Promotional Products Business
PPB

IN THIS ISSUE

Why **Industry Certification** Is A Smart Career Move **P. 26**

Bags For Every Promotion **P. 46**

Defining Risk For The Promotional Products Industry **P. 58**

Smart Marketing: Part 3 In Our Series For Entrepreneurs **P. 76**

CELEBRATING LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

PPAI's Top Awards In 2017 Salute Those Whose Commitment Has Shaped The Association, And Enriched The Industry And Our World P. 80

PPAI Hall of Fame inductees Margie Price, MAS, and Joel Schaffer, MAS

A PPAI Publication » January 2017

16oz Stainless Steel Water Bottles
with Plastic Outer Cover

Item# **ASB221**
low as $**5.99** (c)

11oz Color Changing
Magic Photo Mugs

Item# **AS7102BK**
low as $**4.19** (c)

8oz Stainless Steel Copper
Coated Gran Torino Hip Flasks

Item# **AVF34**
low as $**3.29** (c)

20.5 oz. 100% Lead Free
Crystal Wine Glasses

Item# **ACG104**
low as $**4.94** (c)

54 oz. Glass Candy Jars
with Wooden Lids

Item# **ACAN10**
low as $**3.99** (c)

67oz Munich Stainless
Steel Beer Growlers

Item# **ABM33**
low as $**15.00** (c)

16 oz Copper Coated
Moscow Mule Mugs

Item# **ATM290**
low as **$5.99** (c)

15 oz. ARC Sport Beer Mug

Item# **A53331**
low as **$3.05** (c)

5.75 oz. ARC Angelique
Twisted Stem Flute Glasses

Item# **A09189**
low as **$2.55** (c)

8.25oz Libbey
Cosmopolitan Martini Glass

Item# **A400**
low as **$3.21** (c)

4.5 oz. Lexington Wine Sampler

Item# **A0505AL**
low as **$2.46** (c)

18 oz Glasgow Vacuum Insulated
Travel Mugs

Item# **ATM315**
low as **$8.49** (c)

BEL PROMO

ASI 39552 • PPAI 362224 • SAGE 67337

SHOP ALL NEW ITEMS

WWW.BELPROMO.COM

Bigger and Better Than Ever

SAGE Conference™

In conjunction with The PPAI EXPO

Monday, January 9, 2017
Mandalay Bay Convention Center
Las Vegas, NV

Last year's event broke records. This year's will break more.

Learn new ways to be **more efficient** during the workday, how to **improve your client relationships**, and how to **send effective email campaigns** to gain more business.

You'll learn everything you need to know to stay on top of the promotional products industry!

Save your spot now.
go.sageworld.com/conference17

SAGE
800.925.7243
www.sageworld.com

contents

JANUARY 2017
Promotional Products Business
The Official Business Monthly of Promotional Products Association International

26 HEAD OF THE CLASS
Professional Development And Industry Certification Make The Grade At These Industry Companies

80 CELEBRATING LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE
PPAI's Top Awards In 2017

COVER AND ABOVE IMAGE: Photographs by Chris Fritchie

4 **Perspectives**
Moving From Transactional To Relational

8 **Feedback**

11 INNOVATE

12 **Question**
What's Your Company's Compliance Report Card?

16 **Eye On Apparel**
Foul-Weather Wear

22 **Management**
Six Distributor Best Practices

37 GROW

38 **Market To Market**
First Responders

46 **Editor's Picks**
Bags

54 **Money Matters**
Negotiating With Your Shipping Carrier

58 **Guest Viewpoint**
Defining Risk For The Promotional Products Industry

63 THINK

64 **Fast Forward**
Pop-up Eyewear Vending Machines Inspire Trendsetter FOMO

72 **Product Responsibility**
Coping With Diverse Customer Compliance Standards

76 **Entrepreneur**
Smart Marketing

97 CONNECT

98 **Close Up**
SVS Marketing's Iain Walker

100 **Inside PPAI**

106 **People News**

108 **Day In The Life**
ESP Promotions/K&R New York's Merrick Falkenstein

111 **Snapshots**

113 **Datebook**

115 **New Members**

120 **The Creative Calendar**

Paul Bellantone, CAE
President & CEO

Moving From Transactional To Relational

In the November issue of *PPB*, Chair Tom Goos, MAS, summarized his term over the past 12 months. In that column, he talked about the Association's undertaking of a strategic planning session and his pride in the work of the PPAI Board and staff on the resulting strategic plan. He mentioned a new mission statement and the idea that the plan focused on taking the Association from transactional to relational.

The new mission statement—*PPAI is the trusted leader delivering essential knowledge, resources and community to ensure the success of our members and the industry*—says a lot, not only about where we are going but perhaps where we've been.

As we prepared for the strategic planning session, our session facilitator, Seth Kahan, took the time to talk with members. He participated in focus groups, made phone calls and interacted with members one on one. It was the feedback from these members that let us know we had become the trusted leader. I take great pride in knowing that the organization has positioned itself as such.

But the fact that the phrase is still a part of our mission statement is meant to show that we will not rest on our laurels, and as we move forward we not only fully embrace this title, but we plan to focus on it in the future. We will strive in every aspect of our operation to remain your trusted leader, and in doing so, we will move the organization from transactional to relational.

You may be wondering exactly what that phrase means. I must admit, after the strategic planning session, I had to think about it a bit myself.

It means that our strategic plan will take us beyond simply trying to acquire new members and sell additional benefits. It will focus us on reaching deeper into the members we have and enhancing a deeper relationship.

> Our strategic plan will take us beyond simply trying to acquire new members and sell additional benefits. It will focus us on reaching deeper into the members we have and enhancing a deeper relationship.

Let's consider each of the four goals:

1 **Drive meaningful member value and engagement.** This goal says nothing about getting more members. It is, as I like to refer to it, our Love goal. We want our members to love us, to trust us and to engage with us—however you choose to engage with us. Whether we're talking about super users/brand advocates, or the creation of knowledge communities where content will be king, our focus is value and engagement—and is relational in every sense.

2 **Advocate for the industry.** A long-standing goal for the Association, advocacy is something we will continue to execute on your behalf. But what changes with this strategic plan is that we want to build a stronger relationship with you, so that we advocate together. Each of you has an opportunity to be a part of our buyer outreach efforts by getting involved in our Get In Touch! campaign. This million-dollar-plus, five-year campaign, will only see its full potential if we work together. Our efforts on the legislative and product responsibility sides are not dissimilar in that they too will garner the most attention and draw the greatest success when we work together. Stronger relationships between you and your Association will build a stronger industry for the future.

3 **Deliver and leverage strategic foresight.** By having a greater understanding of what's ahead, we can better prepare for our future. This goal looks to find and track emerging trends that will or could have an impact on our industry. It's not just looking at what disruptors might be coming our way and the implication of such, but what opportunities are being created for the industry by these trends.

4 **Manage an efficient and progressive organization.** How do we retool PPAI to deliver second-to-none member experiences, interaction and engagement? This might be a deeper dive into technology to enhance member interaction with the Association or developing more personalized relationships with each of our members—basically allowing you to customize your PPAI membership in a way that best meets your needs.

Transactional to relational. You see, no mention of acquiring more members, selling more booths or anything that is transactional. Those may be a byproduct of this strategic plan, and I hope that they are, but it is not our focus. You loving this organization is our goal. PPB

UPIC: Pioneer
ASI 78200
SAGE 56460

Signage That Shouts

pioneer LINE

Remarkable *Products*. Remarkable *People*.
Remarkable *Company*.
100 Years Strong.

Celebrating 100 YEARS

USA ©2016 PBC BM-PM1609095

Promotional Products Business
PPB

EDITOR
Tina Berres Filipski
972-258-3084
TinaF@ppai.org

NEWS EDITOR
James Khattak
972-258-3052
JamesK@ppai.org

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Jen Alexander
972-258-3046
JenA@ppai.org

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Julie Richie
972-258-3091
JulieR@ppai.org

ART DIRECTION
SPARK Publications
SPARKpublications.com
704-844-6080

ADVERTISING MANAGEMENT

MANAGER, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
Ellen Tucker
972-258-3095
EllenT@ppai.org

MAJOR ACCOUNT MANAGER EAST
Joel Baker
972-258-3021
JoelB@ppai.org

MAJOR ACCOUNT MANAGER WEST
Melissa Massey
972-258-3029
MelissaM@ppai.org

ACCOUNT MANAGER, A-D
Jeff Rogers
972-258-3090
JeffR@ppai.org

ACCOUNT MANAGER, E-K
Lameshia Haynes-Gilbert
972-258-3067
LameshiaHG@ppai.org

ACCOUNT MANAGER, L-R, NUMBERS 0-9
Connie Brazil
972-258-3064
ConnieB@ppai.org

ACCOUNT MANAGER, S-Z
Kristi Pullen
972-258-3079
KristiP@ppai.org

ADVERTISING SPECIALIST
Lydia Gonzales
972-258-3076
LydiaG@ppai.org

BPA WORLDWIDE BUSINESS

PPAI
The Mark of a Professional®

PRESIDENT/CEO
Paul Bellantone, CAE
972-258-3050
PaulB@ppai.org

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Robert I. McLean Jr.
972-258-3085
BobM@ppai.org

VICE PRESIDENT, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
Alan Peterson
972-258-3048
AlanP@ppai.org

DIRECTOR OF EXPOSITIONS AND MEETINGS
Darel Cook
972-258-3075
DarelC@ppai.org

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE
AJ Hunter
972-258-3086
AJH@ppai.org

DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
Paul Elfstrom
972-258-3071
PaulE@ppai.org

DIRECTOR OF MEMBER ENGAGEMENT AND REGIONAL RELATIONS
Carol Gauger, MAS
972-258-3088
CarolG@ppai.org

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS
Anne Stone
972-258-3041
AnneL@ppai.org

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING
Keith Vincent
972-258-3040
KeithV@ppai.org

BOARD OFFICERS

CHAIR OF THE BOARD
Tom Goos, MAS
Image Source, Inc.
Tom@imagesourceteam.com

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR
Rick Brenner, MAS+
RFBrenner, LLC
RickB@rickbrenner.com

CHAIR-ELECT OF THE BOARD
Mary Jo Tomasini, MAS
CE Competitive Edge, LLC
mjtomasini@competitive-edge.net

VICE CHAIR OF FINANCE
Norm Hullinger
alphabroder
nhullinger@alphabroder.com

BOARD MEMBERS

TERMS EXPIRING 2017
Tom Goos, MAS
Image Source, Inc.
Tom@imagesourceteam.com

Kim Newell
Gold Bond World Wide, Inc.
Kimn@goldbondinc.com

TERMS EXPIRING 2018
Mary Jo Tomasini, MAS
CE Competitive Edge, LLC
mjtomasini@competitive-edge.net

Lee Strom
SanMar
lees@sanmar.com

TERMS EXPIRING 2019
Dale T. Denham, MAS+
Geiger
dale.denham@geiger.com

Norm Hullinger
alphabroder
nhullinger@alphabroder.com

TERMS EXPIRING 2020
Brittany David, CAS
SnugZ USA
brittany@snugzusa.com

Perry Wehrle
PAW Marketing, Inc.
perry@pawmarketing.com

MEMBER-AT-LARGE
Larry Cohen
Axis Promotions
larry@axispromotions.com

REGIONAL ASSOCIATION COUNCIL DELEGATE TERM EXPIRING 2017
Scott Hareid, Hareid Marketing,
shareid@promo-connections.com

EDITORIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Debbie Abergel, Jack Nadel International; Jeffrey Batson, CAS, Next Products, Inc.; Suzan Bolski, MAS, Anything Goes Promotions, Inc.; Craig Dickens, Suntex Industries; Jeff Mockbee, Theinfopeople LLC; Joe Nguyen, Better Life Industries, LLC; Kim Reinecker, MAS, Starline USA, Inc.; Carrie Laufenburg, MAS, American Ad Bag Co.; Jeff Schmitt, MAS, Cedric Spring & Associates; Bill Petrie, Brandivate; Kate Plummer, CAS, Clearmount Plastics Limited; Andrea Smith, MAS, The Vernon Company; Lance Stier, Chocolate Inn/Taylor & Grant; Chris Stumpf, CAS, Stumpies Marketing Group; Michael Wolaver, Magellan Promotions, LLC. PPAI Board Liaison: Norm Hullinger

PPAI HEADQUARTERS
3125 Skyway Circle North, Irving, Texas 75038-3526 Phone: 888-IAM-PPAI (426-7724) www.ppai.org, pubs.ppai.org

READER RESOURCES

SUBSCRIBE TO *PPB*: Subscribe online at pubs.ppai.org or send your name, title, company name and mailing address, along with phone and fax, to *PPB* Subscriptions, 3125 Skyway Circle North, Irving, Texas 75038. Or phone in your subscription to 972-258-3037. Include payment with your order. Visa, MasterCard and American Express are accepted, along with checks. Additional member subscriptions are $58 for PPAI member companies (U.S.), $70 (Canada and Mexico) and $75 (international). Nonmember subscriptions are $72 (U.S.), $82 (Canada and Mexico) and $92 (international). Please allow four to six weeks for start of subscription.
ADVERTISE IN *PPB*: Download a media kit with rates and specs for all PPAI print and digital publications at pubs.ppai.org, or call 888-444-6627 or e-mail mediasales@ppai.org.
WRITE FOR *PPB*: The magazine regularly accepts articles from both professional writers and industry experts—like yourself. Find out everything you need to know about submitting an article or an idea by requesting a copy of *PPB*'s Writer's Guidelines by calling 972-258-3084 or sending an email to ppb@ppai.org.

A Healthy New Year Starts Right Here!

1, 3, 5 Day RUSH SERVICE

FA NEC TIN – First Aid Necessities Tin…

• This first aid kit comes in a tin and includes the following packets, 2 first aid and burn cream, 1 lip moisturizer, 2 instant hand sanitizer, 1 1% hydrocortisone cream, 2 sting relief wipes, 2 antiseptic wipes, 4 bandages, and 2 burn gel.
• Price includes a 4 color laminated decal. • Ingredients are printed on the label.
• Everything you need to heal the hurt!

As Low As $3.19(r)

NEW!

MADE IN THE USA

TESTTUBE-BATH – Tube with Spa Bath Crystals…

• Reward yourself with these relaxing spa bath crystals, in a convenient capped test tube, after a long day's work!
• Available in seven enticing aromas that are sure to please the most demanding client.
• Aromas: Alertness (Peppermint), Breathe Easy (Eucalyptus & Spearmint), Relax (Lavender), Nature (Lemongrass & Sandalwood), Revitalize (Citrus), Pure Aroma (Vanilla), Stress Diffusion (Rose).

As Low As $1.25(r)

NEW!

MADE IN THE USA

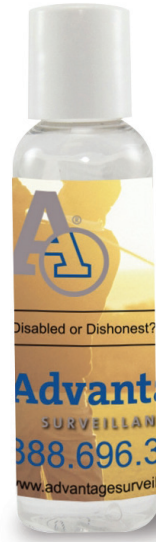
ENERGYSHOT – 2 oz. Energy Shot…

• Supercharge your day with this multi-hour energy shot in a convenient condensed package!
• Currently only available in a delicious mixed berry flavor.
• Comparable to leading multi-hour energy shots on the market.
• Price includes four color laminated decal.

As Low As $1.90(r)

1, 3, 5 Day RUSH SERVICE

MADE IN THE USA



HS02 – 2 oz. Hand Sanitizer…

• Compare and save. U.S.-made 2 oz. instant hand sanitizer with aloe moisturizer and citrus scent. Price includes white cap and a 4-color process laminated decal. Lamination protects your invest ment. To change cap color, add $0.10(V).
• Ingredients are printed on label.

As Low As $1.02(r)

HSPEN15 – 10 ml. Hand Sanitizer Spray Pen…

• Contains 62% alcohol, aloe moisturizer, and citrus scent
• 10 ml. anti-bacterial, instant hand sanitizer pen. Price includes clear translucent cap and a 4-color process aminated decal. Ingredients printed on label.
• Great giveaway.

As Low As $.99(r)

1, 3, 5 Day RUSH SERVICE

ADMINTS
ZAGABOR
SO MUCH MORE THAN MINTS
www.admints.com
Powered By Hit

feedback

Send feedback on articles in *PPB* or opinions on industry issues to JamesK@ppai.org.

Creativity Only Means Something If You Put In The Work

In the November PPB *article, "Creativity Is Meaningless," Bill Petrie, founder and CEO of brandivate, an executive team outsourcing company focused on the promotional products industry, shared his thoughts on creativity and how it only represents real value if you're prepared to back it up with research, execution and effort.*

INNOVATE
GUEST VIEWPOINT

Creativity Is Meaningless

That Is, Unless You Can Back It Up With Action

by Bill Petrie

Recently, I was speaking in front of a group of approximately 100 promotional products distributors and posed the following prompt: "Raise your hand if you position yourself as 'creative' to differentiate yourself from your competitors." I would like to tell you that I was surprised when about 85 people raised their hands, but I wasn't. In an effort to be different from the competition, far too many in our industry reach for the easy claim of creativity.

In an effort to be different from the competition, far too many in our industry reach for the easy claim of creativity.

For those of you leveraging your creativity in an effort to garner the attention of prospects and clients, I have some bad news for you: creativity doesn't exist merely because you say it does.

Think about the illustration above: 85 percent of the people in the audience are using the same exact word to express how they are different to their target audience. If you're part of 85 percent of anything, you're part of the crowd and the exact opposite of different.

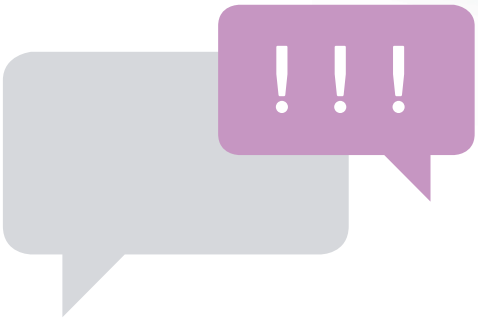
Furthermore, like the parameters for being elected into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, creativity is wildly subjective. What one client might think of as fabulously creative another might perceive as horribly old and tired. In other words, you are raising both the perceptions and expectations of your clients by proclaiming your creativity. Merely saying you are creative doesn't deliver on that promise.

Here's an example that has happened to many in our industry: You work tirelessly on finding and developing what you believe is the most creative solution for a client's marketing challenge or ly to find out during the presentation that they used the same product last year for a different promotion, and it failed. Or, even worse, your competition presented the same merchandise solution the previous day. Suddenly your proclamation of creativity has done the exact opposite of setting you apart—it's only reinforced the perception

22 | NOVEMBER 2016 | PPB

Do you wa
We can he
"This type of business
Exchange take us
happier with their

MICHAEL TURNER, M.S.
President
Bearsworth Promotions
Chatsworth, California
PPAI 553137



PETRIE RESPONDS:

There is no magic word or phrase that one can simply substitute in place of "creativity." My point with the article is that one should only use words that can be backed up with tangible proof which provides both context and meaning. For example, if a prospect asks why they should hire you, the response "because I'm creative" has as much meaning as if you had said, "because I'm awesome." Both may be very true, but without context, the words are very subjective and, therefore, meaningless. However, if you answer the same question by stating that you are creative and would like to show them a case history that backs up your claim, you provide something tangible that the prospect can understand far beyond a hollow industry buzzword.

Praise For PCT

Published five days a week, Promotional Consultant Today (PCT) *has made an impression on readers with its quick-read, daily delivery of short, snappy sales tips and effective expert advice tips targeted to the unique educational needs of distributor salespeople. Visit pubs.ppai.org/subscribe to sign up for* PCT.

I want to let you know how much I'm enjoying *Promotional Consultant Today*. Just long enough; just short enough. I read them all.

PAUL E. PRENDERGAST
Vice President, Sales and Marketing
E. A. Dion, Inc.
Attleboro, Massachusetts

The Prominence Of Profitability

Cliff Quicksell, Jr., MAS+, consultant and acting director of marketing for distributor iPROMOTEu, shared his thoughts on keeping profitability front-of-mind in the December PPB *article, "Sales Are Great But Profitability Is King." Strong sales numbers are great, Quicksell wrote, but without equally strong profitability, they don't mean much.*

This industry, by following your suggestions, can ensure survival in difficult times. I have always believed the promotional products business has suffered from an institutional inferiority complex. Your comments will help people get beyond the idea that their products and services are not worth a higher price.

Like you, I have lectured on this topic for the past 25 years. In almost every class, someone has made a comment similar to the one you mentioned about overcharging. Profit is not a dirty word. People need to understand that their personal value concepts may be quite different from their clients.'

BARRY HULTS, MAS
President
Hults Consultants and The School for Promotional Marketing, Inc.
Bridgeville, Pennsylvania

YOUR ACTIVE LIFESTYLE HEADQUARTERS

Booth #4078

PPAI Member #436753
asi#72657 Sage#69207

Activelifepromo.com
by motto Inc.

920-364-9544
sales@mottoinc.com

12 **QUESTION**
WHAT'S YOUR COMPANY'S COMPLIANCE REPORT CARD?

16 **EYE ON APPAREL**
FOUL-WEATHER WEAR

22 **MANAGEMENT**
RELATIONSHIP GOALS

+ Top 10 Rainiest Cities in the U.S.
page 19

Head Of The Class

Professional development and industry certification make the grade at these industry companies.

page 26

by Julie Richie

What's Your Company's Compliance Report Card?

Q A DISTRIBUTOR ASKS: How do you measure the success of your internal compliance and product safety programs?

A Compliance programs should be seen as a key part of every organization's foundation of providing quality products to the marketplace. In terms of identifying quantifiable metrics, this will always be a challenge, as end-user clients will have different reasons for desiring the information. Essentially, doing the right thing through product testing, having the information readily available and meeting applicable community regulations and laws is the core value and outcome of compliance efforts.

BILL MAHRE
President
ADG Promotional Products
PPAI 111475

At Proforma, we have more than 500 supplier partners in our Preferred Limited Partner program and each one has undergone a full review of their quality and business practices to ensure they meet our high standards of social and environmental responsibility. By having stringent safety, health and ethical standards for our preferred suppliers, our owners know they have a reliable and trustworthy network of vendors for all their project needs.

We also regularly attend PPAI's Product Responsibility Summit and encourage our owners to stay educated on the latest standards for safety and quality in our industry. Should an owner run into a safety compliance issue with any of our suppliers, the situation is thoroughly reviewed by Proforma's Strategic Partner Development Team to fully understand the situation and determine if the supplier should be removed from the network. Because of our deep commitment to excellence, Proforma is in the process of instituting a supplier rating system. This system will motivate our suppliers to uphold their high product and service standards to maintain a high ranking, while also reinforcing the trust our owners have in our network.

Product safety and quality is a priority for Proforma, and our industry, because it is the benchmark by which many of our clients measure the value and reputation of the products and programs we provide. By creating a safeguard for our owners through our Preferred Supplier Network, we can ensure their success in providing the highest quality products available.

GREG MUZZILLO
Founder / Proforma
PPAI 196835

It's really a negative metric that you look for:

- No recalls.
- No legal actions against the firm for defective products.
- No factories fail to meet the code of conduct.

LARRY WHITNEY
Director, Global Compliance
Polyconcept

We measure success by the satisfaction of our clients. Many of our high-profile brands have increased their spend with HALO specifically because of the security they have with our compliance protocols. We share our compliance protocols with every client and use them to differentiate HALO in a crowded marketplace. Clients that trust your close monitoring of your supply chain will ultimately buy more from you.

NICKI STAATS
Supplier Relations Administrator
HALO Branded Solutions
PPAI 106462

At Terry Town, we measure the success of our compliance program by the ease with which our distributor partners can utilize and depend on us—especially when they may not know all the answers themselves.

If you don't have a dependable compliance program in place, it can be very challenging for a distributor to count on you when they're dealing with clients that have large compliance needs. It doesn't matter how much they love to work with you or how much business they've done with you in the past.

A Compliance Conversation

Is compliance a hard or a soft measurable? In discussing this question with others, I received responses like, "You are either compliant, or you are not." One co-worker responded with three questions:

1 Are you asking about regulatory compliance?
2 Are you asking about customer compliance?
3 Are you asking about internal policy compliance?

I believe those are appropriate questions; and the response to each gives us the response to the subject question. So, let's take these in order, as asked above:

1 **How do we measure regulatory compliance?** I believe this is the easiest to answer. Many third-party certifying bodies require a company to have on staff a regulatory/compliance professional. This person must understand the regulatory landscape and the plain language of the statutes, regulations and standards. If there is no person in your company who has this ability, your company is playing with matches in a hay field. Having a person on staff who knows and understands implementation of the law is your company's regulatory and compliance insurance policy. Pay that person now or take the chance of paying the government later. In short, you're compliant with federal and state law, or you're not. There is no "sort of;" "we're close;" or "I think so."

How do you measure that? Your regulatory compliance specialist performs quarterly, unannounced inspections of your facilities—and even the facilities of your suppliers—using the standards that apply to products you offer, or you require records of such compliance (testing, internal and external audit reports, SDS, etc.). Documents and observations are hard measurables used to determine compliance.

2 **How do we measure customer compliance?** Your customers (should) require that your company is compliant in regulatory matters and order accuracy. Every company should have a resolutions team that receives customers' concerns and inquiries about regulatory and order compliance. This team becomes the liaison between the customer and the supplier in determining whether an order was out of regulatory compliance (improper labeling, no tracking number on a children's product, no country of origin marking) or customer-expectation compliance (wrong flavor of lip balm, wrong logo, logo smeared or off-center). These are measurable by the number of "resolutions" a company records.

Every distributor should have a quality control team (or person). Every distributor should require its suppliers to provide proof of quality-control mechanisms. Most federal and state regulations, as well as third-party certifying bodies, require manufacturing facilities to document quality control processes. The FDA has a clear code for quality control. Now, a distributor may say, "No product comes to our facility. Why do we need a quality control team (person)?" In my experience, distributors ask for sample products from suppliers before adding any product to a catalog or brochure or booth. Every distributor should closely review these samples. They may be "golden samples," however, it is a good practice to have a supplier (every once in a while) send you a sample of a product they are sending to one of your customers. Thus, you can carefully review products for customer and regulatory compliance.

Resolutions teams and quality control teams are hard measurables used to determine compliance.

3 **How do we measure internal policy compliance?** In a recent CFO.com blog post, Lucy Skelton lists five ways to measure internal compliance:

- Proper training and compliance campaigns;
- Employee surveys of internal policy compliance standards and requirements;
- Bringing in outside experts or utilizing other resources in the drafting and implementation of internal compliance;
- Empowering your managers to make compliance decisions and help employees understand compliance issues; and
- Closely reviewing and observing compliance breaches and successes; keeping records of your observations and findings.

Using your staff to develop, implement and uphold clear internal compliance standards (codes of conduct, mission statements, company values, etc.) allows you to create methods to turn what may be soft measurables into hard measurables.

All compliance is really about ethics: We all know what's right. You either do the right thing, or you don't. If customers are staying, and you're growing, then you are at least compliant to customers (price is a customer compliance issue). If you are losing customers, then you must determine where you are not compliant. If the CPSC or FDA shows up, and you get fined, or shut down, because you were in the chain of custody for a non-compliant product, you have received a hard measurable. If you can't keep employees, your internal compliance (including pay standards) may need to be evaluated. So, soft or hard, compliance is measurable. Your job is to ensure that you have the data, understanding, policies and ethics in place to measure it.

RICHARD D. MASSEY, ESQ.
Director of Legal and Regulatory Affairs
SnugZ USA, Inc. / PPAI 112982

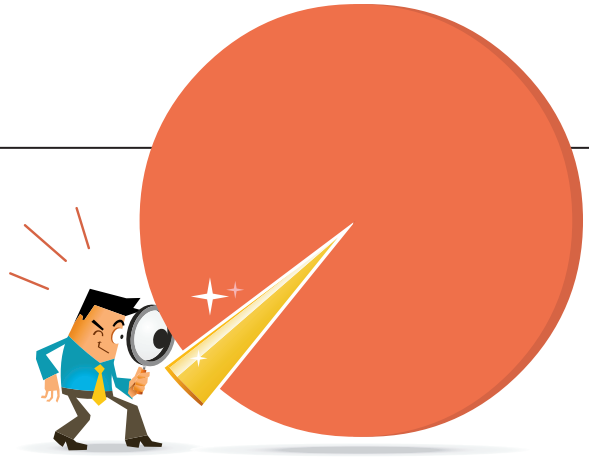
If you cannot deliver the information they need in a timely manner, they will go somewhere else. We get a lot of distributors that reach out that have never used Terry Town before, but have heard how dedicated we are to compliance or have run into us at a PPAI Product Responsibility Summit.

