

## WCPA Blogs, Articles and Thoughts

Have you ever had a moment where you just want to tap out those thoughts about business, products, research and development and all the things that go with your day-to-day duties?

Well now you have the opportunity to share those compelling, innovative thoughts with WCPA members! We're going to start a blog and a Facebook page.

What does that mean? Well, for starters, it means you can email your articles, essays, and tips and advice to [wcpa2012@hotmail.com](mailto:wcpa2012@hotmail.com) and share your knowledge through the WCPA newsletter, blog, and Facebook page.

Do you have topics for discussion? Well, through Facebook, you can bring that topic up and start a dialogue with WCPA members all over the West coast!

And if you have a particular passion on a certain issue, you can write an article and have it posted on the WCPA blog and printed in this newsletter! Take a look at Page 3 of this newsletter and you will see that Brian Holian of Tri Vantage has done exactly that!

Look for the announcement about our Facebook and blog pages soon! In the meantime, visit [www.wcpaonline.com](http://www.wcpaonline.com) for more info.

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## WCPA STILL NEEDS YOUR INPUT!

Hello everyone! Summer is here and it's hot! For WCPA, summer means its planning time!

We're still hoping to hear from members on where our next annual meeting should be.

Most of our members are located in California, Oregon and Washington.

If you would like the next WCPA annual meeting in your neighborhood, cast your vote now! Think of it as a sort of WCPA Idol for cities.

Some suggestions have included Ontario, California, Portland, Oregon and Seattle, Washington.

If you don't want any of those cities to make the cut, email me and let me know what your thoughts are so we can choose the right location.

We're also looking for input on where our regional meetings should be. Do you have a suggestion? Thoughts? Comments? Or even concerns about where our regional meetings should be? Then please feel free to contact me or Bud Weisbart and let's discuss!

Thank you!

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Buzzwords come and buzzwords go in business...almost as often as the so-called "Gurus" who are behind them.

One of the recent buzzword terms to come along particularly resonates with me because it relates to something we have been practicing in our business for over a decade: "Open-Book Management".

Well, not literally for us, because the definition of "Open-Book Management" – as the practice of letting employees know what is going on in the business – is limited.

Instead in our company we practice what we call an "Open Management System."

The system involves the active participation of our co-workers in the practices and decisions made in both the long and short term in our business.

Sometime ago we sat back and tried to identify what would make employees better while making us the best that we could be?

We determined that of paramount importance was that we wanted our co-workers to be committed to the goals of our business, knowledgeable of what we are all about, and capable of doing their jobs.

Then we took this discussion a step further and asked:

"What do our employees want, not just of us, but also for themselves and their families for now and in the future?" "How do their desires relate to what they do here in working with us?"

These were very important questions for us because, as with most smaller companies, people working here are like our family, and in many cases have been

working with us most of their adult lives.

Our longest-term worker, one of our production managers, has been with us for 33 years!

So for us what our employees want for themselves, in their association with us, is an important issue.

And the answers to these questions are not that surprising:

- Identification of common values with the organization with which they work.
- A sharing of common purpose; self-determination in charting the course in their lives.
- Involvement in and with the decisions that are made which impact their lives and the organization with which they work.

I think most companies place too high a premium on the supposed values of secrecy in their businesses.

In our company, with the exception of some personnel and legal issues, everything is open to anyone.

We also encourage all our co-workers to participate in the decisions and discussions we have about projects and policies.

We do this through daily meetings of senior managers, and through weekly meetings with all employees.

We are open about these issues because we strongly believe that, as outlined above, for our co-workers to be what we want them to be, and for us to be what they want us to be, this "openness" is an imperative.



# Make Your Supplier Part of Your Team

By Brian Holian, Tri Vantage LLC Western Regional Sales Manager

## IFAI Celebrates 100 Years

The Industrial Fabrics Association International (IFAI) has officially kicked off the observance of its 100th Anniversary this year.

