

The Product Line



THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE PROMOTIONAL PROFESSIONALS ASSOCIATION OF CHICAGO

JAN 2009

Pride in our past, Hope for our future.

Kevin Flynn, CAS, President, PPACChicago

The 44th President of the United States was inaugurated this month, a historic and very well publicized election is finally over and a winner crowned. Let hope spring eternal. In his speech President Obama said a few things that hit home for me and I wanted to share them within the contexts of our lives in the promotional products business.

☞ First he says: "Our challenges may be new. The instruments with which we meet them may be new. But those values upon which our success depends – hard work and honesty, courage and fair play, tolerance and curiosity, loyalty and patriotism - these things are old. These things are true. They have been the quiet force of progress throughout our history."

Again without judgment of who has said them or your opinion of that person's ability to lead, our President says something that we all know to be true; these times are hard and when the cycle heads down it is your job to be solid in your resolve.

☞ Obama goes further to say: What is required of us now is a new era of responsibility – a recognition, on the part of every American, that we have duties to ourselves, our nation, and the world, duties that we do not grudgingly accept

continued on page 2 >



In this issue

Features

- 1 **Pride in our past,
Hope for our future.**
by Kevin Flynn
- 5 **How Do You Sharpen
Your Blade?**
from Freepromotips.com
- 10 Frozen Travel Budget
- 11 PPAC Scholarship Winners
- 12 Winterfest

In Every Issue

- 2 Advertising Index
- 3 President's Line
- 4 Upcoming Events
- 4 New Members
- 7 The PPAC Board
- 7 Member Spotlight
- 9 On the lighter side
- 14 Industry Happenings



Pride in our past, Hope for our future.

continued from page 1



but rather seize gladly, firm in the knowledge that there is nothing so satisfying to the spirit, so defining of our character, than giving our all to a difficult task.

Responsibility is something that we have seen wane in our society between the buy now, pay later mentality and the amount of waste we produce with our lives, we have an opportunity in an industry to take charge of our lives, do what we can to reduce our carbon footprint, use and promote sustainable resources through a physical medium far more environmentally friendly than our traditional print media counterparts, it is now that we can look ahead and do something about how we “leave our mark”. I challenge each and every one of you to make one change to our lifestyle that will make a permanent difference in our world. Be it reduce personal spending to being down you debt or plant a tree, every change that you make causes an effect on how the world turns for the better.

For my part, personally, my quest is to reduce the carbon footprint of America by leveraging the current economic market spending cuts and offering every client prospect and suspect a less costly, more utilitarian and renewable advertising spend, the promotional product. It is far less costly than that of traditional advertising (based on cost per exposure) and certainly more directed in its use. PPACHicago’s New Product Ideas Show is scheduled for Thursday, February 12th and if you don’t already have some ideas on how to execute a marketing approach like this one, you certainly can get it there.

Until next time, pick up the phone and keep pitching. As “Bluto” Blutarski said in Animal House “Was it over when the German’s bombed Pearl Harbor? Heck no, so when the going gets tough...the tough get going, right? Who’s with me?????????????????”

The Product Line

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Advertising Index

- 8 Aloe Up
- 13 Bodek & Rhodes
- 11 Digispec
- 6 San Mar

> President's Line

My Fellow Members,



While I sit here writing you today, the big 3 are ridiculous; banks have crashed, the industry is in the tank and to top it all off, Illinois Governor was taken from his house this morning on allegations of "pay to play". All but the later has come as a shock for most of us, as this is the Promotional Professionals Association of CHICAGO, based on past history...nobody should

be even remotely surprised that a Governor of Illinois allegedly corrupt. That said, all of this has added to the current state of affairs making this time particularly rough living. I tend to be optimistic and so in that vein I will say this, it is always darkest before the dawn.

Despite the down turned economy, the Pharma issue and the uncertainty of our economy, this too shall pass. While we wait this out, I would tell you two things: 1- Watch your overhead (duh) and 2- Remember that in times like this, you have a great opportunity to push your clients to spend, spend, spend as this is the perfect time for them to market while their competitors are holed up in the basement waiting for the nuclear winter to end.

Clients who spend on the way down have a great tendency to pick up market share and recover significantly faster than those who wait it out and start spending post recovery. For more information see "Turning adversity into advantage: Does proactive marketing during a recession pay off?" (from International Journal of Research in Marketing, Volume 22, Issue 2, June 2005, Pages 109-125).