When they can call us up and ask to see product testing results or a children's product certificate and we can deliver that information immediately, they know they are dealing with a supplier that has a solid compliance program in place.

AARON BRADLEY
National Account Manager & Director of Compliance
Terry Town / PPAI 230911

A big part of the value of a good compliance program can be measured by the increased sales and better customer satisfaction that it brings. It also brings market access, as you need a good program to participate in the programs of most brands these days. Other benefits include better product quality, reduced business risk and safer products for the people that make and use what you sell.

JOSH KASTELER
Director of Product Integrity
Bamko Promotional Items
PPAI 242148



Do You Have An Answer?

A Distributor asks: You hear the term "niche marketing" praised a lot these days. But what if you've gone down that path and specialized in a niche and now the niche you've specialized in is in a down cycle? How do you get out of the tailspin?

What's Your Answer? Email answers along with your name, title and company name by **January 20** to Question@ppai.org for possible inclusion in an upcoming issue of *PPB* magazine.

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

Stay Fit With Hit

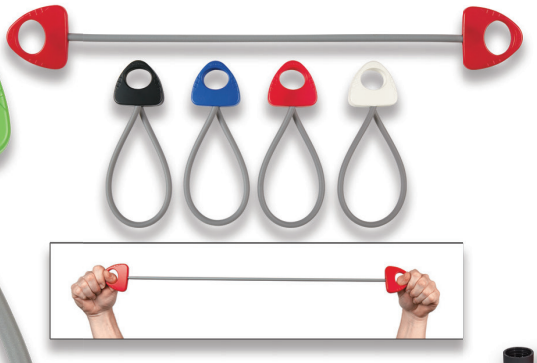
NEW!

#5679 - 20 OZ. REVABLEND™...

• Polypropylene Material • Stainless Steel Blades • Patented Blade System Will Allow Up To 2,000 RPM's • Create Shakes, Salsa or Smoothies On The Go • Twist Bottom To Blend Or Roll Along A Clean, Dry Surface At A 45° Angle • Snap-On, Spill-Resistant Flip Top Lid • Meets FDA Requirements • BPA Free • Hand Wash Recommended

As Low As $11.99(C)

reVablend® BLENDING ON THE GO!



Digibrite® Full Color Imprinting Process

#7865 YOGA STRETCH BAND...

• Stretchable Latex Material • Handles Lock Together For Easy Storage For Workouts Any Time, Any Place • Twist To Lock And Unlock

As Low As $1.99(C)

NEW!

Optional Lid Imprint

#6013 - 24 OZ. SYNERGY GLASS SPORTS BOTTLE...

• Made Of High Borosilicate Glass With Silicone Sleeve • Wide Mouth Opening • Screw On, Spill-Resistant Lid • Easy Carry Handle • Do Not Microwave • Meets FDA Requirements • BPA Free • Hand Wash Recommended

As Low As $9.99(C)

**Bottle Not Included*

ColorBrite Multi-Color Imprinting Process®

#43 NEOPRENE BOTTLE KOOLER WITH PHONE HOLDER...

• Made Of High Quality Closed Cell Neoprene • Features A Phone Holder With Display Window And Zippered Closure • Easy Carry Strap

As Low As $3.99(C)

Optional White Label

#7845 COOLING TOWEL IN CARABINER CASE...

• Made Of Soft PVA Material With A Mesh-Like Construction • Comes In A Clear Plastic Case For Easy And Convenient Storage • Easy Carry Handle With Built-In Carabiner For Attaching • Reusable • Towel Size Is Approximately 11¾" W x 31" L • Super Quick-Absorbing And Quick-Drying Towel

As Low As $4.99(C)

asi-61125

HIT® PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS

www.hitpromo.net

ASI•61125 PPAI #113910

COUNSELOR DISTRIBUTOR CHOICE AWARDS

COUNSELOR TOP 20 2015 SUPPLIER

Delivering Design on a Budget

by Julie Richie

In The Forecast: Foul-Weather Wear

Promotional apparel and accessories keep wearers warm, dry and looking good

Ask anyone hosting large outdoor events what their biggest fear is and most would say weather. There's little worse than rain driving all your attendees to their cars and back home, ruining your event and costing you money. Rain can be a major bummer—but it can also be a 'promotunity.'

With a little planning, you can help your clients turn a rainy forecast into the pot of gold at the end of a rainbow by finding the right promotional rainwear and umbrellas to offer attendees or customers. Not only can the right gear save your event, it can create great photo and branding opportunities.

Meredith O'Brien, vice president of sales, promotional products division for Storm Duds Raingear (PPAI 223406), says to keep portability in mind when choosing promotional rain apparel. Given the unpredictability of the weather, she says a poncho that folds up into a pouch is a great option. "It's easy to transport. If there is a chance of rain, why not just throw the pack in your backpack? That way you are covered just in case."

Read on for our picks for rain and winter weather apparel and accessories that will take any promotion to the next degree.

Apparel That Protects And Promotes

These **fleece accessories** are perfect for winter weather protection. With a scarf, gloves, earband and bag, this set is available in black only. All items are decorated with either fusion embroidery or fusion sublimation digiprint.

Suntex Industries / PPAI 113094 / **www.mainstsun.com**

Ponchos With Punch

This high quality, **multi-use poncho** made from New Englander® polyurethane bonded to a knit backing is waterproof and has heat-sealed seams. It features a hood with snap neck and drawstrings for added wind and rain protection, as well as a side snap closure under the arms. It coordinates with the New Englander rain pant, and one size fits most adults. It conveniently packs into a matching storage pouch.

Charles River Apparel / PPAI 111644
www.charlesriverapparel.com

Made from Dura-Tuff™ polyethylene blend, this **lightweight poncho** is available in 10 standard colors—clear, white, yellow, royal blue, red, green, orange, purple, black and navy blue. It has an oversized hood with adjustable drawstring and is durable yet economical, with superior dryness and comfort.

Mad Dasher, Inc. / PPAI 113961
www.maddasher.com

Easily carry rain protection with you in this convenient **Poncho in a Pac.** Made with 100-percent waterproof, eco-friendly EVA fabric, it offers 52 x 86 inches of coverage with snap closures at the neck and side. It is resistant to cracks and ultraviolet radiation and is biodegradable—perfect for outdoor events and attractions.

Storm Duds Raingear / PPAI 223406
www.stormduds.com

Case Study

Take Me Out To The Ballpark

When the University of Washington Huskies were ready to open their new ballpark in 2014, they turned to Seattle, Washington-based distributor Zippy Dogs (PPAI 253813) for a great promo item for fans. Zippy Dogs partnered with Storm Duds Raingear (PPAI 223406) to provide good quality Husky-branded rain ponchos that they distributed on stadium seats throughout the ballpark the day it opened. As is predictable in Seattle, "It was raining that day," says Elise Lindborg, top dog at Zippy Dogs. "The fans loved the team-branded rain ponchos. People were fighting over them!"

Apparel That Protects And Promotes

The ultra-lightweight, fashionable **Cloud Jacket** will keep you outside and moving even on rainy and windy days. With a smooth-as-skin feel, the jacket has an airy print pattern and reflective details for high-visibility functionality. It is made of 100-percent polyester with a water-repellent finish, stand-up hooded collar, zip pockets, back yoke and tagless label for comfort. For on-the-go convenience, the jacket packs into its hood pouch. Available in sky, spring and storm in sizes S-3XL for men and XS-3XL for women.

Vantage Apparel / PPAI 113235
www.vantageapparel.com

Keep warm at work or play in the **Cotton Duck Hooded Jacket**. This jacket was built with harsh and rugged winters in mind and features 12-ounce sanded/washed cotton duck for wind and water resistance, heavy polyfill insulation throughout, brushed tricot body lining, nylon sleeve lining, #10 YKK zipper, three-piece hood construction, embroidery access zippers to accommodate crest/back customization, no back seams and two large inside pockets. It's available in four colors (black, spice, moss and navy) and 16 sizes (S-6XL, LT-6XLT).

White Bear Clothing Co. / PPAI 236468
www.whitebearclothing.com

Perfect for anyone who does outdoor work including farming, construction or machine operation, these **Deerskin Palm with Thinsulate® gloves** will keep hands warm. The golden deerskin leather palm is extremely soft and durable, and the black Spandex and Neoprene back is stretchable and breathable. The gloves are lined with 40 grams of Thinsulate® to keep hands warm in the cold weather. And there is an elastic cuff with Velcro® hook-and-loop fastener for a comfortable and flexible fitting. They are available in large and extra-large sizes.

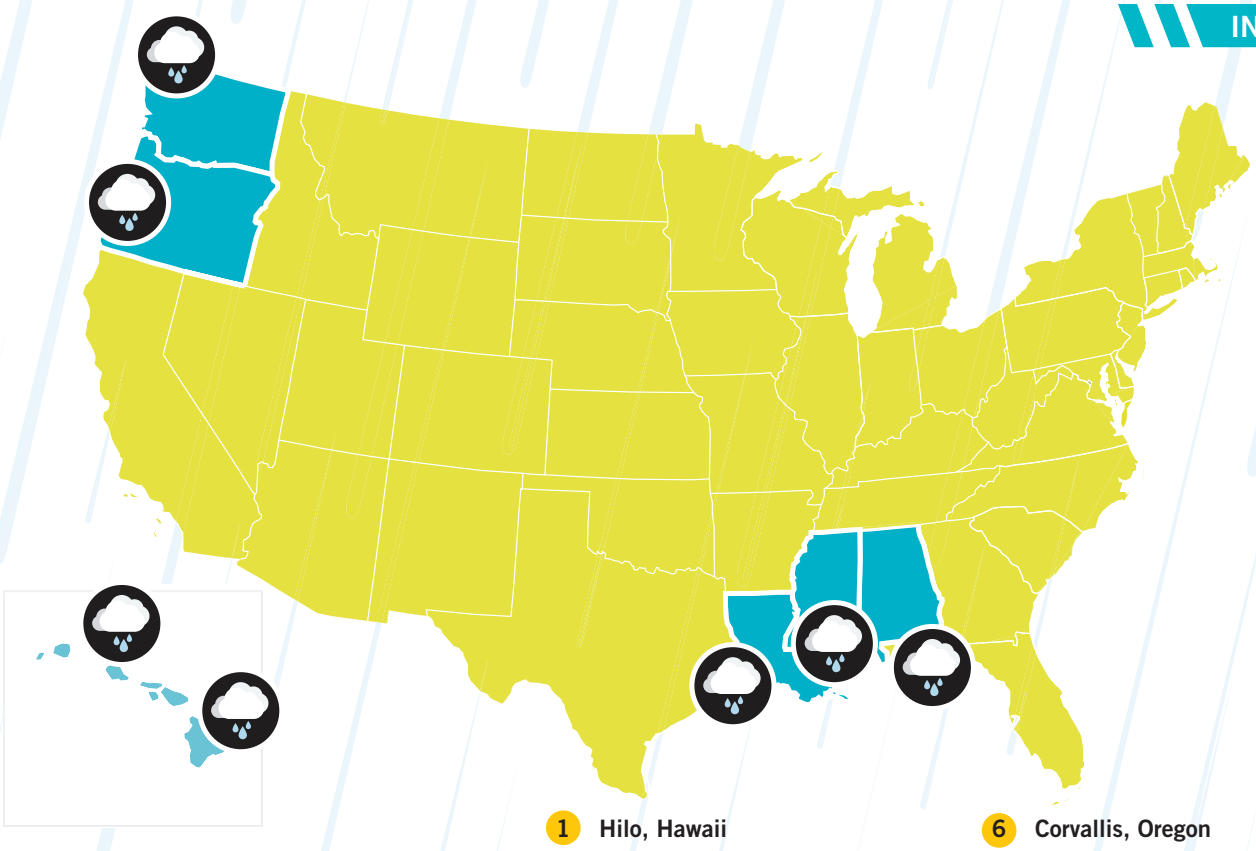
Starline USA, Inc.
PPAI 112719
www.starline.com

Umbrellas With Personality

Colorful Character

The alternating gradient color panels with black triangular border make this umbrella pop. Throw in the auto-open feature and the extra-large 58-inch arc and it's a winner. The matching gradient case with shoulder strap keeps it classy and convenient.

Stromberg Brand
PPAI 114212
www.strombergbrand.com



Top 10 Rainiest U.S. Cities

**Average of annual rainfall amounts in cities with populations of more than 20,000 from 1981-2010*

1. **Hilo, Hawaii** 156.79 inches
2. **Maple Valley, Washington** 85.73 inches
3. **Kailua, Hawaii** 71.12 inches
4. **Marrero, Louisiana** 67.26 inches
5. **Longview, Washington** 66.81 inches
6. **Corvallis, Oregon** 65.9 inches
7. **Pascagoula, Mississippi** 65.4 inches
8. **Mobile, Alabama** 65.28 inches
9. **Gulfport, Mississippi** 64.68 inches
10. **Houma, Louisiana** 64.51 inches

Source: WeatherDB

Mother Earth

It's easy to go green with the **Ecoverse™ vented auto open, auto close umbrella**. Made from 100-percent recycled and sustainable materials, this eco-friendly umbrella protects you and the environment with style. Features include a bamboo handle, recycled aluminum shaft and fabric made from recycled materials. Its unique vented double canopy and push-button auto open, auto close feature make it a top-rated umbrella for wind and rain.

Shedrain / PPAI 112963 / **www.shedraincorporate.com**

The Rebel

Who says umbrellas have to close downward? This 48-inch arc **inverted-style umbrella** turns traditional umbrella closure on its head. The revolutionary design allows the umbrella to close away from you so you stay dry when you close it. It's also easier to close when entering or leaving a car or through a door.

Peerless / PPAI 112666 / www.peerlessumbrella.com

EYE ON APPAREL

foul-weather wear

Apparel That Protects And Promotes

The **CB WeatherTec™ Trailhead Jacket** stands up to wicked winter weather. This 100-percent nylon ripstop jacket is breathable and waterproof to a 5,000mm water column. It is fully seam-sealed with a storm flap, draw cord hem and adjustable cuffs to seal out the cold and wet. The self-fabric mock neck features a concealed hood and reflective trim. Zip in the Barlow Pass Jacket, Cedar Park Fleece or Peak Full-Zip liners for dynamic insulation. Men's sizes include S-3XL, Big & Tall: 1XB-5XB, LT-4XT; Ladies' sizes include XS-3XL.

Cutter & Buck / PPAI 196156

www.cbcorporate.com

Embrace cooler weather by sporting the **Men's Tec Full Zip Hoodie**. Featuring permanent moisture wicking to keep you dry and comfortable, a front pocket for additional convenience, and enhanced breathability, this microfiber poly technical fleece hood is everything you need for your winter weather health and fitness needs. Available in four colors: black, royal, steel and navy. Sizes include XS-4XL.

Expert Brand / PPAI 267226

www.expertbrand.com

This lightweight **Primaloft™ insulated jacket** will keep you warm and comfortable with its sporty active fit. It's perfect to use as outer warmth or to layer as insulation under a shell. This jacket compresses into its own pocket for portability and has a hood hidden in the collar.

Craft Sportswear

PPAI 637932

www.craftcorporate.com

This U.S.-made, water- and wind-resistant **bonded poly windshirt** sports fashionable drop needle lines, giving it a higher perceived value. It is available in a pullover, a 1/4 zip, or a full-zip jacket. The zip versions can be zipped up into a cadet collar. The open hem makes it perfect for golf on a wet day, or the barrel pull can cinch it shut for more warmth. It's available in black, navy, olive, stone, red and steel blue and in sizes S-4XL.

AKWA / PPAI 205981 / **www.akwa.com**

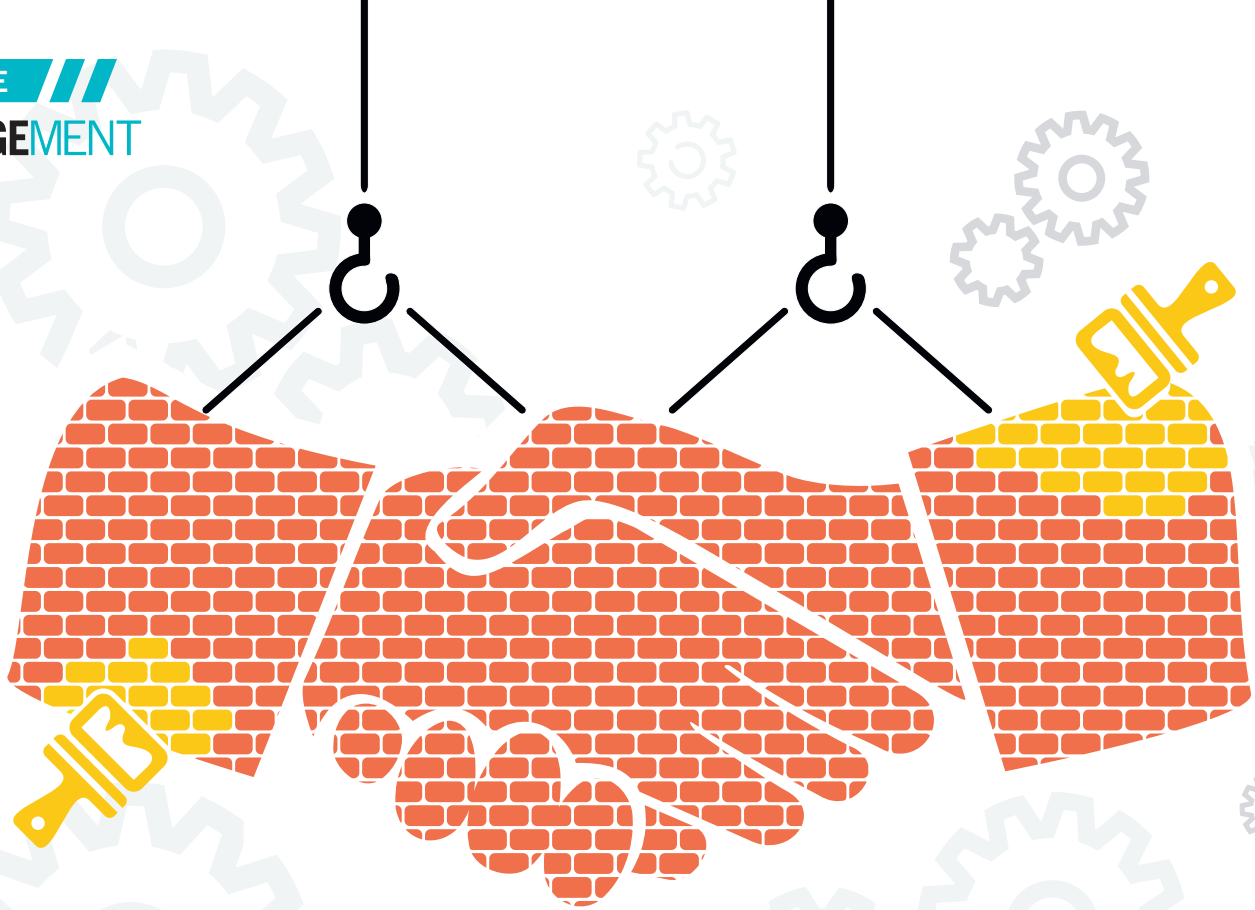
Find out about The Ultimate Manufacturing Experience by visiting us at the PPAI Vegas Expo in January 2017, Booth# 2257

Seattle | Philadelphia | San Diego | Shanghai | Cambodia

GREATER CHINA™

The Ultimate Manufacturing Experience.™

888.424.6847 | GREATERCHINA-USA.COM | ASI #58135 | PPAI #191353



Relationship Goals

Build a solid supplier-distributor bond with these best practices.

by Ken Tuvman, CAS

As a promotional products distributor for more than 34 years, I've learned to consistently hit the bullseye by delivering promotional products that meet or exceed our clients' expectations. It's a process that includes the crucial elements of proper branding, choosing safe and ethically sourced products, and delivering on time.

In my experience working with suppliers, the six steps described below have helped me hit the mark on client campaigns and projects again and again.

1 Choose suppliers carefully. At age eight, my mom enrolled me in group guitar lessons. I had no idea at the time how much learning to play the guitar, and then being part of a band, would help me later in life. But think about it: every time you act on a request from a client, you're the conductor of an orchestra—choosing products, ideas, packaging and decorating from a number of trusted resources, and putting them together for a big finish. Our company subscribes to SAGE and we utilize its tools to filter products based on quantity, budget and delivery time. Another tool enables us to filter suppliers who can meet specific needs. All things being equal, I prefer to work only with suppliers that have a "B+" or higher rating, because my reputation hinges on the quality of the suppliers with whom I work.

2 Build trust. Like marriage and family, supplier/distributor relationships are important. Over the years I've developed solid relationships with suppliers who are as committed and conscientious about quality as I am. Some orders are simple; some are complex. A simple order is when a customer orders a single stock item with their logo and/or copy. Many suppliers offer 24-hour turnaround at no extra cost. Our team frequents this service on a regular basis because a quick-

turn order ensures the order is completed quickly and the customer gets delivery faster. Other key benefits are improved cash flow and efficiency. In my world, there's nothing better than successfully completing orders and getting paid fast.

Being able to trust your supplier partner is especially important when working on complex orders. About three years ago, my No. 1 client called me for help with a request for custom bags to promote a grocer rewards program. The client, a large oil company, had partnered with a large national grocery chain to boost fuel and grocery sales. For every $100 worth of groceries purchased, the shopper could save 10 cents a gallon when filling up at the client's gas stations. Custom bags were to be given to customers while they were filling their tanks. The challenge was production time and logistics. My client needed more than a million bags and they needed them in six weeks. The order request came toward the conclusion of the Chinese New Year, when factories in China are typically closed. Fortunately, I had an ace in the hole: a long-standing relationship with a supplier partner who frequently travels to China. We discussed the project and the customer's budget and then put a moving timeline together working backward from the in-hands date. We knew what date the goods had to be at the client's distribution warehouse—what remained was working out the logistics of ordering the material, getting the manpower to sew and decorate the bags, and securing a time slot and a shipping container to load the bags on a ship.

But think about it: every time you act on a request from a client, you're the conductor of an orchestra—choosing products, ideas, packaging and decorating from a number of trusted resources, and putting them together for a big finish.

With the major details worked out, I met with my client and discussed the cost and logistics needed to meet her request. We got the order! I closed my eyes, took a deep breath and submitted our purchase order. This was the largest order of my career and I was scared. If things worked out well, I'd be a hero, and if they didn't, I'd be a zero. Ours can be an unforgiving business and we're usually only about as good as our last order.

Fortunately for me, I'd done my homework and chosen the right horse to run this race. Every aspect of this six-week project came off perfectly, including my supplier flying one of his managers to China to check on the progress of the project. The result was exceedingly successful—we delivered on time and on budget. Besides the promotional bags building revenue for my client, the icing on the cake was being invited to a vendor recognition event where my client presented us with an award. It pays to trust your intuition, and also to do your homework.

3 Start with good art.

To save time, we always submit camera-ready artwork with every order. Our company specializes in rush orders, which inherently have more risk built into them. Submitting camera-ready artwork on the front end eliminates getting stuck in an endless loop of going back and forth with the supplier's art department, which often results in an order either not shipping on time or our having to upgrade shipping, which increases costs to us or our customers. Our top suppliers who offer free 24-hour production require camera-ready art and have specific email addresses to use. We have an established relationship with a reliable artist who consistently and accurately produces and delivers camera-ready artwork. Additionally, my son, who works in our business, learned to use Adobe Photoshop and is quite good at preparing camera-ready artwork and virtual mockups to show clients. If you don't have an artist on your team, check out SAGE's art services. However you choose to do it, create a relationship with an individual artist or an art service you can rely on.

4 Establish an expectation for strong communications.

I'm a big believer in two-way communication with our suppliers. When I submit any order, I expect an email confirmation. When I email a purchase order to suppliers, I always include the words "Please confirm receipt." Recently, I was working on a small order of lapel pins with a firm in-hands date. The customer service representative assigned to my order didn't acknowledge my purchase order and I had to call her more than once to make sure we were on the same page. (I just realized the in-hands date is tomorrow and, again, I need to contact the supplier to confirm the order shipped and get a tracking number—frustrating!)

Lack of communication eats up time, and I loathe wasting time going back and forth with suppliers. I'm attracted to suppliers that acknowledge my orders when received, send

Nobody is perfect. Mistakes happen and when they do my policy is to address the situation head on and take responsibility.

order confirmations with ship dates and then provide me with tracking numbers. Tracking numbers are especially important to our clients, particularly when an order ships to a hotel or event outside of the corporate office.

I also think it's critical to develop and maintain relationships with customer service representatives (CSRs) and I use a tool in the supplier portion of SAGE that enables me to store notes; this also where I save my CSR's name, extension and email address.

5 Be ready to handle any mistakes. Recently we sent a large rush order to a supplier and the order shipped on time but somehow the shipping department messed up the shipping labels. Nobody on the supplier end noticed when generating the label on the FedEx software that it was an invalid address (or they noticed and didn't make the correction). The order was supposed to ship to a client in Washington for an event but the label had our company name, the client's address in Washington, and our city, state, zip. Luckily, the next day we received a call from the FedEx depot, about an hour from our office, stating they had five boxes with a bad address. I realized it was the rush order that had to be delivered that day. Fortunately, we generally include a fudge factor of one to two days in every order giving us a margin of safety for unforeseen circumstances. We contacted our supplier who immediately went on the defensive and instead of focusing on remedying the situation started with "we rushed the order and wouldn't have done it for anyone else." I stopped him right there and told him that the focus is always on the customer and to please help re-route the packages and I requested to use their FedEx number. As an aside, I wasn't happy to see the boxes this supplier used were falling apart. We got the boxes redirected, the client received her merchandise in time for her event and we voluntarily discounted her invoice for being late. We also requested and received an adjustment to our invoice from the supplier.

Nobody is perfect. Mistakes happen and when they do my policy is to address the situation head on and take responsibility. As a manager in our company, I don't blame my staff, my supplier or the shipper—I apologize on behalf of all parties and strive to make things right with the customer. I learned a long time ago from Bart Christensen, a former manager at 3M Promotional Markets, about the lifetime value of a customer. My first account, established in 1982, is a family-owned lumber company in Los Angeles. I've been providing their calendars, pens and coffee cups for the past 34 years. Look at your customers as an annuity—if you treat them right, they'll keep coming back. Consistency is a good thing.

6 Thank your supplier partners. I've heard more than once from supplier principals how some distributors are consistently abusive and ungrateful. Before entering the promotional business, I worked with my dad, a glazing contractor. I watched how well he treated his suppliers and paid his bills on time. To show my gratitude to a CSR for going above and beyond the call of duty, I'll send a handwritten note, and for extraordinary service, I'll send a nominal gift with a thank-you card.

My recommendations to you come from many years of experience. I'm reminded of a motivational speaker named Charlie "Tremendous" Jones, who gave a presentation about how he built a large and viable insurance company. After the speech, an anxious new salesman, striving to succeed, asked Jones how he became so successful. Jones replied "Good judgment." The young man then asked, "Well how do you get good judgment?" He then replied, "Experience." The young man, eager to learn all he could, pressed on. "Well how do you get experience?" Jones replied, "Poor judgment."

Our business is a challenging one and is not for the faint of heart. Unlike other jobs with schedules, we're on call all the time. Ours is a business of constant interruptions. I wish it were more predictable but it is not. When a client calls and says, "I need to place an order for an event next Tuesday," it's important to respond quickly. Every step will flow more smoothly if you already have solid relationships with suppliers who have the inventory and production ability to make things happen. PPB

Ken Tuvman, CAS, is national sales manager at distributor A.K. Rose, Inc., in Chanhassen, Minnesota.

