

# INDA's Small Business Newsletter

Covering Issues That Affect You

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November 2008

## INDA SMALL BUSINESS E-REPORT

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**Welcome to the INDA Small Business e-Report.** This monthly e-publication provides INDA members with insight and advice on operating a successful small business in today's nonwovens industry.

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## **SMALL MANUFACTURERS TO BATTLE BIG GUYS FOR 2009 VISIONARY AWARD**

A couple of smaller companies will go head-to-head with industry giants in the competition for the prestigious 2009 Visionary Award. Now in its eighth year, the Award – which is given annually to a new consumer product that utilizes nonwoven fabrics in its final form – will be presented at the VISION 2009 Consumer Products Conference, January 26-29, 2009 in New Orleans, La. The finalists will make presentations during VISION 2009 and conference attendees will vote on the recipient of the 2009 Visionary Award.

“The vital role nonwovens continue to play in a host of consumer products is clear in the quality of these five finalists, which were selected from almost two dozen nominations from around the world,” says Visionary Award Chairman Michael Jacobsen, of INDA. “They represent the most significant advances in incorporating nonwovens technology into consumer products and they are being recognized not only for their technical attributes, but for their novel use of nonwoven fabrics as well.”

The five finalists are:

### **1. Ahlstrom Disruptor nanoalumina fiber, nonwoven water filter media**

Disruptor is a nonwoven, wet laid filter media that is based on nanoalumina fiber technology. Disruptor offers many benefits for consumer product water purification products, including refrigerators, tap filters, shower filters, counter top filters, under sink filters, prefilters to home reverse osmosis (RO) filters, water pitchers, water coolers and spa filters.

### **2. Back Enterprises, Gemy Wormy Sanitary Sleeve**

The Gemy Wormy Sanitary Sleeve is a kid-friendly, easy-to-use disposable product that captures germs by teaching children to cough and sneeze into their elbow in a fun way. The product is comprised of a nonwoven laminate containing multiple elastic filaments for the cuffs, an inner layer of breathable film and an outer layer of spunbond polypropylene.

### **3. Kimberly-Clark, GoodNites Sleep Boxer for Boys and Sleep Shorts for Girls**

GoodNites give children comfortable protection that looks and feels like everyday sleepwear. They are designed to help protect, with customized protection zones for girls and for boys.

**4. Rotano International, Nooby's Booties Disposable Dog Boot**

These disposable dog booties are made from spunbond polypropylene and polyethylene and are marketed to fill a gap in the market as a disposable dog bootie. It comes in two versions - a Disposable Dog Bootie for Wet Conditions and one for Dry Conditions.

**5. WearOnce.com/Tredegear Consumer Designs, Inc., Once Single-Use Panty**

Created for the modern woman and introduced in late 2007, the Once single-use panty with a breathable, soft, stretchy and stylish fit feels like any other panty, but with one big advantage - it is worn once and then discarded. It is made from a breathable, soft, and stretchy nonwoven with comfortable leg and waistbands and a cotton gusset.

Last February at VISION 2008 in San Antonio, Tex., Kimberly-Clark's Spa Sensials personal care treatment received the 2008 Visionary Award over five other finalists. Other previous recipients include Tyco Healthcare Retail Group's Swim Pants (2007); Chicopee's Disaster Relief Blanket (2006); Fiberweb's Resolution Print Media (2005); Church & Dwight's Brillo Scrub 'n' Toss (2004); FMJ ChemBio's Civilian Quick Escape Mask (2003); and Procter & Gamble's Swiffer (2002).

For more information on VISION 2009: [VISION Homepage](#)

**SMALLER FILTRATION 2008 EXHIBITORS CAN GET FREE PRESS IN DAILY FILTER**

Not matter how big their booth is, all exhibitors at Filtration 2008 in Philadelphia next month can get free publicity in the Daily Filter, the official Show Daily newspaper of Filtration 2008. Exhibitors should send a press release or information on what they are highlighting at Filtration 2008 – along with a photo if available – to editor Michael Jacobsen at [mjacobson@inda.org](mailto:mjacobsen@inda.org); 201-612-6601. Deadline to submit information is November 20.

