

Multi-Line Reps: "Our challenges are reflective of the entire supply side's concerns about cross-channel selling and how merchandise is sourced. The supplier/rep/distributor model must be a true partnership to help our customers compete effectively

and find new ways to grow."

What She Wants Suppliers And Distributors To Know:

"Premium reps provide tremendous value in helping promotional consultants navigate the brands their clients love and want. A recent Incentive Research Foundation survey found that 75 percent of small businesses buy merchandise incentives online or at retail. If our distributors are not providing premium products to their clients, the client is buying them somewhere else. Reps can help [distributors] win that business."

Help Her Do A Better Job:

"Distributors can help by digging

deeper in their discovery questions about projects. Don't just ask me for a specific product. Tell me how the product is being used and provide all the relevant details. Describe the demographic of the recipient. How many do you need and when? Does the gift need to get through airport security to fly home on a plane? We might offer a far more appropriate idea for you than what your client requested. Suppliers can help by understanding the speed at which distributors work and the need for urgency, responsiveness and reliability." **PPB**

Tina Berres Filipski is editor of PPB.

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GROW!

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Score A *Winning Promo*

Get on the ball with these golf-related
promotions on page 46.

FERTILIZE
YOUR
ENTERPRISE

WEDDINGS

SAY 'I DO' TO THE WEDDING INDUSTRY

PROMOTIONAL ITEMS MAKE MEMORABLE REMINDERS AND FAVORS FOR THE BIG DAY

By Jen Alexander

NOT EVERY BRIDE-TO-BE DREAMS of a fluffy white dress and a thousand rose petals strewn down the aisle—but that doesn't mean alternative visions of the big day are any less meaningful or in need of a specific plan of action.

The many faces of the wedding industry, from photographers to bakers to ceremony officiants, exist solely to help to make wedding dreams a reality—and promotional products marry well with the messages these vendors want to deliver.



For businesses whose bread-and-butter comes from the wedding industry, bridal shows can make up a sizable chunk of annual revenue. Great Bridal Expo, a national bridal show producer based in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, offers vendors several tips on making promotional products count when exhibiting at one of the company's many national shows. Take note, promotional consultants—these tips could turn a wedding-business vendor into a client:

1 When selecting the right products, choose quality over quantity. Giveaways that are geared toward a target market such as brides, bridal party members or couples, increase opportunities to keep a business's brand in front of potential customers. Photographers, for example, might consider custom photo frame magnets with contact information printed on them.

2 Premium items such as crystal champagne glasses are ideal for enticing qualified leads, but if brand awareness is the goal, stick with less expensive items that can be distributed in bulk.

3 Wearables and tote bags are always popular and are available at several price points. Consider the importance of a quality method of decorating for both of these long-lasting products.

4 Food gifts are great for attendees, who will be wandering through dozens or even hundreds of booths without stopping and will definitely have worked up an appetite.

Kick wedding festivities up a notch with products like these



Guests will carry a wedding memory with them forever when it's on a U.S.-made **metal keytag**. Four-color process personalization allows couples to create mementos with photos, text or logos on brass, antique brass, nickel silver or sterling silver tags.

Osborne Coinage Co. // UPIC: COINS
// www.osbornecoin.com

Dip into an adorable customized **nail polish** in a color of your choosing. Imprint the square bottle in black, white, silver or gold, and cap it with a black, white or silver top.

Diamond Cosmetics, Inc. //
UPIC: Diamond1 //
www.diamondcosmetics.com



CASE STUDY

A Different Kind Of Wedding Band

HIDE-A-BAND MAKES FOR A MEMORABLE, MULTIFUNCTION FAVOR

WANTING TO TREAT GUESTS to a memorable favor, and to encourage them to participate in the wedding festivities, one couple chose to hand out Hide-A-Bands from Suntex Industries (UPIC: SUNTEX). The bands were decorated with an engagement photo, the couple's names and their wedding location using fusion sublimation DigiPrint decorating technology. The hidden pocket of the band was filled with confetti to throw after the ceremony, and the band also was used as a beverage wrap during the reception.

Source: Suntex Industries

MARKET TO MARKET



Who says feminine and rugged don't go together? Bridal parties will love getting this **frayed camo cap** in pink-Mossy Oak Breakup or Fuchsia-Realtree Max 1 styles. The cap sports a 100-percent cotton washed twill front and 60/40 cotton-polyester camo back. The unstructured, low-profile design has six-panel construction and a pre-curved, distressed visor. The Velcro® closure also has a camo-brand woven loop label over the back arch.

Kati Sportcap // UPIC: KATI // www.katisportcap.com

Pack perfectly for a destination wedding or the honeymoon with pieces from the **KAPSTON™ Collection**. The collection offers four bags with coordinating padding on the straps, plenty of storage and retail-inspired fabric. The 19-inch carry-on folds up nicely for storage underneath a bed or without taking up too much space in a closet.

BIC Graphic USA // UPIC: BIC // www.bicgraphic.com



Make a save-the-date announcement stick with a **sticker postcard**. The 4.25- by 6-inch size guarantees visibility for custom graphics on the front, and a pre-printed return address on the back.

Magna-Tel, Inc. // UPIC: MAGNATEL // www.magna-tel.com

Wedding Trends For 2016

Social media hashtags

His-and-hers cocktails



Photography/videography drones

Mixed-gender wedding parties (think man of honor and groomsmen)



Fresh-picked floral arrangements; freeform bouquets



Retro menswear

Metallics in the color schemes and stationery

Custom-created monograms



'Naked' cakes



HOLY MATRI-MONEY

- The bridal business is a **\$48 billion** industry.
- In 2015, the average cost of a wedding fell somewhere between **\$29,000** and **\$31,000**—honeymoon not included.
- Approximately **2.5 million** weddings are performed each year in the U.S.
- Marshall Field's became the first store to launch a wedding registry, in 1924.
- Many couples request donations instead of gifts; vetted charities include the I Do Foundation, JustGive.org and Brides Against Breast Cancer.



Take a wedding reception or rehearsal party from day to night with **pinhole sunglasses** and **light-up foam sticks**. The iconic sunglasses are available in nine colors and feature UV400 protection, four-color process decals and optional imprinting on sunglass arms. When the sun goes down, light up the party with a light-up foam stick decorated with a four-color process wraparound sticker.

WOWLine // UPIC: MANY0002 // www.wowline.com



From The Ring To The Reception Hall

MILLENNIAL BRIDES THESE DAYS are more likely to use online resources than traditional print wedding magazines. Six out of 10 brides in this demographic report using mobile devices to plan their nuptials; 64 percent use Pinterest for inspiration, while 54 percent use the site to illustrate their wedding vision to planners and vendors. Nearly 40 million boards on Pinterest are dedicated to weddings.

Source: Huffington Post



Line up the wedding party for an epic photo with the help of a **custom selfie stick**. The nine-inch stick extends to just over three feet and includes an adjustable phone holder that fits all smartphones. The attached cable plugs into the headphone jack; no Bluetooth connection required. Then, toast to making memories with a personalized Moscow Mule mug.

The stainless steel 16-ounce mug is coated in copper with smooth rims and a fashionable handle. **Makana Line LLC** // UPIC: MAKANA // www.makanaline.com





The **SPARKLE imprint process** features glossy holographic or metallic dots that make promotional bags like this one shine. These dots come in more than 30 eye-catching colors for use on nonwoven and polyester bags like this Grandé mesh panel tote, a 100-GSM premium non-woven polypropylene bag featuring front and back mesh panels, 26-inch-long handles, and a wide Velcro® strap closure.

BAG MAKERS, Inc. // UPIC: BAGMAKRS //

www.bagmakers.inc

Add some pop to the post-ceremony procession with 0.6-ounce imprintable **bubble bottles**.

With two hearts on the top and a wand inside, these effervescent favors are ideal for sending off the bride and groom.

Essef Distributors //

UPIC: 7414140 //

www.lincolnline.com



Supplier Hears Wedding Bells For A New Market

AS THE CHAPEL DOORS CONTINUE to open for more couples, one supplier is keeping an eye out for new promotional opportunities. Leslie, Michigan-based supplier Weepuline, LLC (UPIC: WEEPULS) recently launched a line of Same-Sex Marriage Weepuls™. Michael Crooks, vice president of U.S. operations, says his company's newest Weepuls fill the void of relevant promotional products for the same-sex-marriage (SSM) market.

"We believe the same-sex-marriage market is largely underserved with specific products that deliver a message creatively and effectively," says Crooks. "We developed our SSM Weepul in an effort to expand the markets for our distributor partners by providing a relevant product with which the gay and lesbian community can promote causes and celebrate events."

The SSM Weepuls are two Weepuls on one base, outfitted in either top hats or bridal veils. The concept can be further enhanced with the optional use of Weepuline's "rainbow" poms. The promotional message is imprinted on an attached ribbon. Crooks adds that the concept is applicable across other Weepuline products as well, including a Weepul holding an appropriate-colored awareness ribbon, and relevant bookmark options. **PPB**

Tee It Up



The season for golf-related promotions has arrived. Here's how to be ready.

By Julie Richie

IF YOU HAVEN'T THOUGHT about targeting golf tournament sponsors or golf-related businesses as potential clients, you may be missing out on a great opportunity to expand your business.

Wayne Cimperman, president of Vegas Golf/Foxyware (UPIC: VegasGGz), says there are more than 15,000 golf courses in the U.S., many of which host tournaments during the year. "From local business outings to sponsored corporate events to the many charity golf events, there are more promotional opportunities than ever for those who know how to take advantage of them," he says.

Cimperman's company manufactures a poker golf game, Vegas Golf The Game, that is played on the course, adding an extra element of fun to the round—and an additional fundraising opportunity in charity tournaments. It's just one of many golf-related promotional products that will appeal to golf tournament sponsors.

So how do you find those golf sponsors to pitch your marketing expertise? Cimperman shares three easy ways to find potential golf clients.



IN THE CLUB The average golfer spends \$2,776 on the game annually and has an average household income of \$100,980. Source: National Golf Foundation



Wayne
Cimperman

1 READ. Look in major golf magazines to see who is advertising. Companies include banks, liquor companies, pharmaceuticals, hotel chains and automobile manufacturers, among others. “Simply contact their corporate headquarters and ask who is in charge of their sports marketing, or ask for the specific brand manager,” Cimperman says.

2 WATCH TELEVISED TOURNAMENTS. You will see the major networks that sponsor the tournament along with companies who have purchased commercials and companies that have signage on the courses being played.

3 LOOK LOCALLY. Contact your most popular local golf courses. Ask them if they have a calendar of events, including some golf tours or events for the year. Most of the larger courses will have this information. For example, your local course may have a State Farm Invitational event or a Century 21 golf event or a local Girls and Boys Club fundraiser, etc. Call your local sponsor’s office and ask who is in charge of putting that event together. Introduce yourself and set up a meeting to share popular golf items on which you can put their logo, he says. Golf pros are also a great source of information so make sure to strike up a conversation with staff at your local courses.

GO WITH THESE GOLF PRODUCTS FOR MAXIMUM PROMOTIONAL IMPACT



Step up your giveaway game with this **laser-etched scroll** made from sustainably harvested wood and filled with barbecue almonds and a white chocolate-champagne golf ball truffle. In warmer weather, the truffle can be replaced with a regulation-size branded golf ball. After the tournament is over, the scroll can hold golf balls, tees, reading glasses, ear buds and many other items.

Torn Ranch // UPIC: TRNRANCH // www.tornranch.com

Golf tournament participants will use this **poker chip ball marker** for years to come. The custom removable golf ball marker sits in a magnetic custom poker chip and is easily removable and replaceable. It’s a convenient size that fits right in your pocket.

Da Vinci Imports // UPIC: davinci // www.davinciimports.com



No golfer can afford to leave the **6-in-1 Divot Tool** at home. It includes a bottle opener, can opener, cigar holder, divot tool, club holder and ball marker—everything you need for a day on the links. Made of durable metal, this tool is golf-green friendly and a great conversation starter as well.

Hat Trick Openers // UPIC: hatt // www.hattrickopeners.com

EDITOR'S PICKS

Nothing promotes fun like a pen shaped like something else. This **golf tee pen** measures just over seven inches and is great for your next golf outing. It's ideal for golf courses, bars, restaurants, fundraisers and more. Just like a traditional golf tee, the pen is white and it comes with blue ink.

Wowline // UPIC: MANY0002 // www.wowline.com



The final piece of any great golf tournament is a meaningful award such as the **Birdie Award** (left) or **Kilmer Golf Award**. The Birdie Award can be personalized using a deep etch or deep etch with colorfill imprint. The Kilmer Golf Award is made of magnificent optical crystal and is available in three sizes, perfect for recognizing the achievements of first place, second place and third place winners in a tournament. Personalize the Kilmer Golf Award with your choice of imprint processes: deep etch, deep etch with colorfill, 2D/3D subsurface laser engraving or Illumachrome™ four-color imprint.

Crystal D // UPIC: CRYSTALD // www.crystal-d.com



Let your imagination run wild on absorbent velour and Turkish combed cotton **ColorFusion Golf Towels™**. Edge-to-edge designs in vibrant colors ensure you'll have a standout piece. The towel measures 16 x 24 inches and has its own sewn-in loop for easy hanging.

