

Spending Less, Getting More

By Mike Emerson,

Most distributors have already eliminated the under-performers within their organizations and slashed truly non-essential costs in reaction to today's economy. Now reductions to the sales force carry with them the legitimate concern that as personnel is eliminated revenues will be as well. The question many distributors are asking is, "How can I reduce costs without losing sales?" For many distributors it is challenging to even understand how to look at the risks.



The answer is: "Align your selling resources more closely with the market." Achieving this is not simple, but a proven three-step process for doing so does exist. The steps involve: 1) segmenting customers, 2) utilizing effective sales management practices, and 3) ensuring incentive structures are in alignment. This article will discuss the importance of each step and illustrate how the outcomes from each will enhance profitability.

1) Segmenting Customers

Customers ascribe different value to the services provided by wholesale distributors, yet often times distributors offer homogenous service levels to all customers. Some customers are very price conscious and whichever source offers the lowest price will receive their business. Other customers assign value to product availability, extended credit terms, the ability to procure most of the products they need from a single source, frequent delivery etc.

(Continued on page 6)

SAVE THE DATE! ISD/FPDA Joint Industry Summit October 4-8, 2010

The PGA National Resort & Spa
West Palm Beach, Florida

Plans are underway for this exciting 2010 event. Teaming with the ISD will greatly enhance the program value, capitalizing on expanded networking while providing unique opportunities for members to explore new product lines and business alliances. Details available on page 5 of this newsletter.

For more information of the PGA National Resort, click [here](#).

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"The professional network for fluid power, automation and motion technology providers dedicated to significantly enhancing member and channel performance by delivering indispensable networking, education and success strategies."

A Message From FPDA President Richard Neels

Hello all,

I'd like to start this message by inviting you to attend the FPDA-ISD Industry Summit, scheduled for October 5-8 at the renowned PGA Resort in West Palm Beach, Florida. It promises to be an exceptional event, and will afford you a priceless opportunity to network with your peers.



During the past year, I have been reminded of the tremendous value that derives from networking with my colleagues. In short, the ability to share information and receive input on industry and product trends, management issues, and other business needs helps me in shaping our employee owned company's direction.

In relation to the above, I have found that the *best* networking opportunities come through my participation with industry associations, particularly FPDA – The Motion & Control Network. Within this organization, I have an ever-expanding circle of colleagues I go to when looking for information, thoughts, and advice pertaining to our shared industry.

This is where you come in: If you are not taking full advantage of this unique networking opportunity, I encourage you to do so. And the best place to start is at the above-mentioned fall meeting.

Here are the main reasons I encourage you to add the October 5-8 meeting to your business schedule:

An FPDA meeting will give you insight into the industry, updates on its state of affairs, and a chance to share your input.

You will gain the latest information on trends and economic factors impacting your business. You will also learn what your colleagues did in the face of adversity, how they handled downturns, etc. Very insightful information.

Participants can engage with the senior leaders of distributors and manufacturers in one location over a three-day period. These invaluable discussions always fill me with new ideas, inspire me to lead my organization more effectively, and provide an insight into our industry that I simply cannot get anywhere else. In this era of e-mail, Facebook, and Twitter, it's still extremely invaluable to network in-person.

This year, we will share our meeting with the members of the International Sealing Distribution Association – who knows what relationships we can build, new products we may market, or new ideas we will gain by networking with a new segment of our industry? This is a fantastic opportunity that I am very much looking forward to.

In late May, you will receive more information on this event. I encourage each of you to make the investment (both in time and dollars) and join me at the PGA National Resort. I guarantee you will leave with the feeling that your investment was a wise one.

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Benchmarking Tool Designed Specifically For FPDA!

Are You Using This Valuable Information?

DID YOU KNOW?

February marked the fourth consecutive month of accelerating year-over-year growth. On average sales growth was 5%, up from 1% growth reported in January.

Orders rose 16% (on average) in February, a notable acceleration from the 9% growth in January.

Distributor orders surged in the month, growing 12%. This follows a more modest 1% increase in January.

