The Representor®
THE VOICE OF MULTIPLE-LINE SELLING IN THE ELECTRONICS INDUSTRY
Electronics Representatives Association
FALL 2017

TOOLS OF OUR TRADE –
Constructing a Successful Future



Update your toolbox at ERA's 2018 conference!

Inside:

New Energy Markets, page 8
From the Floor, page 15
Off the Shelf, page 17

How TTI Simplifies Your Business







Right Parts | On Time | Peace of Mind

Your business depends on a supply chain that gets the job done for your customers and lets you sleep at night. TTI has been delivering the right parts, on time, for 45 years. To partner with the TTI branch near you, simply phone 1.800.CALL.TTI, and rest easier tonight.



The Specialist in Electronic Component Distribution

A Berkshire Hathaway Company | 1.800.CALL.TTI • ttiinc.com

ecia MEMBER

The Representor

Electronics Representatives Association

Advancing and supporting the professional field sales function in the global electronics marketplace through programs and activities that educate, inform and advocate for manufacturers' representatives, distributors and their principals

Founded 1935

ERA Headquarters Office

Phone: 312-419-1432
Fax: 312-419-1660
Email: info@era.org · URL: era.org

Chief Executive Officer:
Walter E. Tobin
wtobin@era.org

Editor:
Neda Simeonova
nsimeonova@era.org

Consulting Editor:
Tess Hill
thill@era.org

Advertising Manager:
Stephanie Tierney
stierney@era.org

Cover:
Katherine Green
In Bits

ERA Is a Member of the:

- Alliance of Manufacturers' Representatives Associations
- Manufacturers' Representatives Educational Research Foundation
- Small Business Legislative Council

■ THE REPRESENTOR (ISSN 1057-0373) (Vol. 28, Issue 4), is published by Electronics Representatives Association, 1325 S. Arlington Heights Road, Suite 204, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007. First annual subscription per ERA member company or manufacturer member is $15.00. Additional ERA member company or manufacturer member annual subscriptions are $12.00 each. Non-member annual subscriptions are $24.00. Foreign annual subscriptions are $40.00. Single copies are available at $6.00 per copy. (All prices quoted are payable in U.S. dollars.) American Express, MasterCard, Visa and Discover charges accepted.

■ Copyright 2017 by Electronics Representatives Association. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. Except as permitted under the United States Copyright Act of 1976, no part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a data base retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

■ Statements of fact and/or opinion are the responsibility of the authors alone and do not imply an opinion of the officers or members of ERA. Send letters to the editor (regarding magazine material) to: Editor, THE REPRESENTOR, c/o ERA, 1325 S. Arlington Heights Rd., Suite 204, Elk Grove Village, IL 60007; email: info@era.org; fax: 312-419-1660.

ERA Executive Committee 2017 - 2019

Chairman of the Board:
Dan Parks, CPMR

Board President:
David Norris

Senior Vice President/Fiscal & Legal:
Chuck Tanzola, CPMR

Senior Vice President/Education:
John O'Brien, CPMR

Senior Vice President/Membership:
Kathie Cahill, CPMR

Senior Vice President/Industry:
Bob Evans, CPMR

Manufacturer Delegate:
Ken Bellero

Distributor Delegate:
Chris Beeson

Chief Executive Officer (Ex-Officio):
Walter E. Tobin

Consultants Available for Expert Access

Accounting & Taxes:
Stan Herzog

Legal:
Gerald Newman

Executive Searches:
Carla Mahrt

Insurance:
John Doyle

Rep & Mfr. Services:
Bryan Shirley

Rep Network Management:
Cesare Giammarco

Sales/Business Strategy:
Craig Conrad

Sales Consulting/Coaching:
John Simari

Sales Team Management:
Timothy L. Conlon

Start-ups:
Alex Gabbi

For contact information, go to the Member Services page at era.org.