Filtration 2008, organized by INDA, Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry, will take place December 9-11 at the Pennsylvania Convention Center in Philadelphia, Pa., and is expected to attract more than 2000 filtration professionals from around the globe.

**WILL EMPLOYEE FREE CHOICE ACT BECOME LAW?**

The Employee Free Choice Act (H.R. 800, S. 1041) is a controversial piece of legislation that was introduced last year and has caused a stir among U.S. business interests who contend it will trigger a flurry of unionizing drives if it ever becomes law. According to Peter Mayberry, at the INDA offices in Washington, D.C., EFCA would remove employers' right to secret ballot elections when a majority of employees have signed

union cards and there is no evidence of illegal coercion. Supporters of the bill say the changes are needed to fend off union busting tactics, but opponents like the National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) and U.S. Chamber of Commerce argue the changes will lead to illegal coercion by union organizers.

Although it failed to move during the current session of Congress, House and Senate Democrats see their best opportunity for passage during the next Congress because of projected gains in both chambers. Considering the potential stakes, both sides have stepped up their advocacy efforts. Organized labor, for instance, has launched an aggressive grassroots political mobilization effort, targeting some \$200 million to back candidates that support EFCA in key election contests. Business interests are rallying behind the Coalition for a Democratic Workplace (CDW) to promote grassroots opposition efforts, and are pouring millions of dollars into multi-media advertising and educational efforts intended to protect secret ballot elections

Readers interested in this issue can learn more about the views of those who oppose the EFCA by visiting [www.nam.org/efca](http://www.nam.org/efca), while those who seek information from organizations that support the bill can learn more at [www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/voiceatwork/efca](http://www.aflcio.org/joinaunion/voiceatwork/efca). To review the legislation itself, visit [www.thomas.loc.gov](http://www.thomas.loc.gov) and enter "H.R. 800" into the search engine for the 110th Congress.

### **SMALL BUSINESS TIP: 10 TIPS ON THE OFFICE HOLIDAY PARTY**

It is mid-November, which means the Holiday season – and all the challenges it brings to smaller companies – is right around the corner. It is one of a small business manager's annual decisions – what kind of Christmas party should the company host this year, and how can the company avoid the inevitable party-related personnel problems.

Organizing and holding a successful annual company holiday gathering may be even more of a challenge in these difficult economic times, so this research conducted by Croner, a provider of employment and health and safety advice for businesses, may be even more useful for small businesses. Croner reports that one in two parties end up with colleagues fighting, one in three with incidents of sexual harassment, and one in five with accidents involving employees.

But rather than scrap the party all together, Croner has issued its Top Ten "Rules of the Yule" to help bosses host a safe celebration.

1. Set a "Party Policy." This could be as simple as displaying employees' responsibilities, such as acceptable standards of behavior, on a notice board.

2. Identify potential hazards. This involves inspecting the venue to plan for drunken slips and trips, considering the safety of people going home after the event, and even identifying any potential conflict between employees so that table plans can be organized accordingly.
3. Issue behavioral guidelines. This should clarify unacceptable behavior, such as harassment, bullying and fighting. Employees should understand that, as this is technically a work activity, normal disciplinary procedures would be applied.
4. Invite husbands, wives ... and life-partners. If inviting employees' partners to the event, employers need to tread carefully. This should not be restricted to husbands and wives but also extended to partners of the opposite and same sex, to avoid potential sexual orientation discrimination claims.
5. Avoid "tipple tattle." Boozing bosses should avoid discussing promotion, career prospects or salary with employees who may use the convivial situation to discuss matters that are more suited to a formal appraisal or private meeting. The employee is likely to expect any career promises to be kept even if the employer can't remember the conversation!
6. Limit the spirit. If you supply the alcohol, or encourage its consumption, you may be legally responsible for the welfare of the employee if they suffer from drink induced disasters. The best solution is to limit the number of free drinks and be prepared to ask individuals to take it easy if they appear worse for wear.
7. Don't poison your staff. If providing a buffet, the food must be safe to eat. This is especially important if the event is being held in a company-owned cafeteria.
8. Ditch the mistletoe. The Christmas party is the perfect environment for a festive fling, but this could have repercussions when employees return to work. A brief encounter under the mistletoe can cause embarrassment in the workplace and put strain on working relationships.
9. Curb drunk driving. Sensible bosses will issue advice before the party about not driving after having an alcoholic drink. Consider hiring a minibus for the end of the night, or provide the numbers of local taxi firms to demonstrate that reasonable steps have been taken to minimize this risk.
10. Don't expect miracles the morning after. Bosses should decide to what extent they will be lenient to staff coming to work with a hangover, arriving late, or even not at all, and inform employees. More important is the safety of employees, who may not be fully sober the next day, especially if they need to

drive or operate machinery. Consider removing the risk to safety by giving them alternative work until they are fit to resume their normal tasks.

