

INDA's Small Business Newsletter

Covering Issues That Affect You

July 15, 2005

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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COOL OFFICES SOMETIMES LEAD TO HOT EMPLOYEES

As summer temperatures rise and air conditioners get turned on, chilly office temperatures can lead to tiffs in the workplace, according to a recent report by the International Facility Management Association. Complaints about office temperatures top the 10 most common office complaints.

"There are temperature comfort ranges. It's kind of a science and an art," says Don Young of IFMA. "Some workers wear sweaters, and the people next to them are hot." From bringing flannel pajamas to the office to keeping space heaters running by their desks, workers are finding numerous ways to battle the cool temperatures indoors this summer.

Some companies are finding ways to compromise between hot and cold employees. At one New York office, cold employees barter soft drinks for time without air conditioning. Other firms install dummy thermostats so workers think they have control over the temperature.

The battle over the thermostat is not only a source of workplace arguments, but it has an impact on the bottom line. When office temperatures were turned up from 68 to 77 degrees Fahrenheit, typing errors fell 44 percent and overall typing output rose 150 percent, citing a 2004 Cornell University study.

That translates into about an extra \$2 per worker in productivity when temperatures are turned up.

STEP UP AND NOMINATE YOUR COMPANY FOR THE 2006 VISIONARY AWARD

Just as the summer weather is heating up, so is the nomination process for the annual Visionary Award, one opportunity that smaller companies in the nonwovens and consumer products industries have to compete on a level playing field with larger competitors, so take note.

The award, presented by INDA, annually recognizes consumer end products that utilize nonwoven fabrics or employ nonwoven technology during their manufacturing process. The Award has a history of recognizing and honoring smaller companies, especially two years ago when a relatively unknown FMC Chem-Bio beat out giants such as Procter & Gamble and Kimberly-Clark for the 2003 Visionary Award.

The 2006 Visionary Award will be presented at the Vision 2006 Consumer Products Conference, scheduled for January 15-18, 2006, at the Sheraton New Orleans in New Orleans, La. For more on the Conference: www.inda.org

INDA will be accepting nominations for the 2006 Visionary Award until September 1. The nominees will then reviewed by an INDA selection committee and five finalists will be selected to make presentations at the Vision 2006 Consumer Products Conference. Conference attendees will then vote on the recipient of the award.

The criteria for the 2006 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 2004-05.
3. The product can not have been selected as a finalist in any previous Visionary Award competition.

Products will be judged on their novel use of nonwovens 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.

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.

To nominate a product email an explanation of the product to Michael Jacobsen, Visionary Awards coordinator, at mjacobsen@inda.org or call 201-612-6601 with any questions.

SMALL BUSINESS TIP: FIRST IMPRESSIONS COUNT

An unprofessional or inadequate logo can mortally wound a small company's image. At the same time, a slick-looking letterhead or business card can create an impression of professionalism and experience. Many small-business owners, however, don't have the money or the clout to hire a graphic arts company for a smartly designed custom logo. Others simply don't understand how important such a logo is.

First impressions count, though, especially with small businesses. If you're a client and you're looking at whether you want to do business with Company Y or Company Z, you'll be more likely to go with the one that appears professional and credible because of the way it represents itself. A great logo can make a small company appear more like a big business, and it can also help keep customers loyal.

Most of all, a logo should reflect what that company's customers are looking for and what will make them trust and love the firm. A lot of entrepreneurs are thinking more about what they like aesthetically about a logo than about who they are selling to --

that's a big mistake. A logo should show that a company is a real business, and it should convey confidence to the customer.

REVAMPED INDA RESEARCH FACILITIES DATABASE LINKS ACADEMIA WITH BUSINESS

As education and academic institutions play a more vital role than ever in the progress of nonwovens and engineered fabrics worldwide -- especially for smaller companies without the resources for in-house research facilities -- INDA has published an Academic Research Facilities Database aimed at bringing together industry and academia.

The revamped INDA Academic Research Facilities Database is essentially an on-line directory of the research capabilities, facilities and educational offerings of colleges and universities along with their contact information.

The database is available at <http://www.inda.org/about/research/index.html>

"Throughout the history of our industry, academia has played an increasingly important role in the development of new products and technologies. This is a way to highlight them and to educate the industry on the services and capabilities these colleges and universities offer in the fields of nonwovens and engineered fabrics," says Cos Camelio, INDA Technical Director.