My First *Performance*

BULOVA

A History of Firsts

Bulova are registered trademarks. © 2016 Bulova Corporation. 98B229.

BULOVACORPORATESALES.COM | 1.800.228.5682 | PPAI: 133171 | SAGE: #50905

HEAD OF THE CLASS

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION MAKE THE GRADE AT THESE INDUSTRY COMPANIES.

By Jen Alexander

YOU'VE GOT A STABLE OF LOYAL CLIENTS AND A PORTFOLIO THAT REFLECTS YOUR EXPERTISE AND TALENT, BUT ARE THESE ENOUGH TO SHOW PROSPECTS AND PEERS THAT YOU ARE THE BEST PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS PROFESSIONAL YOU CAN POSSIBLY BE? Industry professionals looking to add another feather to their cap will often turn to professional development and certification.

By many accounts, certification is a valuable means by which professionals in dozens of industries can set themselves apart and gain a strategic or sometimes financial advantage in the workplace. A recent survey conducted by *Certification Magazine* revealed nearly half of all respondents—48.2 percent—believe certification helps them improve or confirm their qualifications for the job they currently hold. And nearly 35 percent of respondents say they pursue certification to show they're qualified to take on more responsibility at work.

PROFILES IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Shari Garvalia, MAS

Showdown Displays

Garvalia earned her CAS at The PPAI Expo 2012 and earned her MAS in March 2016 using PPAI's online proctoring service to complete her exam.

> The certification program is one important element which can help us elevate the perception of the promotional products industry, especially in the minds of those who think of us as just selling "logoed stuff."

PPB **What challenges did you encounter, if any, when fulfilling the requirements for earning each designation?**

Garvalia I had attended education events primarily at the Dallas and Vegas shows as well as local regional association events, throughout my many years in the industry. When I decided to test for CAS certification a few years ago, I had more than enough credits, however I learned I had to fulfill some basic requirements which included basic entry level courses that did not exist when I started in the industry, such as Promotional Products Industry Overview Part I and Part II.

A few years ago, not all of these courses were available via webinar, so I had to wait for the opportunity to attend them in person. That was interesting, and while not difficult, the realization that I had to complete those basic courses, after all of my years in the industry, delayed my testing. The increase in the number and variety of courses available through live and recorded webinars has made it much easier to complete required courses.

PPB **What were some of the webinars or live education events that you enjoyed most, or that most surprised you with their relevance to your work?**

Garvalia I always enjoy the live events more than the webinars, because the interaction and spontaneity keeps me engaged and energized. The best live education events have been part of the Women's Leadership Conferences and North American Leadership Conference, and I also always enjoy the general session keynote speakers at The PPAI Expo in Las Vegas.

PPB **How will having these designations elevate your business among clients, and how can certification improve the industry as a whole?**

Garvalia The CAS and MAS designations represent one's commitment to continued education and personal and professional development. The certifications show that a commitment to the industry has been made by a dedicated professional, and someone who is willing to invest in their personal development and career. The certification program is one important element which can help us elevate the perception of the promotional products industry, especially in the minds of those who think of us as just selling "logoed stuff."

PPB **You completed your MAS exam through the online testing platform; what can you share about your experience that would help others who might be unsure about testing online?**

Garvalia When I realized there were not any in-person exams scheduled at events or at times that I would be available for many months, I was intrigued by the opportunity to test online. The proctoring service was easy to deal with, and the scheduling and actual testing process was simple and seamless.

The proctor is visible to you at all times on your screen, and at one point when I had a question, he answered it immediately. While the cost was a little higher to test online, it was definitely more convenient and timely for my needs. I also liked the fact that I received an immediate score rather than waiting a few weeks, which happens with in-person exams.

PPAI / 113974

INTRODUCING

THE URBAN BAG SERIES

ENTIRELY CUSTOM DESIGN • DURABLE AND HANDSOME
URBANSHOE • URBANDUFFLE • URBANPACK

AS LOW AS
$9.22 d

Fits size 14 shoe

AS LOW AS
$18.99 c

Carry three ways

AS LOW AS
$22.99 c

Extra large

COMMUTERS • EXECUTIVE GIFTS • GENDER-NEUTRAL

GOLD BOND
MORE THAN YOU EXPECT

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS

See us at the PPAI show, booth 5605
Visit goldbondinc.com for more details

74 NEW ARRIVALS FROM

NIKEGOLF · OGIO · ENDURANCE · PORT AUTHORITY · Sport-Tek · PORT & COMPANY · CornerStone · DISTRICT

FAMILY OWNED • CUSTOMER FOCUSED • SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE • AWARD-WINNING PRODUCTS • DEEP ON-HAND INVENTORY • SALES-BOOSTING MARKETING TOOLS

CATALOGS • ONLINE 800.426.6399 • SANMAR.COM

SANMAR

Certification also helps seasoned workers stay relevant, especially as Millennial professionals enter the workforce with up-to-date skill sets already under their belts. Achieving field-specific certifications shows current and potential employers that workers are dedicated to their craft and the industry to which they apply their skills and professional development. To the customer, holding an industry certification shows a higher level of professionalism and is documented evidence of industry expertise.

"Achieving certification is not about checking a box—it's about gaining the content knowledge that enables you to earn a certification," says PPAI Certification Manager Julie Levay. "It's a customizable program that allows you to learn more about the industry and how to do your job better."

PPAI Certification is a valuable means of differentiating oneself in the marketplace, Levay says. "As the industry's longest-running certification program, its Certified Advertising Specialist (CAS) and Master Advertising Specialist (MAS) designations are instantly recognizable—and well regarded among professionals in the field."

Certification in the promotional products industry requires an investment

Ready To Go To The Head Of The Class?

Earn Your PPAI Certification

PPAI Certification™ CAS • MAS • MAS+

		PROGRAM ELEMENTS					
		Industry Experience	Education Points	Required Courses	Exam Required*	Recertification Required**	Designation Awarded
	TAS Trained Advertising Specialist	Less Than 3 Years	25 CAS or MAS Level	No	No	No	Certificate of Completion
CAS Certified Professional	**CAS** Certified Advertising Specialist	3+ Years	75 CAS or MAS Level	Yes	Yes	Yes	Certification
MAS Certified Professional	**MAS** Master Advertising Specialist	5+ Years	100 MAS Level & Valid CAS	No	Yes	Yes	Certification
MAS+ Certified Professional	**MAS+** Master Advertising Specialist Plus	7+ Years	225 Total Points & Valid MAS	No	No (Project Based)	No	Certification

**The PPAI Certification exam is offered year-round at PPAI live events and online. In order to register you must have already completed the specified CAS or MAS program requirements.*

***CAS designees must continue to keep their CAS Certification current by completing 25 additional educational credits over three years.*

MAS designees must continue to keep their CAS Certification current by completing 25 additional MAS-level educational credits over three years.

Fast-Track Your Certification

The PPAI Certification Fast-Track Program is an initiative aimed at providing promotional products professionals with a minimum of five years of verifiable industry experience with an avenue for "waiving" certain CAS certification requirements in consideration of their experience, education, and/or achievements.*

The PPAI Fast Track Program is comprised of two applicant-submitted waivers:

- Certification Fast Track 15 "Waives" all six CAS-required courses (15 points) for the applicant (each course will show as "Waived" on the applicant's transcript).
- Certification Fast Track 75 "Waives" all six CAS-required courses (15 points) and remaining 60 CAS points for the applicant—qualifies the applicant to immediately sit for the CAS exam (each course will show as "Waived" on the applicant's transcript).

**Specific criteria must be met to be eligible for CFT 15 and CFT 75; respective fees apply. Contact PPAI at certification@ppai.org for more information.*

of time and money. With all that you've got on your plate as a busy professional, it's reasonable to expect that you might ask yourself, "Is certification worth it?"

At least two of the largest distributor companies in the industry have decided that professional development is not just good for the individual, but it's good for the entire company—so they provide opportunities for every employee to earn certifications from PPAI's certification program.

Lewiston, Maine-based distributor Geiger (UPIC: GEIGER) introduced an internal development program for managers in 2006, extending it to all associates in 2007. Laura Bosse, MAS, vice president of human resources, explains how the company's program ties into PPAI Certification.

"We partner with PPAI to develop an annual program for supporting our associates in their pursuit of or maintenance of CAS or MAS certification, which is the foundation of our professional development program," she says. "The program provides a common body of knowledge and expertise. Associates who are certified have an edge over others when it comes to being considered for growth opportunities within the organization."

Under the program, Geiger management associates must obtain MAS certification, while non-management associates who interact regularly with customers, sales partners or production partners must obtain CAS certification within a three-year period. "Our training includes an additional, internal certification in continuous improvement at the leader or practitioner level," she adds.

Bosse says that in addition to internal training opportunities and a lending library, Geiger offers a tuition reimbursement benefit for college courses and encourages staff to participate in external learning

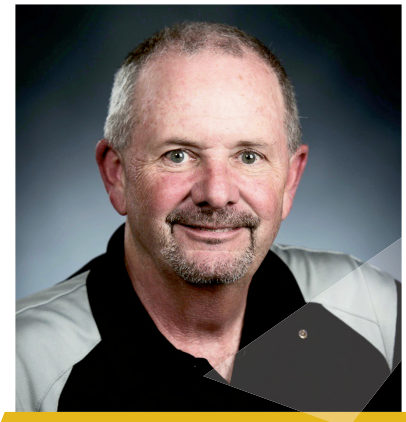
Connect Your Professional Development To PPAI Certification

An internal professional development program can be a valuable tool in helping employees achieve PPAI certification, and PPAI will work with an individual organization to create a scalable program that's customized to their educational needs.

The main objective is to provide support for established internal education and offer assistance with quick and easy certification needs. PPAI reviews a company's internal education for certification credit opportunities and provides discounts on certain certification fees.

Through this process, says PPAI Certification Manager Julie Levay, the Association bolsters the individual company's professional development plan by allowing company employees to not only grow from provided internal education, but to have that knowledge accredited in their pursuit of a highly respected industry certification. "Overall, these partnerships are helping educate the industry, producing knowledgeable, committed promotional products professionals," she says.

PROFILES IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT



Tim O'Neill, MAS

Image Masters

Tim O'Neill earned his CAS designation at The PPAI Expo 2014, and went on to earn his MAS the following year.

> Within the industry, I do think that having a CAS or MAS designation signals a level of professionalism to supplier and distributor colleagues.

PPB **You earned your CAS and MAS within 12 months. Was this a planned effort, and if so, what kind of preparation did you go through to accomplish this feat?**

O'Neill It sounds tougher than it was. For my entire career I've valued attending professional development at every conference that I attended; I just never bothered to start the paperwork for certification.

When I did decide that having my certification was a goal I checked my transcripts, and I also applied for extra credits for my time in the industry and for my service on our regional association board many years back. When it was all said and done I had more than enough units for my CAS and was close to the target for my MAS. I took the CAS exam that year, finished up my remaining few units for my MAS at the same PPAI conference and sat for the MAS exam the following year.

PPB **What were some of the webinars or live education events that you most enjoyed, or that most surprised you with their relevance to your work?**

O'Neill I believe that understanding product safety is a significant component of being a professional in this industry, and once PPAI developed the curriculum for Product Safety Aware, I made sure that all of my sales team and I did the webinars together.

PPB **How will having these designations elevate your business among clients, and how can certification improve the industry as a whole?**

O'Neill I use my MAS designation in my email signature and on my business cards and I've had a few customers ask about it. But for the most part, we don't earn our customers' trust with a designation; we do that with our actions. Within the industry, however, I do think that having a CAS or MAS designation signals a level of professionalism to supplier and distributor colleagues.

opportunities as well as PPAI events and online webinars.

To recognize and reward the effort it takes to achieve certification, Geiger provides an incentive bonus of up to $750 for CAS and/or MAS certification, depending upon the length of time it takes to complete the requirements and pass the exam. Associates who are not required to achieve certification may do so on a voluntary basis and are still eligible to earn the incentive bonus.

Professional development through ongoing education is a key part of Geiger's workplace philosophy, says Bosse.

PPAI Professional Development Over The Years

Today's PPAI Certification program is the culmination of decades of dedication on the part of Association members who believed that formal industry education was important to increasing the legitimacy of promotional products as a business and the professionalism of the men and women who earn their livelihoods from it.

PPAI's formal professional education began as an Executive Development Seminar in 1961. The curriculum for the eight-day session was created by industry pioneers including Jim Albert and Ralph Thomas, with a hyperfocus on specialty advertising business. The supplier and manufacturer participants—then called jobbers and manufacturers—were awarded with diplomas at the conclusion of the seminar that conferred upon them the newly minted designation of Certified Advertising Specialist.

Sales training clinics were added to the roster in the late 1960s, and in 1983 the Master Advertising Specialist designation was established, along with the adoption of certified education units, or CEUs, as the formal measure of skills attained to achieve CAS and MAS status.

Photo provided by Gene Geiger, MAS.

The 1973 CAS class was an all-male group. Even in the mid-'70s few women were active in the industry.

Since the program's inception, more than 5,000 members of the industry have achieved a CAS, MAS or MAS+ designation. The industry's dedication to continuing professional development is a testament to the efforts of those early Association leaders who believed that education makes the industry stronger.

"The Geiger Way, our company's value statement, includes the following: 'Our associates are by far our most valuable asset. We will hire talented people, train and empower them, and recognize their accomplishments.'

"We believe that investing in our associates' achievement of industry certification makes them more credible to our customers and sales partners, and better able to provide a higher level of customer satisfaction," she says.

Distributor firm AIA Corporation (UPIC: advinadv) in Neenah, Wisconsin, took its training programs up a notch roughly four years ago, certifying its on-site training classes through PPAI.

"We recognized that to better meet the needs of our customers we had to expand our staff orientation and ongoing training program and focus on excellent customer service as well as a deeper knowledge of the complexities of the promotional products industry," says Marie Miller, MAS+, director of continuous improvement for AIA. "The certification program is important because it gives everyone a goal to strive for as well as additional knowledge and credibility with our customers."

Miller says by providing new staff members with a broader understanding of the overall industry and the supply chain, and by increasing product awareness, "we're able to bring them up to speed quickly so they can build lasting relationships with our customers."

Even though certification isn't mandatory, 82 percent of AIA associates are certified, something Miller says is indicative of the quality of the training program as well as the significance of certification. Employees who earn PPAI certifications are recognized through announcements, on the company plaque, and with bonus points toward AIA's company incentive program.

In addition to providing internal professional development, AIA partners with a nearby college to invite instructors who teach skill building in core business areas such as communication, technology, performance management and customer service, she says. "Often these classes are certified through PPAI, so our associates get the benefits of a fresh, outside perspective, a business-experienced instructor and credits toward their certification."

The payoff for professional development doesn't stop with the individual learner, says Miller. "The impact is seen in numerous ways including higher customer satisfaction results, increased employee engagement and an overall sense of cultural unity." PPB

Ariel

Taking Care of **You!**

INTRODUCING ARIEL PREMIUM SUPPLY'S HIGH QUALITY

DRINKWARE COLLECTION

Keep 17oz Vacuum Insulated Stainless Steel Bottle

DBT-KE16

As Low As
$8.39(R)

Belmont 20oz Vacuum Insulated Stainless Steel Travel Tumbler

DTM-BE16

As Low As
$8.42(R)

Glendale 20oz Vacuum Insulated Stainless Steel Tumbler

DTM-GL16

As Low As
$8.42(R)

Add Antwerp to your Incentive Programs

ANTWERP

diamonds (usa)

www.antwerpdiamondsincentives.com

+ Categorically Speaking

Factors To Consider When Choosing Bags For Five Popular Purposes **page 52**.

38 **MARKET TO MARKET**
FIRST RESPONDERS

54 **MONEY MATTERS**
WHEN IS THE RIGHT TIME TO NEGOTIATE WITH YOUR SHIPPING CARRIER?

58 **GUEST VIEWPOINT**
DEFINING RISK FOR THE PROMOTIONAL PRODUCTS INDUSTRY

Ready To Roll

The Right Bag Makes All The Difference In Every Promotion

page 46

by Jen Alexander

On The Scene

Promotional programs keep first responders top of mind in the community

Whether they're first on the scene or first to help you recover, first responders are a lifeline and lifesaver for us in times of crisis and disaster. According to the National First Responders Organization, first responders include "any individual who runs toward an event, rather than away." They fill myriad job descriptions including law enforcement agents, firefighters, emergency medical technicians, paramedics, members of the Red Cross and officials with FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Promotional products help us remember how much and in how many ways they can help. The key, say experienced consultants, is effectively combining messages with memorable products.

Livi Dalmau, a Coral Springs, Florida-based franchise and ecommerce specialist for distributor American Solutions For Business (PPAI 469883), has worked with a restoration services company for 10 years, helping craft relevant promotions with successful results.

"The company specializes in water, fire, mold and biohazard property damage and over the years has purchased a plethora of promotional items like hand sanitizers, microfiber cloths, lip balm, note pads, t-shirts, candy, magnets and cookie tins to promote their business," says Dalmau.

One of her more creative solutions included a red syringe pen, since the customer provides trauma cleanup services. "This was an effective promotional item, since it tied well to the theme of the company and was a memorable piece that many people had never seen before," she says.

Dalmau also listens to her customers and helps develop their ideas into memorable promotions, for example a duck-shaped stress reliever with its own birth certificate and a line on which to write the duck's name. "This promoted their services of performing duct work for their customers," Dalmau says. "They then challenged the agents to post photos on social media of the ducks in unique locations and ran a contest for the most creative posts."

By incorporating something cute and creative, she says, the customer was satisfied by the engagement they got from their agents and online presence.

Jen Alexander is associate editor of PPB.

Reaching Out To First Responders

Gregg Emmer, chief operating officer at Batavia, Ohio-based distributor Kaeser & Blair (PPAI 103148), shares insights into working with police and fire departments, and other response agencies.

What are the most frequently requested items among clients in the uniform services/ first responder fields for use in the areas of public relations (community relations) and fundraising, and who are the primary audiences for these programs?
Water bottles have been continually popular for fundraising and youth outreach. Fire safety programs use coloring books. Some police departments have used junior badges for youth programs and bicycle items for bike safety education in elementary schools.

What messages are most consistently communicated by these groups to their target audiences?
Safety and situational awareness. We have done drawstring backpacks for police-sponsored safety and personal defense classes.

What do's and don'ts can you suggest to distributors who want to work with first responders and other similar organizations or agencies in their community?
Many uniformed services will require USA-made goods. When making recommendations or soliciting business, proposing domestic products is a good idea.

What types of budget restrictions or purchasing rules do you most often see with first responder groups?
We see a good deal of the costs covered by sponsors wanting to be involved in community outreach programs. On outright purchases we are sometimes asked to provide a quote or bid.

Pitch products like these for promotions that help first responders get the word out.

Shine a light on employee IDs with a **5/8-inch reflective lanyard**. The strap is ideal for working in low-light conditions.

Fields Manufacturing
PPAI 111951
www.fieldsmfg.com

Remind little ones that first responders are great helpers with a nine-inch **Trooper bear** or **Axe Firefighter bear**. The soft, cuddy construction ensures comfort in times of crisis.

Artistic Toy Manufacturing, Inc.
PPAI 110753
www.artistictoy.com

A rugged, portable 5 ½-inch **super bright flashlight** with a bright krypton bulb gives EMTs and firefighters a helping hand during nighttime calls. This version comes with a wrist strap and two AA batteries. Choose from opaque black and white, or transparent red, blue and green.

Tempo Industries/Timenet
PPAI 110911
www.tempoline.com

A pen is an indispensable tool on the scene, and the **BIC® Anthem pen** has been made more useful with a click-through stylus. The iconic BIC® Boy is molded into rivets on the barrel, and the pen features a comfortable grip and black trim.

BIC Graphic / PPAI 114187 / **www.bicgraphic.com**

Workers get a better grip with breathable **fluorescent gloves** in a yellow-green knit with black latex rubber-coated palm. These gloves are cut-, puncture-, and abrasion-resistant and come in men's large and extra-large sizes.

Suntex Industries / PPAI 113094 / **www.mainstsun.com**

Workers on the scene will definitely be seen in an **ANSI/ISEA 107-2010 safety vest** that's Class 2 compliant. The vest is made with 120 gsm fine knit mesh with front right chest pockets and a clear ID pocket with hook-and-loop top closure. The front left chest displays two layered pockets with a pen divider. The neon orange vest is made more visible with two-inch grey reflective stripes. Choose from sizes small to 5XL.

Macro Industries / PPAI 261952 / **www.3cfactory.com**

Discover Your Inner Outdoors

BACKPACKER

available exclusively through

alphabroder

alphabroder.com 1.800.523.4585

MARKET TO MARKET

first responders

Keep personal items and work tools dry in this eye-catching **roll-top backpack**. Made with PVC-coated polyester, the lightweight pack features padded, adjustable shoulder straps and adjustable chest straps, with cinch straps on the roll-top closure. A large, waterproof zipper pocket adds storage space and accessibility. Choose from red/black, orange/black, yellow/black, ocean blue/black, purple/black, and granite/black.

Stormtech USA, Inc. / PPAI 260245

www.stormtech.ca

Mark unsafe and personnel-only areas with these **12-inch red flags**. The flags come in perforated rolls of 2,000 pieces and are made of sturdy 2.5 mil plastic.

Promosafe / PPAI 360119

www.promosafe.com

Firefighters

The National Fire Department Census counted 27,198 voluntarily registered fire departments, representing 50,700 fire stations and 1.2 million personnel, in January 2016—this equals roughly 90 percent of the total fire departments operating in the nation. Fire departments do more than put out structure fires. More than 75 percent provide vehicle extrication, and just over 60 percent offer fire/injury prevention and related public education. Just under 20 percent staff a hazardous materials team.

Market Snapshot

31% of registered departments serve the MIDWEST

21% of registered departments serve in the NORTHEAST

13% of registered departments serve in the WESTERN STATES, including ALASKA and HAWAII

Pennsylvania has the most registered departments at **1,796**

35% of registered departments serve TEXAS, THE SOUTHEAST and MID-ATLANTIC states

Washington, D.C. has **three** registered departments.

56% of active personnel are VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS

71% of all registered departments are volunteer-only

69% of all registered departments have just one station

17% of all registered departments have two stations

14% of all registered departments have three or more stations

Source: FEMA

Finally... A new and different business and branding opportunity.

FIVEFREEBOOKS

Customize the front with your logo or message!

HUGE CATEGORIES
of books to choose from:

Fiction • Romance • Mystery
History • Science Fiction
Health & Fitness • Horror
Animals & Pets • Hobbies
Religion • Business
Math & Science • Humor
Parenting • Kids
& More!

- Gift of free reading
- Customize a branded card
- Print a unique code on the back
- Download on any electronic device

FIVEFREEBOOKS

$50.00 worth of books as low as $5.00 EQP

Item #FFB100

Quantity	100	250	500	1,000
Price (R)	$6.99	$5.99	$5.49	$4.99

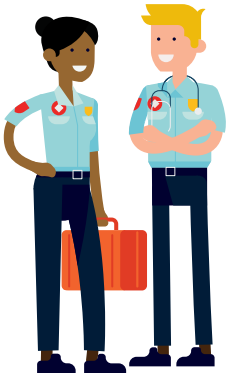
Setup $60.00 (v)

Call 800-367-2523 or email Corrin@nwpromos.com for self-promo or sample.

Nationwide Promotions LLC

www.nationwidepromotions.com
ASI/73464 PPAI/261136 SAGE/50381
PPAI Booth #3438

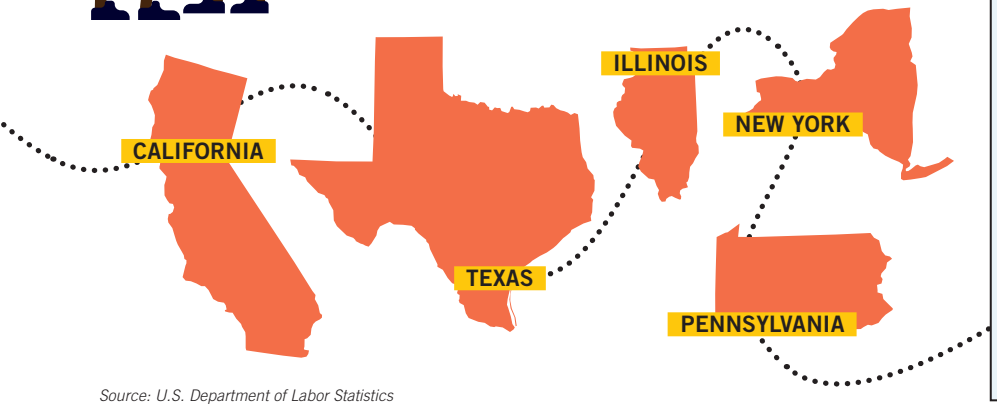
Paramedics and EMTs



Just over 240,000 people were employed as emergency medical technicians or paramedics in 2014, and the 10-year outlook for job growth through 2024 was estimated at 24 percent—more than three times as fast as the average growth rate for all jobs.

Average hourly pay for employees in 2015 was just under $32,000 a year; hospital-affiliated workers earned nearly $35,000, local government employees earned an average of $34,770, and employees of ambulance services earned $29,710 annually.

The states illustrated below boast the most employees in the EMT and paramedic fields.



Source: U.S. Department of Labor Statistics

Police

In 2015, police departments that served cities with 50,000 or more residents employed roughly 16 officers for every 10,000 residents, according to data gathered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Though their staffing totals were lower than some other major cities, Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Maryland, and Wilmington, Delaware, had the highest number of officers per capita among cities reporting their data to the FBI—56.9, 43.4 and 42.6 respectively. In contrast, Sammamish, Washington, employed just 27 officers.

While New York City reported employing nearly 35,400 police officers—it is the nation's largest police force—the ratio was 41.4 officers per capita, slightly lower than D.C., Baltimore and Wilmington.

Source: Governing.com

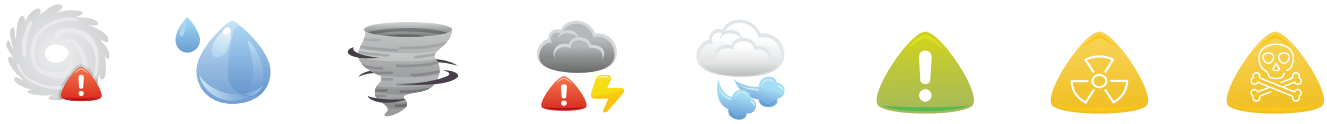
Emergency Response

Emergency response encompasses disaster and crisis management, mitigation and recovery, and groups can include government, nongovernmental (NGO) and private agencies and organizations. The Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) empowers participating states to lend emergency management and disaster response aid to one another. The EMAC program encourages states to use NGO and private sector resources.

The National Emergency Management Association (NEMA) conducted a study among states that have used private sector and NGO resources to assist other states in emergency situations. The survey found that 40 of the 43 participating states have provided assistance in more than 58 events since 2006, including blizzards, floods, ice storms and special events such as the 2008 Presidential Inauguration.

While more than 86 percent of participating states rendered assistance to other states, 62 percent of states reported receiving assistance between 2006 and 2016. Massachusetts reported the greatest number of events for which it received assistance (five). PPB

Percentage Of State Assistance



84% provided assistance after hurricanes

73% assisted after flooding

36% assisted after tornadoes

31% assisted after severe weather

24% assisted after tropical systems

7% assisted after an environmental emergency

2% assisted in HAZMAT/ Transportation

2% assisted after a pandemic flu outbreak

Source: National Emergency Management Association

BOARDROOM
custom clothing • ecoapparel

NEW
2017 Collection

Brand New Styles
From Tees to Polos, Zipnecks and Shirts to Softshells and Hardshells

Our **Custom Made-to-Order Styles** provide excellent performance in a variety of situations while maintaining **low environmental impact.**

Customize with a diverse number of colors, private labeling, and imprint options

48 Unit Domestic MOQ
30 Day Production
600 Unit Offshore MOQ
90 Day Production

PPAI VEGAS 2017 Booth: #1357

www.boardroomclothing.com

contact: info@boardroomclothing.com

by Julie Richie

Ready To Roll

The right bag makes all the difference in every promotion.