With all of this economy talk and reducing overhead being the "thing to do" it is a perfect time to remind you that you can see 200+ of the industry's best suppliers right here in your back yard at the PPACHicago New Product Ideas show. At the time of this writing, the talk is that Expo in Vegas is going to be down as much as 50% in attendance due to reduced spending so take advantage of this great opportunity to see new product that you may have missed in Vegas. I wish all of you good luck and good selling as we embark on what is sure to be "a year for the ages".

Until we meet again friends, godspeed.

Kevin J. Flynn, CAS, President

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> Upcoming Events

January

1/4 - 1/5	ASI Orlando
1/6	☞ <i>Last Day</i> for PPACHicago NPI Show Exhibitor Contracts
1/14 - 1/16	PPAI Expo Las Vegas
1/21 - 1/22	Hess & Associates NPS Show
1/30	Conversation Café

February

2/2	PPACHicago NPI Show Distributor/Client ☞ <i>Registration Deadline</i>
2/2	<i>Board Meeting</i>
2/5 - 2/6	ASI Dallas
2/6	Mid America Showcase
2/11	PPACHicago Pre-Show Education and Party
2/12	PPACHicago New Product Ideas Show "Hot New Ideas and Going Green" <i>Show hours are 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Register online today at ppachicago.org.</i>

March

3/4 - 3/5	Advantages Road Show
3/9	<i>Board Meeting</i>
3/9 - 3/10	ASI New York

April

4/13	<i>Board Meeting</i>
4/28 - 4/29	SAGE Show Chicago

May

5/11	<i>Board Meeting</i>
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June

6/2 - 6/3	Promotions East
6/8	<i>Board Meeting</i>

July

7/13	<i>Board Meeting</i>
7/20	PPACHicago Charity Golf Outing
7/22 – 7/23	ASI Chicago

August

8/5	PPACHicago Lake Michigan Boat Cruise
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September

9/10 – 9/11	Advantages Road Show
9/25	Showtime Show

New Members

-Distributors-

American Solutions for Business
Glenwood, MN

Francine Marketing, Inc.
Chicago, IL

I.D. Ology Promotions
Round Lake, IL

-Suppliers-

Stoney Creek Marble Products
Blairstown, IA

**WRAPZ (Division of
Connemara Converting)**
Bolingbrook, IL



How Do You Sharpen Your Blade?

Freepromotips.com

The young man swaggered into the lumberjack camp, announcing with full bravado that he could cut down more trees than anyone. "In two hours I can cut down 10 trees!" he shouted. "Who wants to take me on?" The oldest man in the camp said he would be delighted to see who would win the bet.

The contest began at dawn. In no time the young man felled two trees, wood chips flying everywhere. The older man also began chopping, slow and steady, and after he finished his first tree he disappeared for a few minutes, walking out of sight of the young man who was still flailing away. After the second tree fell, the older man again walked away but soon returned, his third tree falling quickly thereafter.

The young man had also chopped down three trees, but each tree seemed to get harder to bring down. Although he was stronger than the older man, he was soon very tired, and each swing seemed less effective as the one before. He watched the older man disappear for a third time, wondering why he needed so many breaks. Perhaps, the younger man thought, he is old and needs to rest.

There are many ways to sharpen the blades you need in your professional life, but before you can do it, you have to be willing to make the commitment.

He soon forgot about the older man and went back to his fourth tree, which seemed to take forever to topple.

In no time at all the two hours had passed but the results had long been visible to those watching the contest. The older man had chopped down nine trees, the younger man only five. Both had the same size axes, both had the same amount of time. The younger man had stronger muscles and appeared to be in better shape. Yet the older man had bested him.

As he turned to walk back to the camp, the older man heard the younger man ask "Between trees, what were you doing?" The older man looked back and smiled. He simply said "I was sharpening the blade of my axe."

And so it should be with us, but more often than not, it isn't. I hear sales people boast how great they are, yet they never take the time to speak to others

in the profession to learn something new. I talk to business owners who are too busy to attend valuable workshops where they might learn something that could improve their business. I witness young hard-charging managers scoff at the idea that there might actually be someone that they might learn something from.

