

INDA's Small Business Newsletter

Covering Issues That Affect You

July 2009

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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Quote of the Month:

The most damaging phrase in the language is: "It's always been done that way."

Rear Admiral Grace Murray Hopper, American computer scientist and United States Naval officer

INDA NEWS

S.C. Johnson Receives 2009 WOW Innovation Award

The big guys came out on top this year as Windex Outdoor All-in-One Glass Cleaning Tool, a highly successful new product from S.C. Johnson, was voted the recipient of the 2009 WOW Innovation Award as part of the third annual World of Wipes (WOW) Conference, June 22-24, 2009 in Atlanta, Ga.

The WOW Conference, organized by INDA, is devoted solely to wipes, with a concentration on substrates, active ingredients, packaging, market metrics, industry challenges and market opportunities, particularly in Asia and Europe. A record setting 267 attendees took part in the three-day Conference held at Grand Hyatt Atlanta Buckhead.

The WOW Award recognizes and rewards the industry members who bring new and value-added processes and products to the wipes market. For the first time, the WOW Innovation Award was sponsored by *Nonwovens Markets* (www.risiinfo.com), the twice-monthly newsletter that covers developments in the nonwovens industry around the world.

Following presentations by five finalists nominated by the industry, attendees at the WOW Conference voted Windex Outdoor All-in-One Cleaner Glass Cleaning Tool as the recipient of the second annual WOW Innovation Award. Windex's Special Sheeting Action Formula wipes prevent streaks and spotting and allows the user to clean 20 windows with a single pad. Users can reach up to 11 feet, so they can safely clean outside windows without using a ladder.

"We are very honored to receive the 2009 WOW Innovation Award for Windex Outdoor All-in-One Glass Cleaning Tool," says Brad Goodwin, SC Johnson Business Vice President, Home Cleaning Division. "At SC Johnson, we are dedicated to innovative, high-quality products. Windex Outdoor All-in-One helps today's fast-paced families get a streak-free shine for their outdoor windows without having to spend a lot of time or effort, leaving consumers more time to enjoy the outdoors."

The four other finalists were Clorox Green Works Natural Biodegradable Cleaning Wipes, Evolon Exfolia Beauty Cloths, developed by Freudenberg and Beauty Cloth International and presented by Kleen Test Products, PGI Spinlace Nonwoven Fabric presented by Polymer Group, Inc. and Prime Label & Screen Rigid Lens II Resealable Flat Pack, from Prime Label.

INDA Now Accepting Nominations for 2010 Visionary Award

While the WOW Innovation award may have been captured this year by a large player in the market, the small guys have another chance to show their stuff with the upcoming 2010 Visionary Awards, which is now open for nominations. These prestigious awards recognize consumer end products that utilize nonwoven fabrics or employ nonwoven

technology during their manufacturing process. INDA, which sponsors the annual award, will be accepting nominations through September 1.

Now in its ninth year, the 2010 Visionary Award will be presented at the Vision 2010 Consumer Products Conference, January 19-22, 2010, which will once again be held at the Sheraton Canal Street in New Orleans, La.

The process and criteria for the 2010 Visionary Award are simple:

1. The finished consumer end product must contain a nonwoven fabric or utilize a nonwoven technology during its manufacturing process.
2. The consumer product has to have been introduced to the trade or to consumers in 2008-09.
3. The product cannot have been selected as a finalist in any previous Visionary Award competition.
4. Companies can nominate their own products. While any number of products can be nominated, only one product per company will be selected as a finalist.

Products will be judged on their novel use of nonwoven technology, as well as on their consumer and trade acceptance. Eligible consumer product categories include disposable diapers, feminine hygiene products, adult incontinence products, household wipes and home filters, among others.

The nominees will be reviewed by an INDA selection committee and finalists will be selected to make presentations at the Vision 2010 Consumer Products Conference. Conference attendees will then vote on the recipient of the award and the recipient is announced on the final day of the Vision 2010 Consumer Products Conference.