In today's highly mobile society, the right bag to carry and protect our many (expensive) technical devices—laptops, smartphones, tablets and e-readers—is essential. According to the U.S. Travel Association, U.S. residents logged 1.7 billion trips for leisure and 459 million trips for business in 2015.

To better accommodate the needs of travelers and their important gear, manufacturers have upped their game in making products that are more lightweight, comfortable to carry, durable and easier to maneuver than ever before. In no place is this trend more evident than in the backpack market, where styles continue to evolve from the very first modern backpack, developed by Gerry Outdoors in 1967.

Although the first backpacks were originally intended for hikers, college students began using them to lug their books around campus, prompting companies to begin creating backpacks designed specifically for students. By the 1980s, backpacks had become part of every back-to-school checklist. Now, with students relying less on textbooks and more on laptops and tablets, backpacks are being redesigned again with mobile device storage in mind.

Other types of bags are also evolving to meet customers' changing needs, with more eco-friendly fabrics, compactable designs and dynamic, full-color decoration to make logos and images stand out. Read on to see some great bag options for gifts, incentives and promotions, and for tips on choosing bags for specific purposes as well as how to distinguish between good, better and best backpacks.

Suitcases And Satchels To Schlep Your Stuff

This colorful bag is a premium, stylish and clever **compactable tote** that makes your logo or artwork pop. From bag to ball, the 24/7 bag is a snap to keep with you all the time. It can carry up to 35 lbs, and its versatile strap design featuring a felt patch to avoid slipping off shoulders makes it a go-to bag for an entire day's worth of activities.

Flip & Tumble, LLC / PPAI 588867
www.flipandtumble.com

The new **Dunes™ Laminated Tote** is a natural-color laminated tote with a subtle canvas-like appearance. A large non-woven polypropylene pocket on the front shows off your imprint. The 16-inch by 12-inch bag includes 28-inch handles and an optional plastic bottom insert available. The bag is shown here with a ColorVista imprint process.

BAG MAKERS, Inc.
PPAI 111408
www.bagmakersinc.com

Find comfort and style in the phthalate-free, low-lead **Sota Backpack**. Featuring a unique zippered opening with front clip closure, a front zippered pocket, inside zippered pocket and slash pocket for extra storage space, the backpack also includes a top webbed handle, an air-mesh padded back, reflective striping on the front so you can be more visible at night and adjustable shoulder straps for carrying comfort. Choose a standard one-color logo or a TruColor multicolor imprint for the same price.

Starline USA, Inc. / PPAI 112719
www.starline.com

These seriously strong **luggage stickers** that you apply to your luggage make for easy, quick identification. The stickers are made from thick vinyl and have aggressive adhesive for durability and longevity without damaging the surface. One sheet includes five bright stickers plus a writable contact ID sticker.

Gill Studios, Inc. / PPAI 114157 **www.gill-line.com**

This **sanded calf leather wheeled travel bag** features a sports design with broad appeal. A telescoping handle and in-line skate wheels allow for easy rolling while dual handles with a handle wrap make it a cinch to carry. Two exterior open pockets and two interior zippered pockets accommodate plenty of travel items in style.

Scully Leather / PPAI 174962
www.scullyleather.com

Designed to be the perfect carry-on travel bag or gym sport duffel, this large **canvas and leather bag** features a matching luggage tag, polished nickel hardware, sturdy leather handles, five bottom feet, an adjustable padded shoulder strap, an easy access exterior zippered pocket and a roomy inside compartment with mesh and zippered pockets.

Strong Leather Co. / PPAI 113072
www.strongleather.com

When affordable luxury and useful convenience is paramount, this **complete line of bags** including travel, messenger, cross-body and computer bags along with executive briefcases, wallets, mobile cases and travel accessories is sure to fit the bill. Debossing any of the products with a company logo creates a unique piece that is conceptually interesting and visually stunning.

Bugatti / PPAI 545540 / **www.bugatti-wholesale.com**

Busy travelers love the **Switzer Canyon Rolling Carry-On**. With telescoping handles and 360-degree spinner wheels, it is easy to maneuver. The handle position extends to 12 or 21 inches so you can find a comfortable length. The large main compartment has a two-way zipper, a snap-out zippered toiletry bag, clothes holder with a quick-release buckle and an expandable zippered front. Polydrill lining protects against spills and tears and the bag comes with a matching luggage tag.

Beacon Promotions / PPAI 113702
www.beaconpromotions.com

Fashion meets function with this on-trend **quilted bag collection.** The faux-leather tote features soft, quilted, slate grey micro-check fabric accented with faux leather accents and gold-plated grommets and buckles. The quilted day pack has padded shoulder straps and a fully lined interior, and a padded divider. The quilted overnighter is fully lined with an oversized inside zipper pocket.

AAA Innovations / PPAI 110972 / **www.aaainnovations.com**

Time is money.
Stop wasting yours.

Make the most of your time, with Antera Software...
Can you afford not to?

Your first stop at PPAI EXPO 2017:

BOOTH # 4061

January 8-12, 2017
Mandalay Bay Convention Center in Las Vegas, NV

214-556-8040
sales@anterasoftware.com
www.anterasoftware.com

Antera
Software USA

EDITOR'S PICKS

bags

Designed and engineered for the global sophisticate, **BRX bags** are virtually weightless due to the strategic use of lightweight, durable 420D nylon, 600D polyester and water-resistant tarpaulin. The Outsider® handle provides greater interior capacity and increased packing space, making it easier to go anywhere, from off the beaten path to the lap of luxury.

Incentive Concepts / PPAI 212912 / **www.incentiveconcepts.com**

The **Wenger Synergy Backpack** offers a triple-protection padded compartment for up to a 16-inch laptop and also has a dedicated 10-inch tablet/eReader pocket. The CaseBase Stabilizing Platform keeps the bag standing in an upright position. Air-flow back padding and shock-absorbing shoulder straps make it comfortable to carry, and a Quik Pocket provides easy access to items you need most frequently. The pass-thru grab handle trolley strap slides over the handle system of wheeled luggage for easy travel.

Victorinox Swiss Army, Inc.

PPAI 113873

www.VSACorporate.com

Pack Patrol

What increases backpack quality—and the accompanying price? Andrew Spellman, vice president of corporate channels at Victorinox Swiss Army, Inc., lays it all out so you know what specific items to look for when designing the perfect pack for your client's budget. He says the most important consideration overall is weight. "In real estate, it's all about location, location, location. In luggage and bags it's all about lightweight, lightweight, lightweight."

Here's an overview of what other elements take a backpack from good to great.

Good

- **Design:** Generic, singular main body
- **Fabric:** Inexpensive fabric such as cotton canvas or 250-400D nylon
- **Functionality:** Just the basics; no protection

Better

- **Design:** More storage elements such as pockets and zippers and better comfort and safety with items such as padded shoulder straps and reflective trim
- **Fabric:** Thicker, heavier polyester fabric or 600D nylon with PVC backing to add sturdiness and form
- **Functionality:** Upgrades to appeal to casual users

Best

- **Design**: Added protection such as thicker, padded laptop sleeves with memory foam; useful extras such as more pockets, premium YKK zippers, custom-designed branded wheels, zip-away pockets for items such as water bottles; palm-facing rotating handle, water-resistant fabric and zippers, ventilation system for better comfort, etc.
- **Fabric:** 800D nylon to 1680D ballistic nylon fabric such as CORDURA®
- **Functionality**: Organizational tools and enhanced durability for serious students and business travelers

ewiz™
Digital
Multichannel Solution

aws360
Art & Order
Management

ecorp STORES
Corporate
Store System

ewiz™
Catalog
Management

15 years of expertize in the promo industry.

Talk to us 443 283 3456 or Email us at info@artworkservicesusa.com

www.artworkservicesusa.com

ASI 820124 | PPAI 231735 | UPIC ARTW0330

Categorically Speaking

Factors to consider when choosing bags for five popular purposes

Jennifer McFadden, communications director for BAG MAKERS, Inc., shares advice for how to pick the best bag for your client's promotion. Here's what she says you should consider when working with clients who choose bags for the following purposes.

Trade Shows—Far more people will walk by a trade-show booth than walk into it. If you provide a great show bag, attendees will carry it and advertise for you throughout the show floor. The best way to bring all eyes to your trade-show bag is to use a four-color imprint. A one-color imprint lets you tell people your company name and website; a full-color imprint lets you show people what your company does with a photograph or picture of your product or service. The full-color imprint tells your story when you're not around to talk about it. Look for higher GSM material for greater durability, and wide adjustable shoulder straps for comfort.

Event Goody Bags—You should consider several things for event goody bags—the customer's budget, the size of the giveaway items, and whether the customer's message is short- or long-term. Plastic die-cuts are a popular option for a one-time-use bag. Customers who want more mileage for their message should consider nonwoven bags, like our Celebration Totes, that get used (and seen) repeatedly.

Higher-end Gift Bags—A heavy stock or unusual shape will lend a higher perceived value to gift bags. (We often suggest our Reverse Trapezoid EuroTotes for higher-end gift bags because of their distinctive style.) Foil imprints lend an upscale look, and custom tissue, ribbon and bows complete the package.

Shopping Bags—When choosing grocery totes, you want a bag that won't break when packed full of items. Look for a high GSM, reinforced handles, and plastic bottom boards, like those offered in our Big and Little Thunder Totes. Distributors also can consider space-saving, convenient collapsible bags; for example, our T-Pac Poly T-Shirt Bag has a large interior pocket that transforms into the bag's storage pouch. For more upscale shopping bags, Mesh Panel Totes combine fashion and function. They pair a retail look with the functionality of a shopping tote.

School Bags—When choosing bags for schools, look for features that provide added value or safety; for example, our Explorer Backpacks have reflective stripes that bounce light back from 50 feet, making students more visible at night. PPB

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

The Best Exit Strategy IN THE INDUSTRY

Getting into the Specialty Advertising/Promotional Marketing Industry is pretty easy today – it's getting out that is a lot harder! Without a great strategy and the best help, you will never get the full value from your distributorship.

We have the best Exit Strategy bringing you the most value and it has worked for many others for years and years. Don't get fooled by ads pretending to want to buy your business. If they have to trick you by hiding behind made up business names, why would you trust them?

We are Kaeser & Blair, the Original, the very first promotional distributor. We are the largest organization of independent business owners in the industry.

Let us show you how you can get substantially more for your business, receive additional bonus revenue from K&B and have fun while you are making the transition.

If you want to exit soon or simply plan for the next few years, get full information now.

KAESER & BLAIR INCORPORATED
Promotional Advertising Specialties

1-888-698-1684
www.kaeser-blair.com

Contact us in complete confidence to learn how lucrative our exit strategy will be for you. Our experienced executives welcome the opportunity to speak to you. Personal private meetings are available at all major industry shows. Complete confidentiality is always maintained.

Deals On Wheels

When Is The Right Time To Negotiate With Your Shipping Carrier?

by Thomas Andersen

We're often asked, "How often should I negotiate with my carrier?" Or, "I'm only in the second year of a three-year term with my carrier, so I need to hold off on negotiating my contract until it expires, right?" The following are some rules that often apply and some indicators to consider.

How Often Should You Renegotiate?

It is rare for any company that manages its parcel shipping effectively to go more than two years without renewing their carrier agreement(s). Many take it a step further and have specific items addressed every six to 12 months based on changes in their business, growth or what the carriers

announce during the General Rate Increase (GRI). Considering that most negotiations can take one to three months, it's healthy to review your carrier contracts annually (at a minimum) and proactively address any shortcomings when necessary. When the carriers announce a significant change, such as the new dimensional weight rules in 2015, you should be prepared to analyze the impact and make your case to have the increase mitigated.

Can You Negotiate Too Often?

There is a fine balance between negotiating too often and not often enough. Two years between full RFPs shows the carriers that you are serious about managing your parcel costs, and it also shows a degree of loyalty where the carriers can expect to keep your business for a minimum of two years; longer if they continue to be receptive to making changes along the way. Companies that actively keep two carriers engaged typically have more competitive pricing than companies that remain "married" to a single carrier.

Is There A Time Of Year That's Best For Negotiation?

There is no rule of thumb, but you can typically expect negotiations to be a bit more challenging in November and December due to holiday operational challenges. Historically, the carriers announce the increase in September, with the increase to be applied around January 1, so being prepared to tackle any required adjustments related to the GRI at the end of Q3 or beginning of Q4 will typically provide enough time to have issues resolved prior to year-end. As for managing RFPs or more comprehensive negotiations, the other 10 months are often better suited, in order to get the full attention from your carriers.

What Should You Know About Multi-Year Agreements?

The big carriers have a yearly increase where they typically suggest a four to five-percent rate hike. However, the impact varies quite significantly by shipper, based on shipment profiles and characteristics. Most shippers end up taking an increase ranging from six to 10 percent each year. This is because the increase does not apply equally by service, zone and weight, and it's designed to have a more substantial impact in the

Know Before You Say 'Go'

Consider these helpful insider tips next time you negotiate your carrier agreements.

- Everything is negotiable, but don't try to negotiate everything. Put your efforts into areas that have the greatest impact on your bottom line.
- You can renegotiate with carriers at any time. You do not have to wait for your agreement to end to renegotiate.
- Never sign an agreement or addendum that contains an early termination clause.
- Make sure you completely understand your shipping data, your shipping profile and your shipping characteristics. Your carriers know everything about your shipments. You need to as well.
- No matter what the carrier promises, never waive your right to file for a Money Back Service Guarantee/Guaranteed Service refund. It will never be in your favor and you will lose your ability to reclaim thousands of dollars in refund opportunities. Late deliveries lead to unhappy and lost clients.
- Don't put all your eggs in one basket. Split your business with the carriers 80/20 percent or even 90/10 percent. Let the carrier know you always have another option waiting for the opportunity to earn your business.
- Have a solid grasp of your key shipment variables, including but not limited to: pickup and delivery density, single piece versus multi-piece, commodity type, packaging, parcel conveyability, special handling requirements, perishability, hazardous materials, weights, services and zone distributions.
- Use the USPS, regional carriers and consolidators as leverage.
- Don't let your carrier relationship get in the way of negotiating a fair and competitive agreement. Your carrier representative is compensated by how much they grow their profits from your business. A great relationship doesn't mean higher prices.
- Use your LTL spend as leverage.
- Understand all of your accessorial charges: residential adjustments, dimensional weight, address corrections, etc., and how they affect your total spend.
- Look at your minimum net charges and how they affect your effective discounts.

The companies who receive "best-in-class" carrier agreements are those that understand their shipping profile and know how and when to renegotiate their carrier agreements.

weights and zones that are most significant for most shippers. Few companies have the ability to increase their prices every year by five to 10 percent. Shippers make strong arguments for why this increase is necessary, while typically understating the fiscal impact. Even if your contract includes protection against the GRI in the form of a rate cap, this typically only addresses a portion of the increase. The GRI cap does not address accessorial charges, which are typically discounted by a percentage or dollar value off the gross charge. As the list rates increase, so do these rates, as well as minimum charges. Accessorial fees and surcharges can amount to 30 percent of your shipping costs. Just look at the impact of the new dimensional weight rules.

In the end, remember that your spend is extremely important to the carriers. Each carrier has specific discounts, fees, rebates and incentives that are negotiable beyond just the initial offer they put on the table. Ultimately, the bottom line is that the flexibility to renegotiate your small parcel agreements exists prior to the end of the initial term. The companies who receive "best-in-class" carrier agreements are those that understand their shipping profile and know how and when to renegotiate their carrier agreements. PPB

Thomas Andersen is partner / vice president of supply chain services for industry business services company LJM Consultants (www.myLJM.com). He has more than 15 years of logistics and transportation experience, and core expertise negotiating contracts with FedEx, UPS, DHL, and the regional carriers. For information, email Tamra Earlywine at tearlywine@myLJM.com *or call 310-497-7677 or 631-844-9500, ext. 833.*

BURNSIDE® @ alphabroder

FASHION, DELIVERED

BURNSIDE® APPAREL IS NOW AT alphabroder.

VISIT PPAI BOOTH 2212.

alphabroder PPAI #156993

Burnside PPAI #184396

WWW.ALPHABRODER.COM

WWW.BURNSIDEAPPAREL.COM

GUEST VIEWPOINT

From Best Practices To Industry Standards

Defining Risk For The Promotional Products Industry

by D E Fenton and Tim Brown, MAS

Compliance with manufacturing standards continues to be a hot topic for the promotional products industry. It is regularly on the agenda at industry-sponsored training and education forums and written about by our industry media.

As the industry's first and only third-party validated compliance accreditation organization, the Quality Certification Alliance (QCA) frequently receives inquiries from industry professionals concerned about standards, standards-development bodies and industry self-regulation. Confusion and misunderstandings often reside at the core of these questions.

As industry peers, we would like to address some of the more common points raised:

- Why would an industry be satisfied with self-regulation?
- Does self-regulation really make an industry more compliant and disciplined?
- What does a standards organization do?
- Is QCA a standards development organization?
- Some have implied that QCA appears to be intended for large industry companies only.
- Why is QCA structured the way it is?
- How can the board of a nonprofit entity be made up of for-profit industry companies and not have anti-competitive designs?
- Does an industry of our size really need third-party solutions like QCA?

The very essence of a standards organization is to make life easier, safer and improve overall efficiency.

Industry Practices That Became "Standard"

The very essence of a standards organization is to make life easier, safer and improve overall efficiency.

Industry-based standards organizations have long existed. Some standards provide compatibility for improving the utility of a product, while others establish management practices that positively affect consumer safety, port security and environmental issues. Whether product or process, industry standards are simply best practices.

Best practices are, by their nature, voluntary. When an industry best practice gains momentum, frequently the government or the market will adopt those best practices as standards.

Examples of industry-based standards that have gained acceptance in law and the market include:

ASTM F-963

Originally defined by the Toy Industry of America, this standard is now embodied in U.S. law as a component of the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act of 2008.

FLA Labor Standards

An outgrowth from a White House-sponsored initiative, the Apparel Industry Partnership (AIP) is a roundtable comprised of a handful of large apparel labels, non-governmental organizations and college students addressing concerns for labor rights in a manufacturing setting. QCA benchmarked its social accountability standards and audit processes with FLA in 2015.

Whether product or process, industry standards are simply best practices.

What Are The QCA Pillars Of Compliance?

The QCA Compliance Accreditation Program is comprised of Five Pillars of Compliance© that include Product Safety (and Regulatory Compliance), Quality, Social Accountability, Supply Chain Security and Environmental Stewardship.

Like many compliance accreditation programs, QCA employs a proprietary gap analysis and corrective actions that are validated by third-party audit providers. No applicant is accredited and no member is re-accredited without completing the gap analysis, the required audits and two mock recalls of products randomly selected from their line.

The standards against which QCA audits are performed are:

- ISO-9000 - Product Safety, Quality and Elements of Environmental Stewardship
- UN Global Compact Principles - Social Accountability and Balance of Environmental Stewardship (a questionnaire developed in-house and benchmarked by Elevate, a third-party audit provider for social accountability)
- CTPAT - Supply Chain Security

For more details, download the QCA Knowledge Series for free at http://www.qcalliance.org/knowledge-series

Why Is QCA A 501(c)(6) Entity?

QCA is categorized by the IRS as a 501(c)(6) organization. Our product is education and information. QCA is subject to the private inurement doctrine, which means no benefit may accrue to any individual member, nor may unequal standards of membership be applied. (QCA is legally obligated to use the same measuring stick regardless of company size, name or location.) Lastly, funding for QCA is based on dues and fees for service. Note: QCA does not certify product or set standards.

An example of a similar board structure would be PhRMA. The PhRMA Code pertains to the design, development and introduction of new drugs to the marketplace and the obligation to educate stakeholders on the role new medicines play in patient care. Consistent with this, a Code revision in 2008 limited promotional items to only those with educational value. QCA's board, like PhRMA's, represents the industry's leading companies which are devoted to advancing the industry and protecting end users of products.

Do I Need A Compliance Program?

As a member of the promotional products industry, your company is not legally obligated to adhere to industry best practice standards. However, should your product cause harm to the end user (or violate U.S. import law), you will want to have considered the stance federal regulators have taken:

> When you are designing and manufacturing (or importing) your product, you should contact a voluntary standards organization that may have standards in place for your product or for products similar to yours. Although this is not a mandatory requirement, you would be well advised to consider the guidance in these other standards because it is based on the considered judgment of other manufacturers, designers and safety experts.

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) "Voluntary Standards" are available at https://www.cpsc.gov/Regulations-Laws--Standards/Voluntary-Standards/Voluntary-Standards

The CPSC has consistently looked to industry best practice (voluntary) standards when evaluating culpability for harm to the consumer, from product to processes (see Best Buy Settlement 2016 at https://www.cpsc.gov/Best-Buy-Agrees-to-Pay-38-million-civil-penalty. The settlement included a tested recall program similar to the mock recalls performed by QCA firms as noted above.)

U.S. Customs and Border Protection is, likewise, poised to take a more stringent position (increased fines, embargo and confiscation) on freight found to violate import law whether the product is banned, found to have been manufactured with forced and/or child labor or otherwise violative actions. The State of California and many promotional products customers in other states require certification that the product was not manufactured using forced labor.

Takeaway

Compliance programs focus on detecting, deterring and

GUEST VIEWPOINT

Improving a company's processes to adapt to a changing environment for business is appropriate for an industry of any size.

addressing risk. With risk, a business may choose to eliminate it in the product or the process, reduce it, avoid it (leave a category or even the industry) or live with it. Standards allow us to define what constitutes an undue risk and the appropriate corrective action. At QCA, this is what we work on every day with applicants and accredited firms.

PPAI's Product Responsibility Advisory Group (PRAG) includes a number of past and current members from QCA-accredited firms and many of the best practices shared by PRAG come directly from their company programs. These have been shared freely for the betterment of the industry as a whole.

QCA's Compliance Accreditation Program addresses generally accepted definitions of risk, for which QCA applicants and accredited firms develop practicable processes for ensuring adherence to compliance standards. Third-party validation of compliance with the letter of the law and customers' preferences protects the industry, its members, end buyers and end users of our products. Finally, improving a company's processes to adapt to a changing environment for business is appropriate for an industry of any size.

In an industry where product safety is paramount to buyer satisfaction, QCA helps protect company brands and reputations by offering compliance with the highest process standards in the marketplace. PPB

D E Fenton is the executive director – compliance for the Quality Certification Alliance (QCA). Additionally, she has held positions managing overseas manufacturing operations, offshore buying offices and directing corporate compliance for the major U.S. retailer, Walmart.

Tim Brown, MAS, is executive director – operations for QCA. Brown has spent the past decade in the promotional products industry. Most recently, he was product responsibility manager at PPAI. Prior to that, he owned his own compliance consulting firm and was the supplier relationship manager at Cintas Branded Apparel & Promotional Products.

Scan with the Zappar App to reveal an exclusive special from Next.

Your Source for Hard Goods & Promotional Print Products

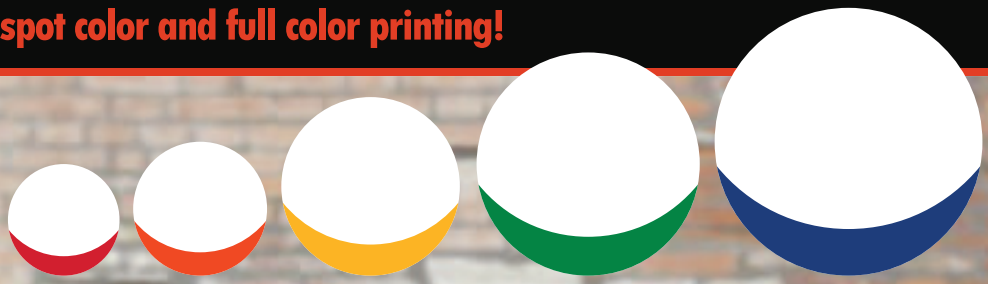
WWW.NEXTPROMOTIONS.COM

ASI: 73871 SAGE: 67367 PPAI: 255687 UPIC: NEXTPRO

Save 15% on your next Basketball Order!*

Highly customizable, 20 plus standard ball colors and hundreds of two tone combinations, great spot color, multiple spot color and full color printing!

Basketballs available in 5 sizes!



2.5" Micro | 3" Pee Wee | 4" Mini | 5" Middie | 6" Large

Backboard shapes

Original

Traditional

Rectangular

Basketballs sets available in 5 sizes!

337, 338 & 339 | # 336 | # 335 | # 333 | # 331

SPORT PRODUCTS PLUS+

*Send us a copy of any industry supplier's football invoice for the same end user and take 15% off a basketball order for that customer. Offer expires February 28th 2017. Cannot be used in conjunction with program pricing.

Visit our booth at PPAI Las Vegas Jan 10-12, ASI Orlando Jan 19-20 and ASI Dallas Feb 2-3 and check out our website at **sportproducts.com** for a LOT MORE **BASKETBALL STUFF!**

CPSIA Compliant ASI 68207/PPAI 112420/SAGE 52485

TRANSFORMING THE INDUSTRY THROUGH TECHNOLOGY, CREATIVITY, & A PASSION FOR BRAND LOVE.

WHO IS BOUNDLESS?

Simply put, we're people who love promotions. We believe promotional products are the best way to connect with the people you care about. Promotions can turn prospects into customers, employees into ambassadors, and everyday people into champions for your cause. There's a name for all of this good will and positive energy. Some call it brand equity. Others call it brand loyalty. We call it **Brand Love**, and we're here to help make that happen.

WHY BOUNDLESS?

We help transform and elevate your business by offering our sales partners the competitive advantage that they're looking for to acquire new business and grow existing accounts.

You don't want to be just another number. You want to excel, stand out, and work at a company that supports you. You don't just want back office support; you want a company that will invest in your professional development and work with you to make sure your needs and your clients' needs are being met. **Boundless does that.**

"I love the incredible flexibility of Boundless—their ability to change and adapt to the economy, growing technology needs, the way buyers shop, and take on new challenges!"

Kim Esson

"In an industry where technology has been changing everything from sourcing to proposals to invoices to artwork to real time inventory, Boundless was and still is what I view as the leader in this innovation."

Ed Sallie

LET'S TALK TECH

BOUNDLESS OFFERS A FREE BRANDED E-COMMERCE STORE TO EVERY CLIENT

24/7 HOUR ACCESS DAYS A WEEK

$13 million

INVESTED IN BACK OFFICE SOLUTIONS AND PROPRIETARY TECHNOLOGY FOR OUR SALES AFFILIATES' SUCCESS.

"Boundless' tools were a no-brainer. This is what my clients are asking for."

Stephanie Lyndon-Wheeler

boundless™

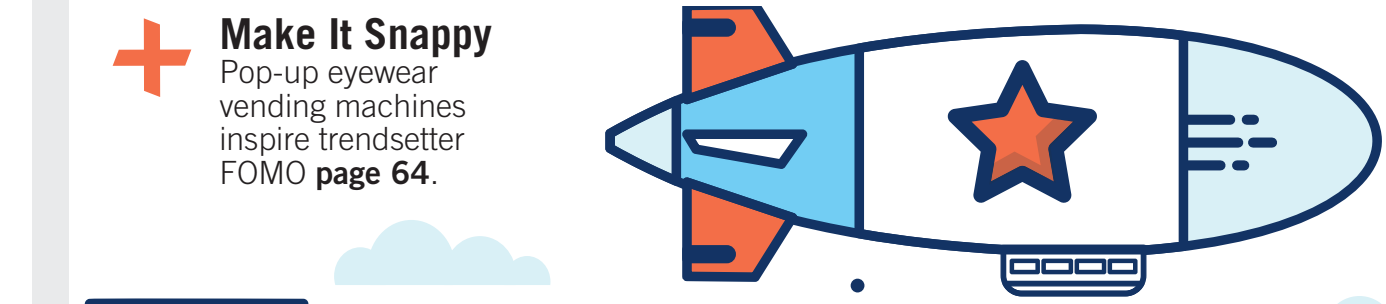
THE POWER OF PROMOTIONS

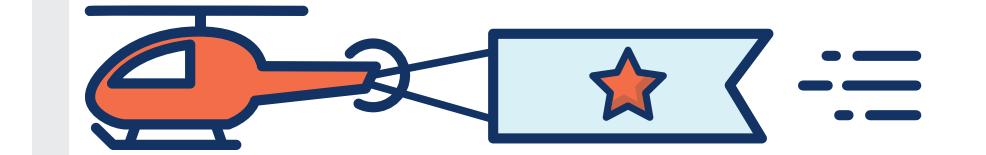
Don't waste your time wishing you could do more for your clients. Take that step, and see how the average Boundless sales affiliate is up 20% year to date. **Schedule a demo today!**

For more information, contact us at 888.898.6671 or visit us online at boundlessnetwork.com/beboundless

PPAI #267078

Make It Snappy
Pop-up eyewear vending machines inspire trendsetter FOMO **page 64**.