Since the prior survey, manufacturer orders accelerated from 18% to 21% Monthly

If you are participating in the FPDA Monthly Survey, which is conducted by Cleveland Research Company, you are already familiar with this data. If you aren't participating, why not join your fellow members and report your data to Cleveland Research? They conduct an online monthly survey of the FPDA Members, from which a monthly "Industrial Distribution Industry Trends" report is compiled. This report focuses on the fluid power/motion control industry and its end-use markets. The survey does not take long to complete and is conducted through Survey Monkey.

According to Richard Neels, "These reports are something you would probably find very useful. In fact, they help provide the foundation for many of my business discussions and decisions. The detailed reporting cannot be found elsewhere, and this is provided as a free service to our FPDA members – both distributors and manufacturers".

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FPDA Fall Meeting Sports a New Look and Name!

FPDA/ISD 2010 Industry Summit
PGA National Resort
West Palm Beach, Florida
October 5-8, 2010

FPDA will feature a new look for its meeting this fall, featuring new events designed to enhance networking and education for all participants. Combining forces with the International Sealing Distribution Association will boost your networking opportunities. All events will be combined except for Board and Committee meetings and association membership meetings. This is a meeting you cannot afford to miss! Full meeting details will be provided in May, but to whet your appetite, here is a quick snapshot of the program for you – check out the new program elements.

Tuesday, October 5, 2010

7:00 am – 12:00 Noon	FPDA Board of Directors Meeting
10:30 am – 3:30 pm	FPDA/ISD Golf Tournament
5:15 pm – 5:45 pm	FPDA First Timers Orientation
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	FPDA/ISD Joint Welcome Reception
8:00 pm	FPDA/ISD Young Executives Get-Together

Wednesday, October 6, 2010

7:30 am – 8:30 am	FPDA Membership Meeting
8:45 am – 9:45 am	FPDA/ISD General Session & Keynote
10:00 am – 12:00 Noon	UID In a Day Workshops <i>(Featuring the best of the University of Industrial Distribution!)</i>
12:15 pm – 1:15 pm	FPDA/ISD Luncheon
12:15 pm – 1:15 pm	FPDA/ISD Young Executives Luncheon
1:30 pm – 3:30 pm	UID in a Day Workshops
3:45 pm – 5:00 pm	FPDA/ISDA Peer to Peer Round Table Session
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm	FPDA/ISD Manufacturer Hospitality Suites

Thursday, October 7, 2010

8:00 am – 9:30 am	FPDA/ISD General Session
9:45 am – 11:45 am	FPDA/ISD Technology Sessions
12:00 Noon – 4:00 pm	Joint Buffet Lunch/Supplier Showcase
6:30 pm – 9:30 pm	FPDA/ISD Evening Event

Friday, October 8, 2010

7:00 am – 8:00 am	FPDA/ISD Continental Breakfast
8:00 am – 9:45 am	FPDA/ISD Closing Session

See you in West Palm Beach!



The Value of Rock Solid Business Relationships in Turbulent Times

By: Ed Rigsbee, CSP

“Relationships really matter when things go wrong,” said Pat Marantette, president at E.T. Horn Company. It was on a warm and sunny Southern California day that I visited Pat at his specialty chemical distribution facility in La Mirada. The purpose for my visit was to interview him in preparation for my presentation the following winter at the 29th annual meeting of the National Association of Chemical Distributors.

Pat spent a fair amount of time stating his case about relationships mattering most when things went south. Of my several hundreds of interviews, Pat was the first to put business relationships in such a light. And, he’s absolutely correct.

I have spent much of the past decade both researching and preaching the virtues and values of partnering and developing strategic alliances. Recently, as you know, our world changed—things went south in New York and Washington, DC. As a result, many industries, the airlines as a prime example, have been or will soon be devastated. At times like this, the quality of the relationships that management has built with their suppliers, customers and employees is quite transparent.

While we are living in a time of high technology, in times of heavy stress, high touch is crucial. Sure, there is plenty of the impersonal e-commerce, e-auction sites and industry portal sites, yet in turbulent times we fall back to the much-needed high touch. As America moves into uncertainty, a roller coaster ride for business and industry is assured. The best antidote for the motion sickness that accompanies high-speed ups and downs is rock-solid business relationships.

