



Small Business Newsletter

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Covering Issues That Affect you

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.

Visionary Award to be Handed Out to a Small Business This Month

With no large companies the likes of Procter & Gamble or Kimberly-Clark in the running, a smaller company is assured of winning the prestigious 2012 Visionary Award, which will be presented at the VISION 2012 Consumer Products Conference, January 23-26, 2012 at the Hotel Intercontinental in New Orleans, Louisiana. Now in its 11th year, the Visionary Award is given annually to a new consumer product that utilizes nonwoven fabrics in its final form. The finalists will make presentations during VISION 2012 and conference attendees will vote on the recipient of the 2012 Visionary Award.

The annual VISION Conference is organized by INDA and each year it brings together executives from nonwovens and consumer products companies for three days of education and networking.

The four finalists are:

1. BandZorb Disposable Headwear Liners, from BandZorb LLC. The patent pending BandZorb Headwear Liners are self-adhesive, antimicrobial, absorbent, eco-friendly disposable bands that are sold in two sizes to fit virtually all visors, caps, hats, and helmets.

2. IntelliDent Toothbrush Holder, from E4 Technologies. IntelliDent is made from an SMS nonwoven that is slit and ultrasonically welded to form a pocket for a toothbrush. Each breathable, quick drying IntelliDent shield blocks surface and airborne microbes as it wicks moisture away from brush bristles, creating a cleaner, healthier environment for the toothbrush.

3. O'Cedar ProMist Disposable Floor Cleaning Pad, from Tietex International. This nonwoven composite incorporates airlaid nonwoven, spunbond nonwoven and film roll goods stitchbonded using microfiber and "scrubby" yarns. The two yarns are bonded in such a fashion that loops are created on the "A" surface and the combination of microfiber and scrubby loops provide exceptional floor cleaning performance.

4. Stomp 'N Go Stain Lifting Pad, from Bissell Homecare. Stomp 'N Go is a stain-lifting pad that removes carpet stains with a single "stomp." The user simply places one of the pre-moistened pads onto the spot, gives it a good stomp, and then watches as the stain begins to absorb into the pad. Stomp 'N Go pads use an oxy-based

formula to lift and remove most spots and stains within 30-minutes.

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 product, adult incontinence products, household wipes and home filters, among others.

For more information on VISION 2012: <http://www.inda.org/events/vision12/>



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INDA Forming Relief Effort

INDA is looking for its members' assistance in creating a nonwovens industry disaster relief/rebuilding giving initiative. By taking a few moments to complete a very brief online survey – <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/WEB22DUTDLZQX3> – about the products and other contributions your company could donate, you will take the first step toward helping people suffering from the misfortune of disasters.

Contribution of donated nonwoven products and other contributions. Participation will be easy, will cost members nothing beyond the donated products and contributions, and will create new marketing and public relations opportunities for participating companies and the industry overall. Most importantly, it will enable the nonwovens industry to make a meaningful and collective impact in the lives of those devastated by disasters.



The INDA charitable program will consist of a partnership with a reputable charity that would coordinate the logistics and distri-

INDA Wants Small Business Input on Trade Deal

The Office of the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) is seeking comments from stakeholders on recent requests by Japan, Canada, and Mexico to join the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations. The USTR is particularly interested in input on agriculture, services, and manufacturing trade issues, including non-tariff barriers, and on the possible economic effect on U.S. producers and consumers from reduction of trade barriers with the three countries.

Japan, Canada, and Mexico expressed their

interest in joining the deal on the sidelines of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation summit in Hawaii this November. The current nine TPP countries – the U.S., Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Malaysia, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam – concluded their tenth round of negotiations this December and President Obama has expressed the hope the deal will be completed in 2012. Although the decision to allow any of the countries to join will require approval by all nine parties, a far from foregone conclusion, if the three do eventually gain admittance, the TPP would represent a

combined population of more than 750 million people with a total economic output of \$25 trillion.

INDA is looking at the possibility of filing comments on behalf of the industry. However, it must hear from members to make sure this submission is complete. Contact INDA Director of Government Affairs Jessica Franken at jfranken@inda.org.

It Was an Awarding Year for Small Business

INDA, Association of the Nonwoven Fabrics Industry, has been busy during the past year recognizing the "best of the best" in its awards competitions and special events. In addition to honoring a number of successful consumer and industrial products that are making an impact in the world of nonwovens, INDA also recognized some of the most influential executives in the business with lifetime and service awards.