Last January at the Vision 2009 Conference in New Orleans, the Disruptor™ nonwoven water filter media from Ahlstrom was named the recipient of the 2009 Visionary Award. Other previous recipients of the coveted Visionary Award include Kimberly-Clark's SpaSentials spa treatment (2008); Tyco 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).

To nominate a product, email an explanation of the product to Michael Jacobsen, Visionary Awards coordinator, at [mjacobson@inda.org](mailto:mjacobsen@inda.org). Samples of the product should also be sent to Michael Jacobsen, INDA, 22 Paterson Avenue, Midland Park, NJ 07432 USA.

Call 201-612-6601 with any questions. For more information on the Vision 2010 Consumer Products Conference, log on to <http://www.inda.org/events/index.html>.

SMALL BUSINESS ADVICE

Every Business is a Service Business

You may think that you're in the business of selling a raw material, piece of equipment or nonwoven fabric, but according to golf equipment entrepreneur Barney Adams – speaking in an interview in *Success* magazine – “everybody is in the service business.” Adams, who initially had trouble breaking through to regular retail channels, found success on Home Shopping Network and infomercials and grew his business, Adams Golf, from \$1 million to \$85 million in annual sales in three years. Here he offers some success strategies for wowing customers:

- Define your product by the service it provides. Everybody is in the service business.
- Be flexible with business plans. A small business has to be flexible and that can't happen with a business plan treated like commandments.
- Watch the little things. Excessive overnight email. Every light left on at night. Sloppy housekeeping. “I don't know how you can put out a quality product in a place that looks like a dump,” says Adams. “Most companies fail because of the little things.”
- Trust your instincts in hiring. Your gut is the sum total of your knowledge and experience.
- Sublimate your ego to your business. Are your actions good for the business or good for you? “In my early days, it didn't bother me to say, ‘Yeah, I stayed at a Motel 6 last night.’”
- Take responsibility for successes and failures. “My company, my mistake. Hopefully I can handle it properly on a private basis, but not on a public basis.”

Source: Success magazine, August 2009

Cost Savings Suggestion: Consider VoIP

In today's tight economic times, when expanding your business may not be feasible, it makes sense to look internally at ways to shave costs to keep profitability on track. One area so simple it may be overlooked: your monthly phone bill. According to technology consultant Gene Marks, VoIP (voice over IP – the IP is “Internet Protocol”) may be worth a look. Marks provided a case study:

Company X knew it needed a better phone system. This was last fall, when the recession was already in full swing. They knew they had to act sooner rather than later. “Customer responsiveness is the key to our success,” says company president John Doe. “Even though we're small, we have to show that we're agile.” The company relied on the phone to reach out to companies big and small. “Selling to the big guys when you're small can

be a struggle," says Doe. "Getting in the door takes the right infrastructure. A good phone system is [the difference between] life and death to us."

Six months ago, Company X was still using a Ma Bell system stuck in the 1970s. Remote employees couldn't connect; traveling employees couldn't be reached and customers got busy signals (remember those?). When people did get through, many couldn't get routed to the right person to help them. Meanwhile, the company continued to grow. And Doe knew he would lose his competitive edge if he didn't upgrade their system, downturn be damned.

Through a third-party vendor, the company purchased a "Voice over IP" phone system, including software from Cisco, as well as phone units for each user. With VoIP, calls travel over data networks like the Internet, rather than via traditional phone lines that are expensive to maintain. Total cost of the installation: \$12,000, financed over three years — not a trivial investment for a small company in a recession, but one that continues to prove its worth.

Company X's two employees who work from home now have handsets that plug right into their home computers, connecting them to the company phone system through their own broadband connections. Now calls to the main number are sluiced to their home phones; if not answered, they bounce back to a live person or voicemail, without callers knowing. Better yet, customers who once got busy signals when they tried calling employees at home now get routed to another person, to voicemail or even to a cell phone.