Norbert Oberz, founder, of the successful Sport Chalet

sporting goods chain headquartered in La Canada, California built the foundation of his business throughout the 1960s and 1970s on the relationships he built. With his employees, he took care of them. He even bought up small houses close to the original Sport Chalet in La Canada for selected employee housing. With his customers, he delivered unsurpassed service and value. People always knew they would get a square deal from Norbert. And with his suppliers, he always paid them. Granted, in drought years it might only be five dollars every other week, yet he continued to pay in good faith.

Visiting with Steelcase in Grand Rapids, Michigan, one executive told a story of how the company helped a long-time dealer that was in big-time financial trouble—of the visit to the family home of the dealer and sharing options at the dinner table with the dealer and his sons. And how Steelcase helped that loyal dealer back into a position of strength in his market.

After writing three books and several hundred articles on partnering, alliances and business relationships, let me share **10 tips that will help you to keep your business relationships rock-solid.**

1. Behave toward another the way you want them to behave toward you. Perhaps go even farther and behave toward them the way they would like you to. It is a subtle difference but makes a huge difference.
2. It’s more important to be a good partner and get things done, then to obsess on being right. Think about how many times another driver ran a light or made an illegal lane change into your lane. Sure, if they hit you it would be their fault because you were in the right, but you got out of their way. Why did you do this when you were right? Because you did not want to put yourself in danger or go through the trouble of dealing with the other driver’s insurance company. It is the same idea in the business environment. Just focus on getting things done.
3. Make relationship bank deposits before you try to make withdrawals. Can you just walk into any bank and instantly get \$100,000 simply by asking

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Spending Less, Getting More (cont'd from cover page)

The sales support provided by a distributor is no different when it comes to influencing customers' purchasing behavior. It has material impact on some customers and very little, if any, on others. Evaluating the customer base with a critical eye and understanding their economic drivers is essential.

You can start by asking the following questions:

How much does a given customer rely on you to help select products or do they always know what they are going to buy?

- What is their ratio of purchases relative to quotes?
- How have the products purchased by the customer evolved over the last few years and how do you expect them to change in the immediate future?
- How much untapped opportunity exists within the customer?
- How many strong relationships exist with the customer, aside from the outside sales person (The inside relationship is key, if there is one.)?
- Is the customer significant enough to your business that having an outside sales person call on him is necessary strictly from a defensive perspective?
- Do sales reps primarily fulfill demand that already exists or do they create demand by, for example, showing customers how a product or service can improve productivity?

The answers to the questions above will identify what type of sales resource is appropriate for each customer based on a customer's needs. Customers that require assistance when selecting products clearly need active involvement while those that use internal capabilities to select products need passive involvement.

Customers that rarely purchase but that are con

-stantly asking for quotes likely make buying decisions based on price and an operational fax machine is likely the only selling resource required to maintain or grow sales within these customers. Customers whose purchases have changed little and where you have the majority of the business may only require support from inside sales as fulfillment, not selling, is all that is required.

The objective of this analytical customer segmentation exercise is to identify how customers can be aligned with company selling resources so that their needs are met at the lowest cost. An excellent analogy exists in health care. When someone goes to the hospital, they receive care from many different individuals. One person will take their blood pressure and temperature, while another individual will ask questions about the symptoms they are experiencing. Finally, a doctor will issue a diagnosis and implement a treatment plan. Although a doctor is capable of performing all these tasks, others within the hospital undertake activities they can perform effectively to free up the doctor for high value activities. Considering the cost difference hospitals incur for doctors versus nurses versus technicians, it only makes economic sense for the lowest cost function that can competently perform a task to perform it.

Most companies that complete this analysis will find that more than 20% of the accounts assigned to an outside sales representative can have their needs met by a lower cost function. This translates to an opportunity to reduce outside sales staffing by an equivalent amount.