Towel Specialties // UPIC: TOWLSPEC // www.towelspecialties.com

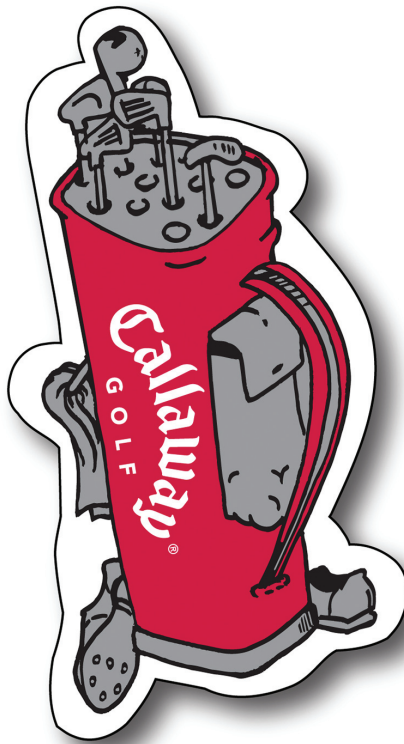


JACKETS ONLY

Augusta National bought green jackets from New York-based Brooks Uniform Company in 1937 for members to wear during the tournament so patrons would know who to turn to for information. Members wore them at the club so that waiters would know who would pay the bill. In 1949, Sam Snead became the first Masters champion awarded a green jacket. *Source: Augusta.com*

With golf season right around the corner, it's time to get your business in front of the avid golfer. Put your logo on this **golf bag magnet** and drive out the competition.

Magna-Tel, Inc. // UPIC: MAGNATEL
// www.magna-tel.com



Above Par Promotions

PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

AREN'T JUST important for distributing on the day of the golf tournament. Plan to use them strategically before and after the tournament as well to increase a brand's marketing reach.

BEFORE Pre-tournament promotions build excitement for the big event. Send out a branded umbrella, divot tool, ball marker or golf tees to registrants.

DURING Choose a quality branded tote bag to give to tournament participants when they check in. Fill the bags with products they'll use repeatedly, such as a golf-themed pen, towel, water bottle, balls, ball marker, tees and divot repair tools. Memorable branded awards provide a great end to the tournament and good will for years to come, so make sure there are plenty of opportunities to win them.

AFTER Send each participant off with a take-home gift such as a branded photo frame with an event photo.

Source: EmbroidMe



A little rain and wind on the course is no match for the **Typhoon Tamer Umbrella**. With a large 62-inch arc, the umbrella is lightning resistant, thanks to its all-fiberglass construction. Gusty winds are channeled through the vented canopy. A matching fabric case with shoulder strap and color-coordinated ergo-shape soft grip handles makes for easy portability. Available colors include black, black-white, hunter green, hunter-white, navy blue, navy-white, orange-white, purple-white, red-white, royal blue and royal-white.

Stromberg Brand //
UPIC: 1ASTRMBG //
www.strombergbrand.com

EDITOR'S PICKS

Use the durable **Rounder tote** as a registration gift for tournaments. Pre-fill the bags with golf balls, water bottles, scorecards, tees and more, and line them up for participants to pick up when checking in. The Rounder is also a great "collection" bag at golf tournaments, so participants have a place to store their watches, mobile phones and wallets while they play. The bag features a cinch-top closure, and imprinting is available in silk screen or full-color, high-resolution ColorVista.

BAG MAKERS, Inc. //
 UPIC: BAGMAKRS //
www.bagmakersinc.com



Keep sun protection close by with this **Neoprene shoe pouch** featuring an SPF 30 sun stick and SPF 15 lip balm. Not only does it give the golfers protection from the sun, but it keeps your client's logo in front of them with three different branded products.

Aloe Up Suncare Products // UPIC: ALOEUP1 // www.aloeup.com



A great take-home gift for golfers, these **golf ball-textured frames** are made from heavy duty mat board backing and come with an easel. Choose single mat or double mat, which provides a forest green trim around the photo. The frame accommodates a five-inch by seven-inch horizontal or vertical photo.

Warwick Publishing Company // UPIC: WARWICK //
www.warwickpublishing.com **PPB**

As golf tournament prizes go, you can't get much smaller or louder than the **Boompods™ Aquapod Bluetooth Speaker**. The three-watt speaker turns any mobile device into a portable sound system that provides great sound quality. With its IPX7 water-resistant rating, this speaker will continue to play in wet situations. It includes a removable suction cup to adhere to any flat surface, a carabiner for attaching to a golf bag, a lanyard and an adjustable clamp. It's available in three colors.

Starline USA, Inc. // UPIC: STAR0009 // www.starline.com

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

VIRTUAL SAMPLES BUILT INTO YOUR WEBSITE

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- COMPARE AND SHARE DESIGNS
- ADD TO CART OR REQUEST A QUOTE
- PRODUCTION-READY OUTPUT

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SAAS-BASED PRODUCT
CUSTOMIZATION

Raising Eyebrows And Response Rates

Some savvy distributors are creating data-driven marketing strategies to help their clients win and keep business. If you offer interactive marketing campaigns, here are three talking points to communicate to customers and prospects. **By Darin Painter**

MARKETING TEAMS HAVE NEVER

been more valuable or more stressed out. They're under the gun and under the microscope, responsible for solving major business challenges: acquiring leads, retaining members, engaging clients, winning back customers and more.

As these teams execute marketing campaigns, they ask important questions: Which tactics are working, and which ones aren't? Which messages should we change, and when? Are we using data effectively?

Their world seems to be spinning and picking up speed. But, at the same time, opportunity abounds for progressive distributors. Advances in media, data and technology have made it possible for your clients—everyone from Fortune 500 firms to Joe's Flower Shack—to find, win and keep business in new ways.

As your clients and prospects seek the Holy Grail of audience engagement, how can they deliver targeted, meaningful messages to their audience? And how can you position your firm to be their trusted marketing, print and technology resource?





TALKING POINT No. 1:
What are they really trying to accomplish, and how are they measuring success?

Marketing campaigns lack relevance when they lack resonance. What good are touch points if recipients don't notice or feel connected? That's why smart, data-driven strategies matter. They make it possible to deliver the right message to the right customer at the right time through the right channel.

But here's the thing: The right strategy doesn't start with slick technology or a slick agency. It begins with the customer—its marketing goals and whatever business challenges keep employees up at night. An end user's interactive marketing services partner needs to understand those goals and challenges before addressing them. (See "Cut, Paste and Send This to Clients: Choosing an Interactive Marketing Services Partner.")

Any marketing team can tell customers what they need to know. Great ones take a different approach; they create ways to listen and learn, constantly building relationships and developing conversations with their customers or members. In that sense, the right marketing services partner wears the same color jersey as its client's team, collaborating on effective ways to marry data, tactics and technology.

Here's an example: A university sought a better way to educate high school sophomores and

juniors about the school. Timely, compelling outreach is a main goal of the school's admissions leaders. But like most higher-education institutions, the university lacked an efficient, simple way to target and engage prospective students and then track the success of those efforts by viewing a live dashboard.

A marketing services provider deployed a multifaceted, segmented campaign that included:

- **A series of six marketing emails to prospective students.** Messaging reinforced the school's advantages and included links to its website and downloadable collateral. The design was customized based on each recipient's academic area of interest. Interested students were taken to a landing page that included a form to fill out so the university could learn more about interested students. Follow-up emails were sent automatically, triggered by action or inaction.
- **Customized direct mail and personalized landing pages.** Prospective students who expressed interest received a customized direct-mail piece based on answers provided on the landing page.
- **A dashboard for integrated campaign tracking.** The university could easily track the success of the campaign as a whole, or each touch point individually. Its marketing leaders could view who sub-



Think of it this way: Marketers are armed with a box full of pins. What's missing is the pincushion—a distributor partner that can tie together data, technology and strategy.

mitted information, which tactics worked the best, the success rates of email and direct mail and much more. Those leaders could also see how students accessed the landing page (via smartphones, specific browsers, etc.). Comparing interactive campaign data with demographic data, the university also knew what ethnicity the responders were and what regions they were located in.



TALKING POINT No. 2:
An interactive marketing strategy isn't tangible unless it's trackable.

Marketers are facing business challenges that didn't exist even five years ago. For example, greater power is placed in the hands of customers today. Because so many options exist for online interaction—social channels, websites, mobile, email and others—customers can selectively choose when, where and how they interact with a brand. In effect, people are always "on."

Amid this communication deluge, marketing teams are trying to gather and utilize various sources of information to better understand customers—their needs, behaviors, buying patterns and preferences. The ability to reach targets "where they are," and to gather and understand data about them, is the foundation of successful interactive marketing efforts.

Think of it this way: Marketers are armed with a box full of pins. What's missing is the pincushion—a distributor partner that can tie together data, technology and strategy.

Today, however, countless organizations are managing incoming data from online and offline sources manually—sorting, cleansing and normalizing it using spreadsheets, and then uploading information into marketing automation and sales systems. Data quality can be severely affected by this approach.

CUT, PASTE AND SEND THIS TO CLIENTS: CHOOSING AN INTERACTIVE MARKETING SERVICES PARTNER

MANY ORGANIZATIONS NEED HELP to plan, create and execute interactive marketing campaigns. Here's what to look for in an ideal partner:

- Begins with questions rather than preconceived notions and is able to articulate what you want but haven't yet achieved—more buyers who fit ideal profiles, increased loyalty from current customers, higher attendance at an event or in a program, more engaging communication to donors or stakeholders, etc.
- Gathers and manages customer data from numerous sources, thanks to an agnostic database structure
- Provides real-time access to data to drive effective strategies and promote proactive engagement
- Offers a customer engagement platform that supports real-time, response-based interactions that can be scheduled and set up in advance for automated engagement
- Designs marketing dashboards that are highly visual and easy to understand, consolidated and arranged so the information can be digested at a glance
- Goes beyond charts and graphs to give marketers perceptive analysis and practical conclusions—meaningful intelligence that makes sense of campaign data
- Provides a mechanism to exercise continuous proactive (direct and unsolicited) and interactive (responsive and conversational) communication with customers across a dynamic range of media platforms
- Deploys campaign management technology through an integrated platform that can help marketers unify messaging, eliminate duplication, speed campaign deployment and control costs
- Offers technology that addresses brand control and compliance across multiple media



Besides, marketers don't want vital insights that they could use to better engage customers to wind up in inaccessible data silos.

Data-driven marketing empowers your clients to respond to each of these challenges. It's the strategy of collecting and connecting large amounts of online data with traditional offline data, so marketers can quickly gain cross-channel insights about customers, then use those insights to create highly personalized interactions. Those interactions can be tailored to the customer at their point of need and in real time.

Here's an example: One distributor created and now manages a highly successful invitation, enrollment and communication program for a major healthcare insurance provider. The client needed an online portal that could empower caregivers and elder-care recipients.

The distributor created the following components:

- A microsite that enables people to enroll, view provider information, set appointments, learn about common health topics and more; the site includes comprehensive administrative functionality
- A process by which direct mail invitations, welcome kits and other materials are delivered automatically to program subscribers; emails are also sent automatically
- An automatic reminder tool that sends appointment alerts via the subscriber's preferred communication method (text, SMS, email, mail or phone call)

- An online dashboard that shows program data and reports in real time; statistics shown include when the site is accessed, visitors and page views, what sections of the tool are most used, which resources are viewed and more
- A database to store all subscriber subscription information



TALKING POINT No. 3: Marketers shouldn't have to guess where leads are coming from or how many targets have responded. They can have this information at their fingertips.

Gathering data is only part of the interactive marketing campaign process. Another component is measuring and tracking data from both online and offline programs and then delivering insights through dashboards so marketers can make sense of it all.

The speed and effectiveness with which an organization can turn data into knowledge and actionable insight have become key competitive advantages. Without accurate tracking and analysis of website activity, email campaigns, program registrations, transactions and other online activities, how can your clients gauge the success of their efforts?

Recently, a marketing services provider built a special dashboard that enables a college's marketing team to see a real-time view of all mailing campaigns. This dashboard and associated data can be dynamically compiled using a calendar date-range tool. And because of the

provider's data analytics capabilities and data warehousing platform, the college's officers now receive specialized reports so they can review admissions officers' participation and utilization of specific recruitment programs.

The notion that data can guide marketing decisions isn't new. What is new is the volume of data, which has multiplied due to the number of available communications channels. With so many advanced metrics and data capturing tools available, cam-

paigns can constantly generate valuable information about customers. In fact, according to data warehousing firm Teradata, 75 percent of marketers plan to implement a big data analytics solution during the next two years "to untangle the mass of customer data available to them."

Analytics dashboards and reports can provide complete visibility into the status of clients' ongoing programs. Marketing teams can align metrics with their business goals and track

what matters most.

Customized data dashboards can be designed to provide real-time feedback, allowing marketers to fine-tune campaigns on the fly.

The importance of data analytics is driving the transformation of customer engagement in digital marketing. As more distributors evolve into marketing services providers, opportunities abound to help marketing teams solve their problems and achieve their goals. **FPB**

Analytics dashboards and reports can provide complete visibility into the status of clients' ongoing programs. Marketing teams can align metrics with their business goals and track what matters most.

Darin Painter is editor-in-chief of PS Magazine. Reprinted with permission of Print Services & Distribution Association (PSDA).

