



Help us Decide the Location of the Next WCPA Annual Meeting!

This year, WCPA members got to see the glitz and glamour of Las Vegas. We stayed at the New York-New York Hotel & Casino. We got to meet members of the Industrial Fabrics Association International's Tent Rental Division. We strayed out onto the Vegas Strip at night and enjoyed our conference.

But next year, we need to decide where we want to gather and what we want to learn about. At the Las Vegas meeting there were suggestions for Seattle, Ontario, California, Portland and San Francisco.

Are there any cities that you want to go to? Anywhere that might be perfect for our members? We want to hear from you! Please email your suggestions to wcpa2012@hotmail.com. Let's start the discussion now and make sure we find a place that's suitable and fun for everyone!

While we're talking about the meeting, let's also come up with lecture and workshop topics. Is there anything you want to learn about? Anything you want to talk about? Is there a particular speaker you want to hear from? How about a particular issue you want addressed? Let us know! Send us your ideas, thoughts, comments and concerns!

We'd love to hear from you! Visit us at www.wcpaonline.com.

IN THIS ISSUE

Help us Decide	1
The Company Team	2
It's Not About the Money! ..	2
Regional Workshops	3
Value of Newsletters	3
IFAI Calls for Elections	4

Your Business is Only as Good as Your Team

Over the years, I've interviewed probably more than a thousand business and company owners for the newspapers I worked and freelance for.

One of the things that struck me as I wrote about these companies and their innovative and dedicated leaders is that they all talk about the same thing: A business is only as good as its team.

Every successful company I've come across has credited its team of employees for its success.

The importance of hiring the right people, using the right resources and developing personnel for leadership roles within your company is one of the key factors to success.

Many of the companies that talked about having a good team mentioned that everyone was like family. Employees cared about each other, helped each other and worked for the best interest of the company.

The foundation of a good business is not only about a positive cash flow, but its people.

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Hang on...I'm about to commit heresy to common business knowledge --let alone debase one of the most popular lines in recent movie history.

Yep, don't "show me the money!"...don't even talk to me about it...for sure don't set your business goals, sales goals, personal goals, or any other goals in your life in monetary terms. Those of us in smaller business, are well aware of the folly of trying to control our entire economy based solely on monetary policy. We are the vulnerable ones to monetary policy: we get our funds by either what we sell at a profit or by what we borrow from the bank.

We're small, but we're a part of the bigger picture of this country's fiscal policy, and in fact we impact it and are impacted by it. We drive new job development, we work on narrower margins, we're nimble and adaptable, and we're where the new ideas are that drive the economy with our innovative approaches.

Because of these attributes, those of us in small business are well rewarded, as well is this country's macro economy: we're in control of what we do and how we do it, we're in touch with the day-to-day issues impacting our businesses and are able to respond quickly, and we're sensitive to the immediate impact of market trends and what we want to do about those trends. But most importantly we have the ability to promote our products and services in unique ways that are reflective of our personal values and philosophies.

And it is for these reasons that the money involved, while an important resource, cannot be the

primary measurement by which we measure our success or failure.

There are a number of reasons which have led us to the evolution of this philosophy in our business. We feel that businesses that measure their success in purely monetary terms suffer from the following conditions:

- ◆ They sap their energy from the service, quality and the "investment" needed to develop relationships with customers.
- ◆ They create short term instead of long term commitments, and in doing so mirror the weakness of larger businesses which must focus on the short term profitability for shareholders rather than the long term rewards of sustaining commitments.
- ◆ They build an incentive among workers to go for short term results to justify their quest for increased salaries and benefits, rather than tying workers' rewards to their jobs with the company for the long term.
- ◆ They create an environment in the company which results in an inability to ensure customers of long term commitments to quality and service to meet their needs.
- ◆ They create an environment in their relationships with customers that are short term and price driven, which means that their customers realize

WCPA Regional Workshops

Regional Meetings are an important way to keep up with WCPA's activities, learn new things and network.