2) Utilizing Effective Sales Management Practices

Sales productivity is frequently measured by sales or gross profit per person. One of the reasons this metric is commonly used is because it is easy to measure. Companies have no difficulty obtaining sales information and the number of individuals employed, but it gives no insight into the activities that generate the results. It is similar to measuring how hard an engine is working by looking at the speedometer instead of the tachometer.

To understand sales productivity more, insight will be gained if activities are analyzed instead of results.

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A helpful exercise is to look at the accounts in a sales territory and assign a required call frequency for each one. Factors to consider would be account size, growth potential or likelihood of additional business, level of support required, and risk of business being lost. Accounts would typically be assigned a weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or quarterly call frequency.

Once all the accounts are assigned a frequency, sum up the required calls per quarter or year. Take the total required calls and divide by the number of available selling days. If you're like most companies we work with you'll be surprised at how low the number of calls required is. This by no means is an indictment of a sales forces' work ethic nor does it imply that 30% to 50% of their time is idle when call duration is figured into the equation. Of course, calls are being made to prospects that have yet to be added to a rep's account base and essential activities must be performed in addition to making sales calls. However, we have found that idle capacity exists within a sales force and that this capacity can be used productively through effective sales management practices.

In our book, *What's Your Plan: Smart Salesforce Compensation in Wholesale Distribution*, we describe effective sales management as, "a structure for continuously improving sales force performance through focus, discipline and a coaching process built on a platform of accountability" For the sake of this article, we must presuppose that a "platform of accountability" already exists. If not, we suggest you visit our website, www.ircg.com, where you will find many articles that are helpful regarding instilling a platform of accountability.

Sales management is the piece that takes the analysis performed so far and makes it actionable. Sales managers should present sales reps with the required sales calls per day analysis. The information should be presented for discussion, not as a "gotcha." The goal is not to accuse the sales rep of being lazy or unproductive. The discussion's context should be that the analysis

conducted illustrates that internal or external obstacles may exist that prevent sales reps from maximizing their time growing sales.

Two areas should be explicitly addressed during this discussion. The first is around the identification of internal obstacles that are consuming sales rep time and preventing them from growing sales. Once these areas are noted, management should consider whether the value of having sales reps undertake them is greater than the return that could be realized if the reps were working with customers and potential customers. Ask yourselves, what would happen, if reps stopped doing some of the reports required of them, or if someone else took responsibility for checking inventory or sourcing products for special orders?

Being able to eliminate perceived low value activities from sales reps will, by itself, increase productivity.

The second focus area should be around targeted growth. The overall point of the discussion is around increasing productivity and the first area discussed was about eliminating low value activities to free up selling time. This step is about what the best use of that time is. Selecting a handful of target accounts (3-5) and creating actions plans for gaining sales is the ideal. Actions plans consist of activities, dates for completion and responsible individual. Generating \$50,000 in new business is the outcome of an action plan; not a step in it. Considering the urgency that exists today for some companies, these action plans should be of no more than three months duration.

Target account action plans help reps to become more proactive and thoughtful about how they spend their time. Instead of helplessly fretting about the soft economy, reps can use targeting to take charge of the situation. You can read more about targeting and other sales management best practices in our book, *5 Fundamentals for the Wholesale Distribution Sales Manager*.

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Once the action plans are created, sales manager and rep should meet bi-weekly to review progress. There is nothing like a deadline to instill focus, discipline and create a sense of immediacy. Plan, act, and measure the results. In the immediate term, the results likely won't be measured by the income statement but by the fact that a meeting occurred or an appointment was made. In the medium term, targeting opportunities is one of the best ways to maintain or grow overall revenues.

3. Ensuring Incentive structures are in Alignment (is this where it begins?)

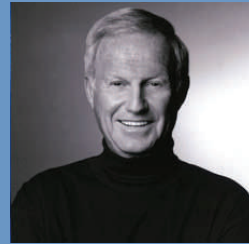
To reinforce the importance of the initiatives derived from the process outlined thus far, it is a good idea to consider the structure of the sales forces' pay plan. Based on the outcomes of the steps thus far, it is likely that fewer outside sales territories exist and accounts will have been absorbed by the remaining sales reps. Inside sales may have greater responsibilities than before, e.g. making calls to accounts when this is all that is necessary to meet the accounts needs, and sales reps are likely to have action plans for growth with a handful of target accounts.