64 **FAST FORWARD**
OPENING A CAN OF MARKETING GENIUS

72 **PRODUCT RESPONSIBILITY**
HOW TO COPE WITH DIVERSE CUSTOMER COMPLIANCE STANDARDS

76 **ENTREPRENEUR**
SMART MARKETING

80 **PPAI AWARDS**
CELEBRATING LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

Brand And Deliver

Your brand makes a promise—don't break it.

page 70

by Jen Alexander

AD-ITIVES

Make It Snappy

Pop-up eyewear vending machines inspire trendsetter FOMO

Like a Bigfoot sighting or a triple rainbow, Snap's big yellow vending machines only exist for those who have seen them. The Snapbot machines have been dropped in just a handful of places, on no particular schedule, to dole out picture-taking sunglasses, called Specs, manufactured by the company formerly known as Snapchat—now just known as Snap. The first sighting was in the company's hometown of Venice, California.

Oversized and funky-looking, the sunglasses are outfitted with cameras that let viewers take circular video in a 115-degree field of view, then upload to Snap for instant sharability. But don't blink, because the video only records 10-second spots at a time.

MARKET SHARE

Opening A Can Of Marketing Genius

Tuna company promotes packaging redesign with online instant-win game

When you've already got a fan base on Facebook, how do you improve on social media marketing? Make a game of it, of course. That's what Chicken of the Sea did when it wanted to promote its new pull-tab tuna cans to consumers.

From October to November last year, Facebook users logged on to the company's page and played the interactive Pull It Off Game and Promotion, which offered the chance to win $25,000 in prizes. The online game featured a virtual "kitchen" setting where players tried to grab a tuna can as it revolved on a table—but only EZ-Open cans would open in the game.

The company reported more than 228,000 plays from 45,000 unique players and a resulting 473-percent increase in overall web traffic. Since the program's launch, a record average of 10,700 hours of consumer digital engagement time per week has been measured. More telling than the online numbers are the in-store sales: Chicken of the Sea's EZ-Open product sales increases are in the double digits.

FIVE MINUTES WITH
Jay Deutsch
BDA

Heads Up

Beer promotion scores big with help from bobbleheads, courtesy of BDA, Inc.

Beer supplier Constellation Brands wanted a way to increase in-store visibility and boost sales for the Corona beer brand, so it turned to longtime promotional partner Bensussen, Deutsch & Associates, Inc. for a head-turning idea. Jay Deutsch, CEO and co-founder of BDA, Inc., shares how the Woodinville, Washington-based distributor applied its expertise in bobblehead promotions to turn heads in the marketplace.

PPB **When Constellation approached BDA, what were their goals for the program?**
Constellation has been a client of BDA for years, so when they decided they wanted to increase Corona beer sales during football season, they turned to BDA to create a promotion to gain floor space in stores and ultimately increase beer sales. The only limitation was the fact that the promotion had to be within a budget of $200 per bobblehead.

PPB **How did you come to select Jon Gruden and bobbleheads as the focal point of your product development? What was the process like for obtaining permission to use his likeness, and where were the bobbleheads produced?**

Deutsch [Former pro football coach and current ESPN analyst] Jon Gruden is the current spokesperson for Corona, so it seemed only fitting to use him for this promotion. Once we decided we wanted to involve his likeness, we worked with the Corona brand team to get his approvals.

BDA is the largest producer of bobbleheads and we were on track to produce 3.8 million bobbles last year. However, this is the first time we created a four-foot bobblehead for in-store promotion which makes it so exciting for consumers.

The bobbleheads were distributed to nearly 4,500 stores nationwide. Now, here's the really cool thing our team did. It typically costs up to $350 to ship one of the Gruden bobbles across the country. But by managing the distribution ourselves, our team sent product to seven different distribution points, bringing shipping costs down to $55 per unit.

PPB **How long did the development of the promotion take, from initial meeting to delivery of product? How long did the promotion run in stores?**

Deutsch The initial proof of the concept was created in May 2015 and then we showed a sample of the physical product at the national Gold Network Summit (GNS) in March 2016. And, as they say, the crowd went wild. As soon as Constellation gave the green light on the promotion we went into production from March to June and the first deliveries were made in July and early August. BDA has offices in China that allow us to work directly with a factory for some custom projects. The promotion ran in stores for 30 to 60 days. The biggest lesson we learned from this project is that we must plan ahead. Even with a six-month lead time, we maxed out production on nearly 4,500 four-foot units and 15,000 seven-inch units.

PPB **Beer seems to sell itself pretty well during football season, so how did the bobblehead promotion affect Constellation's sales?**

Deutsch Beer is a crowded category, and the success of this promotion brings attention to the Corona brand during football season. This promotion was all about gaining share of eyes and having something in a unique place with creative displays. Constellation was also able to drive this program throughout distributor networks to drive share of market. The never-before-seen, four-foot Gruden bobblehead also generated a lot of organic social media buzz. Corona was successful in driving nearly 4,500 new placements this season alone.

BRANDABLE

Brand And Deliver

Your brand makes a promise—don't break it.

As a B2B company, your brand does more than serve as an identity; it also serves as a reminder of the promises you make to your customers. A study conducted by McKinsey & Company showed that business buyers rely heavily on vendor reputation to help them make purchasing decisions—sometimes more so than asking questions about service, pricing, product availability and quality.

It's not that these aspects of a business aren't important; rather, the reputation conveyed by a brand serves as a shortcut to the answers. Rather than existing as a marginal element of a company's value proposition, brand plays a central role.

So what does it look like when a company breaks a brand promise? Brand strategy expert Mark DiSomma shares these seven examples:

1. **Overpromising and under-delivering.** A brand doesn't do what it promises, either willingly or because it is unable to.

2. **Delivering on your expectations rather than the consumer's.** Does your customer know what you're promising? If not, chances are high that you'll give them 'X' when they were expecting 'Y.'

3. **Attaching conditions to your promise.** Will you deliver on your promise only if consumers can meet stringent requirements or unrealistic qualifications? If so, you aren't truly prepared to give your customer what you've promised.

4. **Delaying fulfillment.** Whether you miss delivering on a promise by the expected deadline, or you take too long to resolve a customer issue with the promise itself, trust in a brand can erode quickly.

5. **Failing to launch the promise.** Even worse than under-delivering is not delivering on a promise at all. If your product or service isn't ready to share, don't promote it in the hopes that it will be by the time consumers are ready to ask for it.

6. **Promising the obvious.** If you're trying to sell a service that customers already expect, you're merely committing to the minimum, which your customers can get somewhere else for less—if not for free.

7. **Promising what everyone else already has delivered.** Promises that appear to be unique at first can quickly become the norm when other companies deliver on them before you do. Stay in tune with the marketplace to ensure your brand is promising something unique and hard to replicate.

Brand promises, simply stated, tell customers what a company can and will do for them, and how it will be done. Of course, promises can have both explicit and implicit intentions, and the challenge for the company is to learn what its promises mean to the customer first. PPB

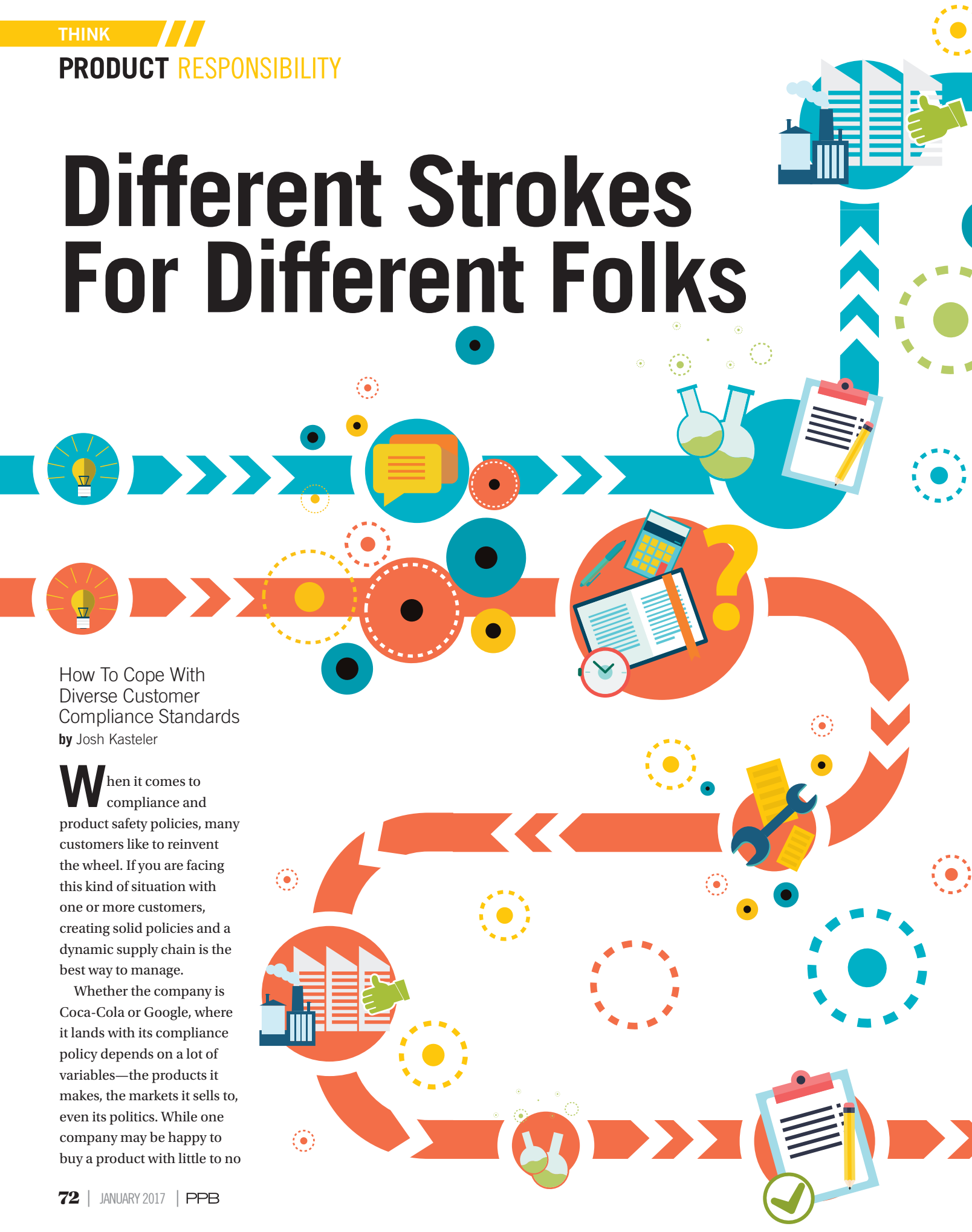
ASI 98975
PPAI 267060
UPIC ZEIT0001

www.logocut.com
www.stillwaterawards.com
801•972•8210
sales@zeitcompany.com

Stillwater AWARDS by ZEIT COMPANY

LOGOCUT

Different Strokes For Different Folks



How To Cope With Diverse Customer Compliance Standards

by Josh Kasteler

When it comes to compliance and product safety policies, many customers like to reinvent the wheel. If you are facing this kind of situation with one or more customers, creating solid policies and a dynamic supply chain is the best way to manage.

Whether the company is Coca-Cola or Google, where it lands with its compliance policy depends on a lot of variables—the products it makes, the markets it sells to, even its politics. While one company may be happy to buy a product with little to no

The avoidance of risk drives a lot of compliance policy decisions, and companies that have had a recall or safety issue in the recent past will typically be much more demanding of their vendors.

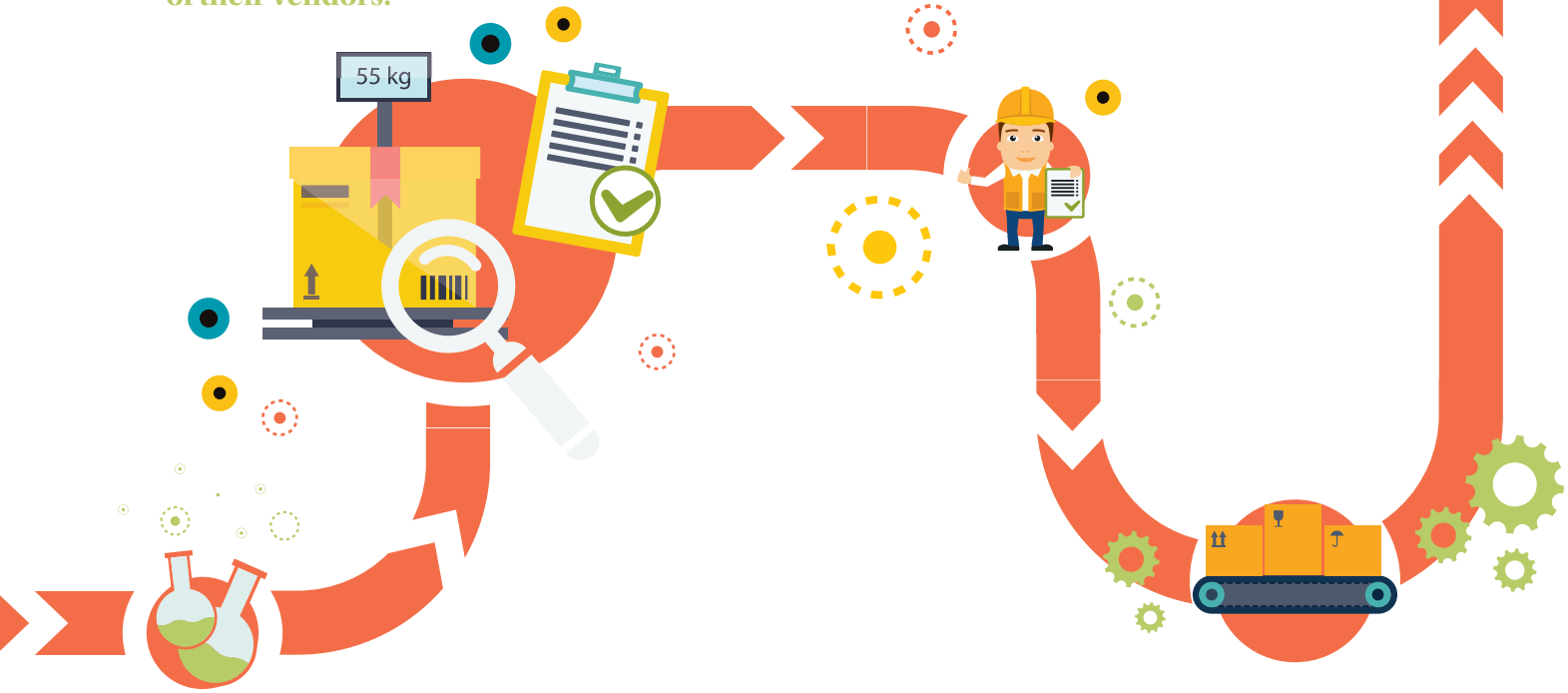
testing, another company may require the same product to be tested as though a baby would chew on it. For many distributors and suppliers, it's increasingly harder to satisfy all the people all the time.

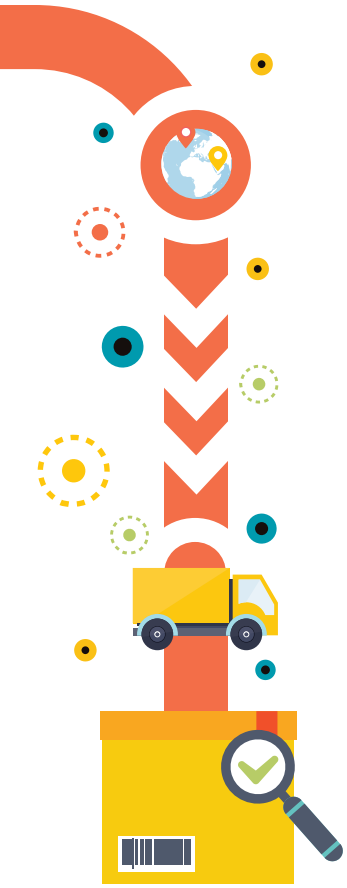
This variability has a lot to do with a company's risk tolerance. The avoidance of risk drives a lot of compliance policy decisions, and companies that have had a recall or safety issue in the recent past will typically be much more demanding of their vendors. While some companies might be OK with an outdated test report, others may want to see testing on the same batch of products they are buying.

Many of us offer a wide variety of products, from simple shopping bags to complex electronics—and each one of the products has its own collection of legal requirements and/or industry standards. Some product requirements are straightforward—such as for kids' items or products that hold food. Other product requirements, such as for electronics, are not so clear. They might have few legal requirements, but electronics have strong voluntary requirements that have a big impact on safety. Every one of your customers may have their own idea on what standards to adopt.

Creating a supply chain that can cope with differing customer requirements is a real challenge. It takes a robust compliance program, supply chain transparency and a dynamic sourcing team that can react quickly. Here are some areas to focus on to help you meet the challenge:

Do a product risk assessment. A standardized, documented review of each of your products is a key step. A proper assessment not only ensures you identify all potential risks, it also allows you





It's as important to know when to say "no" as it is to say "yes." Many labs may blur the line between testing that is mandatory and just a best practice.

to define possible legislation and industry standards that may apply to your product. Most importantly, it allows you to anticipate the standards and testing your customer may want, and guides you on how to discuss these with customers from an informed position.

Know your customer. Consider the brand values of your potential customer. Does the brand have anything to do with the environment, health or children? If so, chances are their compliance requirements will be much higher and you'll want to pitch them products that have high compliance standards. Also, consider if they have had recent issues with products in the marketplace, as this usually affects their risk tolerance.

Set a compliance baseline. Take stock of your bigger customers and make sure your standard testing policy is up to their expectations. Testing to the legal minimum should be the starting point and helps ensure you aren't introducing regulatory risk to your customer's supply chain. A few years ago the "legal minimum" would satisfy most customers, but this is rapidly changing. Many industry standards are now considered a minimum requirement even if not legislated. On top of that, compliance to many laws, such as California's Proposition 65 and Illinois' Lead Poisoning Prevention Act, can be tackled in different ways.

Segment your product line. One strategy that many companies have adopted is to split up your product offering based on compliance. For example, if you have a big-brand customer that treats everything as though it's a children's item, it may be worth it to test a larger portion of your product line to the CPSIA standard to capture more business. Another tactic is to provide Proposition 65 protection to a line of products for those customers that ship to California but don't like to apply a warning label.

Scrutinize your lab proposals. It's as important to know when to say "no" as it is to say "yes." Many labs may blur the line between testing that is mandatory and just a best practice. You might end up with a Cadillac testing plan when all you need is one suited to a Kia. Make sure you get an itemized list of each test method and understand what law or industry standard it is designed to meet. This will help keep costs down as your testing activities become more complex.

Guide your customer. Often client companies have a compliance standard that they don't really understand. In some cases, they'll appreciate some pushback and updates if there is good reason to do so. In many cases this can help save on testing costs as well as widen the types of products they can include in their program. In the end, you may be able to lead your customers to a different place from where they started, as well as giving you an opportunity to impress.

Consider screening technologies. Having quick, in-house testing technologies can give a company a way to quickly prove that their products are safe. In some cases, when a customer has a compliance requirement not based on legislation, a quick scan by an XRF analyzer or portable FTIR testing equipment may be enough to satisfy the requirement without the need for expensive and time-consuming third-party testing.

Over time you may develop compliance strategies for each customer and end up with a complex web of requirements. And we haven't even discussed social compliance yet, which also brings another level of audit formats, documentation and expectations.

In the end, we may be setting up small, separate supply chains for each major customer that produces products to specific standards. To do that well, a company needs in-house compliance expertise, close factory partners and a culture of transparency. Companies that are successful at this should be well positioned for the next five years as the promotional products industry evolves. PPB

Josh Kasteler is director of product integrity at distributor BAMKO. Reach him at jkasteler@bamko.net.

Rewards
To Fit **Every** Lifestyle

Providing the Rymax lifestyle to your consumers and employees is easy. Our proven solutions can help your company retain employees, drive engagement, improve loyalty and increase revenue.

Contact us today for a customized solution that's right for you.

Rymax has over 300 brands and 15,000 products including:

ALOR · COLE & MASON · CORAVIN · GAIAM · KEF · Julióska

JOHNSTON & MURPHY · MCM · MICHAEL KORS · ROLI · THULE · VERSACE

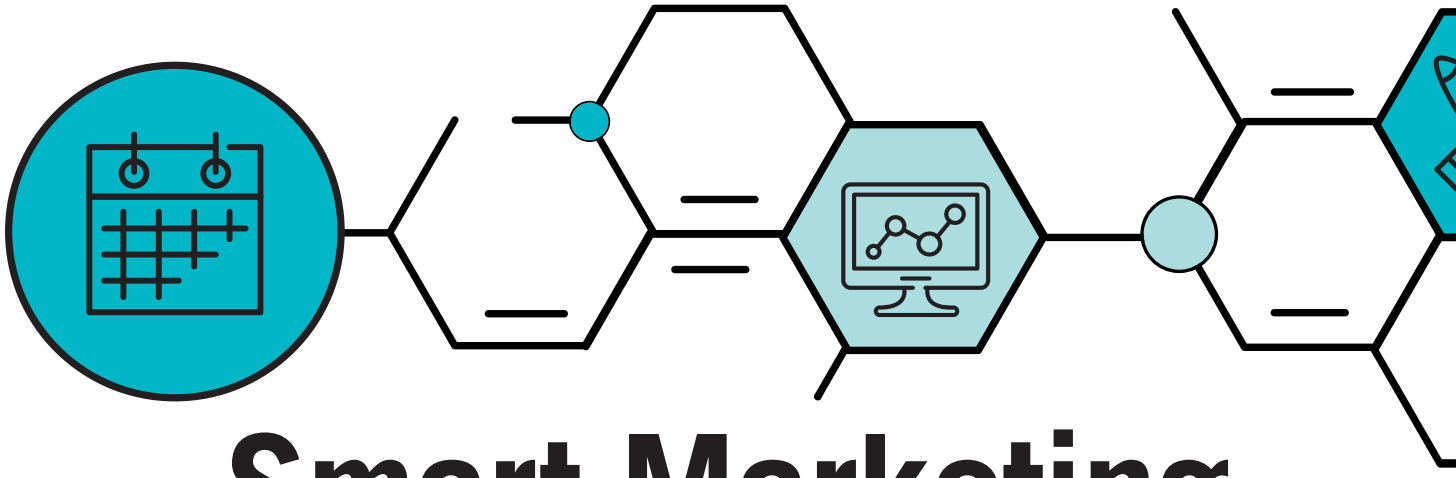
VISIT US AT
PPAI BOOTH #605

RYMAX
MARKETING SERVICES, INC.™

866.RYMAX.11 • www.rymaxinc.com

Incentive Solutions Delivered. Worldwide.

Copyright © 2016 Rymax Marketing Services, Inc. All rights reserved.



Smart Marketing

Why Do Businesses Need Marketing? It Starts The Conversation With Clients.

by Abigail Tiefenthaler

Third in a five-part series

Last month's article was on the most foundational part of your marketing, your brand. Your brand is everything, and without it, there is no reason to market your business. Marketing without purposely creating a brand is a waste of time, money and effort. Your brand is that important.

Promotional products are a huge part of the marketing conversation. Promotional items build brands. They inspire brands. They make brands memorable. Yet, so many promotional products distributors and suppliers don't think of their business as their brand. And, as a result, industry businesses get lost in the shuffle. Your brand is your reason to market. It is the essence of your business. It's who you are, what you do and how you serve. It sets you apart in your competitive marketplace. Whether you manufacture, decorate or sell some of the 700,000 promotional items available in our industry, a strong brand will make or break your business.

If you didn't read the article on branding in the December issue, I encourage you to go back and look it over. Good branding is the first step to developing results-oriented marketing. And, every business needs marketing. Why? What makes marketing so important? Marketing starts the conversation! It moves people through their own decision-making process to get to "yes!" It builds visibility, authority and trust. You need marketing to create a thriving business.

If you don't want to feel like you're always selling and pushing your product, marketing helps bring people to you—qualified people, people who are ready to say "yes" before you even make the offer.

More importantly, if you don't want to feel like an order taker or that you are always competing on price, you need to make marketing a priority because the right positioning (developed during the branding process) makes you a unique and different solution to your ideal client's business challenge. They need you!

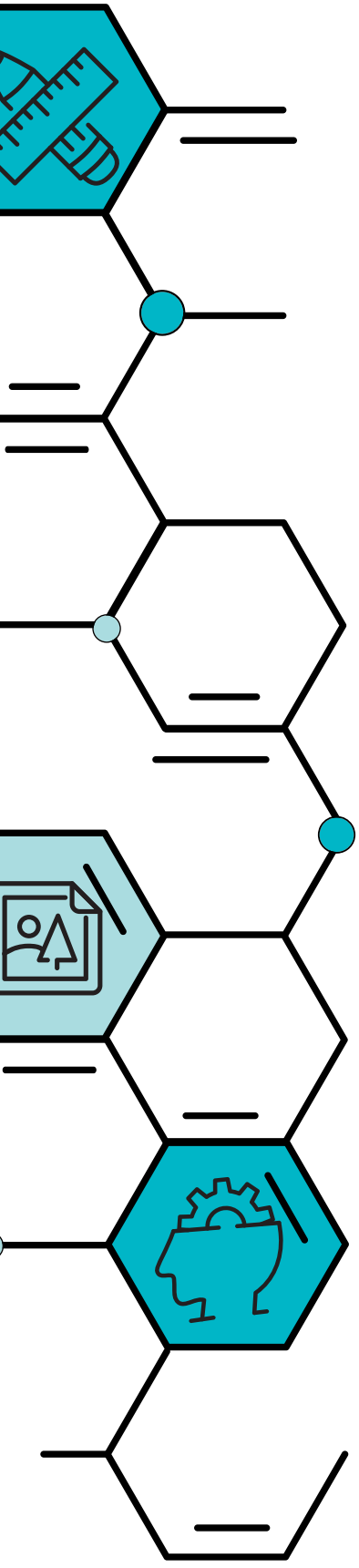
Build a brand and you will build a business. It's that simple. But without marketing, no one will know who you are.

First Steps First

Where do you start? You start with a marketing plan. Benjamin Franklin said, "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail." And, he was right. Planning organizes your thinking so you can focus, structure and prioritize. Planning gets you one step closer to action because it helps you see what is possible, and create a series of steps to make something happen.

What are the critical elements of an effective marketing plan? What will help you create a roadmap you can use? Make sure your plan includes the following:

A measurable goal. What do you want to achieve with your business? How are you going to measure your results? Where is your business now? Answering these questions is the first step. Marketing is a people mover. You want to move people through their own decision-making process to choose you. So, why are they choosing you? Where do you want them to go? Where are they now? Knowing these



answers helps you start thinking about the how's of getting them to their destination.

Hopefully, you're setting goals regularly in your business. If not, now is a good time to start. While marketing is creative, it's also a test in analytics. Marketing is a create-implement-review-modify discipline. It's a balance of art and science. Goals help you chart your course. You can set your goals based on a number of criteria. For instance: total number of customers? Or, dollar amount of average order? Or, maybe, frequency of orders? Or, number of new customers? Knowing what you want to focus on is necessary for creating a plan. And, here is where most business owners get caught: they want to focus on everything. They want to improve the numbers everywhere, but it's almost impossible to do that at one time. Pick one area to start and build from there. And, pick a timeframe for measuring your progress.

