

ERA 2017 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES EVENT THEME

The ERA 2017 Conference Committee, chaired by Holly Myers, CPMR, of Wallace Electronic Sales, has announced the theme of the event, slated Feb. 26-28 in a return to the AT&T Conference Center in Austin, Texas. “**Collaborate, Differentiate, Accelerate: Drive to Excellence**” is the focus of the committee in building the conference program. Possible topics the committee is exploring for the program are: evaluating the disruptive environment and how to become a disrupter; tactical versus strategic thinking and how to use both sides of the brain in business management; a presentation by Amazon on its philosophy in selling electronic products; opportunities in new energy sectors of the industry; best practices re: selling via the Internet; manufacturers’ evaluation of reps and rep councils; and using Cloud services to gain operational efficiency.

In addition to Myers, returning members of the committee from the 2016 conference are: Kathie Cahill, CPMR, of the Net Sales Company; Tobi Cornell, CPMR, of Kruvand Associates; Tom Griffin, CPMR, of Catalyst Sales; John Hutson, CPMR, of The MacInnis Company; and Rick LaPiana of the Cain-Forlaw Company. New members who joined the committee this year are: Ken Bellerio of Schaffner EMC; Zach DeVillers, CPMR, of Brainard-Nielsen Marketing; Todd McAtee of Mouser Electronics; and Mike Swenson, CPMR, of the Mel Foster Company. ERA staff members on the committee are Walter Tobin, Tess Hill, Neda Simeonova and Stephanie Tierney. Updates on the conference are available at erg.org.

ERA EXPANDS MEMBERSHIP TO INCLUDE DISTRIBUTORS

ERA announced in June that distributors are now eligible for national membership in the association. While some chapters of ERA have had distributor members in their territories for some time, it is now possible for distributors to join ERA on a national basis and extend that membership privilege to ERA chapters for their branches. One set of distributor dues will cover both national and chapter membership.

Walter Tobin, ERA CEO, notes: “ERA is a field-based organization with its 20 chapters headquartered in markets throughout the Americas. Our programs are designed to facilitate stronger local ‘boots on the ground’ programs to help drive demand creation, new customer development and increased sales ... Adding distribution completes the ‘third leg on the stool’ of this partnership among reps, manufacturers and now the distributors in the field. ERA will continue to develop sales, products and other programs meant to benefit all three constituents of its membership. In addition, the continued coordination of demand creation and supply chain programs between reps and distribution will prove to be a huge benefit to our manufacturer members.”

For details on ERA distributor membership, go to era.org, or email info@era.org.

MRERF SCHEDULES CSP AND MBP COURSES THIS FALL

The Manufacturers’ Representatives Educational Research Foundation (MRERF) has scheduled two offerings of its Certified Sales Professional (CSP) program plus a session of its Manufacturers Best Practices (MBP) class this fall. The CSP classes will be conducted Sept. 13-16 in Baltimore and Oct. 11-14 in Phoenix. The MBP session is coming up Sept. 27-27 in Orlando, Fla. The foundation’s next Certified Professional Manufacturers’ Representative (CPMR) classes will be held Jan. 8-11 in Austin, Texas.

In other news from MRERF, watch for the announcement of two new programs in development: a course to certify sales managers and a webinar to train inside salespeople. More information about MRERF and its programs is available at mrerf.org.

The annual ERA-ECIA Breakfast at EDS in May drew hundreds of attendees to hear guest speaker Don Hnatyshin (right), chief supply chain officer of Jabil. He addressed “The Digital Economy: Enabling the Intelligent Digital Supply Chain.” ERA CEO Walter Tobin, on stage in the far right photo of the ballroom at the Mirage Hotel, arranged for Hnatyshin’s participation and introduced him.