Consideration should be given to ensuring that incentives are aligned with these changes. Structuring bonuses or commission rates to place a premium on target accounts is one possibility. Moving from a commission program to a salary and bonus program to account for significant shifting of accounts is another. Providing incentives to inside sales for retaining and growing business for accounts they are assigned would also be worth some thought.

It also makes sense to ensure that the basic principles that many distributors use as part of their pay plans are still applicable. Some companies structure their incentive programs such that growth over prior year is the threshold for variable pay to kick in. If this is the case and growth over the previous year is completely unrealistic, it may make sense to adjust the threshold to a reasonable stretch goal. Other companies' base incentives on aggregate sales or gross profit dollars generated. These companies may want to consider modifying their program so that reps can replace some of their lost income through successes that are within their control. The market may be down 20%, which means a rep would be wildly successful if his or

her territory were only down 5%, however, this would still result in a pay reduction relative to last year. Providing bonuses for new business or increases in the sales of higher margin products could prove very motivating.

At the end of the day, the number one thing is to ensure that "A players" earn incomes necessary to endure the downturn, as these individuals will be critical to capturing market share when conditions improve. Through the process outlined in this article, wholesale distributors can tackle the daunting task of changing their selling effort to deal with today's economic situation. The silver lining is that when conditions improve, sales growth and profits are likely to be at levels above where they were historically because of these changes. ∞



Real Winners Keep Moving The Finish Line

By: Harvey Mackay

When the World Series or the Super Bowl rolls around, there's usually a reliable way to pick the winners: The guys who say "I'm just glad to be here," aren't going to be the ones wearing the championship rings when the game is over. They achieved their goal before the game began.

What's really more important, goal-setting or goal-getting?

A teen-ager will mow lawns all summer in order to buy the jalopy that he is certain will impress Mary Anne. The real lesson -- learning solid work habits -- is easily lost if Mary Anne is not impressed.

We all know companies that were household names, the bluest of the blue chips, that are fading memories today. W.T. Grant, Woolworth. Zenith, Studebaker, Montgomery Wards. Every salesperson knows an ace who was on top of the sales charts for years and a ll of a sud

Continued on next page

Real Winners Keep Moving The Finish Line (cont'd from page 8)

-den lost his stroke. He didn't go from first to second, he went all the way to the bottom.

In each of these cases, the goal was the same, to get on top. But once they got there, they started to lose their way.

They lost the hunger, the ability to innovate, to listen to their customers, to adopt to change, to be humble.

They had achieved their goals. Now was the time to reap the rewards. About 20 years ago, a fellow named Parkinson, wrote a series of books in which he cleverly framed his observations into "Parkinson's Laws." Most are just as valid today, because these rules of human nature are timeless. One was, and yes, I'm paraphrasing a bit, "Whenever a company proudly announces the establishment of their beautiful, new, modern, efficient corporate headquarters, you can be sure they're heading downhill."

Why? Because instead of focusing on their business, the company's managers are focusing on themselves. Messy desks, cramped quarters, unlovely surroundings are the physical manifestations of people too busy getting the work done to care much about their own creature comforts.

The greatest danger to a business is not risk. It's lack of risk: complacency. As success piles upon success, the goal changes. Number 1? We are number 1. Roll out the red carpet. Get that door, will you? And where's my driver?

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Do You Have Some Exciting Company News That You Would Like To Share?

Please send it in to the FPDA Office to be included in the next FPDA Newsletter!

You can email news and updates to nweber@fpda.org.

FPDA Upcoming Educational Programs

- April 29, 2010: FREE MDM Webinar: Growth Planning with Dr. Adam Fein**
- May 11, 2010 How To Be Successful with Email Marketing**
- June 10, 2010: Implementing Lean Distribution**
- June 24, 2010: Smart Grid 101 for Distributors**

For additional webinars and online registration for these events, please check the FPDA website. There are always new events being added throughout the year.

