

# INDA's Small Business Newsletter

Covering Issues That Affect You

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March 15, 2006

## 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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## SMALLER INDA MEMBERS CAN BE A PART OF A LARGER ONLINE COMMUNITY

Ever feel like you just need someone to share your business problems, or that you are all by yourself out there? Smaller companies especially feel isolated sometimes, thinking that there is no one with whom to share your problems and concerns.

INDA has heard you and now the association has harnessed the global power of the Internet to offer the INDA Communication Action Network (ICAN) for its members. This unique tool will facilitate electronic networking among INDA members in the U.S. and around the world.

Launched last fall, ICAN is essentially an “industry forum” that allows member companies to ask and answer questions, participate in discussion forums and read and share company and industry news.

Members can sign up for free for any or all of the ICAN email communities:

- Small Business
- Sourcing
- Technology
- Marketing
- Government Relations
- International Trade
- Safety
- Human Resources

Other communities will be offered at member request as well.

The ICAN process is simple for INDA members:

1. An individual posts a question by logging in to the Members Only section at [www.inda.org](http://www.inda.org).
2. The question is posted to everyone who has signed up for that community.
3. The other community members respond from around the world with answers/suggestions to the question. The user can even choose to have the answers emailed directly to them.
4. In addition, community members can log in at any time and get community news and participate in community forums and chats.

Everyone in any INDA member company is eligible for this service.

For more information: [www.inda.org](http://www.inda.org)

## **PARTY TIME? HERE ARE SOME SMALL BUSINESS TIPS**

If your company is like most others businesses – small or large – one of the staples of your employees' existence is the staff party. Weddings, retirements, babies, promotions, new hair cuts ... no event is too small for many companies (INDA included) to have an excuse to clear off the conference table, order in some sandwiches and cake and celebrate.

Trouble is, too often these parties evolve into a serious time-waster. Not only the party itself, but the planning, picking up the food and cleaning up – not to mention the post-party networking – can really eat into productivity. Here are a few tips from “business-etiquette specialist” Lydia Ramsey on how to handle the party line.

- ☐ Schedule parties during the least busy times, such as the end of the workday, and with a set time limit.
- ☐ Stick to a regular spot, whether a conference room in the office or a local restaurant. Celebrations around a desk can be disruptive for those who need to keep working. Plus, having them in the same location makes sure no one feels slighted.
- ☐ Avoid partying around the customers. They may feel like they are interrupting something, which they are.
- ☐ Keep collections for presents to a minimum and strictly voluntary. Not everyone makes as much money as you do.
- ☐ Finally, always give gifts of roughly equal value, especially if they are coming from management. The key is to not show any favoritism.

We didn't even get into the debate over whether alcohol should be served, but the rule of thumb should be “no.” And if you do, make sure there is someone watching consumption.

## **TIME TO LOCK IN YOUR IDEA07 SPACE**

We know it is still more than a year off – 13 months to be exact – but NOW is the time to make sure your company has its booth space reserved for IDEA07, April 24-26 in Miami Beach, Florida. Companies that have exhibited at IDEA in the past know that it is not to their advantage to wait too long or prime locations will be long gone.

Make sure your company gets a prime location, so get your group together, decide on your booth size requirements (10 x15 feet [150 square feet] is the smallest booth size available). Unlike most other expositions, booths on our initial floor plan are not "fixed." Please note that we can design a booth for you of any size up to 100,000 square feet as long as increases are made in 5-foot increments.

Contact Marilyn Bellinger at 919-233-1210 x118; [mbellinger@inda.org](mailto:mbellinger@inda.org) with your IDEA07 booth requirements today!

### **MAKING EVERY MINUTE COUNT IN YOUR SMALL BUSINESS**

With only 24 hours in each day, 168 hours in each week, it's important to make each minute count. Especially at a smaller business when 24 hours sometimes doesn't seem like enough time to cross everything off of each day's "To Do" list.

The key is to determine which (or if all) of the following activities are wasting your time and keeping you from being productive.

1. The wrong software. With an increasing number of computer programs available for accounting, project management, contact management and more, you can afford to be picky. Before you invest in a computer program, talk with others to find out the program's ease of use, usefulness and backup support reliability (whether timely technical support is available). One program may be ideal for one person and worthless or too confusing to another. Also, a program may offer more features than you need, costing you time and money when a simplified version of the same program will do.
2. Interruptions. Close your office door and let your voice mail take messages while you work on important tasks. Start by ignoring your phone for 30 minutes (unless it is a customer calling), then work up to an hour and longer.
3. Postponed decisions. When you're faced with several solutions to a problem, it may be difficult to decide which direction to take. Rather than wasting time contemplating each choice, make a decision and develop a backup plan in case your first choice fails. Make a conscious decision to decide.
4. Long-winded callers. When you call someone who is notorious for keeping you on the phone too long, state up front that you have only a few minutes to talk. Then ask the caller for the information you need or respond to their request, then finish the call. If the caller starts to ramble, call him back later.
5. Searching for lost items. If you waste one hour a day, five days a week, at the end of the year (with two weeks off for vacation), you'll have wasted more than 32 eight-hour days. If you take time to set up files, organize reference materials and store extra supplies, when information or products reach your office, you'll know where they belong.

Finally, make sure you read as many time-saving electronic newsletters as you can. They are chock full of good advice. You're welcome.

## INDA CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2006-07

### 2006

#### *Nonwovens Training Course*

May 16-18, 2006  
INDA Headquarters  
Cary, NC

#### *Nonwovens Training Course*

August 22-24, 2006  
INDA Headquarters  
Cary, NC

#### *INTC 2006, International Nonwovens Technical Conference*

September 25-28, 2006  
Hilton Americas - Houston  
Houston, Texas

#### *Nonwovens Training Course*

October 3-5, 2006  
INDA Headquarters  
Cary, NC

#### *Needlepunch 2006 International Conference*

October 17-19, 2006  
Hilton Charlotte Center City  
Charlotte, NC  
2006 (cont.)

#### *Filtration 2006, International Conference & Expo*

November 28-30, 2006  
Pennsylvania Convention Center  
Philadelphia, PA

### 2007

#### *Annual Meeting 2007 (For INDA Members Only)*

February 25-27, 2007  
Marriott Marco Island Resort, Golf Club & Spa  
Marco Island, Florida

#### *IDEA 2007, International Conference & Expo*

April 24-26, 2007  
Miami Beach Convention Center  
Miami, FL

To learn more about any meetings, go to [www.inda.org](http://www.inda.org)

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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.

Michael Jacobsen  
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INDA Small Business e-Report