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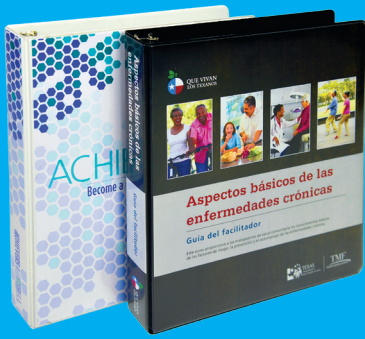
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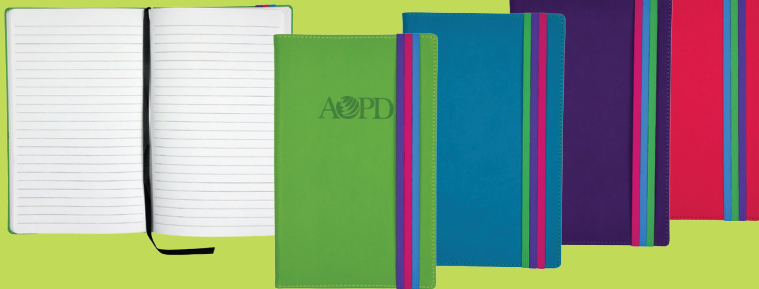
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THINK

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The Millennial Buyer

Don't let a generation gap stand between your business and this \$200 billion market.

To learn how you can earn a Millennial's loyalty turn to page 66.


PUT A LITTLE
BRAWN IN
YOUR BRAIN


 WATER COOLER


Write This Down

By Jen Alexander


THERE'S NO BETTER WAY to feel like you've gotten things done than by checking them off on your massive "to do" list. Of course, that same list may leave you feeling like a failure if it's not wrapped up at the end of the day. But there's more to list-making than just lining up tasks by importance or timeliness. Author Paula Rizzo recommends making six different kinds of lists, each targeted to a specific type of task.


 **1 A TARGETED TASK LIST** Use this list to tackle only those items you have the time and resources to achieve. It's okay to focus on big goals here, but break them down into actionable tasks. Write the next day's list at the end of the day, when you can see ahead to what needs to be done—but not too far ahead. If you miss something that's important but non-urgent, move it to the next day.

 **2 AN OUTSOURCE LIST** Just because something has to be done doesn't mean it has to be done by you. Managers and executive leaders, especially, benefit from delegating tasks that don't require a personal touch or their specific fingerprint. Some tasks may require upfront training, but outsourcing them saves time in the end.

 **3 A LONG-TERM GOALS LIST** Don't let the chaos of the daily grind keep you from thinking about the big picture. Writing your long-term goals helps you achieve them. Writing sets the intention and is more likely to make a goal actionable. Create an email or calendar reminder to review your long-term goals periodically, and revise them as needed.



 **4 A PRO-CON LIST** Pro-con lists might seem juvenile on the surface, but weighing the positive and negative aspects of a potentially game-changing decision forces you to examine that decision more closely. Seeing more pros than cons doesn't tie you to a 'yes,' either—or vice versa.

 **5 A PROJECT LIST** Project lists should detail tasks and pair individuals with those tasks, and they should follow a general timeline of events leading up to the completion of that project. Having project lists helps keep everyone in lockstep, and it helps managers avoid micromanaging.

 **6 A TALKING-POINTS LIST** Create a list of things you want to discuss in a meeting or phone call, so you don't risk forgetting something. Keep this list handy on your desk, so when things pop in your mind you can jot them down.

Source: Fast Company



Five Minutes With
Kelly Truman

Emergency RESPONSE

STANDALONE EMERGENCY ROOMS continue to pop up across the nation, offering 24-hour access to ER-level care for residents of suburban and even rural areas. Kelly Truman, director of business development for Southlake, Texas-based Complete Emergency Care, shares how she uses promotional products to spread the word about her company's services.

PPB What are your primary responsibilities?

Truman My responsibilities range from brand awareness, community relations and leading our marketing team, to making sure our communities know that we are here to serve their medical needs 24/7.

PPB With the increase in standalone emergency care facilities, how is your company trying to set itself apart?

Truman Complete Emergency Care believes in grassroots marketing. We

believe in offering fair prices for exceptional medical care. What sets us apart from others is our billing practice. We offer transparent billing and no "surprise" bills later. We also have higher numbers of highly qualified staff to ensure our patients receive the best



medical care that we would want for our own families.

PPB What kinds of messages do you help share with target audiences?

Truman Our target market is primarily women aged 25 to 55. Women typically make the healthcare decisions for their families, so we like them to know that there is an alternative to their ER experience. They now have the option to come into a clean, kid-friendly, freestanding facility with easy parking, and be offered all the same capabilities as a large hospital. The typical wait time is less than 15 minutes to see an emergency-trained doctor, and our doctors are able to spend more one-on-one time with the patient and listen to their concerns.

PPB What kinds of promotional items are you using, and how are you using them?

Truman We try to stick to practical promotional items: bandage dispensers for purses, gym bags, hot/cold packs for injuries, first-aid kits for home and sports practices, pens, mag-

nets and goodies for kids. We use these items in a variety of ways. We offer some of our smaller items for patients to grab when they are in our facilities. We use a majority of our promotional items at health fairs, school functions, door-to-door marketing and community sponsorships.

PPB What results have you seen from the use of promotional products in your marketing/awareness efforts?

Truman Everyone always has a wonderful reply to our promotional items. Our promo items are things that they will use and not just throw in the trash. People are genuinely grateful for our items and have even mentioned them when they have come in or if we see them again out in the community. Promotional products, along with our other marketing efforts in print, television and radio, have made a significant impact on the growth of our company. In addition, of course, our quality facilities, excellent service and, most importantly, our team of doctors, nurses and caregivers have increased our growth in the areas we serve. In fact, in the past two years we have grown from one facility to 17 in the state of Texas.

TECH TALK

Fitness App Hooks Shark Tank Investor

NEW FITNESS APPS pop up almost as often as CrossFit boxes, but one has managed to keep from drowning by getting the attention of celebrity investors. Sworkit, a leading provider of personalized video workouts for iOS and Android devices, made *Shark Tank* history by striking a \$1.5-million deal with shark investor Mark Cuban, making it the show's largest tech deal and third-overall largest deal.

Sworkit, which stands for "simply work it," is a free, interactive fitness app offering users both customizable and randomized workouts that can be performed anywhere, without any equipment required.

Sworkit CEO Ben Young and COO Gregory Coleman negotiated a deal with Cuban at \$1.5 million for 10 percent of their company. The investment will be used to help double the app's staff and help the company evolve from an app to a full-fledged platform. Sworkit's leaders say they are planning to launch a web version of the app as well as offering it on Apple TV, Google TV and Roku.



PHOTO BY JOE SEER/SHUTTERSTOCK

Sworkit, a leading provider of personalized video workouts for iOS and Android devices, made *Shark Tank* history by striking a \$1.5-million deal with investor Mark Cuban.

Taking History ON THE ROAD



ONE OF THE MOST INSPIRING military defeats gave rise to an iconic motto, "Remember the Alamo!" Custom license plate vendor MyPlates commemorated the 180th anniversary of Texas' independence with the auction of a **one-of-a-kind branded license plate bearing the word ALAMO**. The auction ran from February 23 to March 6—the same time period as the Siege of the Alamo.

In addition to the plate's significance as a vehicular singularity, the winning bidder received rights to legally transfer rights to the ALAMO plate design, either by gifting it to someone or by selling the plate to another driver. The winning bid of \$10,250 came from a San Antonio resident. Proceeds from the auction will benefit the Alamo Endowment and the state's General Revenue Fund.

AD-ITIVES

Auto Ads Get *UBER-SEXY* Down Under

BRISBANE ISN'T KNOWN AS the Sin City of Australia—which is probably why cab companies there **don't permit strip club advertising to be mounted on fleet vehicles.** But one Uber driver gave the opportunity a test run and came away with satisfying results. Uber driver Dee Michaels was approached by the owners of the club, who are friends, when she mentioned to them she'd begun driving for the service.

Michaels says when she submitted her vehicle's photo to Uber staff for approval less than a year ago, the side-panel advertisement for the club was plainly visible and she wasn't told by the service to remove it, so the ad will remain in place as long as the club owners continue to pay for it.

Source: Mashable



MARKET SHARE

Get Hip To This Year's Marketing Trends

DON'T GET STUCK pouring marketing efforts into forms that are no longer fashionable. Keep these trends for 2016 in mind when building your next campaign.



One-to-one messaging platforms

Snapchat-as-TV

Ad-blocking software

All-encompassing digital ads

Video for multiple platforms

PHOTO BY 360B/SHUTTERSTOCK

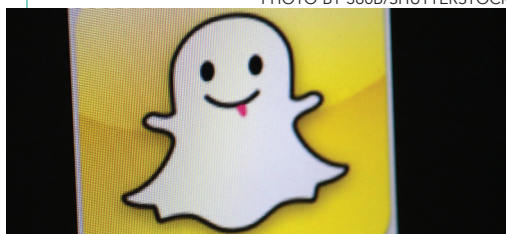


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The Compliance Questionnaire

A FIRST STEP TOWARD MORE INDUSTRY TRANSPARENCY—AND THAT'S A GOOD THING

By Josh Kasteler

PICTURE IT—it's a Friday afternoon and your mind is already focused on the weekend. Suddenly you get an email from one of your biggest customers with the subject heading, "compliance questionnaire." The attachment is an innocent looking, three-page document that asks a number of questions about product safety, social compliance and regulations. No big deal, right?

Actually, it is a big deal. These types of questionnaires (and documents like them) are making their way around our industry more often these days, and you may have gotten a few already. They are primarily being pushed by our industry's largest corporate customers who are starting to put a bigger spotlight on the safety of what they buy.

Product safety is an issue that affects both distributors and suppliers. Suppliers may do much of the heavy lifting when it comes to compliance, but distributors also need to have processes in place to curate the best products for their clients. Suppliers and distributors that work together are able to provide better information about how products are made and tested.

End users may now work with several distributors and suppliers simultaneously in search of the hottest (and perhaps least expensive) products, but that is changing as companies are increasingly looking to consolidate their buying with a limited number of vendors. This not only saves them money, but makes it easier to manage risks to their brand.

This push to consolidation brings opportunities to forge strong, high-volume contracts with the biggest fish. But for every winner, there will be several more companies that won't make the cut and will be shut out of lucrative programs. Increasing regulation (and litigation) and recent, embarrassing recalls are making compliance more of a requirement to do business.

A few years ago your completed questionnaire may not have been read, but these days it will likely be carefully reviewed and graded. Those who do well will be at the top of the list for business and those who do not will be at the bottom or cut altogether. Therefore, your answers to the questions need to be informed and



Compliance Tip:

PPAI's Promotional Products TurboTest™ provides a product safety road map, asking users simple, yes-or-no questions about a particular product or product

PPAI TurboTest™ Promotional Products

line and then breaking down the relevant product safety regulations into easy-to-understand, easy-to-implement steps. It's fast, easy-to-use and free to PPAI members. Take a look. **Find it under Inside PPAI/Product Responsibility at www.ppai.org.**

backed up by documentation to impress. It sounds a lot like high school all over again—you've got to show your work.

Your questionnaire grade translates to how risky your company appears to your customer, and that amount of risk will dictate the level of business they give you. Those who get a poor grade will be considered risky and it can be a long, uphill battle to change that. In some cases, risky vendors are required to undergo expensive audits and other improvement schemes in order to get back into good graces.

Here are some guidelines to help you prepare for the next customer questionnaire that lands in your inbox:

PRODUCT SAFETY The last thing your customers want is to have their brand placed on a dangerous or recalled product. Here are a few fundamentals they will look for:

- **Product Assessments** Do you have experts to evaluate new products before you purchase or develop them? Do you anticipate any hazards with those products and, if so, do you have a testing program to check them?
- **Testing** Can you provide recent test reports to confirm the products don't contain any regulated harmful chemicals? Can you track the testing to the actual product lot from the factory?

SOCIAL COMPLIANCE Today end users increasingly want to treat your supply chain as part of their own. Here are a few must-haves:

- **Code of Conduct** Do you have a code of conduct and require that all suppliers sign it? Is it implemented up the supply chain? Does it meet the industry standards of organizations like the Fair Labor Association and other major consumer brands? (You can adopt the PPAI Code of Conduct as a good first step. Find it at www.ppai.org/code.)
- **Factory Audits** Can you show that your suppliers have had at least one social compliance audit in the past year? Was a third-

party laboratory and/or industry standard used (e.g., Sedex)?

COMPLIANCE Your customers will expect that you have the complex and confusing world of compliance regulation all figured out.

- **Regulation** Do you have statements on your website that summarize your company's approach to the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act (CPSIA) and Prop 65? Can you tell your customers the testing that is necessary for a product type? Is your staff trained on Undue Influence and Recall Management?
- **Documentation** Can you provide General Conformity Certificates (GCCs) and Children's Product Certificates (CPCs) upon request? Can you show that a product was properly evaluated, tested and inspected before shipping to your customer?

The steps above are just a start, but having this information ready will make your next questionnaire request much easier and more impressive. Of course, nothing beats having a well-developed compliance program with processes you use every day. These questionnaires can actually be a good thing as they can lead companies down the road to creating an effective program to ensure all of their products are safe and compliant.