"Whenever a customer calls, they're sure to get hold of a live person — or at least leave a message for the right person," says Doe. "We were never able to do that before."

The new phone system also came with "soft phone" software that hooked any laptops to the phone system as well, via a wireless Internet connection. To listen and talk, all remote employees need is a cheap headset.

It gets cooler still. The voicemail system navigates callers through a simple automated directory. Any messages get converted into sound files that can be e-mailed, forwarded or saved.

How dependable is VoIP versus traditional phone lines? Doe says he hasn't noticed any difference in the number of dropped calls or overall service. If the system acts up, they can call a 24-7 hotline, administered by Cisco, to work through any glitches.

Doe estimates that switching to a VoIP system has cut his telecommunications bill by roughly a quarter. But shaving costs isn't the biggest benefit. "When we're dealing with big customers, we have to appear to be bigger," he says. "We need to look professional. We need to be accessible. We wouldn't be able to survive if we didn't make this investment."

Source: Gene Marks is owner of Marks Group, a technology consulting firm, and author of *The Streetwise Small Business Book of Lists*.

How to Reduce Your Shipping Fees

In keeping with the cost reduction theme, here's some advice from *The Kiplinger Letter* on how to reduce your shipping fees.

The slow economy spells some unexpected breaks for shippers. Eager to grab bigger shares of a market that has all but stopped growing, FedEx, UPS and DHL will duke it out, negotiating contracts to reduce rates, despite an official 6.9% hike this year.

Package delivery services won't trumpet the price concessions, but they're willing to dicker if you know what to ask about. Focus on so-called accessorial charges; you can knock off a host of add-ons, such as a 2% or higher fuel surcharge, insurance, fees for residential or out-of-the-way deliveries that generally amount to 10% of package drop-off charges plus extra charges for oversize parcels.

The largest shippers have the most clout to cut deals, but small companies that regularly ship parcels shouldn't think it's a waste of time to negotiate. The best bet: Shop around. Don't figure that only your longtime package service understands your company's pickup and delivery needs. Most parcel outfits have the software and handling capabilities to take on new customers without a hitch. To gain the most leverage, consider at least a one-year contract.

Even the U.S. Postal Service is giving discounts. Starting May 12, the USPS offers bargains on relatively short-distance parcel deliveries — within a few hundred miles. It will undercut private carriers' basic rates in most cases, and it has no add-on costs for home delivery or fuel.

Note this additional initiative underway at USPS. It's offering businesses and consumers free shipping for recyclables such as old or broken PDAs, iPods, digital cameras, MP3 players and other small electronics as well as empty ink-jet cartridges. The agency figures once customers come through its doors, they won't head elsewhere to ship other packages.

Avoiding the Airplane Cold

The swine flu scare may be just a distant memory from last winter but with summer vacations in full swing — not to mention the ongoing conference and trade show circuit — it's worth a reminder about how to stay healthy while you travel.

According to a recent study in the *Journal of Environmental Health Research*, you are more than 100 times as likely to catch a cold on a plane as in your normal daily rounds. Why this is the case isn't perfectly clear, but the study investigates a panoply of possible causes, including close quarters, shared air and, the most likely culprit, extremely low cabin humidity.

The study found that "when the scenarios of 6 days, 24 hours, or 5 hours were taken as the relevant flight exposure times to colds, passenger transmission rates for colds of 5, 23, and 113 times the normal daily ground level transmission rate were obtained." (Ominously, transmission rates for tuberculosis were also found to be dramatically increased as well.) Thus, the common perception that flying causes colds seems to be based in fact — maybe even 113 times over.

The study runs through several potential sources of higher transmission, but settles primarily on a single likely cause: extremely low cabin humidity caused by low humidity at high elevations.