Advertising Mechanical Specifications

Book size: 8-1/2" wide by 11-1/4" deep, untrimmed; 8-3/8" wide by 11" deep, trimmed.
Advertisement Sizes (width by depth):

	Non-bleed	Bleed (untrimmed)*
2-page spread	15-1/4 x 10" **	17-1/4" x 11-1/4"
Full page	7" x 10"	8-1/2" x 11-1/4"
2/3 page	4-1/2" x 10"	5-1/8" x 11-1/4"
1/2 page island	4-1/2" x 7-3/8"	5-1/8" x 7-3/4"
1/2 page vertical	3-3/8" x 10"	4" x 11-1/4"
1/2 page horizontal	7" x 4-7/8"	7-1/2" x 5-3/8"
1/3 page vertical	2-1/4" x 10"	2-7/8" x 11-1/4"
1/3 page square	4-1/2" x 4-7/8"	5-1/8" x 5-1/2"
1/4 page	3/8" x 4-7/8"	Not available
1/6 page vertical	2-1/4" x 4-7/8"	Not available
1/6 page horizontal	4-1/2" x 2-1/2"	Not available

* Keep all live matter 3/8" from outside edges.
** Allows for gutter bleed of 5/8" per page.

To place an advertisement in ***The Representor,*** contact: Stephanie Tierney at **stierney@era.org.**

Don't miss all the services, information and resources available online, 24/7, on ERA's website. Visit era.org.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 **COVER STORY: Update your toolbox at ERA's 2018 conference by Rick LaPiana**

8 **FEATURE ARTICLE: New energy markets are driving opportunities for increased sales by Gordon Hunter**

COLUMNS & DEPARTMENTS

7 SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW: Adam Anderson, CPMR

11 EXECUTIVE COMMENTARY: Arm yourself with the new tools and attitude for success

13 FROM THE TOP: Trusted partners — looking beyond the metrics and data of performance

14 WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

15 FROM THE FLOOR: The rep model — the key that opens doors to building a better business

17 OFF THE SHELF: Micromanufacturing and 'The Third Wave' — a transition into the information revolution

18 MEMBER SERVICES

19 LEGALLY SPEAKING: Changing a commission plan is no shoo-in

21 THE SUBJECT IS TAXING: Trickle-down economics — pondering the theory

23 NEWS BEAT

24 MARKETING GROUP DIGEST:
- Components
- Electronic Systems Integration
- Materials, Assembly, Production & Supply

26 CHAPTER NEWS

28 CLASSIFIED ADS

31 BUSINESS BOOK REVIEW: *The Inspiration Code: How the Best Leaders Energize People Every Day*

FALL 2017

TOOLS OF OUR TRADE –
Constructing a Successful Future



Update your toolbox at ERA's 2018 conference!

by Rick LaPiana

To my fellow reps and our electronics industry manufacturer and distributor partners: My message is twofold but very straightforward. The rep sales model has been very, very good to me. And don't miss ERA's 49th Management and Marketing Conference in Austin, Texas, on Feb. 25-27, 2018.

It is a privilege to be serving as the chair of ERA's 2018 Conference Committee. And when I think about how I got here, I realize how fortunate I have been.

When I was very young, I planned on being an architect. I wanted to design skyscrapers. By my junior year in high school, however, I had committed to becoming an electrical engineer with the goal to design computers. After 10 years of RF and microwave engineering design work, I took my first position in sales. Little did I know at the time that I'd made a great decision. I worked in field sales for a manufacturer, then as a regional manager for a distributor.

After six years in sales, I bought a rep company. My wife was pregnant with our third child at the time, and I took out a second mortgage to pay the employees. I didn't pay myself for the first time until the business was five months old.

Buying that rep firm was the smartest business decision I ever made. I have been rewarded both financially and professionally, and I truly enjoy being a manufacturers' rep. As trite as it sounds, I feel like the best days are still ahead for those of us who are reps or who work in other segments of the electronics industry. The realistic side of me understands that this will be true only with hard work, by maintaining a commitment to improvement and change, and by dedicating our efforts to remain a strong sales organization.

I see a bright future in electronics sales. This is the core reason why I have become more involved with ERA in recent years. Through ERA, I can work with other reps, our partners in distribution and our firm's principals to make our business more efficient by using industry best practices. It is one of the most valuable uses of my time.

Plus, the ERA national conference allows all of us to tap the power of in-person collaboration and to reap its benefits. I have learned an incredible amount from past conferences, and I always leave with a commitment to specific actions that will result in improvement to my company's bottom line.

ERA's activities help drive me to improve my business's profitability. With a staff totally committed to serving our industry, ERA focuses on enhancing the reputation of the rep model — not only via promotion, but more importantly by training and educating the membership. The national conference is the cornerstone of this effort and is always a do-not-miss event.

