

INDA's Small Business Newsletter

Covering Issues That Affect You

September 2008

INDA SMALL BUSINESS E-REPORT

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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GEIST WRITES ABOUT OUR NEW SMALL WORLD

One of our favorite business speakers, Sam Geist, who focuses his efforts on helping small businesses compete in today's changing environment, sent us an email recently with his thoughts as he traveled home from Mexico on Continental Airlines Flight 2193. These thoughts are worth sharing with our small business readers:

I have just finished speaking to Mexican entrepreneurs at the behest of the Mexican government. My mandate: To offer up suggestions to this audience for how they can effectively compete against China.

As I get on the airplane to return home I consider the implications of our new small world. I contemplate once again the action that must be taken by individual organizations, and industries and even governments to ensure that they and theirs survive and thrive.

It is with these thoughts in mind that I write to share some of the insights I've gleaned from my speaking travels this year. I fully realize, as I am sure you do, that we are not living or working in normal times. It is not a "business as usual" situation. We cannot do what we've always done and expect (or even just hope) that it will all work out.

It won't.

As change in the marketplace storms around us, it increases our fears, our frustrations and our opportunities. In order to face this whirlwind we must recognize the reality of the situation and then we must respond resourcefully, expertly.

We aren't alone. While speaking in South America, in Europe, in Mexico, the same refrain was echoed by conference organizers and governments alike — how to maximize advantages, how to recognize opportunities, how to broaden our perspective, how to execute more effectively. While I don't purport to be privy to all the answers, I do know for certainty that there are specific actions that will positively impact our current state of affairs.

The following three considerations will hopefully assist you not only weather the storm, but come out ahead of it.

1. Recognize the Structural Change in Business Models. And then Remove the Structural Obstacles in our Businesses. Remember what Charles Darwin said a long time ago: "It's not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."

Accept that in our borderless world, we need workplaces without impediments. Take this opportunity to create an open (both physically and mentally) workplace — one without barriers between departments, one without misunderstandings between employees, one that promotes open and clear communication, both vertically and horizontally along the staff line. Enable a spirit of "oneness."

2. Stay in the Box. "My success, part of it certainly, is that I have focused in on a few things." This comes from none other than that successful entrepreneur Bill Gates.

The maxim to "get out of your box" is over-rated and now outdated as well. In today's business environment the opposite proves to be much more effective. Dig deeper. Stretch higher. Focus more intently. Know your box better. Perfect what you're good at. Work at understanding your role — your purpose. Do the same for your organization. Know its objectives and its purpose.

Yes! Look outside the box, but operate within it.

3. Execute... or Be Executed. They're tough words. The toughest! Especially today, real actions speak so much louder than words. Not just motion, not just "busy work", but strategic action.

Concentrate on outcomes — not activities.

Concentrate on the controllable and act with that in mind. Remember your basics. They matter. Keep in mind that effective execution requires both vision and strategy. "Execution is hard work. It's not sexy. It's not fun. It's day-to-day discipline and keeping the project on track." This, from John Baldoni.

While you can't do everything to ward off problems, you can use these three focal points as beacons to assist you to navigate through our difficult marketplace. Please feel free to share my thoughts with your team members, with your customers, with your partners. I would be very interested to hear your comments.

Sam Geist can be reached at samgeist@geistgroup.com; www.samgeist.com

IT'S FALL, SO TIME TO GET BACK TO WORK

We may be back at work this month and saying goodbye to summer vacations, but the good news is that the majority of us are seemingly okay with that. In case you missed it, SnagAJob.com recently announced the results of its second-annual index, which found:

- ⇒ Nearly two thirds of American workers - 65 percent - are happy on the job. That's up slightly from last year's 61 percent.
- ⇒ And while working happiness is trending up slightly, the economy is weighing heavily on workers' minds. In a year-over-year comparison, the economy jumped from 18 percent to 57 percent when workers were asked the No. 1 issue facing the nation, becoming much more of a concern than healthcare or war.
- ⇒ For the first time this year, the SnagAJob.com Labor Happiness Index also tracked workers' sentiments on a number of issues, including their thoughts on commuting. Despite gas prices, eight in 10 (84%) say their primary mode of transportation for getting to work is still their car, which they drive alone.

For the full report, log on to www.SnagAJob.com. And then get back to work!

WHO ARE VISIONARY AWARD FINALISTS? FIND OUT SOON AT INDA.ORG

The six finalists for the prestigious 2009 Visionary Award have been selected and will be announced on October 1 on www.inda.org. While we can't reveal the finalists of this annual award – sponsored by INDA and presented at the Vision 2009 Consumer Products Conference in New Orleans from January 26-29 – we can say that there are a few small companies that are going to battle head-to-head with some industry giants for this recognition of the best consumer products that utilize nonwoven fabrics.

Stay tuned, and check out www.inda.org in October for the list of finalists plus information on Vision 2009 Consumer Products Conference.

REPORT AVAILABLE NOW ON WORLDWIDE NONWOVENS INDUSTRY

Even if you are a small company involved in only one segment of the nonwovens industry, your company can certainly benefit from one of the most comprehensive reports ever on the current state of the global nonwovens industry being released this fall from INDA, in cooperation with its European counterpart EDANA.

The third edition of the “Worldwide Outlook for the Nonwovens Industry - 2007 - 2012” reports on and analyzes worldwide industry statistics, including size of regional markets and projections for growth in all major nonwovens markets and technologies. The report also reviews web forming and bonding technologies, including current capacities and global projections.

“The Worldwide Outlook will set the standard for reporting and analyzing not only the current state of the global business of nonwovens, but for the state of the industry into 2012 as well,” says Rory Holmes, president of INDA. “This report will provide a

benchmark for the state of our industry wherever nonwovens are made or sold and will serve as the key reference source for any company involved in the business of nonwovens.”