IN MEMORIAM

BOB MANTHEY

April 26, 1937 - April 5, 2010

FPDA is sorry to announce the passing of Bob Manthey who spent his working years as a co-owner of Applied Fluid Power. Bob was well known in FPDA circles as one of its founding members. In 2008, Bob was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Over the past year and a half, he fought hard, still getting in a few rounds of golf and a lot of fun with friends and family. He passed away on April 5, clearly feeling great love and support from everyone.

There was a celebration of life service held in Arizona on Saturday April 24, 2010 and a Minnesota Celebration of Life is scheduled on Saturday May 22, 2010, 3:00 at the Minnesota Lakes Maritime Museum, Alexandria, MN.

Bob is survived by his wife, Sue; his children Doug and Janet and their families; and numerous friends and family. FPDA sends it condolences to the family.

Memorial donations may be made to Caring Bridge (www.caringbridge.org), Minnesota Lakes Maritime Museum (www.mnlakesmaritime.org) or PanCan (the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network) (www.pancan.org).

Real Winners Keep Moving The Finish Line
(cont'd from page 9)

Look back at that list of corporate casualties and you won't see Wal-Mart. It didn't matter how much money Sam Walton made, he still drove a beat-up pick-up truck. Instead of hanging around a plush office, he got out and walked the floor of his stores and his competitors' stores. His people were well aware of his habits. The Walton-lifestyle is ingrained into the Wal-Mart culture.

Dave Thomas, the founder of Wendy's, was never so wrapped up in enjoying material things that he lost his desire to get the education denied him by his impoverished childhood. At 60 he went back to high school and got his GED. He attended the prom with his wife and they were crowned Prom King and Prom Queen. His fellow students voted him "Most Likely to Succeed." Not all of today's high schoolers are in the dark about goal-setting.

What's your goal? Whatever it is, I suggest you commit it to writing and keep it on your desk where you'll see it every day. At least quarterly, give yourself a report card. If you ever achieve your goal, be like Curt Carlson, the billionaire founder of the Carlson Companies, the parent of the Radisson Hotels.

As a young soap salesman, Curt used to set yearly sales goals for himself, write them down and stick them in his wallet. About halfway through the year, when he reached his annual target, Curt would tear up the slip of paper, toss it, and set another goal.

Curt has the reputation of being a tough boss. There's a reason: he's never quite satisfied with himself. Curt knows the answer to the question I posed earlier: It's not goal-getting that matters. It's goal setting. You never want to reach

THE FPDA 
MOTION & CONTROL NETWORK



Are YOU Getting the Most from Online Marketing? Check out this webinar with Bob DeStefano of SVM E-Business Solutions

Sure you have a Website, but have you truly harnessed the power of online marketing to produce business-building results for your company? Your answer can be the difference between a Website that is a money-maker and one that is nothing more than a glorified brochure.

In this results-focused Webinar, online marketing expert Bob DeStefano will make online marketing understandable and provide you with a practical roadmap for transforming your Website into your most powerful marketing tool.

You will learn how to harness the power of a customer-focused Website, search engine marketing and email marketing into an integrated marketing system that will continually generate new business, strengthen relationships with customers and maximize the results from your marketing investments.

How to Be Successful with Email Marketing

May 11th at 1:00pm EST

Bob DeStefano is an online marketing strategist and professional speaker with over 15 years experience helping B-to-B companies produce business-building results.

As president of SVM E-Business Solutions, a leading B-to-B online marketing agency, Bob has worked with a wide variety of companies, from Fortune 500 companies to small family-owned businesses, to help them leverage online marketing to achieve bottom-line results. Visit www.svm solutions for more information on Bob and SVM.

Register Online at www.fpda.org

The Value of Rock Solid Business Relationships (Cont'd from pg 6)

Perhaps with a ski mask and some deadly hardware you can, but realistically, you probably can't, as they don't know you. If you have a relationship with a specific bank, perhaps you can. The relationship most likely would consist of a loan or a credit line, one or more accounts and a history. That is your relationship bank deposit with that specific bank. It is the same thing with all relationships; you must do some giving before you can expect to do some receiving.