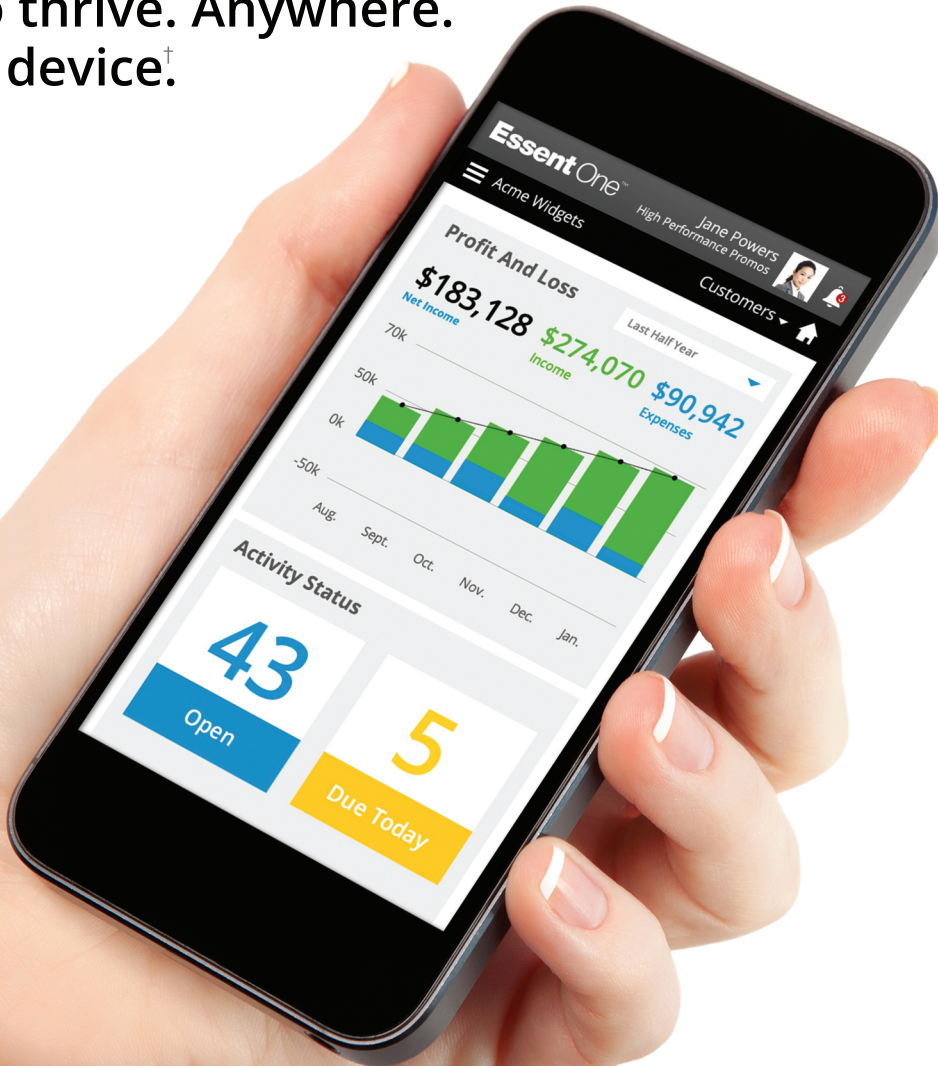
These types of documents are all part of the larger push for transparency in our industry. For decades we've kept our supply chain secret but this practice is largely incompatible for larger customers. The questionnaire is the first step to have more transparency in the process, but it's going to go deeper as time goes on. Expect more audits, more documents and more expectations from your clients.

On a positive note, receiving a compliance questionnaire is an achievement—it means you've made the initial cut of vendors and your customer wants to learn more about you. It also means there is an opportunity to do a better job than your competitors. Their loss will be your gain. **PPB**

Josh Kasteler is a compliance consultant with PromoCompliance. He can be reached at josh@promocompliance.com.

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True Blue

WHY BUSINESSES WANT TO EARN A MILLENNIAL'S LOYALTY FIRST

Part One In A Series • By Seth Barnett

OVER THE PAST YEAR the Millennial generation has taken the majority spot in the U.S. workforce at more than 53.5 million strong; within the next few years it will be the largest working majority in history. With an estimated buying power of \$200 billion collectively, all marketplaces will inevitably change to accommodate this potent force.

Any time a market shifts, there are sure to be challenges, but these should not cause panic. On the contrary, these shifts help create a new level of opportunity to develop products and services for an engaged, aware and enthusiastic new buyer. There are many intricacies to working with and selling to the Millennial generation but no step is more important than to understand how this buyer comes to market and what value they place on the businesses to which they choose to connect.

WHAT COUNTS MOST

Millennials—those in their early 20s to mid-30s—desire to be purpose-driven in everything they do. This means that no matter their role, they want to understand the value in every business connection they have. One common misconception about Millennial buyers within the promotional products industry is that they exclusively seek instant gratification with no concern about product quality. While this generational group does want efficiency in their operations, they hold a company's standards and place within the market they represent at the highest level. The No. 1 takeaway to remember when selling to Millennial buyers is that they are the single most brand-conscious and company-loyal consumer group of all time. This means that should you earn the business with a young buyer, you have a higher likelihood of keeping the person as a long-term client than with those of other generations. This is because from an early age Millennials were taught to be freethinking and develop their own opinions. In economics, this results in brand loyalty. Once a buyer feels that they understand a company and that the company understands them, it is difficult for them to walk away. Therefore, the key here is developing personal relationships.

Millennial buyers need to be able to see a business for what it is, and for them the product itself is secondary. In fact, they often build an opinion about the product based on the company's values and how it operates. Millennials are heavy into research

and will use all digital media channels to better understand a company before they do business with it.

HOW TO GET THERE

For marketers, it is important to ensure that a business is visible through the digital communication stream whether it be a website or, more important, social media. It is easy and cost effective for a business of any size to have a Facebook page, but the quality of the content is the most important factor to consider. A Millennial buyer will check a company's Facebook page to see if the company is loyal to its community, if it engages its employees and if it interacts with customers socially, among other factors. The difference between a company that earns a Millennial's business and one that does not could simply be because one company didn't represent itself well online. That does not necessarily mean the company is not actively giving back to its community or does not engage customers well—it just means that those activities are not well marketed. It is important for a business to frequently brag about itself, its staff and its products online.

The interaction between a company and a young buyer is extremely important. However, the way a business connects with these buyers may be unfamiliar within traditional marketing practices. Remember, Millennials have never known a world without technology and they use it to their advantage in every aspect of life. There is no longer a division between work and home life online for young buyers. They seek out knowledge about current affairs in the same space where they will research a new company. They will tell others about their weekend plans in the same space where they brag about a new company with which they are doing business.

THE PAYOFF

Dealing with a Millennial buyer is a lot like flipping on a light switch. Once you are able to connect with them and effectively interact with them, all the other lights, like loyalty and commitment, come on and stay on. Millennials are quick to endorse a company



WHAT MILLENNIALS WANT

Millennials look for these qualities in businesses they work with:

- **Transparency:** what the business stands for
- **A solid web presence:** both the website and social media channels
- **Positive reviews and feedback** from others
- **Community involvement**
- **Employee engagement**
- **Ability of the company** to blow its own horn—and do it well

that they feel holds value to them. They believe in speaking out about that company experience and the value they obtained from those interactions beyond the actual products received. Millennials are more likely to purchase a brand based on another person's positive experience and are more likely to seek out that information online than through any other source.

One of the more notable research areas which distinguishes Millennial buyers from all others is their uncanny ability to forgive a poor experience. Because they are brand loyal, young buyers will always seek ways to forgive a poor experience so that they can continue to work with that company. This is important because they are the most likely of any previous generation to give a second chance after a negative outcome. This speaks to the amount of work the Millennial buyer does on their own to ensure the companies they do business with align

with their personal values. Because they value the business for more than just the product, they will return to it again and again because it is important to them to stay loyal.

The Millennial marketplace is value- and goal-driven above all else. Like the generations before them, Millennials are still concerned about price. But, they will overlook price for perceived value based on the knowledge they have of the company itself. Companies that have earned the brand loyalty of this generation are well known in the Millennial demographic market.

There will be a continued ebb and flow of consumer trends as different products strive to meet the demands of a younger audience. However, the messaging behind the products holds the most value to this group. While there is no exact formula to capture the attention of a Millennial buyer, the true test will be in how that buyer responds to the relationship a company is willing to develop with them. **PPB**

Seth Barnett, a member of the Millennial generation, is PPAI's diversity development and engagement manager.

DOING GOOD

CFS PRINTING & PROMOTIONS MAKES A HABIT OF HELPING OTHERS PROMOTE THEIR CAUSES **By Jen Alexander**

WHEN HARVEST SHARE FOOD PANTRY was cranking up the heat on its annual Soup-N-Bowl fundraiser in Columbia, Tennessee on Super Bowl weekend, the nonprofit organization had several hometown businesses helping out behind the scenes—including local distributor CFS Printing & Promotions (UPIC: C656649).

“The Soup-N-Bowl is one of many events I’ve worked with; I have a business associate who asked me to help, so I donated the printing [of marketing materials],” says Barry Daniels, president of CFS. “I’m more involved in United Way, because they support several organizations I like to work with.”

Groups that Daniels and his three-person team at CFS have supported over the years include Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), The Family Center and Center of Hope Home. Now Daniels is preparing to give of his time as an individual to mentor young college students.

“Right now what I’m working with is Tennessee Achieves,” a program that pairs working professionals with college freshmen to mentor them through their transi-

tion, he says. “It’s a great program; I’m a college graduate myself; I worked full time and I went to school full-time, so I know what it’s like.”

In addition to promotional messages, Daniels says his team provides items for recognition efforts. “A lot of them want to do something nice for their donors, so with CASA, for instance, I provided portfolios with the donors’ names on them,” he says. “Organizations want products that are high-end, to be used as tokens of gratitude.” Daniels has provided plaques to groups who want to honor their supporters, as well.

Supporting community organizations with hard and soft goods is common among industry companies, but the print promotions that CFS provides are just as crucial to helping organizations publicize

their efforts among targeted groups. This type of marketing is where consultancy can be especially valuable. “They come to me wanting to do something special, and asking me ‘what can you help us with’... allows me to do that. They might come up with a theme, and I will help with their design.”

Daniels, whose company celebrates its 20th anniversary this year, acknowledges the impact that serving the community has on the success of his business.

“Folks that are also involved [in volunteering] and know what I’ve done remember me, and they come to me when they need something,” says Daniels. “Sometimes it’s a second- or third-tier (recognition) that sends people to me. They’ll say, ‘I heard about you from so-and-so’... who might have learned about me from someone I volunteered with.” **PPB**

Jen Alexander is associate editor for PPB.

Charitable Gifts

These are just some of the **printed products that CFS Printing & Promotions has provided to community organizations over the years.** Daniels and his company remain active participants in the Columbia, Tennessee area, **supporting groups that assist families and children in need.**



Of Note

This printed portfolio was offered to CASA of Maury County, which gave out the custom folders as a donor gift.



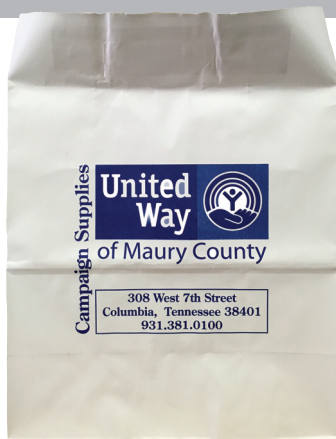
○ CONDUCT MEANINGFUL COMMUNITY SERVICE

COMMUNITY SERVICE IS A HALLMARK of the promotional products industry; both suppliers and distributors give time and funds to local and national causes on an annual basis. Here's how your company can apply its particular skills to assisting neighborhood organizations that serve a particular demographic, or the community at large.

Pick A Charity Whether it's a national group conducting fundraising efforts or a local nonprofit providing services to individuals in need, companies of all sizes can contribute somewhere, somehow. Find one whose mission resonates with your staff, especially if you want your team members to be part of the effort.

Ask What They Need Organization goals and stated missions are what drive a nonprofit's needs. Sometimes it's a website that will help promote a fundraising event; sometimes it's toiletry bags for shelter residents. Examine whether your company's services can be used to meet those needs—or whether individual staff members possess a unique skill or talent that they might want to use in service to a charitable group. Is your team's work schedule flexible? Volunteer hours can be as valuable as donated products.

Put Your Best Face Forward When you decide to donate products and services, don't limit your interaction to phone calls or emails. Meet with groups in person so they know who you are and what your company does. Do the work on-site at their location, if possible, and present gifts or donations in person.



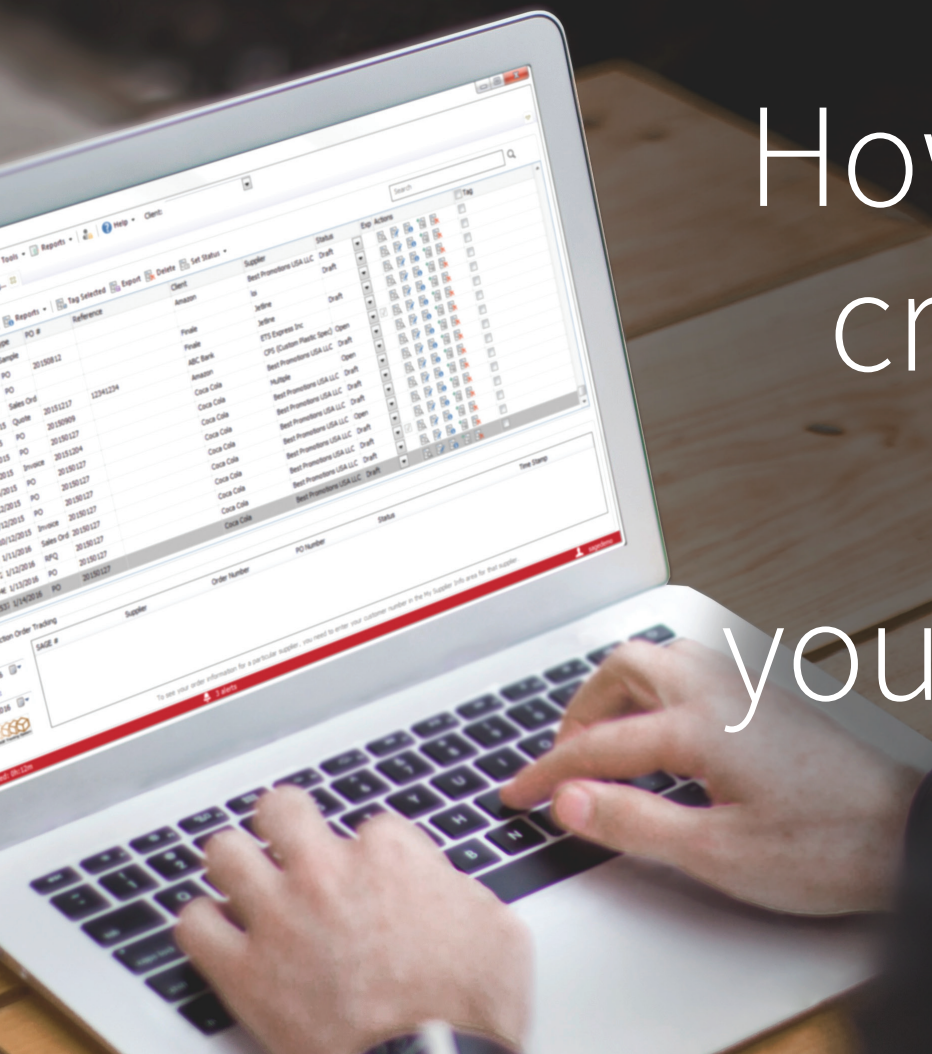
It's In The Bag

Simple, sturdy bags like this one for United Way can be printed with eye-catching logos and are good for multiple uses.