Most commercial airlines fly in an elevation range of 30,000 to 35,000 feet, where humidity typically runs at 10% or lower. At very low levels of humidity, the "natural defense system" of mucus in our noses and throats dries up and is crippled, creating a much more tolerant environment for germs to infect us.

Tips to Avoid the Airline Carrier Cold

1. Stay hydrated. Drinking plenty of water will not only counter the overall dehydrating effects of air travel, which can lead to headaches, stomach problems, cramps, fatigue and more, but can actually fortify your preemptive natural immune mechanisms to function considerably better. As your body dries out, your nose and throat go with it. In an airplane, where your nose and throat are on the front lines of the war with exceedingly dry air, these are the first places to suffer; most travelers have felt the sting of a brutally arid mouth, throat and nose in flight.

Sipping water or some other fluid regularly throughout the flight may be more effective than drinking a lot of water at one time before or during the flight; this will keep your protective system from long dry spells. (And we do mean to single out water here — alcohol and caffeinated drinks such as coffee or sodas can actually dehydrate you.)

Nasal mists have been found to be very effective in keeping this system working in your nose. Additionally, hot drinks are a good way to keep your protective mucous membranes working — first, to assist in keeping you generally hydrated; second, by triggering the system into gear; and third, by directly providing moisture in the form of steam.

2. Keep your hands clean. Your hands are the most consistent point of first contact with cold, flu and other germs. It is a direct line from armrest/seatback/handshake to fingers to fork to mouth to full-blown fever a few days later. According to a National Institutes of Health (NIH) factsheet, the type of virus that causes the common cold and the flu has been found to survive for up to three hours on your skin or on objects such as armrests, TV remote control handsets and tray tables.

If possible, wash your hands before any in-flight meals, and after your flight as well. Of course, airplane cabins are tight places, and this may not be feasible, so Plan B may be to carry alcohol-based products made specifically for washing hands.

3. Don't forget dental hygiene. Just as keeping your hands clean can prevent transmission of germs, using a germ-killing mouthwash in-flight may add another layer of protection while simultaneously helping to keep your throat moist. Just make sure your mouthwash bottle is small enough to comply with the latest carry-on rules for liquids and gels.
4. Take your vitamins. The rapid response effect of vitamins is unproven, but many travelers swear by them. One executive says he starts taking vitamins two days before flying. "I have no idea if it helps at all, but of the hundreds or thousands of flights I have taken, I rarely get colds," he says. "I just take a standard multivitamin, and it has never let me down." The NIH concurs, offering that large doses of vitamin C may reduce the severity or duration of symptoms.
5. Wear a face mask. The NIH cites airborne germs as one of the top two sources of cold virus infection; some travelers have taken to wearing masks either to prevent infection, or when they themselves are already infected. Some people may not last more than a half-hour or so behind a hot mask, but this may be an effective prevention tactic for those who can tolerate the discomfort.

Source: The Independent Traveler

INDA MEETINGS CALENDAR

2009

[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

[Filtration 2009 International Conference & Expo](#), November 17-19, Navy Pier, Chicago, Illinois

2010

[Vision 2010 Consumer Products Conference](#), Sheraton New Orleans, New Orleans, Louisiana

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

[INDA Nonwovens Training Course](#), May 11-13, INDA Headquarters, Cary, North Carolina

[INDA Elementary Training Course](#), June 8-9, INDA Headquarters, Cary, North Carolina

[World of Wipes \(WOW\) 2010 Conference](#), June 21-23, InterContinental Chicago, Chicago, Illinois

[INDA Nonwovens Training Course](#), August 17-19, INDA Headquarters, Cary, North Carolina

[International Nonwovens Technical Conference \(INTC\) 2010](#), September 20-23, Hilton Baltimore, Baltimore, Maryland

[INDA Nonwovens Training Course](#), October 19-21, INDA Headquarters, Cary, North Carolina

[Filtration 2010 International Conference & Exposition](#), November 30-December 2, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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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