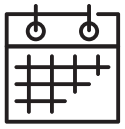
A clearly defined strategy. The strategy is your big picture view of what you want to see happen. Think of it as the airstrike versus the ground war. You can't reach a goal without a strategy, and it's hard to create a strategy without a goal. A strategy is singular. You can use any criteria but it's important to start with one. Even the biggest companies, with the biggest marketing dollars don't implement multiple strategies. You might decide that you're going to create a strategy around increasing the average order per customer. Now, how might this be accomplished? In our industry, you might help clients see price breaks at higher ordering quantities and encourage them to stock up. You could offer bundled solutions to get clients to buy more at a time. You might see if multiple departments or locations want to order at the same time to increase the order size. You might decide to focus on companies that are larger and order more at one time. The strategy is up to you, but once you start thinking about it, you will be thinking about your business on a more strategic level.

A budget. It's important to allocate a budget for any activity that you do in your business, and that budget should include money, time and effort. With so many non-cost marketing opportunities available today it's important to consider time and effort as you budget for your marketing. Social media, networking, blogging—these are all marketing activities and they need to ultimately provide a return on your investment, just like paid media. As a rule of thumb, consider allocating 10 percent of projected sales to marketing activities. Then, outline the types of marketing activities you could potentially do. Evaluate which activities are the best use of your money, time and effort. Free marketing might sound like a great option ***until*** you find out that it's costing you time with clients, or time you would spend billing.

Tactics that are specific and customer-centric. You cannot, and should not, do every activity you think about. Not every tactic is right for your business. Not every tactic will move a prospect along their decision-making path. The more specific your marketing activities, the better the results. Deciding what to do can be hard, because there are a lot of options out there. Think about your customer. Think about where they are toward their goals and what they need. The more you think about what your customer needs, and the less you think about what you're trying to tell them, the better your marketing will be. Marketing's sweet spot is where your activities align with your strategy and your goals, and where they connect on brand.

In deciding which types of marketing activities to pursue, consider all types, including advertising, promotion, merchandising and public relations. Understand how each of these areas of marketing differs. Advertising is paid media, promotion is using your own media, and public relations activities are usually specific events designed to get publicity. Every marketing plan should use a combination of tactics to maximize reach and exposure. Here is another area where business owners often get tripped up. They focus on one media. With all the noise today, it's important to use multiple marketing tactics so that you have more ways to grab your target audience's attention. Find out where your ideal client is and how they want to learn more about you, and build your ground war from there. Consider targeting your content as you target your activities. Make sure your copy and graphics are on message and on brand.

Marketing should permeate your business. Never waste an opportunity to market your business. Think about every potential client experience and



A good marketing plan is frequent, consistent and intentional, and should be reviewed and modified every three to six months.

make sure your brand shows up as its best. Make sure you look at the before, during and after transaction steps. Marketing doesn't stop once you get a customer. Instead, the focus of your marketing should shift from bringing them in to making them feel welcomed and appreciated. Remember, you're building relationships. Think of your business's pre-sale as the curb appeal of a house—then bring customers into your house. How do you want to make them feel so they return again and again, and bring other people with them?

A good marketing plan is frequent, consistent and intentional, and should be reviewed and modified every three to six months. Marketing builds over time, so be patient. Be willing to shift as you analyze results. Be open to trying new things.

Remember, there is no one secret to success, but there is *your* secret to success. You just have to find that special marketing "something" that works for you.

It is in marketing your business that I recommend you hire the best professional you can afford. Don't just hire a tactical expert, hire someone who can help you see the big picture, see beyond what *you* can see and see it at a 360-degree view. Marketing is where you can transform your business.

I always compare marketing to that high-maintenance friend or family member. You love them but they make you crazy. Yes, that's marketing. PPB

Watch for Part 4 of this series on sales strategies in the February issue.

Abigail Tiefenthaler, founder of Aiken, South Carolina-based distributor Sweetspot Strategies, Inc., is also a speaker and consultant helping entrepreneurs run the businesses they really want to run. With 30-plus years of business experience, including 15 years in corporate America working in a variety of marketing capacities, and 19 years running an award-winning promotional products business that put her in the top five percent of the industry, Tiefenthaler understands how critical it is to play full out, and use marketing for the heavy lifting it is designed to do. Her goal is simple: simplify the marketing process and eliminate confusion. Reach her at spmi@mindspring.com or 954-804-9413.

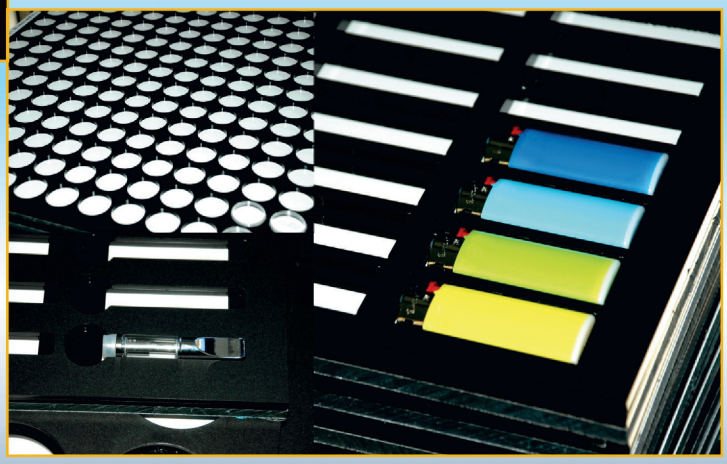
RB FABRICATION INCORPORATED

Better Ideas in Acrylic®

RBFabrication.com
Stock or custom acrylic awards

ACRAprint®.com
FULL COLOR PROCESS ON ACRYLIC
LOGOS PHOTOS GRAPHICS FONTS

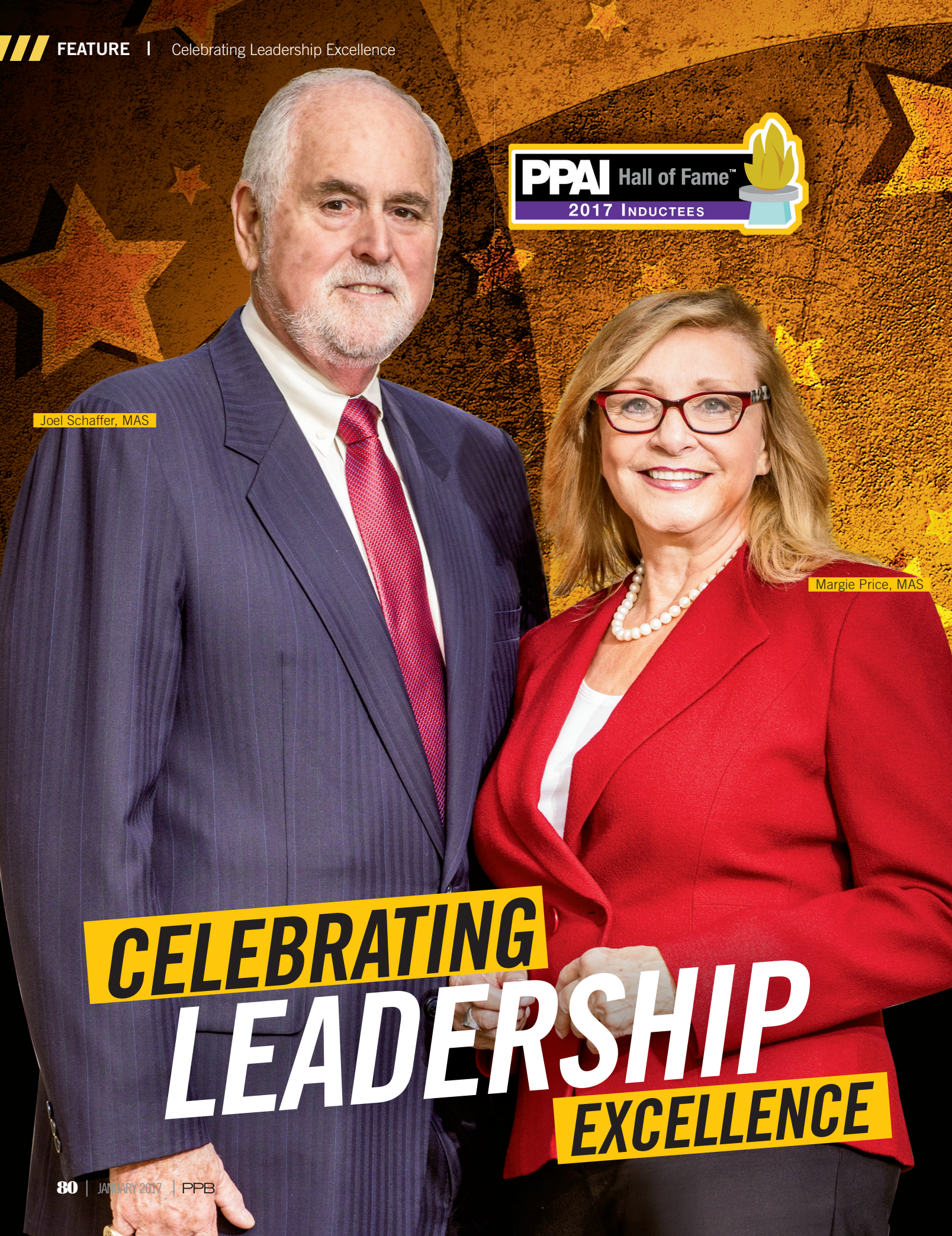
LOGOBLOCKS.COM
Blank or printed logo blocks



AcraLaser.com®
LASER CUT ACRYLIC

Laser cutting of acrylic plastics
Printer jigs, awards and shapes

R. B. Fabrication, Inc. 2296-B Batavia Street, Orange, CA 92865 Phone: (714) 998-2700 Fax: (714) 998-2701



CELEBRATING LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE

PPAI's top awards in 2017 salute four whose commitment has shaped the Association, and enriched the industry and our world.

Joe Scott

PPAI Distinguished Service Award™
2017 Award Recipient

H. Wayne Roberts

PPAI H. Ted Olson Humanitarian Award™
2017 Award Recipient

THE POWER OF THE PERSONAL CONNECTION

PPAI Hall of Fame inductee Margie Price, MAS, built industry success one interaction at a time.

by Julie Richie

You might think that after receiving virtually every PPAI award, from the 2011 Woman of Achievement Award to the 2012 PPAI Distinguished Service Award to the inaugural H. Ted Olson Humanitarian Award in 2012, Margie Price, MAS, president of St. Louis, Missouri-based distributor Premiums Plus, Inc. (PPAI 107727) might *expect* to be inducted into the PPAI Hall of Fame. But you'd be wrong.

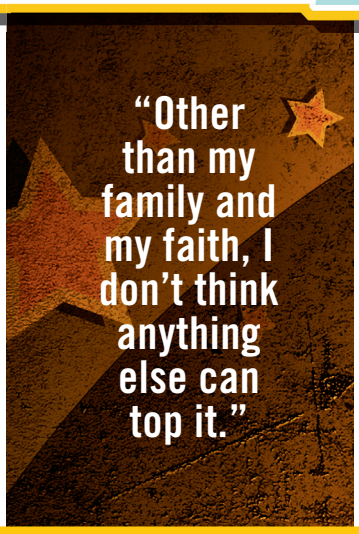
Price says, "This is the epitome of awards. When I'm long gone, my name is still going to be there, leaving a footprint in PPAI's history, and our industry's history for that matter. I'm not sure how I feel about it. I don't know that I deserve it. When I believe in something and I love something, I participate. I've known so many people over the years whom I've worked with that I think should be in the Hall of Fame and I wonder why I am there because I think I pale by comparison. I love that I'm going in, but I still don't quite believe it. It's all very surreal."

Shortly after PPAI made its Hall of Fame announcement this past summer, Price received a congratulatory call from her friend and 2009 Hall of Fame inductee Jo-an Lantz, MAS, COO of Geiger. Price asked Lantz when the reality of being inducted into the Hall of Fame sank in, and Lantz told her that it was after the ceremony when she went onstage with former inductees and realized that she was now part of that group. "Maybe then, I'll get it," Price says of the upcoming presentation at The PPAI Expo. "But it means so very much to me. Other than my family and my faith, I don't think anything else can top it."

Price's contributions to PPAI and the industry as an active member and devoted volunteer over the past 26 years are legendary. In 2004, she served as chair of the Promotional Products Education Foundation (PPEF) and she was instrumental in the creation of the first Women's Leadership Conference in 2005, chairing the event in 2008 and 2009 and serving as an advisor in 2010. She worked collaboratively to help develop the Women's Leadership Conference Grant program that was introduced in 2012.

Price also served on the PPAI Board of Directors twice—once as the Regional Association Council (RAC) delegate from 2001-2003 and again as a director from 2005 to 2009. During her time on the board she chaired many board committees, including the End Buyer Task Force in 2006, the Governance Task Force in 2008 and subcommittees of the Leadership Advisory Committee from 2010 to 2011. She currently serves on the PPAI Government Relations Action Council and is a five-time Legislative Education and Action Day (L.E.A.D. attendee.

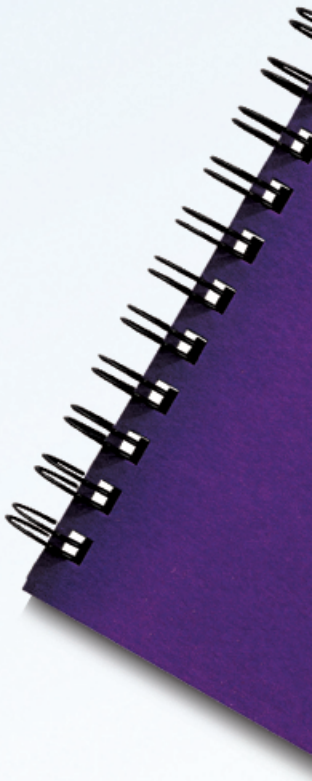
At the regional level, Price has also



Margie with her husband, Herschel.

It's easy!

Company Stores for your clients, Order Management software for you.



BRIGHTStores

Stop by Booth 4274 at the PPAI Expo for a demo.

Margie Price, MAS, is joined by members of her 2009 board class: (from left) Stan Breckenridge, MAS; Darryl Haddox and Paul Miller, MAS, and RAC delegate Mark Fyten, MAS.

"So many people in our trade association are part of my family. That's what this industry is all about. We meet people who become lifelong friends."

Price, shown with members of the PPAI Board of Directors, served on the board from 2005-2009.

volunteered in numerous leadership capacities. She served on the Promotional Products Association of the Midwest (PPAM) board from 1995 to 2004 and served as PPAM president from 1997 to 1998.

Price's nominator, 1994 Hall of Fame inductee Margaret Custer-Ford, MAS, founder of MARCO Ideas Unlimited (PPAI 106680), says, "Margie is a perfectionist. She does all manner of good and helpful things, never beating her own drum, but just quietly making it happen, and happen it does. Not only has she done many, many things for us as an association, but she seems to have unlimited energy for many charitable causes as well."

In addition to running her company and volunteering with PPAI, Price is heavily involved in many organizations in her community, including the St. Louis Men's Group Against Cancer, which she has led as executive director since 1985. Every year she plans its spectacular November auction and dinner fundraiser. The most recent event brought together 550 St. Louis-area business leaders to hear legendary football coach and ESPN analyst Lou Holtz speak, and it raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for St. Louis-area cancer patients and their families.

She's also passionate about her work with the Center for Head Injury Services, a community-based organization that provides services to victims of head injuries and their families. Her son, Dennis, who suffered a severe head injury as a child, benefits from the center's services. "He's an amazing person—the strongest person I know," says Price.

Her identical twin daughters, Melissa and Teresa, both St. Louis prosecutors, will be at The PPAI Expo to watch as Price is inducted into the Hall of Fame. "They are really, really good at what they do," Price says proudly.

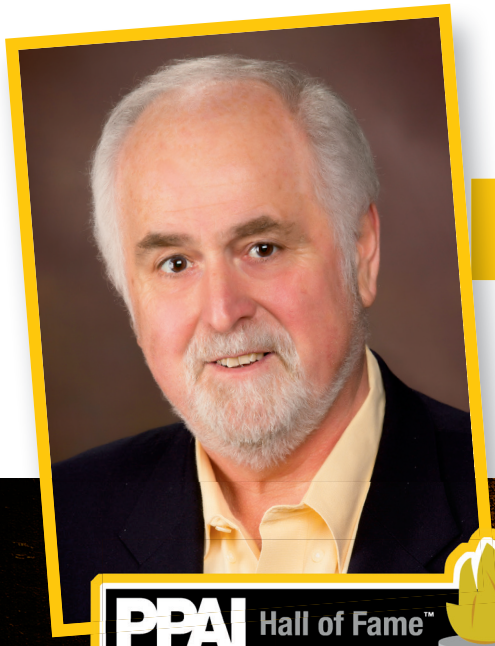
But to Price, family doesn't just include her children and her husband, Herschel. It also includes everyone in her company and her friends in the industry. "So many people in our trade association are part of my family. I belong to The Partnering Group and I consider them my family. I have Diva sisters [a group of industry women] and they're part of my family. That's what this industry is all about. We meet people who become lifelong friends."

Price is generous about sharing her friendship and knowledge with newcomers. "I love to see new people at the Expo, sitting in classes. I love to sit at a table and not know anybody there and introduce myself. They say it's their first year or second year and I ask, 'Did you volunteer for anything? Have you gotten involved? Are you part of your regional [association]?'"

She has this advice for newcomers on how to be successful in the industry: "Sit up front in general sessions and classes, and never leave an empty seat next to you. Sit next to somebody, introduce yourself and find out what they do. You could be talking to someone who has been in the industry for 40 years, who's a Hall of Famer and has won every other award, and has so much to share with you in just five or 10 minutes. Spread your wings and meet more people. Don't stay with your group of friends."

And, Price says, be sure to volunteer with your regional association and PPAI because it pays off in your career. "Being involved with PPAI has made me better at what I do," she says.

Julie Richie is associate editor of PPB.



LEGACY OF A LIFETIME

PPAI Hall of Fame inductee Joel Schaffer, MAS, is an icon of the industry.

by James Khattak

"I am so very proud and thankful to join so many marvelous people who are in the Hall of Fame. It is even better when the award is pre-posthumous."

The PPAI Hall of Fame has, since 1977, honored leaders in the promotional products industry who have made a lasting impact on the field and their communities. And through his advocacy and support at both the regional and national levels, in areas as diverse as professional education and government relations, Joel Schaffer, MAS, president of Soundline, LLC, in Randolph, New Jersey, has left an indelible mark on the promotional products industry and the companies and organizations that serve it.

"When you enjoy the work you do for others and then get recognized for it, that's fulfillment," says Schaffer. "I am so very proud and thankful to join so many marvelous people who are in the Hall of Fame. It is even better when the award is pre-posthumous."

Schaffer has worked in the promotional products industry for 47 years, beginning his career with positions at companies including Jostens and Leathersmith of London. In 1986 he started his own business, publishing an audio magazine for the promotional products industry, which ultimately became Soundline in 1991.

With almost half a century in the industry under his belt, Schaffer has an extensive history of involvement in its regional and national organizations. And his contributions have been recognized. The Specialty Advertising Association of Greater New York (SAAGNY) inducted Schaffer into its Hall of Fame in 2002 and he was inducted into the SAAGNY Foundation Hall of Fame in 2005. ASI presented him with its Marvin Spike Professional Lifetime Achievement Award in 2002 and PPAI recognized his accomplishments with the Distinguished Service Award in 2011.

"Joel is the most passionately creative advocate for promotional products, for the industry and for our Association that I have ever known," says Paul A. Kiewiet, MAS+, executive director of the Michigan Promotional Professionals Association and Schaffer's nominator for the PPAI Hall of Fame. "I have learned so much from this man from his educational sessions. I had the privilege of serving with Joel on the board of PPAI and witnessed his leadership and work ethic."

Schaffer's volunteerism in the industry began in the '70s, with the Association of Metropolitan Advertising Specialty Suppliers (AMASS)—he served on the merger committee that brought it together with SAAGNY in 1976—and he knows first hand the value of dedicating time and energy to causes and organizations that one believes in.

"Volunteer service has done more for my professional and business life than any ad, any email, trade show or online posting," says Schaffer. "Soundline has benefited from my exposure to thousands of industry professionals throughout the world. This serendipitous exposure has built new and loyal clients. People want to do business with those of us who understand what they do for a living and who reflect a high level of professionalism. They gain trust in you and your company."

His volunteer service has included a term on the PPAI Board of Directors from 2004 to 2008 and he has participated in several of the Association's committees, taskforces and work groups, most recently the Certification Committee from 2014

to 2015. He served on the SAAGNY board from 1992 to 2000, including a term as its president, and as a SAAGNY Foundation trustee from 1995 to 2007.

His accomplishments during that time were extensive, including helping set the foundation for today's Regional Association Council (RAC), at a 1998 summit of regional associations in Chicago.

Looking back at them, Schaffer says, "I have been (rightfully) accused by those I served with of being too creative, too much an agent of change and great at starting projects, but letting others complete them. Guilty, your Honor.

"There are many things I am proud of in my service. Having helped raise the bar on professionalism for thousands of suppliers and distributors over the years may be my proudest accomplishment. It is followed closely by having a significant role in reshaping what is RAC today. Beyond that, there are little things that have endured—the 'invention' of the first Valet Express at trade shows, being the first to donate my speaker honorarium to PPEF. However, every step of the way there were fantastic volunteers with me. Indeed, it takes a team."

Beyond the business advantages and professional milestones, volunteerism has brought Schaffer strong bonds and turned colleagues and acquaintances into friends. He notes, "I have rubbed elbows with the best of the best. Their knowledge was willingly shared. Their viewpoints helped me understand areas I had little or no expertise in. The takeaway transcends business. Volunteerism builds lifelong personal friendships with those who serve with you. I have many, many personal friendships lasting decades with people with whom I served. It is a priceless benefit you simply know is coming when you first raise your hand to volunteer."

"Volunteerism must be inherited as both my children, Allison and Brett, have and continue to volunteer for this industry," Schaffer adds. "Without the endless support of your family, volunteerism is more difficult. The number one enabler in my life is my wife and partner, Elyse. In turn, all of my family has satisfaction in knowing it was a job well done by us all."

Kiewiet adds, "Joel has challenged and changed many people and has made the industry a stronger one and the Association more engaged and alive. His influence on this Association will continue for many, many years and I can think of no one more deserving than him to receive our highest honor."

Reflecting on his induction into the PPAI Hall of Fame, Schaffer concludes, "Above all, being inducted into the Hall of Fame means … 'Thank you, job well done.' That is the ultimate paycheck one can get from volunteer service. I am honored to take my place next to an impressive list of people who have built this fantastic industry."

James Khattak is news editor of PPB.

"I have many, many personal friendships lasting decades with people with whom I served. It is a priceless benefit you simply know is coming when you first raise your hand to volunteer."

Joel Schaffer, MAS, pictured on the back row, was an engaged and outspoken volunteer during his service on the PPAI Board of Directors from 2004 to 2008.

Made in USA

WOODY'Z® DRINKWARE

Plastic Drinkware Designed for Fun & Profit

Great Prices & Service!

Woody'z Team takes pride in providing service beyond your expectations.
Woody'z staff works with you on every detail of your requests & requirements!

We sell worldwide - No matter where you are, where you ship . . .
let WOODY'Z help make it happen for you!

Markets & Events Where our Products are Popular:

Sports Concessions & Awards
Schools
Festivals & Fairs
Gaming
Hospitality-Pools
Retail Shops
Corporate
Special Events
Concessions
Restaurants & Nightclubs
Pubs & Bars
Weddings & Parties
Bachelors / Bachelorettes
Bar & Bat Mitzvahs
Graduations
Theme Parks
Zoos
and more.

WOODY'Z®
Est. 1997
Woman Owned

www.WOODYZ.com
info@woodyz.com
for free samples & catalog

Tel: 714.708.2203 • Fax: 714.708.2206

asi 98175 sage 68182 ppai 331512 upic W007

Our Wholesalers:

ACC · alphabroder · Carolina Made · Commonwealth Cotton · Heritage Sportswear · McCreary's Tees · One Stop · Mission Imprintables · PrintGear · Staton · TSC Apparel · TSF Sportswear · Whispering Pines Sportswear

www.adamsheadwear.com • http://ecatalog.adamsheadwear.com

GIVING BACK COMES FULL CIRCLE

Joe Scott's selfless contributions earn him the 2017 PPAI Distinguished Service Award

by Tina Berres Filipski

PPAI Distinguished Service Award™
2017 Award Recipient

"Volunteers are the soul of our Association … Every interaction we have with a member in need, no matter how small, has the potential to change a life—both personally and professionally."

Joe Scott, second from right, enjoys some down time with his soccer team, Nations United, for which he plays goalie.

Joe Scott is the kind of guy you'd want as your business partner, your trusted confidant, your mentor, your colleague, your neighbor, your friend. His easygoing manner and quiet confidence draw people to him, but his dedication to giving back to help others and his industry make him a standout volunteer on many levels.

Scott, vice president of distributor Scott & Associates, Inc. in Chanhassen, Minnesota, will be recognized with PPAI's highest honor for volunteerism, the Distinguished Service Award, this month at The PPAI Expo.

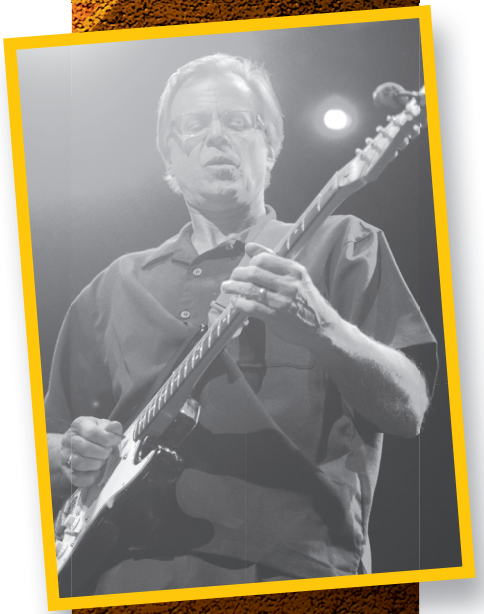
Volunteerism is something Scott learned as a boy by watching his mom and dad, who were active volunteers in their community. He saw the impact of his parents' involvement on the lives of others, and he and his brothers benefitted from being included in his parents' local network. So when Scott was asked to contribute an article to this magazine in 1996, he jumped in with both feet. "I had never done such a thing," he admits, adding that he accepted the challenge but stressed out about the article. He says he was surprised to see that his article was only lightly edited and published. Since then, he's gone on to write a number of articles for *PPB* as well as for other industry and business publications.

Once he discovered how good it felt to contribute, he looked for other ways to get involved. And there were plenty of opportunities for the smart, unflappable Scott, who always kept his promises. He began to share his industry expertise from the podium as an in-demand industry speaker at PPAI, SAGE and regional association shows, and through PPAI webinars. Over the years, he's also spoken about promotional marketing to high school and college students as a PPAI Advocate presenter.

In 2005 he took his volunteerism to the next level when he was elected to the board of directors for the Upper

"I was surprised—and laughed out loud—when I found out I was nominated. What did I do to be considered?"

Scott, and his wife and business partner, Katie.



A long-time musician, Scott is shown playing guitar in the 3-Car Garage Band.

Midwest Association of Promotional Professionals (UMAPP), an organization for which he served as president in 2010. That year was a busy one for Scott, who runs his full-service promotional agency along with his wife, Katie, and four others, and who was also serving his second of a four-year term on the PPAI board.

Asked how he strikes a balance between volunteering, operating the business, his family and other obligations, Scott says, "It's easy to get out of whack when you get into a volunteer mode. The best way I found to strike a balance is to, initially, only volunteer for things that have finite start and stop dates, such as events: you show up at 8 pm, do some things, leave at 10 pm. Things get tricky when you volunteer for committees or a board, which is why it is important to sanity-test the actual time commitment with someone who has done the job." He adds that mature organizations tend to have fewer time-commitment surprises than start-ups. "When I joined the PPAI board, I knew exactly what I was getting myself into, timewise."