A Big Fan

Printed hand-fans like Daniels' United Way samples are ideal for outdoor events such as awareness walks or information fairs.



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PEOPLE,
FACES &
THINGS TO DO



Hi, Buyer!

This year PPAI's Promotional Products Work! Week (PPW!W) campaign, which will be held May 23-27, has retooled and rebranded the program to focus specifically on the buyer.

Find out more on page 72.



HI, BUYER


PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS WORK! WEEK
REBRANDS IN 2016 WITH BUYER FOCUS

By James Khattak

TO KICK OFF THIS year's Promotional Products Work! Week (PPW!W) campaign, held May 23-27, PPAI has retooled and rebranded the program to focus specifically on the buyer. PPW!W is the Association's week-long international event aimed at raising awareness of promotional products and promotional products companies' effectiveness and benefits in advertising and marketing.

After spending three years building the event's culture and profile within the promotional products industry to establish its identity and create awareness among diverse stakeholders, the program is setting its sights on informing and influencing the buying decisions of in-house and agency media buyers.

The new PPW!W color scheme, graphics and messaging were created with the buyer's needs in mind. The campaign, which includes a new logo and icon, a co-op advertising campaign and tool kits for organizers, publicity, advertising and promotions, also features a completely new PromotionalProductsWork.org website for buyers to find promotional products case studies, research and information, as well as a promotional products consultant locator search tool.

PPW!W includes opportunities for the entire industry—large and small companies, regional associations, distributors and suppliers, multi-line representatives and business services providers—to work hand-in-hand. Get started with guides, toolkits and videos at www.promotionalproductswork.org/week. 



TOP Participants in last year's PPW!W were members of **Upper Midwest Association of Promotional Professionals**, who teamed up with supplier Gator Garb for a customer appreciation golf event, and **(ABOVE)** employees at distributor **HALO Branded Solutions**, who celebrated with branded beach balls.

TAKING THE LEAD

L.E.A.D. LOCAL NEW YORK TAKES THE INDUSTRY'S MESSAGE TO ALBANY **By James Khattak**

ON FEBRUARY 24, PPAI JOINED industry professionals in Albany for L.E.A.D. Local New York. Drawing on practices established with PPAI's annual Legislative Education and Action Day (L.E.A.D.) in Washington, D.C., L.E.A.D. Local is the Association's state-level legislative outreach effort to deliver the message of the promotional products industry to state legislators.

PPAI Public Affairs Director Anne Stone and Diversity Development Manager Seth Barnett joined Jonathan Riegel, MAS, executive director of the Specialty Advertising Association of Greater New York (SAAGNY); Alan Baker, MAS, owner of distributor Creative Marketing Concepts and a former SAAGNY board president, and Rick Brenner, MAS+, the PPAI board's

immediate past chair. Together, they held 18 meetings with legislators and their staffs during their day in Albany.

"It was a great experience to see what goes on in the capitol and how legislators navigate through everything," says Baker. "And it was good to be able to sit in front of our representatives and explain to them that they




need to look at the ramifications legislation can have on the industry in our state. Promotional products are an \$800 million business in New York alone."

Riegel says, "Our meetings in Albany are an opportunity to introduce New York's legislators to the promotional products industry, and educate them on its economic impact and the people and companies that make it up. And we want them to know about SAAGNY, its constituents and that we're a resource available to them."

L.E.A.D. Local New York was produced in collabo-

ration with SAAGNY, and PPAI will continue to work with SAAGNY on its government relations plans.

Baker adds, "We also talked about the effectiveness of promotional products. Many of them were aware of the products they'd used them in their campaigns, but maybe not the industry behind them."

The industry travels to Washington, D.C., May 25-26 for visits on Capitol Hill. To stay connected with L.E.A.D. and PPAI's legislative efforts, visit the Association's legislative website at www.ppailaw.org or follow @PPAILAW on Twitter. 



Anne Stone and L.E.A.D. Local participant **Rick Brenner, MAS+**, (right) with **John Banville**, legislative director for New York State Senator Michael Venditto in Albany.

ABOVE L.E.A.D. Local participants **Alan Baker, MAS**, owner Creative Marketing Concepts (right) and **Anne Stone**, PPAI director of public affairs (center right); meet with **State Sen. Phil Boyle** (center left) and a staff member at one of the 18 meetings the group held during their day at the state capitol.

Absolutely Certifiable

PPAI PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATIONS IDENTIFY INDUSTRY'S MOST COMMITTED MEMBERS **By James Khattak**

INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS WHO HAVE earned their Certified Advertising Professional (CAS), Master Advertising Professional (MAS) and Master Advertising Professional Plus (MAS+) certifications join an elite group of individuals who have demonstrated their commitment to the promotional products industry and to continuing their education. In a given year, scores of industry practitioners join that group. Last year alone, 120 professionals earned their CAS, MAS or MAS+ certifications.

PPAI certifications are awarded to professionals in the promotional products industry who have met rigorous educational requirements and demonstrate exemplary commitment to their profession. Professionals who have earned their certification provide the highest standard of conduct and integrity. Highly respected and recognized credentials in the promotional products industry, these designations establish a recipient's professional credibility to colleagues, clients, employers and peers.

PPAI's CAS, MAS and MAS+ designations are achieved through a combination of active employment in the industry, education, industry contributions and the successful demonstration of expertise. The CAS and MAS certifications also require continuing education and recertification to remain in good standing. Learn more about the PPAI Certification Program and PPAI's professional development opportunities on PPAI's website at www.ppai.org/education/certification.

2015 PPAI Professional Certification Recipients

Jaimee Adamson, CAS,

AIA Corp.

Lori Arrigunaga, CAS,

RiteLine, LLC

Jackie Asselin, CAS, Geiger

Jeffery Batson, CAS,

Next Products, Inc.

Kimberly Bechard, CAS, Geiger

Martha Bishop, CAS,

Yankee Candle Company

Patrick Black, CAS,

Perfect Imprints, LLC

Carol Breault, CAS, AIA Corp.

Emily Brewer, CAS,

E Print Solutions, Inc.

Julie Busler, CAS,

Geiger Brothers

Laura Campbell, CAS,

Promotions Unlimited

Staci Cannon, CAS,

Industry Incentives

Solange Carmany, CAS, Cintas

John Carpenter, CAS,

On The Point Promotions

Jamie Chatham, CAS,

Standard Register

Stevie Clark, CAS, SNUGZ USA

William Clay, CAS,

Walker-Clay, Inc.

Paul Cline, CAS, Geiger

Jason Corsetti, CAS, Moderne

Glass Co., Inc.

Lesli Covell, CAS, Proforma

Jennifer Crowder, CAS,

GR Promotions

Susan Cunningham, CAS,

HALO Branded Solutions

Brittany David, CAS,

SNUGZ USA

Charlene Dion, CAS, Geiger

Ashley Doughty, CAS, Geiger

Paul Dubois, CAS, Ready 4 Kits

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Rapit Printing, Inc.

Sunny Fedorick, CAS,

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Kristine Ferraro, CAS,

Motivational Kicks, Inc.

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Dustin Freeman, CAS, Geiger

Jason Fularz, CAS, CPS\The

Keystone Line

Brady Gates, CAS, Geiger

David Geiger, CAS, Geiger

Joey George, CAS,

Black Rock Business Solutions

Silvia M. Gonzalez, CAS,

The Printer Lion

Jennifer Grigorian, CAS,

Hit Promotional Products

Alan Groudle, CAS, Geiger

Max Grover, CAS, Geiger

Scott Heavin, CAS,

Heavin & Associates, Inc.

Corey Krueger, CAS, AIA Corp.

Vicki Lam, CAS,

Promo Victory, Inc.

Justin Lambourne, CAS,

Promomedia Group, Inc.

Marcy LaVallee, CAS, Geiger

Peter LeClair, CAS, Geiger

Nou Lee, CAS, AIA Corp.

Ryan Lester, CAS, Sign Zone, Inc.

Heidi Marks, CAS, AIA Corp.

Melinda Marr, CAS,

Hotline Products

Christa Matuszewski, CAS,

Geiger

Marilyn D. Meléndez, CAS,

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Michelle Michelsen, CAS,

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Kelly Miller-Craft, CAS, Geiger

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Carol Ann Moore, CAS,

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Shari Neigum, CAS,

The Vernon Company

Sydra Newell, CAS, SNUGZ USA

Leo Nieter, CAS, Geiger

Paul Pelletier, CAS,

Great West Promotions, Inc.

Marissa Perez, CAS,

M R Promotional Concepts

Amber Perron, CAS, Crestline

Naomi J Peterson, CAS,

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Karen Plummer, CAS,

Geiger

Daniel Poulin, CAS, Geiger

Stephanie Protz, CAS,

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Melissa Veilleux, CAS, Geiger
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** 2015 PPB Readership Survey

The Right Roots

HOW INDUSTRY VETERAN KIPPIE HELZEL FINALLY FOUND THE PERFECT HOME BASE **By Julie Richie**

A FEW YEARS AGO, Kippie Helzel, MAS, vice president of sales at supplier CPS/Keystone (UPIC: keystone), and her husband, Richard, were at a transition point. Living in Westlake, Ohio, they had recently experienced the passing of both of Richard's parents and didn't have any other family members nearby. With their two sons in college, it seemed like a good time to make a move.

"We had been going to Essex [Connecticut] for many years to visit friends, and from the first time we went, my husband Richard and I thought, 'we love it here, this is our kind of town!' Historic, on the water—the quintessential classic American small town," she says.

One Friday night Richard was casually looking online at real estate in Essex just to see prices, and he saw a small historic house that seemed like a great opportunity. "We had our friend preview the house for curiosity's sake, and the conversation started. We went from 'we can't' to 'why can't we?' and we decided to look at the house. But I was in Dallas at the SAGE Show, so Richard went alone to look with our friends, and by that Thursday at 5 pm we had bought a house that I hadn't even seen!"

The house was wonderful but a bit small. Fortunately, Helzel says, "Within three months a [bigger] house came on the market around the corner from us, and although Richard was out of town, I jumped on it and we bought that house without him seeing it! It is the perfect house for us. We love it."

Built in 1860, the house has original wide plank floors, a fireplace and lots of character, but was fully updated and modernized a few years back.

"Moving to Essex is one of the best decisions we ever made. We live in one of the prettiest towns in America and our dogs, Griffie and Henry, enjoy walking all the streets and woods around us," she says.

With their oldest son, Barrett, currently at home after graduating in December from the University of Vermont, and younger son,



TOP TO BOTTOM Kippie and her friend Andrea Silverman walk Kippie's dogs, Griffie and Henry, near her home in Essex. • **Kippie and Richard Helzel** at their home in Essex, Connecticut.

Burke, a senior at the University of Pittsburgh, Kippie and Richard say they feel like they are finally right where they're supposed to be.

What do you enjoy doing when you're not working?

I am just so happy to be home that often I am truly content just puttering in the house and gardening. I love taking walks with Richard and the dogs to our little downtown. We love to cook and entertain, and have friends over for dinner frequently. We go to Italy every year in March or April to visit relatives and friends, so that is the bulk of our vacationing, though we squeeze in a little additional travel here and there. I have six sisters and one brother, so a lot of my free time is also taken up keeping in touch with them.

How long have you worked in your present position?

I have been with CPS [in Erie, Pennsylvania] for 14 years now; over 10 as vice president of sales. I started in the industry in 1987 with ASI. I've been in the promo industry for almost 30 years. It's hard to believe.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

I really love my actual sales work, talking with clients, reaching out to growing customers and helping distributors with special requests. It feels good, always, to know that I can make things happen for our customers because we have such a great crew at CPS. Now that we have a number of sales reps, a lot of my time needs to go to sales management, which I love because I have such a great team. But given the choice of selling or managing, I honestly prefer the customer contact.