4. Regularly share relationship value updates with those whom you have a relationship. This consists on putting on paper the value you believe you are receiving, the value you believe they are receiving and ideas to make the relationship better. As I stated, commit these three elements to paper, ask the other party to do the same and then switch documents. This is a safe conduit for evaluating the value of your relationship and not getting personal in the process.
5. Know what others need. It is literally impossible to create value for another company, organization or person if you don't know what they hold as valuable. It is easy to get carried away is doing stuff for another as it feels so good. But, suppose what you are doing for them is valueless to them? They why do it? Just to make you feel better? Your energies could be better spent in creating the kind of value (perhaps service) the other could use.
6. Be clear about what you want from your relationship and what you are willing to give to it. The idea of unrealistic or unstated expectations rings loudly here. How can another (organization or person) do for you if you are unwilling to be open about your needs? Also, from the start, be upfront about the level at which you are willing to participate.
7. Be committed; always show your confidence and passion toward your relationships. This applies equally toward a person or organization. Maybe they need to see your level of commitment before they are willing to state theirs? It does not work to be "in" the relationship when it is convenient and "out" when it is not. Sorry, you cannot ride the fence here.
8. I realize it is all too cliché, but do more for your

others than you promised. Just like in a baker's dozen (13), exceed their expectations. The problem with participating at the minimum level is that stuff happens and frequently things get in the way of completing things or actions in progress. Then you come up short-handed, falling short of your committed participation level. If you always do more, you will rarely deliver less than that of another's expectations.

9. Resolve conflict immediately. Like a splinter left in your finger to fester and cause pain, personal or organizational conflict left unchecked is simply a time bomb waiting to explode. While it might seem easier to "let things be," over the long haul, it isn't. To effectively resolve conflict, focus on what matters and don't worry about being right.
10. You can't have a relationship with an organization or individual that doesn't want one. Be honest, and ask yourself if a relationship is even possible. If you operate as if there is a relationship, partnership, alliance or anything else but there really isn't—you are setting yourself up for disappointment and failure. As I have told thousands in my seminars, pick your partners well.

While I've shared my 10 tips for rock-solid business relationships with you, you have perchance guessed that they will also work for your personal relationships. Yes, you are correct. These tips will in fact make a vast difference in your personal relationships. If you need more help, visit my web site at Rigsbee.com. Enjoy the ride!

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Ed Rigsbee, CSP is the author of *PartnerShift*, *Developing Strategic Alliances* and *The Art of Partnering* and has over 1,500 published articles to his credit. Ed travels internationally to deliver strategic alliance keynotes and workshops. He can be reached at 800-839-1520, ed@rigsbee.com or visit www.rigsbee.com.



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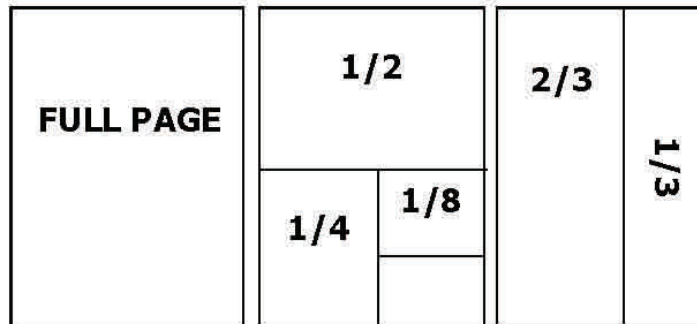
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Advertising Rates for FPDA E-News <small>issued 6 times per year</small>						
Member Rates (per issue)				Non-Member Rates (per issue)		
	1X	3X	6X	1X	3X	6X
Full Page	\$300	\$275	\$250	\$390	\$360	\$325
2/3 Page	\$240	\$220	\$200	\$310	\$285	\$260
1/2 Page	\$180	\$165	\$150	\$235	\$215	\$195
1/3 Page	\$125	\$115	\$105	\$165	\$150	\$135
1/4 Page	\$100	\$90	\$85	\$130	\$120	\$110
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Member Rates (per issue)				Non-Members Rates (per issue)			
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*Logo maximum: 120 width x 70 height pixels

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