Among the participating INDA member universities/educational institutions are Auburn University, Clemson University, Fashion Institute of Technology, Kansas State University, Louisiana State University, Philadelphia University of Textiles & Science, NCRC at North Carolina State University, TANDEC at the University of Tennessee, Texas Tech University, TRI-Princeton, University Of California-Davis and the University of Georgia.

As an added service of the database, the testing capabilities are cross-referenced according to application. Users simply click on a service description and are linked to an institution with that capability.

INDA welcomes any suggestions for improvement or other categories that should be included in this database. Forward any comments to Cos Camelio: ccamelio@inda.org

RUNNING A SMALL BUSINESS? THEN LEARN HOW TO SELL

If there were a Survival Guide for entrepreneurs, the first lesson would be on selling. Yes, you have to learn to raise and manage money, create great products that your customers actually need, manage and motivate your employees, and so on. But the single most important skill that entrepreneurs don't typically learn is how to seal the deal.

No entrepreneur should even start a company before undergoing basic sales training. Selling isn't something that you do only when seeking money for a product or an investment: You sell all through life. You have to persuade people to give you what you want, and you achieve this by convincing them you're offering something good for them.

In a startup, everyone quickly learns that survival depends on the company's ability to sell its products. Even though you may have a better product that the world really needs, your competitors are likely better at selling than you are. And your prospective customer will have never even heard of you.

Most selling techniques are founded on the same marketing principles – understanding human behavior and motivation, fulfilling needs, and communicating clearly and effectively. And most important, each of these techniques creates a well-defined and repeatable process for completing a sale.

The lesson for the entrepreneur is to learn how to sell. It's much too easy to fall in love with your own product or believe your own hype. Most entrepreneurs believe that "if you build it, they will come" -- but this almost never happens. It takes a lot of hard work and discipline to create the right formula for success. Mastering the art of selling is what can make the difference between simply having lots of potential and actually realizing it.

NEED A CONSULTANT? CHECK OUT THE INDA ON-LINE DATABASE

At some point every smaller company needs some outside help, especially in a business as complex, technical and global as nonwovens. That's why INDA has compiled a Consultants' Network available on its web site:

<http://www.inda.org/about/research/consultants/index.html>

The Consultants' Network area is dedicated to INDA member consultants and the services they offer. In it readers will find firms that can assist them with market research, product development and business development.

There are 20 consulting firms participating in this network from India, Canada and all over the United States. Contact information is provided, as well as a brief description of their services and capabilities.

"Because of the specialty and highly technical nature of the nonwovens and engineered fabrics industry, consultants are able to offer valuable services in any number of areas," says Rory Holmes, INDA president. "These men and women from all over the world fill a knowledge gap at companies as they expand into new areas. The market and technical knowledge of these consultants is a vital service to our industry."

Among the consultants listed in the Consultants' Network are:

American Association of Textile Chemists & Colorists
Bohlander Associates
Butterworth Consulting
Catoosa Resources LLC
CEO Consulting Company
Chapas & Associates
Filter Media Consulting Inc.
Herty Foundation
Infinity Solutions Group
Jasch Industries Ltd.
Jenkins, Wilson & Taylor (Patent Attorneys)
John R. Starr, Inc.
Missing Octave Insights, Inc.
N. Newman Associates
Nonwoven Associates LLC
Nordico Market Development
Smith, Johnson & Associates
Southern Regional Research Center (SRRRC-ARS-USDA)
TC2 Textile/Clothing Technology Corporation
TJC Chemical Consultants

The site is a window to the participating INDA member consultants and the services they offer. Any questions or comments should be directed to:
INDA Technical Director Cos Camelio, (919) 233-1210 ext. 114, ccamelio@inda.org

INDUSTRY EVENTS

INTC05 IS SET FOR ST. LOUIS IN SEPTEMBER

The annual International Nonwovens Technical Conference (INTC), co-sponsored by INDA and TAPPI has become known as the leading worldwide technical conference. This year more than 70 technical experts from around the world make this event a critical, must-attend event for the technical community.

INTC 2005 will be held at the Millennium Hotel, St. Louis, Missouri, September 19-22, 2005. Ian M. Julian, Director of Synthetic Fibers, Chemical Market Associates, Inc. will provide the keynote speech. For information on the conference program and registration: www.inda.org

INDA MEETINGS CALENDAR 2005

Nonwovens Training Course. August 9-11, 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

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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Editor
INDA Small Business e-Report