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

I first worked at an oil and gas exploration company in Denver. I started at the bottom of the secretarial pool, and took it so seriously that I was noticed by our CFO who brought me in to his office one day, and asked me about my education and background. When he heard that I was a liberal arts major and graduate of Tufts, he told me that he supported a liberal arts education, asked me where I wanted to work in the company and

"I feel so blessed to have so many great friendships in work and my personal life, the good energy in it all just blows me away sometimes."

then helped me get into the investor relations department. Doing the work required put me on his radar and helped me step in to a higher level position much more quickly than I had expected. That is a lesson I never lost.

What was your first job in promotional products and how did it come about?

After living in Denver for seven years I was ready to come back to the East Coast to be closer to family and friends. My sister had worked at ASI, and recommended me to the company. I studied up as best I could on the promotional products industry to be ready for my interview, and I'll never forget the feeling I had when Don DePena was talking about a "two-headed widget" and I thought to myself, "how did I miss that one, what ad specialty item is that?" Don hired me and turned me over to Ron Ball, and the rest is history, as they say. I could not have had a better mentor and leader than Ron; he taught me everything I needed to know about not only promotional products, but about customers, how to achieve the best working relationships and how to ask for business.


What motivates you in business and in life?

I am energized by the great people in my life, from customers, colleagues and industry friends, to my husband and personal friends. I feel so blessed to have so many great friendships in work and my personal life, the good energy in it all just blows me away sometimes.

What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

Having brought CPS to what I like to call "today's real world." I worked hard, listened hard, fought hard (respectfully) to get CPS where we are today. From rebranding the company 10-plus years ago, to pushing for the expansion of colors and products, rush service, developing a great customer service and sales team, I had to push and be patient. As the owner of the company, Leon Bilewitz, said to me recently, "When we put our heads together we have been able to come to good decisions," and he is right. Finding the balance between a conservative company management philosophy and a changing marketplace forced us both to adjust the pace of our strategic plan and the change required and desired. In the end, I will say that winning the 2016 PPAI Supplier Star Award of Merit is the recognition for all that we achieved as a team.

What advice would you give to an industry newcomer?

It's all about relationships. Do the work, be honest and treat people as you would want to be treated. You may not win over everybody, but in time you'll win enough to be happy. 

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

Identity Builders

IMPRINT PLUS OUTFITS BUSINESSES WITH CUSTOMIZABLE NAME BADGES, DESK PLATES AND MORE **By Jen Alexander**



THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL for many students means a snappy new backpack, freshly sharpened pencils and bright white notebook paper to start the year off right. The folks at Imprint Plus (UPIC: imp8687) can infuse that same excitement into the first day of a new job or a new company with their name badge and desk plate kits, which are manufactured and assembled at the Canadian supplier's facility in Richmond, British Columbia.

The process by which Imprint Plus's Mighty Badge kits, name plate kits and other workplace necessities are created relies on a lean manufacturing philosophy that focuses on delivering value to customers by minimizing waste, says CEO Marla Kott. "The concept of preserving value with less work is the backbone of 'lean'—and the goal we set for ourselves.

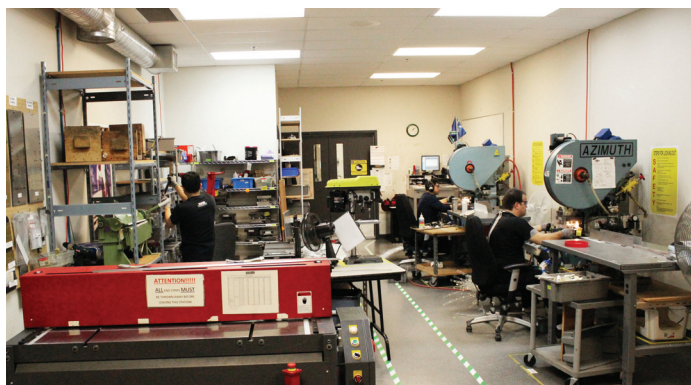
"Waste reduction is an integral part of the corporate culture at Imprint Plus," she says. "We're continually looking for, finding and removing waste from our processes, systems, space, activities, materials—everything we do."

The simplest item to produce is the desk plate, says Kott, and the most complex is the insert sheet that enables product customization and personalization. Imprint Plus utilizes a variety of specialized materials and specialized equipment for production, and ensures its staff members are properly trained for the task at hand.

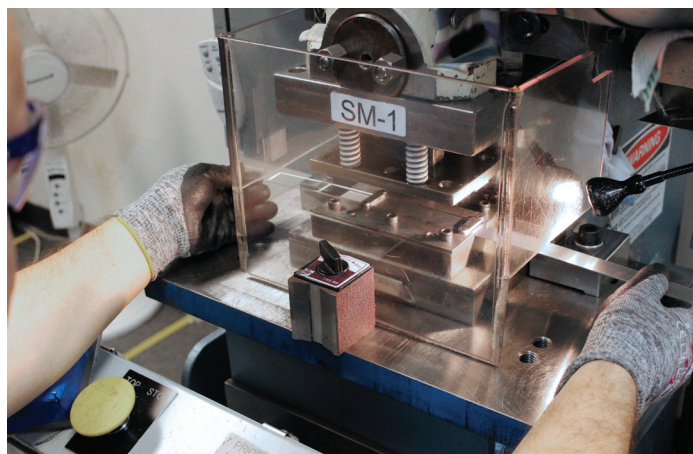
"Staff is trained onsite; lean [manufacturing] training certification is a requirement, safety certifications are required as we need three to four staff members always present, and project management training and certifications are required," Kott says. "The specialized equipment in printing is designed to ensure the images we produce on small surfaces exhibit excellent craftsmanship, one of our cornerstone principles."

Read on to learn how Imprint Plus produces materials for name badges and desk accessories for use in a variety of business settings.

Jen Alexander is associate editor for PPB.



Metal name badge plates are fabricated and have holes punched on-site at the Image Plus facility in Richmond.



Paper badges are customized with names or logos—or both—in the screen printing shop.

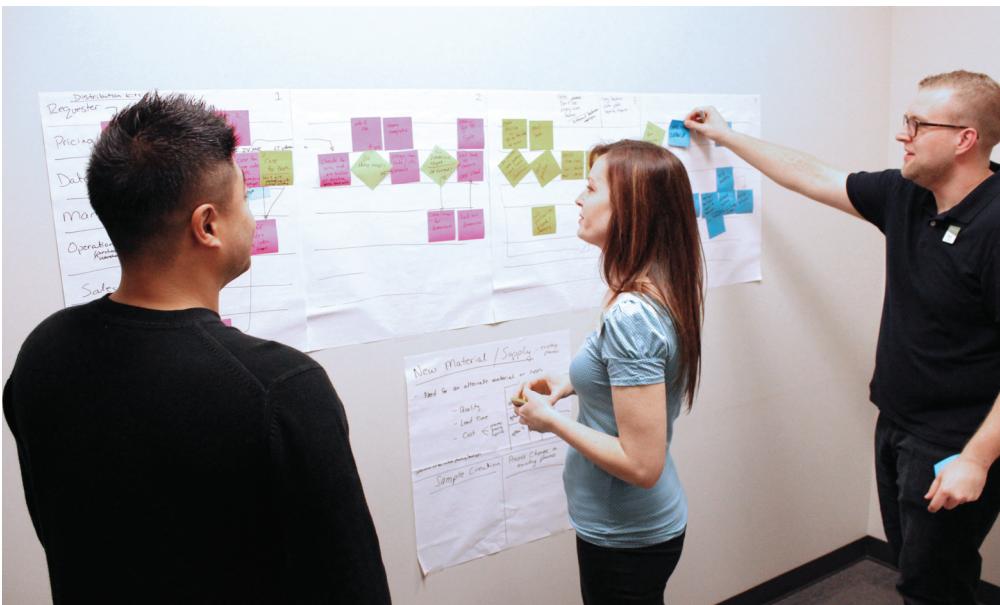


Factory specialist Edward Browne works on the custom packaging line to ensure the kits are complete before they are shipped. • Imprint Plus's popular kits are **prepacked with all the components** needed to create name badges, desk plates and signs.

FACTORY FLOOR



Quality Assurance Specialist Cecelia Calderon measures to ensure Imprint Plus products meet strict tolerances. Each plate, lens cover and insert sheet is **100-percent guaranteed** to snap together seamlessly.



Imprint Plus utilizes **lean manufacturing practices** in every aspect of business. (Left to right) **HeeJun Moon, operations support; Bonnie Wall, operations manager; and Bryan Freitag, logistics coordinator**, collaborate on a project using Lean Kaizen principles.



TOP THREE PRODUCTS At Imprint Plus

- Name badge kits that include software, insert sheets to customize and personalize, plates, lens covers and a magnetic backing.
- Standing sign kits that include software, insert sheets to customize and personalize, the one-piece sign and a lens cover.
- Contemporary desk plate kit that includes software, bright white insert sheets to customize and personalize, the holder, stand and cover, which fit together by pressure alone.

About Imprint Plus

Founding date
1982

Principals
Marla Kott, CEO
Kristin MacMillan, President
Ellen Flanders, Founder

Size of production facility
18,000-square-foot factory with additional warehouse and office space in Toronto; Blaine, Washington and the UK

Number of employees
65-70

Number of orders filled per year
Approximately 50,000

Notable accomplishments

- Kott, Flanders and MacMillan were ranked No. 42 in Profit W100 Canada's Top Women Entrepreneurs (2015 marks the 10th consecutive year the team has been listed)
- Specialty Graphic Imaging Association Awards recipients (2013-2015) **PPB**

COMING JUNE 2016

PROMO MARKETING POWER MEETINGS

CO-LOCATED WITH PPAI'S WOMEN'S
LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE IN ATLANTA, GA



**Women's Leadership
Conference & Power Meeting**
JUNE 27-JULY 1, 2016



ONE-ON-ONE
MEETINGS



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Capturing events & people in the promotional world. By James Khattak



Karl Subban, former Toronto school principal, coach and speaker, delivered the opening keynote of the PPC National Convention.

PPPC National Convention Draws More Than 1,300 Buyers

The **Promotional Products Professionals of Canada** (PPPC) welcomed the industry to Toronto, Ontario's Metro Toronto Convention Centre in January for the 2016 PPC National Convention. Running January 25-29, the 60th annual convention drew more than 3,000 attendees for professional development and networking opportunities, and to meet with nearly 200 industry companies in 370 booths on the trade-show floor. The national convention's professional development schedule extended throughout the week, and featured speakers from the U.S. and Canada to explore the industry's best practices and new ideas. *Photos courtesy of The Image Commission.*



The show's opening day concluded with a networking party, where a Battle of the Bands pitted PPC's The Misprints against PPAI's Midnight Soul Patrol (above).



The national convention this year allowed non-member distributors to attend on the second day of the trade show, and on the third day it welcomed more than 1,300 distributor-invited clients.



YOUR PHOTOS HERE

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

A Women's View Inaugural Networking Reception Makes An Impact

A Woman's View, an initiative from distributor group **iPROMOTEu** to support the needs of women in the promotional products industry, held its first networking reception at The PPAI Expo 2016. With a chic cocktail party theme complete with wine, hors d'oeuvres and gifts

from A Woman's View sponsors, the reception featured a performance from a Tina Turner impersonator and a speech by the first female executive chef on the Las Vegas Strip, Susan Wolfla. Visit www.awomansviewprogram.com for more information about the initiative.



More than 150 women attended the A Woman's View inaugural networking reception.



Tayla Carpenter (right) and **Candace Plunkett** (left), A Woman's View program managers, presented **Ellen Orne** of **Elcco Promotions** with the 2016 A Woman's View Visionary Award in appreciation of her strength and commitment to the industry and in recognition of her dedication, professionalism and success.



PPAI's Tim Brown, MAS, Joins The GAPPP University And Expo To Speak About Product Safety

PPAI Product Responsibility Manager Tim Brown, MAS, joined the **Georgia Association of Promotional Products Professionals** (GAPPP) in February for its GAPPP University and Expo event in Atlanta, Georgia. Brown spoke to a packed crowd on product safety awareness and the compliance challenges and opportunities facing the industry.

Brown's session, "How To Talk Compliance With The End Buyer," drew more than 45 attendees as part of the GAPPP event's education lineup.



Target Marketing Group President and Founder **John Leahy** (center) attends the CPPA 2016 Peake Awards with members of his company's team to accept the Distributor of the Year award.

Michael J. Harper of Summit Group was presented with the association's highest honor, The Peake Award, for outstanding service to the association and the industry.

CPPA Celebrates Industry Accomplishments At Ninth Annual Peake Awards

The **Chesapeake Promotional Products Association** (CPPA) named 14 winners of the regional association's 2016 Peake Awards at an event in Baltimore, Maryland's M&T Bank Stadium on January 26. The CPPA Peake Awards spotlight the top promotional consultants and suppliers in the Chesapeake region by highlighting distributor- and supplier-specific accomplishments as well as overall recognition for campaign excellence and commitment to the association.



PPAI's Bob McLean Joins RMRPPA Professional Development Session

The **Rocky Mountain Region Promotional Products Association** (RMRPPA) is hosting a series of professional development days for its members. On February 18, PPAI Executive Vice President Bob McLean joined the RMRPPA in Denver, Colorado to speak on using industry research to boost sales. McLean's session drew from PPAI's Advocate program and findings from PPAI's The Influence of Promotional Products on Consumer Behavior and explored promotional products' effectiveness, including in relation to other media, and buying patterns. The RMRPPA's next professional development day is scheduled for April 21. **PPB**



With 23 regional association members in attendance, McLean's interactive session on industry research spurred extensive conversations that continued long after the presentation's conclusion.