Scott's service extends beyond the promotional products industry; he's also served on the board for Buy Chanhassen (a group focused on helping local businesses), the Chanhassen Rotary, the Chanhassen Planning Commission, and as a chief fundraiser and secretary for the house corporation board of Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity. He's currently on the board, as treasurer, at Island View Golf Club.

"Joe is a great example of leading by example," says his nominator, Steven Meyer, MAS, president of supplier RiteLine and a former PPAI board chair who worked with Scott during their PPAI and UMAPP board service. "I considered his comments and shared insights, both public and private, as invaluable to my role at both associations."

Scott says volunteering has taught him that you can't fix everything and you can't help everyone, so you should pick one thing at which you can excel. For others who want to get involved, he recommends choosing an organization in which you are interested, asking for their articles of incorporation, bylaws and tax returns and going to a couple of meetings before you commit. "Finding a volunteer culture that meshes with yours is really important," he advises. "Take on one challenge at a time and don't take on more responsibility until you fully understand the time commitment."

From a business standpoint, Scott is pragmatic about the time, talent and effort he generously shares with carefully selected organizations, but when asked what the PPAI Distinguished Service Award means to him personally, he swallows hard and ponders the question as if he hadn't really thought about it from that perspective before.

"Volunteers are the soul of our Association and those who have come before us still live on via the contributions of their mentees," he says, carefully. "Every interaction we have with a member in need, no matter how small, has the potential to change a life—both personally and professionally.

"I was surprised—and laughed out loud—when I found out I was nominated. What did I do to be considered?

"It was when I was sent a document showing all of my volunteer activities since 1996 did it dawn on me. I wasn't aware of how much stuff I had done; it was as natural as breathing. It also dawned on me that none of this would have happened had I not met a certain editor at The PPAI Expo in 1996 who offered me my first volunteer opportunity."

Tina Berres Filipski is editor of PPB.

NEW PRODUCTS 2017

MINYA COLLECTIONS

PPAI EXPO January 8-12, 2017 Booth# 3541

PPAI 112523 ASI/ 73170 SAGE/ 52627

Crystal LightBulb Trophy

C-2045S
Crystal Light Bulb Short Trophy
As low as $33.00 (R)

C-2045
Crystal Light Bulb Tall Trophy
As low as $38.00 (R)

Metal Puzzle Pen Set

MI-1338
Metal Puzzle Pen Set
As low as $12.00 (R)

DONUT SHAPE SILICONE GRIP

MI-5588
Silicone Hand Grip
As low as $5.25 (R)

- Improves dexterity
- Stress reliever
- Strengthen forearm & grip
- Improves blood circulation
- Available in 10 colors
- 30 lbs & 60 lbs workout levels

Soft Touch Silicone, Easy to clean

Crystal Golf Pen Set

C-2061
Crystal Golf Club Pen Set
As low as $21.00 (R)

C-2061A
Crystal Golfball & Club Pen Set
As low as $28.50 (R)

MINYA COLLECTIONS W | www.minyausa.com E | minyausa@minyausa.com P | 800.858.1878

Are you working with the right print provider?

Here, take our card.

Why Navitor? We're here to give you more than just our card. We work hard to offer you competitive pricing, large product selections, quality customer service, and years of experience that have helped us become part of the 3rd largest printing company in the United States.

BECOME A NAVITOR DEALER TODAY!

NOW AVAILABLE:
2017 Catalog & Swatchbook!

Navitor®
the power of us™

Questions? Ready to discover what makes Navitor different from other print providers? Give us a call at **866.628.6868** or visit **Navitor.com.**

STEPS OF SERVICE

H. Wayne Roberts revisits the path of volunteerism that led him to the 2017 PPAI Humanitarian Award

by Jen Alexander

H. Wayne Roberts's desire to contribute to the betterment of his community and industry was sparked in his youth by seeing his parents give of their own time to local efforts. That spark ignited a flame in Roberts that led to him to serve as a faithful volunteer for dozens of organizations, including PPAI. This year's recipient of the PPAI H. Ted Olson Humanitarian Award says it was his community service that led him to the industry in the first place.

"It's interesting that my volunteer activities led me in a roundabout way to promotional products. Before my days in the industry I was in the restaurant business. We used a number of promotional products like matches, pens, etc. I really didn't think that much about it at the time, and of course in those days no one knew what specialty advertising or promotional products meant," Roberts recalls.

"Through my involvement in the Jaycees [United States Junior Chamber], we used more promotional products in the promotion of a county beauty pageant where we brought in Miss America. Then, when I ran for mayor of Clarksville [Virginia] I used Gill Line posters, matches and pens, which I really counted on to gain me visibility.

"In talking with my Brown & Bigelow manager, I was intrigued by promotional products," says Roberts. "One thing led to another and the next thing I knew I was a salesperson for Brown & Bigelow."

As a young man, Roberts had conducted grassroots work for political campaigns, and after college he joined his local Jaycees chapter in Clarksville. He also saw another opportunity to help improve his hometown—as the mayor.

"When I was young I started working on my dad's election to the town council. And since he was very well acquainted with elected officials on the county, state and federal level, I had an opportunity to be around some very influential politicians. When I went to college I majored in political science with the hope of getting into politics," he says.

After college, he returned to Clarksville to run the family restaurant business and saw a lot of things he wanted to change in the town, so he decided to run for mayor.

The election was somewhat of a David versus Goliath event, as the incumbent mayor had been in office for 16 years with little or no opposition, says Roberts.

"The first time I ran, in 1972, I lost by nine votes," he says. "But that inspired me that it could be done, and I ran again in 1974 and was elected, then re-elected in 1976."

Roberts counts among his accomplishments in office the improvement of bookkeeping and financial accountability among city employees, traffic and road improvements, fluoridation of the town's water supply, and a continuing education program for law enforcement officers.

In addition to his roles as president of the Jaycees chapter and mayor of Clarksville, Roberts worked to revitalize the local Chamber of Commerce. "As president I established its first office and secured the area's first national B.A.S.S. (Bass Anglers Sportsman Society)

"It's been particularly gratifying to witness the impact of volunteers and what their contributions have meant to those organizations."

Wayne Roberts, right, receives the Golden Eagle award from Col. Ricky Rupp at McConnell Air Force Base in Kansas.

Above: Wayne Roberts and his wife, Norma, enjoy retirement in the great outdoors. Right: The couple plant crops in God's Garden, which raises produce for the Gallatin Valley Food Bank.

tournament, which is still today a major economic generator for the area," he says.

When Roberts relocated to Wichita, Kansas, in the early 1980s, he invested time in more than just his role as vice president of supplier Pioneer Balloon Co. Serving as chairman of the Wichita Metro Chamber's federal affairs committee led Roberts to the Friends of McConnell (FOM), a civilian group that funded activities held on the nearby McConnell Air Force Base.

"Friends of McConnell funded over $25,000 in activities on the base, and as a member of the group and an honorary commander, I was very involved," says Roberts. In honor of his service to FOM, Roberts received the Golden Eagle designation from McConnell AFB leadership in 2011; he is one of just seven individuals to receive the Golden Eagle since the base's establishment.

Throughout his time in Wichita, Roberts remained engaged in the business community as a member of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB) and as past chairman of the board for the Wichita Independent Business Association.

Roberts and his wife, Norma, also became impromptu saviors for a colony of feral cats while living in Kansas. Though the two are animal lovers, their constant travel meant keeping pets wasn't in the cards—but an encounter with a family of cats outside a local Walmart led them to work with Friends of Felines, as well as to adopt three feral cats of their own. The nonprofit group helps care for feral cats by trapping and releasing them into established colonies.

"Friends of Felines estimates that Wichita has 100,000 free-roaming cats," Roberts explains. "TNR (Trap, Neuter, Return) is the only proven method to control the population growth. Euthanization of the cats simply doesn't work. TNR is a win/win because over time, municipalities spend less money, and the stray and feral cat population is significantly reduced. In some areas, they are being used to help control the rodent population."

After more than 30 years with Pioneer Balloon, Roberts and his wife entered the next stage of life as residents of Bozeman, Montana. But life in retirement wasn't going to be a quiet one; Roberts says as soon as he and Norma settled into their new home, they began looking for ways to become involved.

"We volunteered to help maintain trails for the Gallatin Valley Land Trust; we started working at God's Garden, which supplies produce to the local food bank, and we volunteer through our church at the Community Café, which serves evening meals to the needy," he says.

Decades of service that continue to unfold have given Roberts a veteran's perspective on giving back. "I have been fortunate to volunteer for a number of worthy causes," he says. "It's been particularly gratifying to witness the impact of volunteers and what their contributions have meant to those organizations."

Roberts' nominator, PPAI lifetime member Don Edwards, says his friend is "very deserving of the Ted Olson award [the late Olson was chairman emeritus of PPAI]. Wayne has made endless contributions to society, his fellow man and many worthy causes. The world is a better place because of Wayne."

Inspired by his own father, who ran a restaurant and still found time to help establish a Veterans of Foreign Wars post, and a local rescue squad, among other endeavors, Roberts lives by his father's words and is ready to pass them on.

"He told me you have to give back to your community. I would encourage young professionals to volunteer the time to help their fellow man," he says. "It not only feels good to help others, it's a great way to connect with other individuals who may be out of your normal circle of business or friends.

"There are so many organizations in the community that really do great work and depend on their volunteers," adds Roberts. "Even an hour or two can be a big help to these organizations, and you can learn a lot through volunteering." PPB

Jen Alexander is associate editor of PPB.

Double Your Profits, Double Their Fun!

See us in Vegas at Booth # 1420

Corporate Events • Sporting Events • Breast Cancer Awareness • Business Promotions
Races/Tournaments/Runs • Grand Openings • School Fundraisers • Team Building

THE SPIRIT SLEEVE

www.spiritsleeve.com joe@waltusa.com (435) 787-8888

ASI 88769 PPAI 589348 SAGE 50523

The TOM™ SHOW

7 Cities
7 Days
4 Regionals
5 States

Where QUALITY MEETS!

WHERE

Monday evening, January 23
TOM Show Kick-Off Party and TSPPA Trivia Challenge
Rick's Tavern, Fairfield OH

Tuesday, January 24
Cincinnati - Receptions Fairfield in Fairfield, OH

Wednesday, January 25
Columbus - Hollywood Casino

Thursday, January 26
Cleveland - La Villa Conference Center in Brooklyn, OH

Thursday evening, January 26
TOM Show Bowling Party in Troy, MI

Friday, January 27
Detroit - San Marino Club in Troy, MI

Monday, January 30
St. Louis - Syberg's in Maryland Heights, MO

Tuesday, January 31
Kansas City - Overland Park Convention Center in Overland Park,KS

Wednesday, February 1
Omaha - Comfort Inn & Suites

WHEN

9:00 am - 10:00 am
"How to Sell Series" Four 15 min sessions from top suppliers!

10:00 am - 2:00 pm
The TOM Show
Featuring the newest products, catalogs, samples and ideas from your favorite suppliers and reps. Be the first to see the new products for the new year from the Best Suppliers in the Business.

FREE Door Prizes including a Smart TV and other great prizes.
FREE TOM Cat Cap by Paramount Apparel and other fun TOM Cat promotions.

For More Information, visit: www.TheTOMExperience.com
Like us on Facebook: www.Facebook.com/TheTOMExperience
Talk about us on Twitter #TomShow

Free Admission! No Pre-Registration Required.
Just Bring Your Business Cards.
Must be 18 yr or older except for Columbus must be 21 yrs or older to enter casino.

tsppa · OPPA Ohio Promotional Professionals Association · MIPPA · PPA Midwest Promotional Products Association Midwest

Close Up

How Iain Walker's music career shaped his destiny in the promo world.
page 98.

100 INSIDE PPAI
106 PEOPLE NEWS
108 DAY IN THE LIFE MERRICK FALKENSTEIN
111 SNAPSHOTS
113 DATEBOOK
115 NEW MEMBERS

The PPAI Expo 2017

January 8-12 | Las Vegas, Nevada

More Than 100 Education Sessions Will Be Available; Here's A Quick Preview On Four In-Depth Sessions.

page 105

Iain Walker (second from right on the bass guitar) with his band The Misprints as they battle The Midnight Soul Patrol at the 2016 Promotional Products Professionals of Canada's (PPPC) national conference.

Misprint At Heart

How Iain Walker's music career shaped his destiny in the promo world.

by Julie Richie

Iain Walker, president of Toronto, Canada-based SVS Marketing, fell in love with making music as a teenager when he started playing the bass guitar. "I began playing with a garage band almost immediately," he says. "And we were awful."

But the passion for music remained, so much so that Walker eventually earned a degree in recording engineering. His music career eventually morphed into a side gig (his band is called The Misprints), but it allowed him to get a taste of being an entrepreneur and it led him to his first job in the industry—and all the way to heading up the full-service promotional agency.

SVS Marketing was created in 2009 when Stincor Specialties and Van-Smith Marketing joined forces, combining more than 60 years of promotional products experience. The company specializes in loyalty and incentive-based programs as well as branded merchandise.

Walker also currently serves as treasurer and chair-elect for the Promotional Products Professionals of Canada Board of Directors.

When he's not at work, Walker hangs out in Mississauga, Ontario with his wife, Wanda, and their two children—Andrew, who is in his fourth (and, Walker hopes, final) year of university and Megan, a second-year university student—and their Labradoodle, Sunny. Music is still a large part of Walker's life, especially since Andrew shares his father's passion for creating music. "We have a growing recording studio in our basement so he is able to get his notions saved," Walker says.

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

I still enjoy playing bass in an active rock band. We [Walker's band back in the 1980s] were a pretty good southern rock outfit that moonlighted as a Tom Petty cover band to pay the recording bills. My highest high was probably touring in Los Angeles in the '80s. Unfortunately, there were a couple of kids competing with us. They recently got back together to tour—Guns N'... hmmmm. Guns N' something.

Can't remember. Let's just say our timing was a bit off. These days we gig for charities we believe are important, like cancer research and children in need.

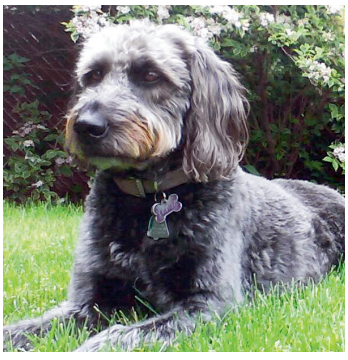
I'm also part of a hopeless group of Toronto Maple Leaf season ticket holders (the Cubs have given us renewed hope!) and I'm also a pretty big Toronto Blue Jays fan and season ticket holder. When I'm home I enjoy cooking and sampling new wines from around the world.

What do you enjoy most about your work?

Every day is different, for one. Not many industries offer that. Not knowing exactly how my day is going to play out is exciting (usually). The creative aspects of what we do are invigorating and I love the people I work with. We stress the importance of teamwork in our mission statement. It fosters a great environment for empowered co-workers to strive for personal success.

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

I was on the road a lot, producing live sound right out of school. We had a lot of fun, but very long days (and nights) taught me that hard work and commitment lead to success. It also stirred a sense of independence and started to help me understand how to take control of my destiny.



Sunny, Walker's "goofball" family dog.

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

My first job in the industry was assembling boxes for a calendar company. This was my best friend's (and bandmate's) family business. Box-making jobs are highly regarded by broke musicians everywhere. My supervisors thought I may have been slightly overqualified when I kept showing up on time and, of course, [based on] the quality of my box making. This led to a promotion to the phone room telemarking promotional products to small businesses all over North America, faithfully promising delivery in four to six weeks. As far as learning, I am still learning and making mistakes, sharing thoughts and ideas and treating people with respect. I've been at it for over 30 years now in one form or another.

Who or what has had the greatest influence on your career and why?

That's a tough one. I kind of fell into this industry, as most do, but I have been very fortunate to have had many positive role models and influences to help me throughout my career. I've always seen myself as an entrepreneur, though, and this industry has allowed me to be immersed in creative environments while allowing me to take control of my destiny.

What motivates you in business and in life?

My family, especially my kids. I want them to have every opportunity to succeed at whatever makes them happy. That means I need to succeed, and offer myself up as a positive, cheerful, low-stress role model for them.

What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

I don't know that I can narrow this down to one thing. I'm so proud of being at the helm of two wonderful, successful, growing companies [Walker also heads Sharper Marketing, a supplier of logoed hard goods to college and university bookstores in Canada]. So many little and big accomplishments (and mistakes) have gotten me this far. I guess my greatest accomplishment will be when I have built a legacy for my family and employees, and I can put my feet up and call it a day. Retirement will offer an opportunity to immerse myself in everything, including music. I'm never going to stop playing!

What advice would you give to an industry newcomer?

There aren't many industries that offer unlimited opportunity. There are no traditional restrictions or glass ceilings here. You have unlimited earning potential. Period. Just work hard, define what you would like to accomplish and go get it! PPB

Julie Richie is associate editor for PPB.

PPAI Partners With APPA On Get In Touch! Campaign

PPAI and the Australasian Promotional Products Association (APPA) announced an agreement in November to use core elements of PPAI's Promotional Products Work! and Get In Touch! campaigns across Australia and New Zealand. APPA plans to launch the campaigns in those countries in early 2017.

The Get In Touch! campaign is designed to increase awareness and enhance the perception of the promotional products industry, as well as communicate the benefits of working with promotional consultants. The overall goal of the campaign is to direct a larger share of advertising dollars to the industry. It will feature member kits available for download and customization, including elements that members will be able to immediately incorporate into their own marketing efforts. The expectation is that APPA members become an integral part of the Get In Touch! campaign.

"APPA's goal is simple: promotional products marketing should be recognized by marketers and business people as an essential part of the brand and marketing communications toolkit," says Steve Granland, APPA chief executive officer. "Our members are recognized as leaders in their creative field, and promotional products marketing rivals other specialized marketing fields for share of wallet, curriculum coverage, career, commentary and perceived value."

PPAI President and CEO Paul Bellantone, CAE, adds, "Get In Touch! is important to the promotional products industry because, for too long, it has been an afterthought for many in the marketing chain. The industry knows, understands and communicates the power of promotional products, but it's time the rest of the world recognized the power of promotional products and their place in successful marketing campaigns."

In August, APPA launched PromotionalProductsWork.com.au and PromotionalProductsWork.co.nz. Targeted at promotional products buyers, these websites provide information and data about the power of promotional products and the importance of working with promotional consultants. The websites will continue to evolve and be an important element of the Get In Touch! campaign.

"The APPA Board is saying it wants this to be a primary focus and a key element of APPA's strategic plan," says Granland. "The board recognizes that now is the time to be proactive. However, APPA will not be successful if it pursues this initiative alone. It's going to require APPA members' assistance to succeed.

"With the assistance of PPAI, APPA has a plan to reach marketing buyers through the campaign at the national level and will create the tools our members need to get involved and engaged with their customers and prospects," Granland adds. "Get InTouch! is a significant and positive step forward in raising the positive profile of the promotional products industry in Australia and New Zealand; however, we must engage our members for this initiative to be successful."

APPA will form a profile-raising advisory group to be chaired by an APPA board member and made up of a small number of industry professionals. This advisory group will be charged with providing advice and support to the APPA national office in both adapting the materials made available by PPAI for the Australian and New Zealand markets and how best to engage with the APPA member base to ensure success.

More details will be provided to APPA members as the advisory group is formed and meets to map out key time frames and deliverables for this project.

PPAI Board Approves New Strategic Plan At Fall Meeting

The PPAI Board of Directors held its fall meeting in October to kick off PPAI's Leadership Development Week in Grapevine, Texas, with PPAI Chair Tom Goos, MAS, presiding. Among the reports and actions taken at the meeting were these:

- President and CEO Paul Bellantone, CAE, reviewed the Association's new strategic plan, and board members voted to approve it as presented. The plan includes a new mission statement which is less transactional and focuses on more relational connections to members. (See page 4 for more information on PPAI's strategic plan.)
- PPAI Director of Marketing Keith Vincent and Vice President of Business Development Alan Peterson reviewed the Get In Touch! campaign. The focus for the next six months will be to reach out to the top five designated market areas, along with increased member engagement Vincent also reviewed the status of PPAI's collaboration with ITR Economics and its role to provide quarterly sales data, create reliable and actionable data, build forecasting capabilities and potentially to provide data for PPAI's annual sales volume study.
- The board also heard an update on the redesign of the PPAI website set for a soft launch this month and a full launch in February.
- Director of Public Affairs Anne Stone provided a report on the Product Responsibility Summit held in September. Based on survey results, 99 percent of attendees said they would consider attending the conference in 2017. She also announced that Legislative Education and Action Day would be held April 26-27, 2017, in Washington, D.C. with three L.E.A.D. Local 2017 events planned for Florida, Oregon and Washington.
- Director of Expositions Darel Cook updated the board about the PPAI Expo 2017, reporting that registration numbers are running ahead of 2016's show. He also discussed plans for moving Expo East 2017 from its previous March time frame to June 14-16, 2017.

Charlie Taublieb

Troy Harrison

Linda Swindling

Cliff Quicksell, MAS+

The PPAI Expo 2017's In-Depth Workshops Offer Attendees Added Value

Attendees at the PPAI Expo 2017 have more than 100 education opportunities to learn new ideas, best practices and tips on improving their careers and businesses, and most are free to attend. Alongside these sessions are a series of in-depth paid workshops on Sunday, January 8, with industry thought leaders who will provide their audiences with takeaways, samples and resources.

Garment Screen Printing: Basic To Intermediate

Charlie Taublieb of Taublieb Consulting, a technical screen-printing consultant with more than 39 years in the industry, is hosting this three-hour, hands-on session in which he takes his audience from artwork through finished prints. The program includes a discussion of the differences between raster and vector artwork and related software; an integrated registration system to decrease set-up times; and the use of frames, mesh and squeegees, as well as set-up procedures. Taublieb will also demonstrate much of what he speaks about during the session, and audience members will come away with a better understanding of garment screen printing as well as ways to increase efficiencies and profits.

Sunday, January 8, 2017
12 – 3 pm
Breakers B
CAS: 3 points
Session Fees: $60
Members/$120 Nonmembers

Smart Sales Hiring

Everyone is in sales, no matter what their job title is. In this session, Troy Harrison, a thought leader in the world of sales and selling, and author of *Sell Like You Mean It – Outselling Your Competitors By Understanding Your Customers*, reframes sales as communication. Every encounter in life involves communication, so everyone is in sales. Sales, when done right, is a two-way dialogue with another person built on trust. There are no shortcuts, gimmicks or tricks. Instead, Harrison says, sales is built upon a PACT (passion, authenticity, creativity and trust) mindset. His session will explain how we must adapt our own preferred styles of communicating to meet another's preferred method to achieve the highest level of sales success.

Sunday, January 8, 2017
12 – 3 pm
Lagoon J
MAS: 3 points
Session Fees: $60
Members/$120 Nonmembers

Walk, Talk And Negotiate Like A CEO

In her session, Linda Swindling, JD, CSP, a consultant, executive coach and facilitator, and past president of the National Speakers Association/North Texas, asks her audience what would be possible if they could show up powerfully, no matter how high the stakes. How much time could they save if they stopped negotiating deals where there was no chance of winning? What risks would they take if they were prepared for any situation or negotiation tactic the other side tried? Negotiations, whether to influence a decision maker at work, get better deals in business, or to persuade friends and family, can improve outcomes when the results really matter. Swindling's presentation will equip her audience to ask outrageously to get what they want, win with integrity, increase their executive presence and influence with leaders and decision makers, pursue only winning deals and know when to walk away.

Sunday, January 8, 2017
12 – 3 pm
Lagoon A
MAS: 3 points
Session fees: $60
Members/$120 Nonmembers

Using The Marketing Funnel To Outperform The Competition

Focus is the name of the game when trying to maximize marketing energies. Today the shotgun approach that most folks incorporate is grossly ineffective and expensive. In this session, Cliff Quicksell, MAS+, with Cliff Quicksell & Associates, shares a marketing funnel tool, which along with classifying and categorizing to creatively target the right clients and prospects, will help dramatically flatten the curve and maximize marketing efforts. Attendees will leave with an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of the marketing funnel, how to use the tool in developing personal marketing and how to incorporate it into discussions with clients, and hear actual case histories and their successes.

Sunday, January 8, 2017
12 – 3 pm
Lagoon L
CAS: 3 points
Session Fees: $60
Members/$120 Nonmembers
PPB

Register for these paid sessions when you register for The PPAI Expo at www.expo.ppai.org.

compiled by James Khattak

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

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

Michelle Irwin

Lewie Hunt

Harm Kurz, MAS

Jay Paparone, CAS

Carrie Laufenburg, MAS

Jamie Johnson

Ryan David

Nikkie S. Freeman

DISTRIBUTORS

Bensussen Deutsch & Associates, Inc.—**Christie Feliz**, national account manager, and Stephen Koplan, senior account manager

Caden Concepts—**Jennifer Dawson**, national sales director

Elevate Brand Marketing—**Michelle Irwin**, inside sales manager

EmbroidMe—**Joseph Loch**, president

Promotional Concepts—**Lewie Hunt**, director of business development

Repco Solutions—**Harm Kurz, MAS**, account executive

Top Promotions, Inc.—**Shannon Mayerl**, promoted to president

SUPPLIERS

Ariel Premium Supply, Inc.—**Rich Harbert**, promoted to director of sales; **Laura Brewer**, promoted to senior sales manager/sales training specialist; **Dan Alspaugh**, regional sales manager for the eastern Midwest territory covering Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and West Virginia; and **Lacey Lee**, regional sales manager covering Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming

BAG MAKERS, Inc.—**Jane Ryan**, regional business development manager for Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania

Evans Manufacturing—**Jay Paparone, CAS**, vice president of sales

The Magnet Group—**Carrie Laufenburg, MAS**, director of key accounts

Maple Ridge Farms, Inc.—**Jamie Johnson**, sales consultant

Royal Apparel—**Gisselle Aguilera**, promoted to manager of the customer service and customer/private label departments

Starline USA, Inc.—**Julie Fritsch**, director of marketing

St Regis Crystal, Inc.—**Ryan David**, chief revenue officer

Stouse, LLC—**Nikkie S. Freeman**, chief marketing officer

SAGE Experience™

Join us January 10-12, 2017 for free, live SAGE education on The PPAI EXPO® floor!

TAKE A BREAK FROM WALKING THE SHOW FLOOR AND JOIN US FOR ONE OR MORE OF THESE COMPELLING SESSIONS:

- SAGE Web 2.0: What You Need to Know About the New Features
- Ditch Chaos for Order with SAGE Order Management
- Deliver Fast, Awesome Customer Service with CRM
- Marketing Emails with No Designing Required
- Get Schooled in SAGE Online
- And many more!

Free to attend!

Visit sageworld.com/experience to view the complete schedule.

SAGE
800.925.7243
www.sageworld.com

The Challenge Of Innovation

Merrick Falkenstein's team at ESP Promotions/ K&R New York thrives on improving and achieving.

by Jen Alexander

Merrick Falkenstein's sense of adventure isn't limited to his passion for traveling. Born in Johannesburg, South Africa, Falkenstein immigrated to Canada in 1987 and two years later launched his company, ESP Promotions, as an importer and distributor, transitioning six years later to become a supplier for the promotional products industry.

Not content to remain static, Falkenstein has continually expanded his company through acquisitions and mergers with other industry companies. This summer, ESP joined forces with the St Regis Group, a family of companies that includes St Regis Crystal, Etching Wines and Promobilia. ESP Promotions trades in the U.S. as K&R New York.

When he does take time away from growing the business, Falkenstein collects art, watches sports and spends time with friends and family. He and his wife of 33 years, Ruth, have two children—Dale and Daniella—and two grandchildren.

Read on to learn more about a day in the life of ESP's owner and president/CEO.

Not content to remain static, Falkenstein has continually expanded his company through acquisitions and mergers with other industry companies.

Describe your office atmosphere.

Our team is very friendly, and has a strong sense of willingness to learn, achieve and be better. Our team thrives on challenges and being busy.