Holmes points out that one of the significant increased benefits of the new report is that it includes application statistics on worldwide markets. “Previous reports available had focused on production and volume, and this addition makes the report even more valuable,” he adds.

Among the findings of the report is the expansion of nonwovens production and capacity in developing countries. The development of turnkey equipment for many key nonwovens technologies has lowered the cost of investment and helped production spread beyond its original base in the United States, Europe and Japan.

Reflecting the changing nature of the global business, for the first time there is a change in the definitions of the worldwide regions. The North American market is now the NAFTA region and includes the U.S., Canada and Mexico (formerly included in Latin America); Europe now includes both Eastern and Western European countries and Turkey. China is broken out separately from the Asia-Pacific market volume. South America accounts for the five largest markets: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia and Venezuela.

“We are publishing this report on the worldwide industry to provide a benchmark of where the industry was at the beginning of the 21st century and its outlook for growth by geographic region and nonwoven forming and bonding technologies,” points out Ian Butler, Director of Market Research and Statistics, who spearheaded the research in the report. “As defined in this report, from INDA's and EDANA's point of view, the worldwide nonwovens industry's prospects are excellent and it remains an exciting industry in which to be involved.”

Among the other highlights of the comprehensive report:

- ⇒ The production of nonwoven roll goods globally in 2007 reached 5.75 million tonnes, equivalent to \$20.9 billion in U.S. dollar equivalents. This tonnage volume is equal to about 144 billion square meters.
- ⇒ For the decade from 1997 through 2007, nonwoven tonnage increased at an average annual growth rate of 7.9% per year, rising from 2.69 million tonnes in 1997 to 5.75 million tonnes in 2007. INDA and EDANA forecast that worldwide nonwovens will continue to grow at a rate of about 7.9% per year during the five year period of 2007-2012 and reach 8.41 million tonnes by 2012.

- ⇒ Square meter volume is forecast to grow at a faster pace - about a percentage point per year higher than tonnage. Newer nonwoven technologies are capable of producing nonwovens at lower weights while meeting the specified requirements. Thus, there is a continuing trend toward lighter weights of nonwoven materials, which reduces the overall tonnage required.
- ⇒ Looking at the historical growth of the four basic nonwoven technologies in tons for the 10-year span from 1997 through 2007, the report concludes that market share for carded technologies in terms of combined volume continues to rise, boosted primarily by spunlaced and needlepunched technologies. Spunlaid volume is increasing at a faster pace and actually surpassed carded within the past year. Spunlaid nonwovens growth is driven to a large part by the technology's expansion in China and now into India.

The cost for INDA members is \$4,000 and \$5,600 for non-members. For more on the Worldwide Outlook for the Nonwovens Industry - 2007 - 2012, contact INDA at 919-233-1210; ext. 130, iwilliams@inda.org. [INDA Bookstore](#).

SMALL BUSINESSES WITH ENERGY PROBLEMS SHOULD ATTEND NETS CONFERENCE

In response to a recent survey in which nonwovens and textile industry executives cited energy costs as their number one concern, INDA is sponsoring the inaugural New Energy Technologies & Sustainability (NETS) Conference. The three-day event is set for October 28-30, 2008 at the Raleigh Marriott City Center in Raleigh, N.C.

The NETS Conference will focus on how companies can learn to cut costs immediately and to establish long-term energy and sustainability strategies. A focus of the event will be the Tabletop sessions, where attendees will have the opportunity to meet with companies that provide products to reduce energy costs.

INDA is teaming up with North Carolina State University's Industrial Energy Service (IES). As experts in energy as well as in nonwovens and textiles, IES will bring together a line-up of knowledgeable speakers to address the energy cost challenges being faced by companies today.

"NETS is designed especially for the nonwovens and textiles industry and the program will be specific to the needs of this market," points out INDA President Rory Holmes. "The challenge of rising energy costs will continue to be a priority for our business and this conference will help identify both short- and long-term solutions for our industry."

There will be two tracks as part of the NETS Conference - Management and Technical. Attendees from the nonwoven and textile industry will include top management, energy managers, plant engineers, project/process engineers and industrial engineers.

For more information on the 2008 New Energy Technologies & Sustainability (NETS) Conference, visit [NETS Homepage](#).

INDA MEETINGS SCHEDULE

2008

October 28-30, 2008, [New Energy Technologies 2008](#), Marriott City Center, Raleigh, NC

December 9-11, [Filtration 2008](#), Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, PA

2009

January 26-29, [Vision 2009](#), Sheraton New Orleans Canal Street, New Orleans, LA

February 3-5, [INDA Nonwovens Course](#), INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

February 22-24, [Annual Meeting 2009](#), Four Seasons Aviara, Carlsbad, CA

March 24-26, [Needlepunch 2009](#), Marriott Grande Dunes, Myrtle Beach, SC

March 31-April 1, [INDA Nonwovens Course](#), INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

May 5-7, [Link with Asia 2009 - The East/West Business Connection](#), Sheraton Wall Centre, Vancouver, BC Canada

May 13-14, [Elementary Nonwovens Course](#), INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

June 22-24, [World of Wipes 2009](#), Grand Hyatt Atlanta, Atlanta, GA

September 15-17, [INDA Nonwovens Course](#), INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

September 21-24, [INTC 2009](#), Grand Hyatt Denver Downtown, Denver, CO

October 1-2, [Elementary Nonwovens Course](#), INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

November 17-19, [Filtration 2009](#), Navy Pier, Chicago, IL

2010

April 27-29, [IDEA 2010 International Conference & Expo](#), Miami Beach Convention Center, Miami Beach, FL

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.

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