See You



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Steve Bobowski



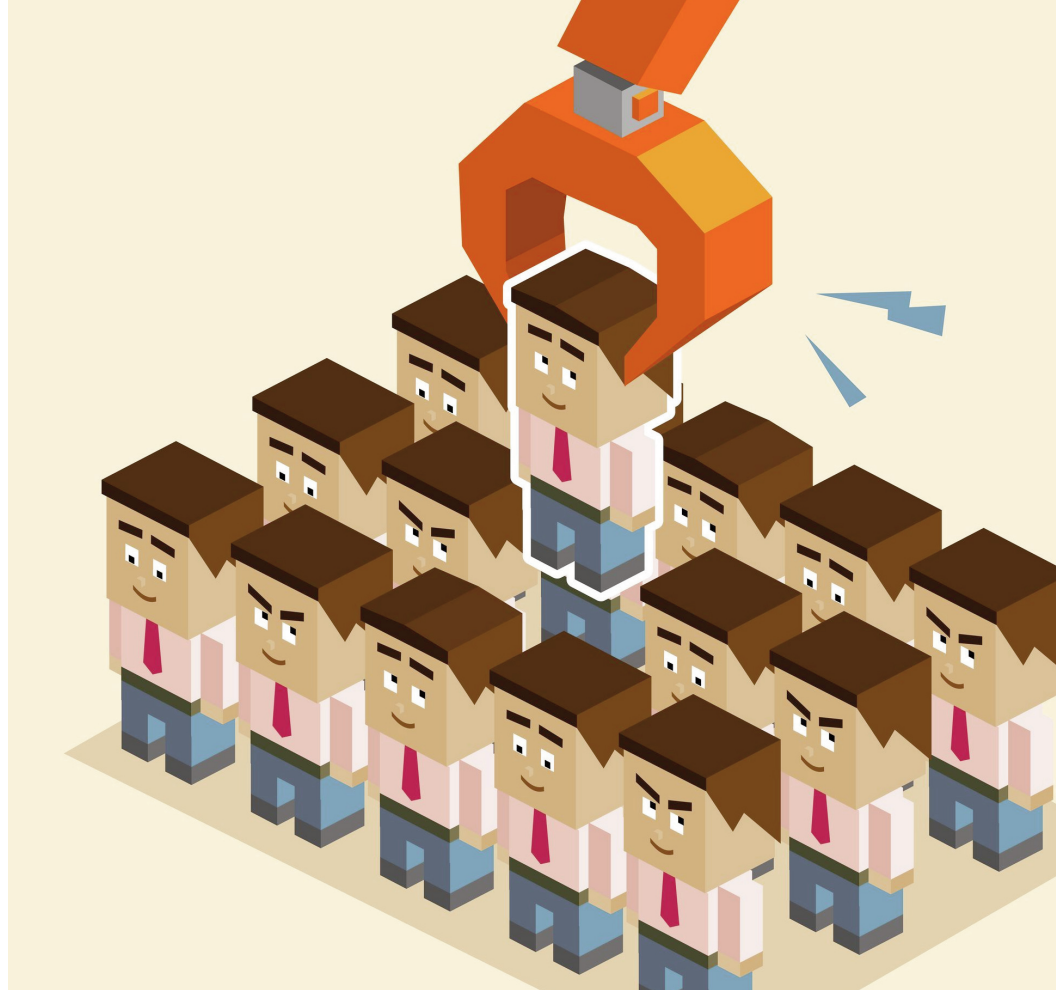
Timothy Fox



Lewie Hunt, MAS



Michael Kogutt, MAS



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

DISTRIBUTORS

Geiger (UPIC: Geiger)—**Julia Wright, MAS+**, independent sales partner

Zagwear (UPIC: ZAGW0001)—**Jamie Cohen**, sales director for the mid-Atlantic region

INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS

PromoKitchen (UPIC: P652237)—**Robert Fiveash**, promoted to president

Quality Certification Alliance—**Juli Sinnett**, consultant to the QCA Distributor Advocacy Council

REGIONAL ASSOCIATION

Promotional Products Association of Wisconsin—**Jennifer Johnson**, executive director

SUPPLIERS

Alpi International (UPIC: ALPI0002)—**Mike Williams**, sales

Custom Crest (UPIC: customcr)—**Lewie Hunt, MAS**, director of sales

ERB Industries, Inc. (UPIC: erbind)—**Westin Moe**, inside sales representative

Gemline (UPIC: GEMLINE)—**Suzanne Simpson**, regional manager for Canada

High Caliber Line (UPIC: HCL)—**Daniel Sachs** and **Dawn Kovar** of West Coast Branded Solutions will represent the company in Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington

HotLine Products (UPIC: HOYL0001)—**Jon Hicks**, promoted to vice president of sales, and **Joann Schafer**, promoted to customer service manager



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



Melinda Marr



Rick Rubin



Suzanne Simpson



Mike Williams



Dana Zezzo, CAS

Hub Pen Company (UPIC: HUBPEN)—**Timothy Fox**, inside sales representative for the Southwest

iClick (UPIC: IClic342)—**Melinda Marr**, regional sales manager for the Midwest territory, including Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin; and **Cynthia Troiani**, regional sales manager for the South territory, including Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee and Texas

IMAGEN Brands, parent company of Crown Products (UPIC: CROWNPRO) and Vitronic (UPIC: ACHIEVER)—**Dana Zezzo, CAS**, vice president of sales

National Gift Card Corp. (UPIC: ngcgroup)—**Rick Rubin**, promoted to executive vice president, sales

Outdoor Cap Company (UPIC: OUTD1200)—**Michael Kogutt, MAS**, director of sales—promotional products

Polyconcept North America—**Brittany Smith**, field sales manager in the South Texas and Louisiana territories

Spector & Co. (UPIC: SPEC0038)—**Maria Kokosoulis**, account manager for the Midwest territory, and **Jennifer Young**, promoted to account manager for Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Washington, D.C. and West Virginia

Stahls' (UPIC: STAH0001)—**Steve Bobowski**, vice president of sales

IN MEMORIAM

Thomas S. Kennerly, III, a national accounts manager with industry business services provider **Customer Focus**, passed away on January 29 at his home in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania. He was 54.

"Tom was well known for his charisma, sense of humor and passion for acting and films, and during his time with Customer Focus, his dedication and commitment quickly became an integral part of our recent success and

Continued On Next Page



Anne Stone

PPAI'S ANNE STONE NAMED TO ICPHSO BOARD

THE INTERNATIONAL CONSUMER PRODUCT Health and Safety Organization (ICPHSO) has elected PPAI Public Affairs Director Anne Stone to its board of directors for a three-year term. Stone's appointment was announced at the organization's Annual Meeting and Training Symposium in Washington, D.C. on February 29.

"Anne's selection to the ICPHSO board is significant and a testament to her personal commitment to

"Anne's selection to the ICPHSO board is significant and a testament to her personal commitment to product responsibility and safety."

product responsibility and safety," says PPAI President and CEO Paul Bellantone, CAE. "Anne and the public affairs team at PPAI recognize the importance of not only growing and but protecting the brands that use promotional products in the marketing programs. As a board member she will not only share ideas and information with like-minded colleagues in many industries but she will also represent PPAI's commitment to safety and responsibility to the broader community."

ICPHSO represents a global membership of health and safety professionals and meets annually to exchange ideas, share information, and address health and safety concerns affecting all consumers. Its board determines basic policies, sets goals and objectives, elects officers and approves the budget in accordance with the bylaws of the organization.

Continued From Previous Page

growth," says Martin Varley, Customer Focus CEO. "We were last together for The PPAI Expo at Las Vegas and I was inspired by his enthusiasm for our products and his determination to deliver on the many opportunities he uncovered. This is truly a great loss to Customer Focus and to our industry as a whole. He will be greatly missed by everyone whose lives he touched."



Thomas S. Kennerly, III

Kennerly had been with

Customer Focus since August 2015. He was a graduate of Penn State Harrisburg and Northern Illinois University, where he earned his MBA. A member of the Screen Actors Guild, Kennerly appeared as an extra in three movies while living in California, and back home in Pennsylvania he wrote and directed two films.

He also wrote and published a book, *How To Make \$1,000,000 In Sales Your First Year*.

Born in Philadelphia to Thomas and Edith (Epple) Kennerly, Jr., he is survived by his brothers David and Mark, and sister Karine Lewis. He is the uncle of Drew, Payton, Jackson, Tyler and Zoe.

A memorial service was held February 6 at West Shore Baptist Church in Camp Hill. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to West Shore Baptist Church.

Long-time industry sales professional **Edward "Ned" Otterstrom** passed away on

January 11 in Sarasota, Florida after a long battle with cancer. He was 73.

Otterstrom's history in the promotional products industry working in sales and sales management includes time with **Cooke Bates/Liter Line, Hit Promotional Products** and **Bebco**.

He is survived by his brother Pete and wife Nancy; his nieces Peri and her husband Henry, and Kristi and her husband Scott; nephew Ryan; two grandnieces and a grandnephew. **PPB**

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AND GIVEAWAYS.

The important events shaping the promotional industry. By James Khattak

APRIL

April 8

HPPA Cool Stuff Show

Houston Promotional Products Association
Houston, Texas
www.houstonppa.org

April 13-14

GCPPA Success Summit

Gold Coast Promotional Products Association
Fort Lauderdale, Florida
www.gcppa.org

April 21

PMANC Showcase

Promotional Marketing Association of Northern California
Monterey, California
www.pmanc.org

April 26-27

NWPMA Spring Showcase

Northwest Promotional Marketing Association
Portland, Oregon
www.nwpma.org

MAY

May 3, 5

Southern Showcase

LDK Marketing
Denver, Colorado, and Albuquerque, New Mexico
www.LDKmarketing.com/southernshowcase

May 12

CPPA NoVA Showcase

Chesapeake Promotional Products Association
Springfield, Virginia
www.cppa.biz

May 19

MiPPA "Ideas In Bloom" Show

Michigan Promotional Professionals Association
Grand Rapids, Michigan
www.mippa.org

May 20

UMAPP Room Show

Upper Midwest Association of Promotional Professionals
Bloomington, Minnesota
www.umapp.org

May 23-27

Promotional Products Work! Week

Promotional Products Association International
www.promotionalproductswork.org/week

May 25-26

PPAI L.E.A.D.

Promotional Products Association International
Washington, D.C.
www.ppai.org

APRIL 26-27
NWPMA

Spring Showcase

Northwest Promotional Marketing Association
Portland, Oregon
www.nwpma.org



PUT IT ON THE SCHEDULE To scope out other events, visit www.ppai.org and click on the industry calendar

JUNE**June 9****SAAGNY Summer Showcase**

Specialty Advertising Association
of Greater New York
New York, New York
www.saagny.org

June 15-16**PPAS Tabletop**

Promotional Products
Association Southwest
Tulsa and Oklahoma City,
Oklahoma
www.ppasw.com

June 27-29**PPAI Women's
Leadership Conference**

Promotional Products
Association International
Atlanta, Georgia
www.ppai.org

June 29-July 1**Promo Marketing
Power Meeting**

Promo Marketing
Atlanta, Georgia
www.pmpowermeetings.com

JULY**July 12-14****ASI Chicago**

Advertising Specialty Institute
Chicago, Illinois
www.asicentral.com

AUGUST**August 10-11****SAAC Show**

Specialty Advertising
Association of California
Long Beach, California
www.saac.net

August 14-16**PPAI North American
Leadership Conference**

Promotional Products
Association International
San Francisco, California
www.ppai.org

August 16-18**PPAMS Road Show**

Promotional Products
Association of the Mid-South
Memphis, Nashville and
Chattanooga, Tennessee
www.ppams.org

August 17-18**PPAI Tech Summit**

Promotional Products
Association International
San Francisco, California
www.ppai.org


August 29-30**PPAF Expo**

Promotional Products
Association of Florida
Orlando, Florida
www.pfaf.com

August 30**AzPPA Expo**

Arizona Promotional
Products Association
Phoenix, Arizona
www.azppa.net

August 30**TSPPA Fall Showcase**

Tri-State Promotional
Professionals Association
Cincinnati, Ohio
www.tsppa.org 

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New Members Joining In January 2016

DISTRIBUTORS

#1 Party Supplies

PPAI# 660530 UPIC: #660530

A Brand Made

PPAI# 656202 UPIC: A656202

A Logo For You

PPAI# 367540 UPIC: ALOGO

A2 Strategies, LLC

PPAI# 666357 UPIC: A666357

ACE HIGH DESIGNS, Inc.

PPAI# 591909 UPIC: A591909

Ad Wise, Inc.

PPAI# 660589 UPIC: A660589

**Adams Corporate
Apparel & Promotions**

PPAI# 666352 UPIC: A666352

Aj Bart, Inc.

PPAI# 663178 UPIC: A663178

Amazing Threads

PPAI# 319126 UPIC: AThread

American Marketing Partnership

PPAI# 485948 UPIC: A485948

American Sports

PPAI# 277275 UPIC: AMERP084

**Anasazi Sports & Golf
Promotions**

PPAI# 277314 UPIC: ANASP001

Antina Promotions, LLC

PPAI# 660425 UPIC: ANTINA

Apple Printing Co.

PPAI# 638283 UPIC: A638283

Ascential Promotions, LLC

PPAI# 469272 UPIC: UPI

Avid Apparel

PPAI# 662310 UPIC: A662310

Bart Nay Printing

PPAI# 663010 UPIC: B663010

Blockhead Promotions

PPAI# 445949 UPIC: molly613

Blue Moon Marketing

PPAI# 660839 UPIC: B660839

BodyLine Graphics, LLC

PPAI# 661295 UPIC: BLGLV

Box & Send Business Center

PPAI# 656784 UPIC: B656784

Buster Harms Printing

PPAI# 663122 UPIC: B663122

CANYON PRODUCTS, Inc.

