

# INDA's Small Business Newsletter

Covering Issues That Affect You

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April 15, 2005

## 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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### *In this Issue:*

**INTC05 Is Set for St. Louis in September**

**Keep Your Books in Order All Year, Not Just During Tax Season**

**Reduce Stress at Work One Step at a Time**

**House Committee Approves Association Health Plan Bill**

**Time to Look Ahead to IDEA07**

**INDA Meetings Calendar 2005**

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### **INTC05 IS SET FOR ST. LOUIS IN SEPTEMBER**

One of the most important benefits of being an INDA member is attendance at the annual International Nonwovens Technical Conference (INTC), co-sponsored by INDA and TAPPI. INTC has become known as the leading worldwide technical conference and this year more than 70 technical experts from around the world make this event a critical, must-attend event for the technical community.

The INTC 2005 Committee is in the process of finalizing the program for its 2005 Conference, to be held at the Millennium Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri, September 19-22, 2005. Ian M. Julian, Director of Synthetic Fibers, will provide the keynote speech. For information: [www.inda.org](http://www.inda.org)

### **KEEP YOUR BOOKS IN ORDER ALL YEAR, NOT JUST DURING TAX SEASON**

Okay, so it is Tax Week and individuals all over America are scrambling to either file their taxes on time or find enough money to give Uncle Sam what he is owed. But for small business owners, the planning must be year-round to avoid any last-minute surprises when their tax bills come due. Advisers suggest starting with a budget that will help make a business and its cash flow more predictable.

“If you have a budget and something starts to go astray, you have an early warning that you have to make some shifts” in your strategy, says William Sihler, business administration professor at the University of Virginia’s Darden Graduate Business School in a recent Associated Press article. Sounds simple, doesn’t it?

Not always, especially among small business owners and entrepreneurs whose gifts rest in creating and selling, not in keeping records. Cash flow and managing receivables often are foreign concepts to many big thinkers. Sihler, co-author of “Smart Financial Management,” warns that even the best ideas will go bankrupt if owners don’t keep an eye on the essentials.

Another benefit of sound record keeping: It makes it a lot easier to receive financing from banks, who are going to insist on a solid financial plan and coherent records before parting with their money.

His one piece of mandatory advice: Delegate minding the money to someone who knows how to do it. Whether you are big enough to add a CFO or treasurer to the staff or small enough to rely on a good CPA, let someone else keep an eye on what’s going out and coming in. For sure, they will pay for themselves.

Some outside resources for small businesses looking for sound financial advice:

- 📄 [Small Business Development Centers, sba.gov/sbdc](http://sba.gov/sbdc)
- 📄 [SCORE, a group of retired executives who help small businesses: score.org, 800-634-0245](http://score.org)
- 📄 [Online Women's Business Center, onlinewbc.gov/docs/finance](http://onlinewbc.gov/docs/finance)

### **REDUCE STRESS AT WORK ONE STEP AT A TIME**

Believe it or not, stress is a factor in the life of a small business ... even in the laid-back world of nonwovens. In fact, nationwide more than one million employees miss work each year due to stress. Employees feel overworked and pressured to get more accomplished every day (make that spunbond line run faster!!!). This feeling of anxiety often leads to frustration and frazzled nerves that hinder productivity. Learning how to control stress and still meet deadlines is crucial in today's super-competitive world.

According to psychologist Tess Marshall, the failure to address stress in the workplace results in absenteeism, reduced productivity, high turnover and medical, legal and insurance costs. Organizations that become proactive in creating a work atmosphere that adds to the emotional well being of employees are rewarded with peak performance and profitability. While learning to slow down may seem counterproductive, most of your readers probably don't realize that this change is the answer to their own challenges.

Marshall says that the remedy is as simple as slowing down and incorporating new behaviors that will bring more focus and enthusiasm to any work environment. Companies, particularly small businesses where every employee is responsible for multiple tasks, need to create a plan to cope with stress. While slowing down in order to work better may seem counterproductive, it does make sense.

And what can individual employees do? First, concentrate on slowing down through breathing exercises. Then practice solitude at certain periods of the day. Don't forget to use exercise to relieve stress. And bosses, learn how to be forgiving and optimistic instead of negative. It just might work.

### **HOUSE COMMITTEE APPROVES ASSOCIATION HEALTH PLAN BILL**

A House committee last month approved legislation that would help small businesses meet rising health insurance costs by authorizing the creation of Association Health Plans. H.R. 525, the Small Business Health Fairness Act, sponsored by Employer-Employee Relations Subcommittee Chairman Sam Johnson, R-Texas, was approved 25-22. The bill would let trade associations establish Association Health Plans that would allow member companies to band together and purchase insurance coverage at the lower rates available to large groups.

"Rising premiums are making it increasingly difficult for small businesses to be able to afford to provide health insurance for their workers," said K. Conwell Smith of the National Retail Federation. "It's time that we let small employers benefit from economies

of scale. Allowing small businesses to band together to purchase health insurance is only one part of the solution for lowering health care costs, but can bring immediate relief to the businesses that need it most.

"Many of America's uninsured are employees of small businesses that cannot afford to provide coverage for their workers. This legislation can go a long way toward helping those workers and their families get the health insurance they need," Smith said.

The House has passed AHP legislation at least twice before, and is expected to give the Johnson bill easy approval in the near future. Senate prospects are less clear, however. A Senate companion bill was introduced last month by Senator Olympia Snowe, R-Maine, but Budget Committee Chairman Judd Gregg, R-N.H., is interested in developing an alternative to AHPs that would facilitate the offering of standardized health insurance products and processes across state lines.

#### **TIME TO LOOK AHEAD TO IDEA07**

Even with INDEX in Switzerland this month, it is still a good time for smaller nonwovens producers and suppliers to lock in their prime booth space for IDEA07. Booth assignments have just been made based on Rebooking Forms received at IDEA2004. Shortly these companies will receive a copy of the revised floor plan showing their 2007 locations. By booking early they have assured themselves of a prime location on the show floor.

The date: April 24-26, 2007 at the Miami Beach Convention Center, Miami Beach, Florida.

IDEA comes only once every three years. Don't miss out on a prime location for your company! Contact Marilyn Bellinger (919-233-1210 Ext. 118; mbellinger@inda.org) with your booth size specifications now!

#### **INDA MEETINGS CALENDAR 2005**

Spunbonding & Melt Blown Course. April 25-29, INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

Nonwovens Training Course. May 10-12, INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

Nonwovens Product Development Course. June 5-10, INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

Fabric Properties & Characterization Course. July 18-22, INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

Nonwovens Training Course. August 9-11, INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

Bonding Fundamentals Course. August 22-26, INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

INTC 2005. September 19-22, Millennium Hotel, St. Louis, MO

Nonwovens Training Course. November 1-3, INDA Headquarters, Cary, NC

Filtration 2005. November 15-17, Navy Pier, Chicago, IL

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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.

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INDA Small Business e-Report