On that note, WCPA is going to start the conversation about regional meetings, topics and locations.

WCPA will foot the bill for a dinner location and speaker costs. Members need only show up and learn!

The first step in all of this is to ask you – the members – what you would like to learn, hear about and talk about.

Some topics that we can start with are: Streamlining your Business; Manufacturing Tips & Advice; OSHA Workshops; Going Green; Workforce Development; Small Business Advice; International Trade Resources.

WCPA welcomes any suggestions or ideas you have about regional meetings and workshops. Please email Carol Park at wcpa2012@hotmail.com with your thoughts and comments.



Reaching your current and potential customers is hard to do. Even just keeping their attention at times is an arduous task.

So what are some of the ways you can reach your customers and not lose them in pile of junk mail and pointless email blasts?

Over the years, after working for a marketing agency and running my own public relations company, I've learned a few tricks.

A basic and fundamental way of getting to your customers and giving them something they can use is what you're now reading; a newsletter.

Newsletters help customers know that you are focused on your industry; that you want to educate and help your customers with simple tips and advice.

In a newsletter you can gain the trust of your customers, give yourself credibility for potential customers and so much more. You can link your newsletters to your Web site. Add a link to a blog site or even a Facebook site.

In just a few weeks, the WCPA Newsletter will be linking to its own Facebook site.

You can also do promotions and have contests. A newsletter is one of the easiest ways to grab the attention of your customers and keep them thinking about your business.

Keeping the lines of communication open and adding things like contact us links and information in the newsletter can also help keep your customers interested.

A newsletter can be more than just updates on your company's activities; it's a marketing tool that can turn into sales in the long run.



Emailing and posting via snail mail is a good way to distribute the newsletters. Not only do you grab the customer's attention by email, but also through regular mail.

Sometimes, being able to hold something tangible – like a nicely printed newsletter – goes a long way in a customer's mind: You've taken the time to think about him/her and send something that adds value to his/her business.

Newsletters don't have to be long. They don't have to be four pages like this one; it can be one page. Content and a good design are important. Try to use your company's logos to give your newsletter your own flare and style.

Put pictures of your CEO/president. Remember to link anything that can be viewed online in the newsletter.

If it's possible, add links to resources like government rebates. Newsletters are a powerful marketing and public relations tool.

Newsletters give your business an extra layer of credibility. Customers will appreciate your effort in sending them something they can use.

Try designing and writing content for your own newsletter today! It's a great creative outlet and a nice piece of collateral for your company.

IFAI Call for Board Candidates

The call for Industrial Fabrics Association International board member candidates has been announced!

The call for board candidates was sent to the association's membership on April 9. IFAI's Leadership Development Board will meet in June to consider the applicants. By July, the committee will notify IFAI members of its recommendations.

Election results will be announced at the [2012 IFAI Expo Americas](#), Nov. 7-9 in Boston.

If you are a member of the IFAI and would like an application contact:

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Continued from Page 2

◆ that the company doesn't expect customer loyalty for the long run.

So focusing on monetary issues is bad for us in small business and for all of us in the country...then what should we do about it?

But first, and before you think I've gone off the deep end, let me say that in following this philosophy, our company has been rewarded with excellent customer relationships and a solid bottom line.

Our philosophy is based on focusing our energy on commitment to identifying the customers' real needs, evaluating our capability to address those needs, and taking whatever action we can to meet those needs.

We empower our workers at all levels to make decisions based on those values. We develop quotes and project profits and margins based on estimated costs and overhead.

Basically, we don't go in with a pre-conceived margin, or profit level, to do the job. This process reinforces the understanding in the mind of our customer that we are working with them in a partnership to be able to provide the most effective product and/or service that meets their needs.

Having pre-conceived margins and profitability figures would divert our energy from the most important job at hand, doing what's best for the customer. The money we make is a result of doing what's right for the customer.



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