PPAI# 626731 UPIC: CANYONPI

Capital Pen

PPAI# 612537 UPIC: C612537

Carne Asada Films

PPAI# 663176 UPIC: C663176

Cayenne Marketing

PPAI# 662950 UPIC: C662950

CDA Printing

PPAI# 467462 UPIC: CDA19003

Cen Pro Graphics

PPAI# 661626 UPIC: C661626

City Paper Company

PPAI# 654062 UPIC: CITYP001

Coast To Coast

Promotional Products

PPAI# 663146 UPIC: C663146

Cobblestone Promotions

PPAI# 228707 UPIC: COBBLE

Consummate Specialty Designs

PPAI# 360219 UPIC: CSD

Consutura

PPAI# 570330 UPIC: C570330

Custom Design Marketing, LLC

PPAI# 487840 UPIC: itofgd

Custom Printed Stuff, LLC

PPAI# 662858 UPIC: C662858

D Squared Graphics

PPAI# 659691 UPIC: DSquared

DeLong Unlimited

PPAI# 652204 UPIC: DELONG

Edwards Specialty Products

PPAI# 279922 UPIC: EDWAP005

G.G. Tauber Co., Inc.

PPAI# 102608 UPIC: tauber

Gamaprint

PPAI# 607773 UPIC: 30051013



A Deluxe Calming
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PPAI member
distributor **Antina
Promotions, LLC**



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

Globe Awards & Promotions
PPAI# 262088 UPIC: Globe836

Greenswealth Corporate Services Limited
PPAI# 649448 UPIC: G649448

HandBuiltBrands
PPAI# 662022 UPIC: H662022

High Caliber Line of Australia Pty Ltd
PPAI# 655636 UPIC: HighCal

Ideas by Design, Inc.
PPAI# 335432 UPIC: ideasbd

Image Sells, LLC
PPAI# 660432 UPIC: IMGSELLS

Industrias Plasticas NYC SA De CV
PPAI# 272897 UPIC: Indus698

Infinite Possibilities Promotions
PPAI# 663019 UPIC: I663019

iPROMOTEu/MCM Productions, LLC
PPAI# 159462 UPIC: MCMP001

iPROMOTEu/Posy Amenities
PPAI# 442265 UPIC: POSYAMEN

J & R Promo Print
PPAI# 661698 UPIC: J661698

JB Logo & Design
PPAI# 348533 UPIC: JBLD

JBS Promotions
PPAI# 350807 UPIC: JBSPromo

Jenis Group, LLC
PPAI# 663264 UPIC: JGL4025

JJ Printing
PPAI# 426900 UPIC: J426900

JM PROMOTIONS
PPAI# 387598 UPIC: 3697JM

Joel Sales Company
PPAI# 660297 UPIC: J660297

K30 Recognition Awards and Promotional Items
PPAI# 662977 UPIC: K662977

Lamar Promotions
PPAI# 664547 UPIC: L664547

LAS VEGAS SUPPLY
PPAI# 662543 UPIC: LVSPROMO

Lasers Edge Plus, LLC
PPAI# 661465 UPIC: L661465

Launchpad
PPAI# 659076 UPIC: LAUNCHPD

LC Marketing Communications
PPAI# 103550 UPIC: LCMA0001

Les Promotions Paisley
PPAI# 630313 UPIC: Paisley

London Logos
PPAI# 661622 UPIC: London

LXP Brands
PPAI# 661379 UPIC: L661379

MACHO PRODUCTS, Inc.
PPAI# 636678 UPIC: M636678

MegFord Design Wear
PPAI# 660956 UPIC: M660956

Memphis City Store
PPAI# 631446 UPIC: MCVB

Mentor Promotions
PPAI# 340405 UPIC: MENTOR

Merchworks
PPAI# 661329 UPIC: Merchwor

Middle Sister Marketing
PPAI# 629457 UPIC: MSISTER

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Craftsman At Work

David Rosenbluth // Vice President, Sales & Marketing // Old Toledo Brands/Utility Pro High Visibility Apparel // PPAI #663241 // UPIC: OTB01



How did your company get its start? The company got started in the workwear world. In a business that does not have much difference in the look of the garments between brands, we wanted to establish an inherent value that was a true difference. For us, that became our association with the Teflon Fabric Protector. That got people at Sears excited, and since then we have been making Craftsman workwear for Sears—about 10 years now.

What led your company to enter the promotional products market? High visibility has become a widely accepted safety product, cutting across many industries and markets, from school bus companies to event security, public works departments, construction, police and fire, etc. Most folks like to have their company name or slogan imprinted on the garments, so it seemed natural to pursue the promotional markets where so many decorators operate and gain further acceptance and market share for our brand: Utility Pro.

What's your favorite thing about being in the promotional products industry? We like the vast variety of customers and potential customers and their ability to bring our products to people and parts of the country we may not have much visibility in. These businesses are part of their local communities and have a strong connection to their customers, which then extends to us.

Why did you join PPAI? To be associated with the acknowledged voice of the promotional products industry, to stay abreast of industry issues and to gain greater awareness and acceptance of our brand: Utility Pro High Visibility. —James Khattak

NEW MEMBERS



A Trailblazer Excursion Set offered by new PPAI member distributor **Szeto Solutions**



A surfboard cover offered by new PPAI member supplier **Victory Koredry**

Millennium Marketing Solutions, Inc.

PPAI# 159584 UPIC: MILNEM

Monogramming Plus

PPAI# 351088 UPIC: M351088

Next Level Promotions, Inc.

PPAI# 654509 UPIC: N654509

Northern Factory Surplus Ltd.

PPAI# 660982 UPIC: N660982

Office Depot

PPAI# 134403 UPIC: OFFIP003

Oyster Promo, Inc.

PPAI# 660585 UPIC: O660585

Pat's Creative Advertising

PPAI# 662762 UPIC: P662762

Perfect Touch Promotions

PPAI# 663079 UPIC: P663079

Perfecto Systems

PPAI# 653854 UPIC: Perfecto

PIM

PPAI# 663235 UPIC: P663235

PMI INK

PPAI# 662717 UPIC: PMI

Powerful Incentives

PPAI# 666445 UPIC: P666445

Print Infinite

PPAI# 662646 UPIC: P662646

Printasaurus, LLC

PPAI# 660679 UPIC: P660679

Printing Galore

PPAI# 628262 UPIC: Prgalore

Promo World

PPAI# 454996 UPIC: PW9268

Promocu

PPAI# 661636 UPIC: Promocu

PromotePromotePromote, LLC

PPAI# 661246 UPIC: P661246

R L O Advertising Co.

PPAI# 103375 UPIC: RLOA0001

Rally Sportswear, LLC

PPAI# 604065 UPIC: rallyllc

Reese Enterprises

PPAI# 227970 UPIC: REESP001

Renard & Company

PPAI# 358020 UPIC: RenardCo

Renner Wraps Graphics & Screenprint

PPAI# 621844 UPIC: R621844

Rhaz, LLC

PPAI# 654020 UPIC: R654020

Ribbity Ribbitz

PPAI# 430409 UPIC: R430409

Right Turn Promotions

PPAI# 662853 UPIC: right

Royal Pacific of Las Vegas

PPAI# 664550 UPIC: R664550

RTS Embroidery

PPAI# 240021 UPIC: RTSEm457

Sanex Design and Print

PPAI# 639302 UPIC: S639302

Seals and Engravables

PPAI# 362527 UPIC: S362527

Sertha Industria E Comercio De Brindes Ltda.

PPAI# 661301 UPIC: S661301

Shock N Awe Prints

PPAI# 661008 UPIC: S661008

Slate Promos

PPAI# 624959 UPIC: S624959

Smith John Company, LLC

PPAI# 486382 UPIC: CFOUR

Smooth Ink Sports, Inc.

PPAI# 661124 UPIC: S661124

Specialties Plus of N.C., LLC

PPAI# 103837 UPIC: SPECPO27

Specialty Promotions, LLC

PPAI# 513494 UPIC: SPLLC

Spectrum Marketing Services

PPAI# 387580 UPIC: SPDA

Sportswear Plus

PPAI# 489939 UPIC: SWP

STAMPMAN SPECIALTIES

PPAI# 286140 UPIC: stampman

Stitches N More, LLC

PPAI# 652236 UPIC: S652236

Success Distributors

PPAI# 642016 UPIC: S642016

Swagmatic

PPAI# 475145 UPIC: 340

Sweet Creations, LLC

PPAI# 506702 UPIC: S506702

Szeto Solutions

PPAI# 188659 UPIC: C188659

Ten10 Design, LLC

PPAI# 599446 UPIC: Ten10

The V Legend Limited

PPAI# 658602 UPIC: V658602

The Wright Touch

PPAI# 218390 UPIC: THEWP005

The U Apparel & Gifts

PPAI# 631988 UPIC: Theu

Thievery Spirits

PPAI# 651390 UPIC: T651390

Thomas Graphics

PPAI# 552324 UPIC: TGraphic

Tompromo Marketing

PPAI# 660301 UPIC: T660301

Traffic Advertising, Inc.

PPAI# 660307 UPIC: Trafadv

Traxler Custom Printing

PPAI# 652178 UPIC: TRAXLER

Trinity Custom Apparel & Promotional Products

PPAI# 663196 UPIC: T663196

UFO Teez

PPAI# 638176 UPIC: U638176

Unique Litho

PPAI# 661293 UPIC: U661293

Vault Media, LLC

PPAI# 661617 UPIC: V661617

Vision Marketing Group, LLC

PPAI# 314942 UPIC: VISION1

Wine and Gold Country Living

PPAI# 620342 UPIC: Amador

Wingraphics

PPAI# 660624 UPIC: W660624

Zen Communications

PPAI# 663151 UPIC: Z663151

REPRESENTATIVES

RyAnn Consulting, LLC

PPAI# 655193 UPIC: R655193

SUPPLIERS

Advance D Tech, Inc.

PPAI# 187682 UPIC: EZETCH

Golden Goods

PPAI# 439598 UPIC: G439598

IDProductsource DBA

IDPaspinline

PPAI# 384049 UPIC: idpaspin

Krazy Klothes

PPAI# 262444 UPIC: K262444

Magnus Pen Corp.

PPAI# 270723 UPIC: magnus

MAIKII

PPAI# 638690 UPIC: M638690

Old Toledo Brands

PPAI# 663241 UPIC: OTB01

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The *Creative* Calendar

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



May

Foster Care Month

▶ **May 2-6** National Nurses Week

▶ **May 10** National Teacher's Day



June

▶ Rose Month

National Dairy Month

June 3 National Donut Day

July

July 1 Canada Day ▶

July 30 International Day of Friendship

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May 16-20

National
Police
Week

If this calendar is helpful or if you have ideas for how we can more effectively share this information, email the editors at PPB@ppai.org.

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- Tag-Free Label

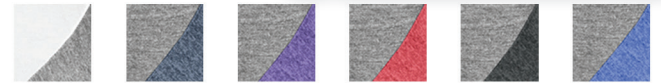


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- 4.5 Oz., 50/25/25% Poly/Ring Spun Cotton/Rayon, 32 Singles • Tear-Away Tag

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Colors 2XL - 4XL Silk-Screen
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- 90/10 Ring Spun Combed Cotton/Poly (Light Heather Grey)
- 50/50 Ring Spun Combed Cotton/Poly (Heathers)
- Tear-Away Tag

You're Gonna Grow Attached to our Lanyards



Standard Metal Ring



Optional Metal Swivel Bulldog



Optional Metal Swivel J-Hook



Optional Lobster Claw



Breakaway Safety Buckle



Quick Release Buckle



Mobile Phone Release

Item #PVI - Polyester Value Imported Lanyard

1-Color, 1-Side Imprint

- 36" polyester lanyard
- Pricing for lanyards includes Split O-Ring attachment
- Set-Up: 1-Color, 1-Side Imprint: \$35(g)
- Stock Colors: Black, White, Red 186C, Red 485C or Reflex Blue C.
- NO NQP or EQP price breaks

	500	1000	3000	5000	10000	25000	
1/2"	.86	.76	.66	.60	.49	.47	6C
3/4"	.96	.84	.74	.70	.56	.55	6C
1"	1.06	.90	.80	.76	.62	.61	6C

Production Lead Time	14 Days	16 Days	16 Days	18 Days	18 Days	18 Days
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Item #DSI - Dye Sublimation Imported Lanyard

Dye Sublimation 1 or 2 Sides 4-color process on 36" white lanyard

Pricing for lanyards includes Split O-Ring attachment

- Dye Sublimation 1 or 2 Sides: Per Design: \$65(g) for same logo on one or both sides
- NO NQP or EQP price breaks

	500	1000	3000	5000	10000	25000	
1/2"	1.17	.92	.77	.60	.62	.57	6C
3/4"	1.37	1.02	.87	.77	.72	.67	6C
1"	1.52	1.17	.97	.87	.82	.77	6C

Production Lead Time	10 Days	12 Days	15 Days	15 Days	15 Days	15 Days
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Additional Cost Per Attachment

Swivel J-Hook: \$.06(g) • Swivel Bulldog Clip: \$.06(g) • Lobster Claw: \$.06(g)

Breakaway Safety Buckle: \$.12(g) • Quick Release Buckle: \$.10(g) • Mobile Phone Release: \$.07(g)



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