What kinds of projects or tasks might you tackle on a given day?

Our days may include sourcing and developing new products, sales training, setting goals and objectives, marketing, reviewing financial data, and visiting with clients. Additionally, we are always looking for new business opportunities such as mergers and acquisitions, addressing quality and compliance challenges, and purchasing and negotiating.

How do you collaborate with co-workers?

I deal with our key managers and satellite offices on a daily basis, conducting daily meetings and getting updates.

How does this job challenge you?

I am always trying to anticipate and think ahead, to keep ahead of new developments and trends, and trying to make myself available 24/7. Sometimes I feel I need to be in three places at the same time.

We try and keep things exciting. We are always on the move, and we accept challenges as opportunities.

What changes or improvements have you recently implemented, or are you planning to make in the future?

We have just merged with the St Regis Group of companies, making us the largest Canadian supplier of promotional products, and probably among the top 10 in the U.S. The 11 companies that we own will be incorporated under the St Regis Group of Companies with all the brands and lines. We have factories in Toronto, Northern Ontario, Chicago and Indianapolis, and an office and showroom in Vancouver, as well as a satellite office in San Diego. We have state-of-the-art software and are taking our capabilities to the next level. New equipment continues to arrive, and we are continually adding talented staff.

What do you love about your company?

I love the challenge of innovation and motivating our team. The company is my baby, which we started with $10,000 and watched it grow into an integral part of the industry. It's also great to watch our team develop and improve over time.

What makes your company a valuable member of the promotional products community?

We try and keep things exciting. We are always on the move, and we accept challenges as opportunities. Our company will keep leading and we will continue to improve in all aspects of quality: compliance, innovation, product and service.

Jen Alexander is associate editor for PPB.

GET IN TOUCH!

ADVERTISING THAT LIVES ON

The kitchen is the heart and soul of every home. It brings the family together every morning. It brings friends and loved ones together on the weekends. It can bring a smile to those who need one the most. 91 percent of consumers have at least one promotional product in their kitchen. More than half of them use them at least once a week. *Connect with your audience on a deeper level – include promotional products in your marketing mix.*

#GETINTOUCH GetInTouchAdvertising.com

GET IN TOUCH!

Campaign Toolkit

Download at
PPAI.ORG/GetInTouch

PPAI's Tucker, Baker Visit Boston-Area Industry Companies

PPAI Business Development Manager Ellen Tucker and Major Account Manager-East Joel Baker traveled to Boston, Massachusetts, in November to meet with and learn from companies in the area, including Charles River Apparel (PPAI 111644), Hub Pen (PPAI 110772) and iPROMOTEu (PPAI 218870).

While at the Sharon, Massachusetts, offices of Charles River Apparel, Tucker (not pictured) and Baker (right) toured the supplier's facility with Tradeshow Manager Sean Moore and Vice President of Marketing Tracy Lehnen (not pictured) and discussed the supplier's plans for The PPAI Expo 2017, its possible participation in Expo East, and advertising and sponsorship opportunities for 2017.

Tucker (second from right) and Baker (center) got an up-close look at Hub Pen's Braintree, Massachusetts, facility and the supplier's laser technology during their meeting with Executive Assistant and Marketing Copywriter Pam Baker (second from left); National Sales Manager Andy Arruda, MAS (left); and Vice President of Sales Mike Fleming.

At Wayland, Massachusetts-based iPROMOTEu, Tucker and Baker met with the distributor's president, Ross Silverstein (second from right), Marketing and Communications Manager Lindsay Cornish (center) and Marketing Coordinator and Event Manager Ashley Perkins to discuss their upcoming meetings at The PPAI Expo 2017 and Expo East 2017, and marketing plans for the year ahead.

PPAI's Barnett Joins TRASA Board Planning Session, Discussion On Attracting Young Professionals

In November, PPAI Diversity Development and Engagement Manager Seth Barnett joined the board of the Three Rivers Advertising Specialty Association (TRASA) to take part in the regional association's 2017 strategic plan discussion. Part of a larger strategic discussion, Barnett contributed his insights to the board's focus on attracting and engaging young professionals in the industry as part of its 2017 plan. TRASA intends to host several young professional-friendly events in 2017 as well as target local universities to educate the academic community about the industry.

PPAI Diversity Development and Engagement Manager Seth Barnett's (right) discussion with the TRASA board—(from left) TRASA Past President Ned West; Treasurer and Expo Co-Chair Bonnie Megan; Board Member Jeff Colley; Fall Showcase Co-Chair Amy Tiller; President Tom Clouser, MAS; Expo Co-Chair Trent Geis; Expo Co-Chair Steve McWilliams; and Vice President and Fall Showcase Co-Chair Joe Aiken—touched on a number of topics, including young professionals' demographics, events that attract Millennials, community outreach projects and opportunities for TRASA to get involved in the more than 35 universities in the area.

PPAI Creative Services Manager Gretchen Demke (right) and Marketing Manager Sarah Dodd (center) help Irving Cares Director of Development Heather Newell unload some of the more than 425 pounds of food PPAI staff collected for the organization in the Association's holiday food drive.

PPAI Staff Donate Food, Money To Local Food Pantry Irving Cares

PPAI's holiday food drive last fall raised $590 and collected more than 425 pounds of food for food pantry Irving Cares, a local United Way agency dedicated to providing Irving residents with temporary assistance and training to promote self-sufficiency. The Association has supported Irving Cares since 2003 and in that time has donated more than 41,000 pounds of goods to benefit hungry families in the community.

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* News Editor James Khattak at JamesK@ppai.org and be sure to include a description, plus your name and contact information.

Datebook

compiled by James Khattak

The important events shaping the promotional industry.

JANUARY

January 8-12
PPAI Expo 2017
Promotional Products Association International
Las Vegas, Nevada
expo.ppai.org

January 10-12
The PSI Trade Fair
Promotional Product Service Institute
Düsseldorf, Germany
www.psi-network.org

January 18-20
ASI Orlando
Advertising Specialty Institute
Orlando, Florida
www.asicentral.com

January 23-27
Southern Showcase
LDK Marketing
Dallas, Fort Worth, Austin, San Antonio and Houston, Texas
www.LDKmarketing.com/southernshowcase

January 24
TSPAA "The TOM Show"
Tri-State Promotional Professionals Association
Cincinnati, Ohio
www.tsppa.org

January 25-26
Promotional Products Expo
Customer Focus
Coventry, UK
www.ppexpo.co.uk

January 25-26
OPPA "The TOM Show"
Ohio Promotional Professionals Association
Columbus and Cleveland, Ohio
www.oppagroup.com

January 27
MiPPA "The TOM Show"
Michigan Promotional Professionals Association
Troy, Michigan
www.mippa.org

January 30-31
GAPPP Expo 2017
Georgia Association of Promotional Products Professionals
Atlanta, Georgia
www.gappp.org

January 30-February 1
PPAM "The TOM Show"
Promotional Products Association Midwest
St. Louis, Missouri; Kansas City, Missouri; and Omaha, Nebraska
www.ppam.org

January 31
PAPPA Winter Showcase
Philadelphia Area Promotional Products Association
Springfield, Pennsylvania
www.mypappa.org

FEBRUARY

February 1
CPPA Winter Expo
Chesapeake Promotional Products Association
Baltimore, Maryland
www.cppa.biz

February 1-3
ASI Dallas
Advertising Specialty Institute
Dallas, Texas
www.asicentral.com

February 2
SAAGNY Winter Showcase
Specialty Advertising Association of Greater New York
Suffern, New York
www.saagny.org

February 6-7
PPAMS MidSouth PromoShow
Promotional Products Association of the Mid-South
Nashville, Tennessee
www.ppams.org

February 10-14
PPPC National Convention 2017
Promotional Product Professionals of Canada
Toronto, Ontario
www.promocan.com

February 13-17
Southern Showcase
LDK Marketing
Baton Rouge and Shreveport, Louisiana; Little Rock, Arkansas; and Tulsa and Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
www.LDKmarketing.com/southernshowcase

February 14-15
SPPA The Show of the South
Sunbelt Promotional Products Association
Birmingham, Alabama
www.sunbeltppa.org

February 27-28
NEPPA Season Opener Expo
New England Promotional Products Association
Foxboro, Massachusetts
www.neppa.com

MARCH

March 6-7
TRASA Expo
Three Rivers Advertising Specialty Association
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
www.trasa.net

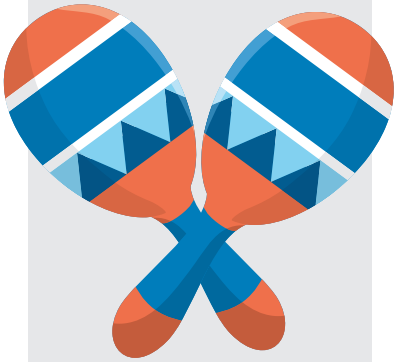
March 6-7
UMAPP Fire & Ice Show
Upper Midwest Association of Promotional Professionals
Shakopee, Minnesota
www.umapp.org

March 8
PPAW Spring Fever Show
Promotional Products Association of Wisconsin
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
www.ppaw.org

March 9
PPAChicago
New Product Ideas Show
Promotional Professionals Association of Chicago
Chicago, Illinois
www.ppachicago.org

March 20-21
CAAMP Carolinas Connection
Carolinas Association of Advertising and Marketing Professionals
Concord, North Carolina
www.caampers.org

March 22-23
NWPMA Brandlandia
Northwest Promotional Marketing Association
Portland, Oregon
www.nwpma.org



March 28-29
CASA Tropical Show
Caribbean Advertising Specialties Association
San Juan, Puerto Rico
www.facebook.com/tuCASApr

March 28-30
VAPPA Road Show
Virginia Promotional Products Association
Roanoke, Richmond and Chesapeake, Virginia
www.whymappa.org

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

New PPAI Members Joining In October 2016

Distributors

3 Keys Marketing Products
PPAI 690229

50 Shades of Graphics
PPAI 668558

A Daily Task, LLC
PPAI 693153

A Sure Sign
PPAI 689709

ABS, Inc.
PPAI 229922

Accent Signs And Printing
PPAI 471627

All About Marketing
PPAI 591376

ALLEGRA
PPAI 639380

Allegra / El Paso
PPAI 674382

Allegra / Okemos
PPAI 673981

Allegra / Ottawa - Bank Street
PPAI 678508

American Solutions for Business
PPAI 689287

AR Design & Printing
PPAI 652558

Art Expressions
PPAI 691202

ASG Specialties
PPAI 555185

Atlanta International Consulting Group AKA AICG
PPAI 221048

Avalon Image Group
PPAI 353782

BCi Creative
PPAI 438931

Berlin Embroidery & Screen Printing, LLC
PPAI 693509

Big Tree Promotions
PPAI 667380

Blackmarx Studio
PPAI 693018

Blue Mountain Sports Apparel
PPAI 426462

Bobwhite Specialties, Inc.
PPAI 156430

Bright Ideas in Broad Ripple, Inc.
PPAI 134589

Buckeye Print and Promotion
PPAI 689555

Bumper Active
PPAI 581943

Byron's Of Texas
PPAI 278326

Carolina Custom Promotions
PPAI 691276

Cedar House Media
PPAI 690241

CG Bellinger
PPAI 621706

Coastal Dipz
PPAI 691168

Coastal Dipz
PPAI 689713

Collinson Enterprises
PPAI 691360

Complete Graphics Solutions, Inc.
PPAI 690297

Crestline
PPAI 691336

DAIGLE JACKETS & PROMOTIONS LTD/LTEE
PPAI 691636

DBR Creations
PPAI 445836

Denver Apparel
PPAI 653087

Designter
PPAI 691170

DREAM DESIGNS, LLC
PPAI 675249

Einstein Printing
PPAI 577245

Embroidme / Verona
PPAI 682095

EmbroidMe of Fulshear, TX
PPAI 691324

EmbroidMe of Memphis Northeast
PPAI 455130

Embroidme-Naperville
PPAI 455268

Emily's Embroidery
PPAI 568126

F-11 Photographic Supplies
PPAI 682628

Fastsigns
PPAI 681352

Field City Media
PPAI 692711

Frick & Frack Kustom Kreations, LLC
PPAI 353985

Full Color Resources
PPAI 693085

G & G Outfitters, Inc.
PPAI 280650

Gator Graphics
PPAI 690039

Geiger
PPAI 693081

Global Promotional Apparel
PPAI 644633

Grafikas & More
PPAI 339428

Haase Embroidery
PPAI 361755

Hallmark Promotions
PPAI 357903

HALO
PPAI 692701

HALO
PPAI 693388

HALO - Stone Coast Marketing
PPAI 691378

Handouts
PPAI 670761

Hittn Skins, LLC
PPAI 397320

Holsen, Inc.
PPAI 270865

House Of Graphix
PPAI 627051

Hunt Direct Agency
PPAI 689711

I D DEVELOPMENT, LLC
PPAI 576871

Illustrated Sportswear
PPAI 379556

Image360 Marietta
PPAI 694921

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.

NEW MEMBERS

Imprezos Pro Uniforms
PPAI 523723

Instant Imprints of Smyrna
PPAI 689553

Instant Imprints of Vancouver
PPAI 642101

iPROMOTEu - Business Identity Group
PPAI 692907

iPROMOTEu – PromoPro
PPAI 679276

Ipromoteu/Adhoc Promo
PPAI 522408

IPROMOTEu/Adzmark Com, Inc.
PPAI 228540

Jailbird Designs
PPAI 691406

JAM Printing & Promotions
PPAI 443778

Jasani, LLC
PPAI 639055

Jason Hogan Designs
PPAI 632569

JJSV, LLC
PPAI 694950

JP Promotional
PPAI 689551

KEE Kreative
PPAI 689904

Kre8iv Gifts, LLC
PPAI 694861

Kuddes Advertising Spec
PPAI 282342

L&J Promotion Products
PPAI 581799

Legends Athletic Supply
PPAI 382226

Let's Play Ball
PPAI 682247

Lightbox Graphix
PPAI 691052

Lights Out Screen Printing Company
PPAI 689495

Louisiana Promotions, LLC
PPAI 690074

Major League Promotions
PPAI 360928

Maximum Impact Promotions & Specialties
PPAI 438622

Meridian-Print-Manage-Fulfill
PPAI 500519

Michael Dahma Associates
PPAI 196781

Mid-West Sportwear
PPAI 668607

Milagro Marketing, LLC
PPAI 689411

Mindflash Int'l, Inc.
PPAI 674454

Minuteman Press
PPAI 682213

Minuteman Press 999
PPAI 514667

Mojo Art & Image, LLC
PPAI 600457

MOSAIC
PPAI 425810

Multiplepath Communications
PPAI 670476

Nationwide Advertising Specialty Co.
PPAI 693262

Nothing Specific, Inc.
PPAI 689599

Nvision of North American Corporation
PPAI 228642

OlleyMay Media
PPAI 690156

Outside The Box
PPAI 690301

P & N Enterprises
PPAI 400488

Paramount Promotional Product
PPAI 606478

Partners In Printing, Inc.
PPAI 690060

Perfect Image Camera
PPAI 682484

Perfect Light and Signs
PPAI 692866

Photo Gift And Print
PPAI 689337

PIP Printing
PPAI 515101

POP! Promotions, LLC
PPAI 284289

PRECISION SCREEN PRINT & MONOGRAMS
PPAI 472655

Premier Apparel Company
PPAI 692813

Print Designz
PPAI 679170

Print Graphics, Inc.
PPAI 200963

Printaholic
PPAI 691319

Printing & Promotional Unlimited, Inc.
PPAI 339712

Promo Artwork Services
PPAI 693127

Promo Joe by Jessica
PPAI 690078

Promobrands Australia Pty Ltd.
PPAI 615287

PromoFX Graphics & Promotional Products
PPAI 523556

Promotional Adventures, Inc.
PPAI 362016

ROCOCO COMPANY
PPAI 552161

RPMS Promo
PPAI 493614

Safeguard Business Forms
PPAI 683257

Savvy Promo, Inc.
PPAI 510773

Serendipity Trading Sa
PPAI 363086

Sign & Stamp Solutions
PPAI 378646

Siler Promotions
PPAI 694903

Simply-U Promotions
PPAI 455600

Sir Speedy
PPAI 692895

Sororitique
PPAI 689353

Southwest Print Solutions
PPAI 521158

Spotlight Property Media, LLC
PPAI 690395

ST ADVERTISING, PRINTING & PHOTOGRAPHY
PPAI 471513

Still Serving Promos, LLC
PPAI 694923

Stratosink
PPAI 694911

Sudbury Promotions
PPAI 692912

Swag Source
PPAI 690055

SYRINGA BOUTIQUE
PPAI 690958

Takedown Sportswear
PPAI 373989

The Design Monkey, LLC
PPAI 613457

The Party Factory
PPAI 605271

The Promotion Agency
PPAI 436875

The Thread Factory
PPAI 690391

TIGEREYE PROMOTIONS, LLC
PPAI 421533

Time Graphix
PPAI 630379

TOMBO DESIGNS
PPAI 645680

Trinity Design
PPAI 690072

Trophies2go.com
PPAI 459806

Utmost Promotions
PPAI 692851

VG Media
PPAI 470474

Vine Advertising
PPAI 522641

Wackes AB
PPAI 692594

WebbMason Marketing
PPAI 287348

Westsound Sportswear
PPAI 440656

WILDWEAR, Inc.
PPAI 319266

Wink Screen Printing
PPAI 670664

WORK.
PPAI 693332

ZOOM IMPORTS, Inc.
PPAI 567692

Suppliers

Access Commercial Corporation, Inc. DBA Force 2000 Athletic Apparel
PPAI 257396

Aspenline
PPAI 438893

BAW Athletic Wear
PPAI 196107

Browntrout Publishing
PPAI 682282

DBEBZ/Backpacker
PPAI 675752

Great Sea International
PPAI 693132

NEW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Honors Plaques
PPAI 134319

Incentive In A Box
PPAI 691116

Indie Caps
PPAI 693141

Itemworks, Inc.
PPAI 689828

Jewelry Group
PPAI 639257

Monag Apparel
PPAI 268489

Nelson Ad Pro, Inc.
PPAI 691622

Nice Guys Supply
PPAI 691304

Patina Products
PPAI 334530

Phoenix Bat Company
PPAI 691196

Seattle Sports Company
PPAI 598981

Sock Club
PPAI 692671

Telescope Casual
PPAI 690311

The Envelope Express
PPAI 693437

Transfer Express
PPAI 690341

Xtreme Canteen, LLC
PPAI 691094

ZClip
PPAI 693250

Seth Cramer

Co-owner and general manager
Phoenix Bats

How did your company get its start? Back in the early 1990s, our founder, Charley Trudeau, was remodeling old houses in Columbus, Ohio. And when you need to replace a staircase spindle or column in a house from the 1860s, you don't go to Home Depot or Lowe's. You have to recreate it by hand, as Charley did on a hand lathe. At the same time, he was playing 19th century vintage baseball for a team with the Ohio Historical Society. Needless to say, finding a bat from that era does not involve a trip to Dick's Sporting Goods. So, Charley started making vintage bats – big honkin' bats much larger in size and weight than today's models, as pitching was underhanded, slow-pitch, and the ball was softer. By 1996, he was doing so many vintage bats for vintage teams across the United States that he followed his passion and made Phoenix Bats a full-time endeavor. It all started out of his garage. The Phoenix name is an ode to the mythological firebird. Like the phoenix rising from the ashes, Charley was bringing back bats to life, some that were originally used almost 150 years ago.

In 1999, Charley was approached by a pro player to make him a bat. This led to Phoenix Bats becoming pro-approved in 2000. In late 2003, Phoenix Bats moved to its current location, where it runs the most advanced bat-making machine in the world, one of only two companies to have this level of precision crafting (and the other is not that "little" company down in Kentucky.). Phoenix now finds its wood bats being swung by pro and amateur players, softball teams, hitting coaches, vintage leagues and Little Leaguers. And out of these interactions came demand for award and trophy bats.

What led your company to enter the promotional products market? Making wood game bats for pro and amateur players, coaches and teams; trophy bats became a logical extension of the business. As these groups started having success with our bats, requests for ways to recognize the achievements were brought to Charley. A laser-etched wood bat made for a beautiful keepsake. It's very complementary to what we do on the field and opened up a new business pathway, with less seasonality to it.

There was also a practical side to deciding to enter the promotional products market. When we get wood in from our mill, not all pieces meet our stringent requirements for what can become a game-usable bat. Many of those pieces that don't meet our specs are still beautiful pieces of wood; typically, they're just too heavy or too light to make a properly spec'd game bat. As our business grew (and more and more wood was ordered), so did the number of pieces needing to find a home off the field. With that, we knew we could make a bat anyone would be proud to display at work and at home.

What's your favorite thing about being in the promotional products industry? It's definitely the fun of each project being different and the creativity that goes in to each project. We get to take a client's branding or recognition need and translate it on to a different medium: a wood bat or super-sized golf tee or night stick--or even a shovel bat for a ground breaking ceremony. We craft something that most recipients are not used to receiving—something that stands out, is kept out and is appreciated by the recipient for not being the same-old, same-old. The good part for our clients is that we're not bashful about speaking up when we see opportunity for improvement or in crafting the right message. Contributing to the success of the project has its own rush.

Why did you join PPAI? We were introduced to PPAI by one of our customers, the head of a promotions firm in Columbus, Ohio. At our first meeting, upon seeing our full-size presentation bat and the mega-sized golf tees, his exact response was, well, not printable but extremely positive. He said, "You have to get these in front of more people ASAP!" Upon his advice, we checked in to PPAI and saw it as a tremendous opportunity to expand our reach. Here was an association that has a rich history and is of the caliber we want to be associated with. Each interaction along the way has been everything we were told it would be. Thanks to PPAI for allowing us to join! It is already making a difference to our business.

ad index

2Monkey Trading LLC	78	
407-985-3966		www.2monkey.com
Admints & Zagabor	7	
856-931-7300		www.admints.com
Antera Software	49	
214-556-8040		www.anterasoftware.com
Antwerp Diamonds Incentives	36	
972-490-6295		www.antwerpdiamondsusa.com
Ariel Premium Supply	35	
800-270-7474		www.arielpremium.com
Artwork Services	51	
443-283-3456		www.artworkservices.com
Bel Promo	IFC, 1	
800-782-1181		www.belpromo.com
Boardroom	45	
604-718-7808		www.boardroomclothing.com
Boundless Network	62	
(512) 472-9200		www.boundlessnetwork.com
Bright Stores, Inc.	83	
800-466-5930		www.brightstores.com
Bulova	25	
800-228-5682		www.bulovacorporatesales.com
Dbebz	41	
212-221-6060		www.dbebz.com
Evans	BC	
800-745-3826		www.evans-mfg.com
Essent	119	
800-559-9959		www.essent.com
GoldBond	29	
800-438-5757		www.goldbondinc.com
Greater China	21	
877-773-6762		www.greaterchina-usa.com
Hit Promotional Products	15	
800-237-6305 x2525		www.hitpromo.net
iPROMOTEu	65-68	
800-850-3370		www.ipromoteu.com
Kaeser & Blair	53	
1-800-642-9790		www.comparekaeser.com
MAC Specialties	61	
516-255-9400		www.sportproducts.com
Minya	91	
1-800-858-1878		www.minyausa.com
Motto, Inc.	10	
920-364-9544		www.activelifepromo.com
Nationwide Promotions LLC	43	
800-367-2523		www.nationwidepromotions.com
Navitor	92	
866-628-6868		www.navitor.com
Next Products	60	
877-851-9595		www.nextpromotions.com
Pacific Sportswear and Emblem Company	9	
800-872-8778		www.pacificemblem.com
Pantone	109	
888-I-AM-PPAI		www.ppai.org
Pioneer Balloon	5	
800-685-4441		www.pioneerline.com
PPAI - Get In Touch	110	
888-I-AM-PPAI		expo.ppai.org
PPEF	IBC	
888-I-AM-PPAI		www.ppef.us
R.B. Fabrication, Inc.	79	
714-998-2700		www.rbfabrication.com
Rymax Marketing Services	75	
1-866-RYMAX11		www.rymaxinc.com
SAGE	2, 107	
800-925-7245		www.sageworld.com
SanMar	30, BM	
800-426-6399		www.sanmar.com
Sierra Pacific Apparel	57	
713-688-4455		www.sierrapacificapparel.com
The Distributor Exchange	101-104	
844-251-8544		www.thedistributorexchange.com
The Spirit Sleeve	95	
888-430-9888		www.spiritsleeve.com
The Tom Show	96	
269-806-4489		www.thetomexperience.com
Whispering Pines Sportswear	88	
800-548-4710		www.wpsportswear.com
Woody'z	87	
800-929-2877		www.woodyz.com
Zeit Company, Inc.	71	
801-972-8210		www.stillwaterawards.com
Zoo Printing	14	
800-507-1907		www.zooprinting.com

Statements of fact and opinion within *PPB* are made on the responsibility of the author alone and do not necessarily reflect official opinions on the part of Promotional Products Association International nor an endorsement of products and services described therein. Advertisers and advertising agencies assume liability for all content of advertisements printed and assume responsibility for any claims which may arise against publisher for their advertising.

PPB (ISSN 1072-3293) Volume 41, Issue 1 is published monthly by Promotional Products Association International, 3125 Skyway Circle North, Irving, Texas 75038-3526. Periodicals postage paid at Irving, Texas, and additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to *PPB*, 3125 Skyway Circle North, Irving, Texas 75038.

PPAI members receive *PPB* as a membership benefit paid for by membership dues. $48 of dues is allotted to *PPB* and is nondeductible therefrom. Nonmembers may subscribe to the publication for $72 annually. To order subscriptions and to request advertising rates, call 972-258-3044.

Copyright © 2017 Promotional Products Association International. All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Essent® One™

Everything modern distributors, decorators and suppliers need to thrive. Anywhere. On any device†.

Complete CRM

Product Research

Quoting & Ordering

Electronic Trading Through OrderTrax®

Performance Dashboards

Operations & Accounting Integration

Team Collaboration

"We chose Essent to make our entire business connected. Everything will flow automatically from one step to the next."

Memo Kahan, CEO
Top 50 Distributor PromoShop

EssentOne.com
800-559-9959

† Requires computer, tablet, or smartphone with a modern, supported browser with internet access. Product images are for illustrative purposes only.

© 2016 Essent. Essent, The Essent Logo and OrderTrax are registered trademarks and EssentOne, Compass, and SiteBuilder are trademarks of Essent Corporation. All other marks are held by their respective owners.

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.

February

Library Lovers' Month

National Time Management Month

28 Mardi Gras

16-20 International Networking Week

17 Random Acts Of Kindness Day

March

National Umbrella Month

National Nutrition Month

10-19 SXSW Festival

20 International Day Of Happiness

4 National Grammar Day

April

National Lawn Care Month

2 International Children's Book Day

11 Barbershop Quartet Day

International Customer Loyalty Month

23-29 Administrative Professionals Week

If this calendar is helpful or if you have ideas for way in which we can better provide this information, email the editors at PPB@ppai.org.

Be Brilliant

Since 1989, Promotional Products Education Foundation has been helping students reach their higher education goals. Today, PPEF provides both need and merit-based scholarships to students who have a parent in the promotional products industry or who work for a company in the industry.

- 102 scholarships were awarded in 2016.
- $150,000 in scholarships were awarded in 2016.
- Over $1 million in scholarship money has been awarded since 1989.

A PPEF scholarship can help you work towards a more brilliant future.

Apply today by visiting **ppef.us**

Scholarship deadline is March 15, 2017

PPEF
THE GIFT OF EDUCATION
Promotional Products Education Foundation

INTRODUCING OUR NEW 2017 PRODUCTS

Over 100 new products for all of your promotional product needs.

24 HOUR EXPRESS PRODUCTION

Evans now offers the majority of our line on 24 hour service, including our most popular items.
That's nearly 500 products – available to you when you need it!
Check out evans-mfg.com and look for the 24 HOURS icon on individual product pages to indicate which items are available for this service.

EVANS

www.evans-mfg.com

ASI 52840 • **PPAI** 110747 • **UPIC** EVANS • **SAGE** 50018