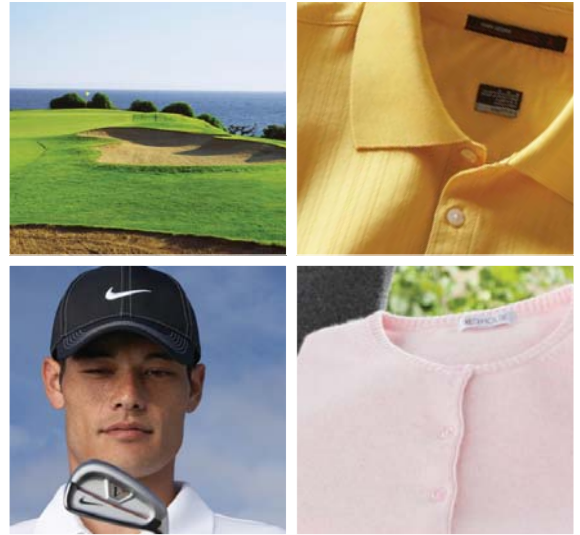
There are many ways to sharpen the blades you need in your professional life, but before you can do it, you have to be willing to make the commitment. In other words, walk the walk not just talk the talk. The boss can mandate that you read this book or attend that seminar, but to truly be effective, it must come from within.

Blade sharpening cannot be a onetime thing. You can't just attend one workshop and proclaim that you "know it all." It will be clearly evident to those around you that you don't.

continued >

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How Do You Sharpen Your Blade?

continued from page 5

The professions understand blade sharpening. Physicians, nurses, dentists, teachers, and attorneys must continue their professional development and education or lose their certifications and licenses. Would you have a fifty year old doctor operate on your heart if the last time the doctor attended a class on the subject was in medical school when he or she was twenty five?

Far too many in business think that they can ignore the realities of a changing world by believing that they already know enough to get by. Actually, many not only think they know enough to get

by, they believe that they can be a roaring success without ever taking the time to sharpen their blades.

Anyone who wants to be a success needs to discover the best way to sharpen the blades of their own axes. Some choose the quiet of the library to read a book, while some prefer to listen to an audiotape or CD as they drive. Still others believe in attending a class, lecture or workshop at a college or trade show or to participate in a formal peer group meeting.

Leonardo da Vinci wrote "Every now and then go away, have a little relax-

ation, for when you come back to your work, your judgment will be surer; since to remain constantly at work will cause you to lose power of judgement."

How do you sharpen the blades that you have? Decide what works best for you and make the commitment to keep your blades sharp.

> The PPACHicago Board

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> Member Spotlight



Getting to know Karen Prusinowski, Sanford B 2 B



Time on Board: Since August 2008

Responsibilities: Events Chair Person

Strengths: Good Listener, Efficient, Honest, Friendly, Hardworking, Competent.

Faults: Anxious, Aggressive Driver, Fast Talker.

Favorite Activities: Traveling, Cooking, Exploring, Laughing, Seeing live music, Playing indoor games like taboo and trivial pursuit, Playing outdoor games like golf and kubb.

Favorite Movie: Tie. Groundhog Day and Grease.

At my house... You will always feel welcome.

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- **New store openings- "Come in, match and win!"**
- **Web site traffic builder- "Visit and see if you are a winner!"**
- **Fund raising- "One lucky winner will go to Hawaii!"**
- **Trade shows- "Bring your number to the booth and check our prize board!"**
- **Events- Guarantee attendance by rewarding one or more attendees!**

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Just how my life goes

By **Jim Dunne**, Alpha Shirt Company

As a sales manager, I am required to travel to shows, with reps, everything. If you are not a frequent traveler, let me tell you that over time, traveling becomes routine. You learn how to pack light, where to stay and eat in any city, where to put your wallet, watch, etc to get through security, like anything else it all becomes second nature. For me, I have had a tendency to get careless on the road, lose my phone, credit cards, blackberry, whatever it is, I get lost in the sale and have forgotten all of these things in various places while on the road. Awhile back, I traveled to the ISS show in LA, long flight, another show, another week on the road but having done it before, I was ready. For me, this trip has become so routine that I drove to the airport, parked and headed to the plane. Five days later I did the same return trip I had done a dozen times and like always, when we landed, I grabbed my briefcase and went looking for my car keys. I looked and looked and as I mentioned before, I tend to get careless with this kind of stuff so I figured, well you did it again dummy you lost your keys!