IFAI is inviting the specialty fabrics industry to its centenary celebration when it opens its doors at IFAI Expo Americas 2012.

The event will be held at the Boston Convention Center, Nov. 7-9, 2012.

IFAI hopes there will be about 7,000 guests during the three day convention and celebration.

Festivities are set to include a Welcome Reception and 100th Anniversary Party, an IFAI Historical Museum on the show floor with archival materials and photos, music, prizes and lots of fun.

The convention will also continue offering educational opportunities including CEU credits.

This year, IFAI will co-locate with the JEC Americas 2012 Composites Show and Conferences in its American debut.

Combined, there will be more than 600 exhibitors.

The Industrial Fabrics Association International is the largest, longest-running trade association for the specialty fabrics industry.

For more information about the IFAI 2012 event, visit [www.ifai.com](http://www.ifai.com).

I have been serving customers in the sun control, outdoor living, marine and industrial markets for my entire nineteen year career. I currently serve customers from Texas to the West Coast.

Over the years I have identified some core ingredients that define successful relationships between customers and their suppliers. These core ingredients include: Communication, Education, Hard Work, Inventory and Fair Pricing.

### Communication

Communication is critical to building a successful relationship with your supplier. You should allow your supplier to visit your facility at least once per year. It is key to have an open line of communication with your suppliers' Account Representatives, Site Managers, and Regional and National Managers.

From top down, you should be able to make contact with your supplier to strategize about projects, discuss terms, talk about customer service, inventory and pricing.

Your suppliers have thousands of years of combined experience and should be ready and willing to help you and your company succeed.

### Education

Your supplier should support their territories by offering to host learning seminars and by supporting regional associations like the WCPA and IFAI. And when we suppliers offer our support, you should strongly consider attending these events. Many things have changed since I got into the game nineteen years

ago and if you don't make the time to learn, you will be left behind.

At the very least, your sales teams should be armed with the latest products and services that are available from your suppliers.

Companies who actively learn about developments in their markets are the companies who are setting the pace.

I can guarantee two things if you attend an event or Expo: You will learn something that will benefit your business and you will have fun.

### Hard Work

Your supplier is your partner in business. You work hard and your supplier should work just as hard.

You should set high expectations for your supplier to perform at a high standard and to deliver products and services in a World Class fashion.

You should expect to get paid for your hard work and in turn, your supplier should as well.

### Inventory

In today's market conditions, the balance of inventory has never been more challenging. Your suppliers need your help.

If you have a project that you know is on the horizon, call your supplier and ask them to be prepared for the order by having the inventory on hand in advance.

Many suppliers will use blanket orders to secure inventory for your core products.

Work with your teams to make sure that you are not using your last tube of black thread so that

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## Photos and Content for WCPA's Facebook Site

WCPA is currently constructing a Facebook page for members and the public.

If you have photos, video or even articles you would like to have featured on the Facebook page, please send them to Carol Park at

[wcpa2012@hotmail.com](mailto:wcpa2012@hotmail.com).

The Facebook page will be a one stop click for newsletters, up-to-date information on upcoming meetings and events and more.

Please send us your thoughts and input so we can make a great WCPA Facebook page!



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inventory does not become an urgent need. I can assure you that your supplier wants to have every item on the shelf when you need it.

#### Fair Pricing

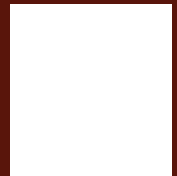
All of your suppliers are competing for your business. Please expect us to give you the best price for the value that we provide.

When you get a price that is much lower than the nearest competitor, ask yourself, "What am I not going to get for this price?"

All of us suppliers appreciate every order you give us. In my many years serving these markets, I have competed against just about every supplier out there.

I can tell you that you are fortunate to have a group of suppliers who care about our markets and want to help you succeed.

Please let your supplier become an important member of your team.



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