Starting with the coveted 2011 Visionary Award presented as part of the VISION Consumer Products Conference in January, running through the inaugural RISE

Durable Awards this Fall, and concluding with the Best Booths competition at the recently concluded Filtration 2011 International Conference and Exposition, INDA has made it a priority to recognize excellence and extra effort by companies and individuals in developing, producing and marketing the products that are driving the nonwovens industry into the future.

"It is vital that the excellent work being done in our industry by both INDA member companies and non-members be recognized by their peers and celebrated by the entire industry," says Rory Holmes,

President of INDA. "INDA's mission is to promote the Value of the Nonwovens Industry Worldwide and these internationally recognized awards honor those that have gone the extra mile in advancing our industry."

Kicking off the year, the Readi Mask was selected over four other finalists for the 2011 Visionary Award by the attendees at the tenth annual VISION Consumer Products Conference, which was held in January in Carlsbad, California.

It Was an Awarding Year for Small Business (con't)

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Readi Mask is a patented Particle Respirator designed to eliminate the problems with mask fit that plague the respirator market. The Visionary Award is presented to a new consumer product that utilizes nonwoven fabrics in its final form.

The WOW Innovation Award was presented to Sani-Cloth AF Germicidal Disposable Wipe, a new generation disinfectant product by Professional Disposables International at the 2011 World of Wipes (WOW) International Conference in Atlanta in June. The wipe is the first alcohol-free germicidal wipe on the market that kills at least 25 bugs in only three minutes for fast patient room turnover. The WOW Innovation Award rewards industry members who bring new and value-added processes and products to the wipes' marketplace and was created to encourage innovative processes and products anywhere along

the wipes' value-chain.

Among the many highlights of the second annual Research, Innovation & Science for Engineered Fabrics (RISE) Conference, held in October in Raleigh, North Carolina, was the presentation of the inaugural RISE Durable Product Award to Aprta Elements, from RKW US. Aprta is a metallic, highly reflective, breathable, air barrier membrane that can be used for multiple uses within the building, architecture, construction, marine, tent and upholstery industries. The RISE Durable Product Award recognizes a durable nonwoven product using nonwoven fabric and/or technology that is commercially sold and utilized in the consumer or industrial marketplace.

The tenth annual INDA Award for Lifetime Technical Achievement was presented during the RISE Conference in October to industry veteran Mike Putnam, of PGI,

while the coveted Lifetime Service Award was given to Morris Collins, Jr., of RKW US. Both men were recognized by their peers in the nonwovens industry for their service and technical expertise throughout their long careers.

Finally, at the Filtration 2011 International Conference and Exposition in late November in Chicago, a Best Booths competition was held to recognize and reward the most attractive and innovative displays at Filtration 2011. Winners were announced in three categories — Large Booth (more than 200 square feet), Ahlstrom Filtration; Small Booth (less than 200 square feet), Colbond; New Booth, Universal Air Filter.

Small Business Confidence Index Was Up in December

Smaller nonwovens companies may or may not agree with it, but confidence among small businesses in December rose for a fourth time as companies foresaw improving sales, profits and a national economy. A survey conducted by the National Federation of Independent Businesses said its index climbed to 93.8 in December, the highest level since last February, from the 92 previous month. The index has averaged 88.2 in the recession that ended in June, 2009.

Four consecutive gains mark the index's longest stretch of increases since that same period ended in November 2010. Alongside other improving data that include bigger payroll gains and stronger manufacturing, the small business report indicates the economy is beginning 2012 on a bright note.

"The economy appears to be slowly recovering, resolving imbalances in debt, housing and the like," says William Dunkelberg, the group's chief economist. "There is still a lot of work to be done."

The share of owners projecting higher sales, adjusted for inflation, rose five points to nine percent, also the highest since last February.

The net share of small business owners planning to hire over the next three months slipped a point to six percent, according to the report. Nonetheless, workforce reductions were at the second lowest level since December 2007 and the business group's model projects an unemployment rate in the "mid- to low eight percent range" this year.

Twelve Small Business Tips for 2012

USA Today columnist Rhonda Abrams guesses that one of the New Year's Resolutions for small businesses is to make more money. Great, she writes, but now what? To help her readers actually achieve their goal, she recently provided 12 tips to make sure small businesses do make more money this year.