### **TECHNOLOGY PLAYS A ROLE IN EMPLOYEE HAPPINESS**

While keeping up-to-date on the latest technology can be a daunting task for small businesses, any investment can potentially have a significant impact on employee production and retention.

That's because an overwhelming majority of U.S. workers place a high value on technology in the workplace, so much so that almost 40% of employees across the labor force would consider changing jobs to work for an organization that is more committed to providing access to and training in the latest technology.

In a just released national survey, commissioned by the Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (FCEDA, [www.FairfaxCountyEDA.org](http://www.FairfaxCountyEDA.org)) and conducted by IPSOS Public Affairs, an independent, leading global research company, four in five workers said access to technology is important to their capacity to be creative and productive at work. A similar percentage (80%) said that such technology gives their employer an edge in the marketplace.

With such a premium placed on technology, many American workers said they would think about leaving their current jobs for an employer that makes better use of technology or offers better technology-related training. A total of 39% surveyed said they would consider such a move if it meant having access to more up-to-date technology, while 37% said they'd contemplate a job switch if better training in technology were offered.

While the results of the survey fairly consistently cut across all workplace sectors and other demographic categories, there were some notable statistical differences:

- Americans working in professional services are more likely (90%) to say that technology is critical to their individual productivity at work, when compared with those working in manufacturing/construction (80%), direct services (77%), health (77%), other sectors (76%) or education (72%).
- Men (43%) are significantly more likely than women (31%) to suggest that they would work for another employer that provided more in-depth training on the latest technology.
- Younger workers are more likely to place an emphasis on technology than their older counterparts.

- Americans working in the manufacturing sector (52%) are significantly more likely than those working in direct services (43%), health (39%), other sectors (39%), professional services (37%), or education (22%) to say that they would consider leaving their employer for another company that makes better use of available technology.
- Hispanic workers are more apt to consider a job change for the prospect of improved access to or training in technology. A total of 65 percent of Hispanic respondents said they would consider switching jobs for better access and 63 percent said they would consider switching for more technology training.

## **INDA MEETINGS CALENDAR**

### [Filtration 2008 International Conference & Expo](#)

December 9-11  
Pennsylvania Convention Center  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

2009

### [Vision 2009 Consumer Products Conference](#)

January 26-29  
Sheraton New Orleans Canal Street  
New Orleans, Louisiana

### [Annual Meeting 2009](#) (For INDA Members Only)

February 22-24  
Four Seasons Aviara  
Carlsbad, California

### [Needlepunch 2009](#)

March 24-26  
Marriott Grande Dunes  
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina

### [INDA Nonwovens Course](#)

March 31 - April 2  
INDA Headquarters  
Cary, North Carolina

Elementary Nonwovens Course

May 13-14  
INDA Headquarters  
Cary, North Carolina

World of Wipes 2009 International Conference

June 22-24  
Grand Hyatt Atlanta  
Atlanta, Georgia

INDA Nonwovens Course

September 15-17  
INDA Headquarters  
Cary, North Carolina

INTC 2009 International Nonwovens Technical Conference

September 21-24  
Grand Hyatt Denver Downtown  
Denver, Colorado

Elementary Nonwovens Course

October 1-2  
INDA Headquarters  
Cary, North Carolina

Filtration 2009 International Conference & Expo

November 17-19  
Navy Pier  
Chicago, Illinois

2010

IDEA 2010 International Conference & Expo

April 27-29  
Miami Beach Convention Center  
Miami Beach, Florida

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THAT'S ALL, FOLKS

We would love to hear from you. Just email us at [mjacobson@inda.org](mailto:mjacobsen@inda.org) to let us know how you are getting along. Michael Jacobsen, Editor, INDA Small Business e-Report