As anyone would, I got off the plane, grabbed a cab and headed home to get my spare set. After a cab trip home and back to the airport, I arrived at my car with the spare set and was ready to finally start the final leg of my trip, home. I went to the door and realized that I left the car open. Thank my lucky stars that I still drive an undesirable car, it was unlocked in the airport long term parking lot for a week and it was still there. I got into the car, shaking my head and it was then that I discovered that not only did I leave the car unlocked, but the keys in it! Still shaking my head, I went to turn the key

“For me, I have had a tendency to get careless on the road, lose my phone, credit cards, blackberry, whatever it is, I get lost in the sale and have forgotten all of these things in various places while on the road.”

and got no response from it. (Expletive, expletive, expletive) now what! The damn battery is dead. Now, angry, late, tired and frustrated, I called Triple A and requested a jump. An hour later, the tow truck rolled up and got in place to jump the car's dead battery. As a sales guy naturally I got talking to the tow guy while he was getting ready and told him the story. Laughing with and at me, he said he was ready and that I should try to start the car. I got it and thought, finally I may be able to get home! But as it goes for me, as I turned the key the car turned and turned and turned and would not start. The tow guy told me to wait a minute as the battery may be pretty low and let it charge up some more. He added to the throttle on the rig and a minute later, he asked me to try it again. And again it would not turn over. Great, I thought, this piece of junk chose NOW to slip into the abyss of car death. I got out and looked at the guy; he thought for a minute and said “Uh sir, is there any chance that you left this car not only open but running?” I paused and thought, well at this point anything is possible. I peeked in and looked at the gas gauge, sir enough, empty. Now laughing out loud (both of us), I ask the guy if he can get me gas. He said he would like to help me but that his rig did not have a gas can and that I would have to call for another truck to bring gas. I did and when he brought the gas, put it in the tank and sure enough it started right up. Well I thought, perfect ending to a perfect week, not only was I stupid enough to leave my keys in my car, running as it turns out for a week but it ran out of gas and still nobody stole it. Just my luck! At least I have this, a top 10 bonehead story of all time!

We look forward to reading your stories in future Product Line Issues. Send your stories to Nancy Paolucci, staff@ppachicago.org and help spread some good humor.

IS YOUR TRAVEL BUDGET FROZEN?

COME OUT OF THE FREEZE THIS WINTER...

Join us at the 2009 PPACHicago
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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 2009

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2009 PPACChicago Scholarship Winners

The 2009 Scholarship Winners were announced at the 2008 Winter Fest Party. Jeff Schmitt (Cedric Spring), Diane Sakowicz (Service with a Smile) and Chris Sinatra (Sinatra Enterprises) will each receive \$1000 to be used on education classes, travel accommodations at education events, and test fees in order to earn their CAS or MAS certifications. Congratulations!



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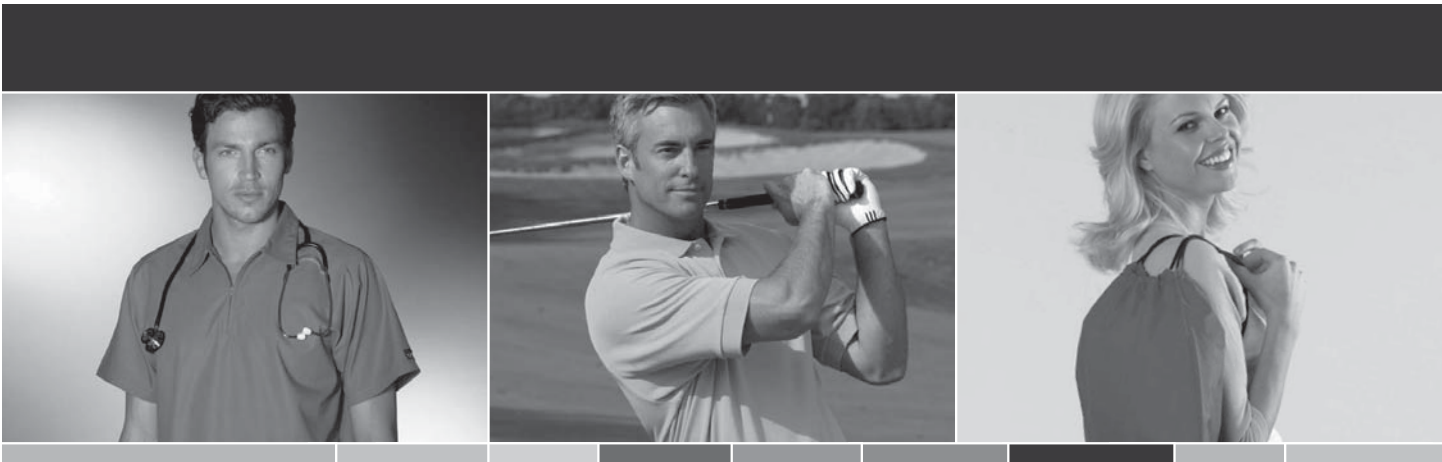


Winter Fest Holiday Party

PPAChicago held our annual Winter Fest Holiday Party on November 13th at the Wyndham Drake Hotel in Oak Brook, IL. Eighty-five association members were in attendance to celebrate the holiday season. In the spirit of the season, the Event's Committee coordinated a canned food collection and donation to Northern Illinois Food Bank. Attendees participated in a Silent Auction during the evening as well as networking a game and short presentation by PPAChicago President, Kevin Flynn. Scholarships were presented to the winners; and Rick Daignault of Midwest Promotional Group in Summit, IL was awarded 2008 Volunteer of the Year for his hardwork with the Charity Golf Outing. PPAChicago would like to thank their members for contributing to another successful event and look forward to many more in 2009.