1. Get listed free. Take 30 minutes – right after you finish reading this – and list your business, free, on search engine local listings. This helps your company show up when a prospective customer searches for a business like yours on the Web or a mobile device. No technical expertise is needed. Get started with Bing business portal, bing.com/businessportal; Foursquare, foursquare.com/business; Google Places, google.com/places; Yahoo Local, local.yahoo.com; and Yelp, biz.yelp.com/claiming.
2. Figure out what makes you money. Businesses have two kinds of money, cash and profits. Cash comes from making sales. Profits come from selling products or services for more than they cost you to produce. Small businesses generally focus on bringing in cash, and that's OK because cash keeps the doors open. But to get ahead, you need to focus on the parts of your business that bring you the most profits.
3. Market to current and former customers. Satisfied customers are the ones most likely to be future customers or refer others to you. Yet small businesses typically neglect to market to them.
4. Get a contact management system. You need a good way to organize, manage and stay in touch with your contacts, something easy and that you can access from mobile devices, not just a drawer full of business cards.
5. Create a marketing plan. Spend your marketing dollars and time wisely. Identify your best prospects and the most effective ways to reach them. Then market consistently. You have to stay in front of prospects.
6. Contact at least three prospects a week. Or seven. Or 20. Give yourself a realistic quota, make a list of top prospects and referral sources and keep it where you see it. Get out there and sell.
7. Bother people. I mean be persistent, not annoying. People are busy, including your prospects. Even if they want to buy from you, they may forget you. So stay in touch repeatedly.
8. Close the deal. Marketing is great, but at the end of the day, you also have to make – and close – the sale. Sure, you have to let prospects know about your products or services, but you also have to ask them to make the purchase. Give them incentives to purchase now and make sure they see a strong call to action in your marketing materials. And ask, directly and in person, to take the order, close the deal.
9. Shop local, shop small. I asked a woman at my gym where she got her workout shoes. She responded: "Try them on at (name of local small store), then order them online." Yikes! Small businesses can't survive as showrooms for online retailers. If we want customers to buy from us, we have to shop small.
10. Check out social-media marketing. I'm not saying that Twitter, Facebook or LinkedIn will make you money, but you can increase your visibility. At least know enough to figure out whether it might be right for you.
11. Get a cloud-based email newsletter service. Don't be misled by the word "newsletter." You can use these services to announce sales, new products or services, whatever. Some choices for small businesses: Constant Contact, Mail Chimp, Vertical Response, Emma. An added bonus of cloud services is analytics. You get far better information about how your sales efforts are performing and who is responding to your emails.
12. Develop a business plan. In many ways, this is the most important. Developing a business plan has been the single most important contribution to my company's survival and success. Planning gets everyone moving in the same direction and provides structure for decision-making.

Rhonda Abrams is president of The Planning Shop and publisher of books for entrepreneurs. Her newest is the 5th edition of *The Successful Business Plan: Secrets and Strategies*. Register for Rhonda's free newsletter at www.PlanningShop.com and "like" The Planning Shop on Facebook for updates. For an index of her columns, go to smallbiz.usatoday.com. Twitter: twitter.com/RhondaAbrams. Copyright Rhonda Abrams 2011.

Time Efficiency Tip: Returning Phone Calls

From The Alternative Board Tips from the Tops newsletter (submitted by Michael Finkler, Team Restoration, Gowen, MI) comes this piece of advice for the harried small business executive: To maximize productivity during the work day, return calls only at appointed times: 8:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Have your voice mail message indicate that these are the times during which you return calls. Of course, if there is an emergency the message should also specify how they can reach me immediately.

INDA EVENTS CALENDAR

Please visit <http://www.inda.org/events/index.html> for a complete list of upcoming events organized by INDA.

INDA Nonwovens Course
February 21-23, 2012
INDA Headquarters
Cary, NC

WOW 2012
June 5-7, 2012
Hotel InterContinental
Chicago, Illinois

CAB - Converting & Bonding
April 17-19, 2012
Hyatt Regency Greenville
Greenville, South Carolina

IDEA 2013
April 23-25, 2013
International Conference and Expo
Miami Beach Convention Center
Miami Beach, Florida