1. Curtis & Sandy Gordon with Ken Dermer
2. Don Lewandowski with the Event Chairwomen Karen Prusinowski and Jessica Koronka
3. Scott and Audra Whitesell
4. Karen Prusinowski, John Paolucci, Jessica Koronka, Nancy Paolucci and Kevin Flynn
5. Bob Stoltz, Jim Dunne, Rick Daignault, and Kevin Flynn
6. Jennifer Sullivan and Jackie Jackson
7. The Crew from ESP





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> Industry Happenings

Movers & Shakers

Senator Promotional Group USA is pleased to announce the promotion of Carol Gauger to Vice President of Sales and Marketing. Previously Vice President of Marketing, Carol will be responsible for overall sales, marketing and customer service of Senator Promotional Group USA.

News

Bodek and Rhodes recently announced new Skip Zone times in the areas near Harrisburg, PA and New York, NY. Many customers can now order from the company's Philadelphia warehouse as late as 4 p.m. and still have their order packed and shipped for next-day delivery (the previous cut-off was 2:30).

Hub Pen Co. is proud to announce that Kaeser & Blair has honored Hub Pen with their top 5 supplier award at their recent Kaeser & Blair annual convention.



(from left to right is: Joe Fleming, GM of Hub Pen Company, Angela McDonald, senior customer service rep. special accounts of Hub Pen, Kurt Kaeser, President and CEO of Kaeser and Blair)

SAGE® announces a new no-hassle monthly subscription option for its research and web-based services. This new option is available for customers who prefer to pay a fixed monthly fee for SAGE's popular research and web based services instead of the current annual fee.

SELCO Custom Time Corp. announces it has been selected to be a key partner for Oregon Scientific as an authorized decorator and distribution channel to the promotional products industry.

Chocolate Inn was again recognized for the eighth consecutive year in a row as a finalist in the Counselor Distributor Choice Awards for Food Gifts and Candy.

continued >

>> Industry Happenings

News continued...

Dallas Mayor Tom Leppert, city council members and community representatives were on-hand to celebrate the completion of a much anticipated move to a newer and larger facility for **Senator Promotional Group, USA, Inc.**

Crystal D won the B2B Standard of Excellence WebAward from the Web Marketing Association. This is the 12th annual competition including more than 2,400 websites from 45 countries in 96 categories. This is the second year Crystal D has won the Standard of Excellence WebAward.

To help kick off the 2009 celebration of **Bodek and Rhodes** 70th Anniversary, FedEx showcased its actual #11 NASCAR stock car at the Bodek and Rhodes Philadelphia headquarters for hundreds of customers and the Bodek and Rhodes family race team on September 18th.



We are saddened by the news that Amy Buskey, Inside Sales Rep for 3M Promotional Markets in the Chicago Territory, recently lost her battle with cancer. Amy Skoog Buskey, 51, of Mankato, died Saturday, December 6, 2008 at her residence. She was born on January 21, 1957, in Minneapolis. She was the daughter of Myer "Whitey" and Joyce (Thompson) Skoog. Amy was a 1975 graduate of St. Peter High School, earned a degree from Rasmussen Business College, and also attended Mankato State University. She was united in marriage to Roger Buskey on July 5, 1982, in Eagle Lake. They later divorced. Amy was a sales professional for various companies, most recently at 3M Promotional Markets. She was a member of Hosanna Lutheran Church and participated in functions for the American Cancer Society and Habitat for Humanity. Amy enjoyed singing, cooking, horses, gardening, traveling, and BWCA camping. Amy is survived by her two sons, Joseph Buskey of Eagle Lake and Thomas Buskey of Mankato; one daughter, Hannah Buskey of Mankato, her father, Whitey Skoog of St. Peter; one sister, and two brothers. She was preceded in death by her mother, Joyce Pengra in 2005. Amy loved joking with distributors on the phone and was always quick to get answers and provide solutions. She will be missed by all she touched over the years in our industry.