An incredibly talented team of 28 volunteers serving on five committees is bringing you this year's conference, themed "Tools of Our Trade — Constructing a Successful Future." This group represents the "power of three," with more distributors and manufacturers participating with reps than ever before. The collaboration among the committee members is inspiring as we all work together to deliver new and fresh program material that is pertinent, timely and a showcase for our industry's best practices.

It's time to update your toolbox! I urge you to join the expert presenters at the 2018 ERA Conference, and be ready to gain insights on key topics such as:

- the electronics industry customer and supplier of the future, including their impacts on your path to market and take-aways on how you should be retooling in order to stay relevant and useful;
- how to achieve better work-life balance, including tips and tools that both you and your personnel can use immediately;
- the national and global economic outlook, including practical advice to help you plan for your own company in 2018 and into 2019; and
- the changing, all-inclusive workforce of today, including tactics to find, hire, train and/

(continued on next page)



About Rick LaPiana

Richard LaPiana is president of Cain-Forlaw Company. Cain-Forlaw was established in 1971 by Robert Forlaw who retired in 1993. The company is headquartered in Arlington Heights, Ill., and currently operates in 18+ states in the central U.S. with six sales offices and 17 employees.

Prior to joining Cain-Forlaw, Rick worked in field sales with Penstock, a specialty distributor that was acquired by Avnet.

Rick also worked for Raytheon's, Microwave and Power Tube Division as a regional sales manager. He spent 10 years in systems engineering for Northrop-Grumman, Defense Systems Division, in Rolling Meadows, Ill.

He has a B.S.E.E. degree from Marquette University, in Milwaukee, Wis., and conducted post graduate studies at the Illinois Institute of Technology.

You can reach Rick LaPiana at rick.lapiana@cain-forlaw.com, or at 847-202-9898.

(continued from previous page)

or work most effectively with diverse team members in your own company and your partner organizations.

There will be six breakout time slots this year — up from five at recent conferences — and you will have outstanding choices. The seminars will deliver tools to help you, your team and your company be more productive and increase your importance to your business partners while sharing your success with them. Among the breakouts will be: a sales techniques swap shop; a forum on design registration, why it's important and how it's impacting how we do business; a session on back-selling, including tips on how to showcase the value of the rep business model; an advanced Excel workshop; a seminar on how to harness the "power of three," i.e., reps, manufacturers and distributors; a workshop on how to best use Microsoft tools for sales collaboration; and a seminar on international customs, designed to help everyone who works with international companies better understand the business customs of key countries. I am confident that the topics will be so interesting that, as many past attendees have told us, you will have a tough time deciding which ones to attend.

We are a diverse organization in many ways, but we have the same formula for success. We range from one-person companies to huge global organizations. The products we sell, make or distribute may not overlap at all. The customers and markets we call on may be different. But the tools we need to grow sales are the same. This conference will demonstrate that we are more similar than different, and together we are stronger because we are all in the relationship business.

We all agree that the environment in which we sell continues to change. So the tools to survive and thrive need to be reviewed and updated regularly. Just as you will find at Home Depot or Lowe's, there are thousands of tools available depending on the job you are working. If you don't have the right tool, the job simply may not get done right ... or at all. That is how you should look at this conference.

Here's my personal example. Earlier this summer, we were hit with an incredible rainstorm that lasted several days and dumped more than a foot of rain. I live in a river valley, and the water table basically rose to where my window wells turned into frog ponds. Slowly the water leaked in and saturated the drywall in my basement. I needed to remove the bottom two feet of the drywall so that I could have a new French drain system installed. Someone suggested I use an oscillating tool to remove the drywall. I did not have any experience with this tool, but I heeded the advice and bought a Dremel Multimax mm30. Wow! It cut through the drywall like a knife through butter. My cuts were fast and straight, and I saved hours by using the right tool.

This is the experience that the ERA Conference Committee is diligently working to provide to conference attendees. Growing sales is totally about efficiency. Using the right tools will make you more efficient ... and profitable. It's clear to me that this is exactly what the talented conference volunteer team will provide in February.

I look forward to being with you in Austin. We will learn and have fun at the same time. ■

SalesRepLawyers.com

S F
N R

The "GO-TO Law Firm" for Sales Reps Nationwide

with over 60 Years Experience Protecting Independent Sales Reps

Based in Chicago, Serving Sales Reps Nationwide

SCHOENBERG FINKEL NEWMAN & ROSENBERG, LLC

Is a principal refusing to pay (or underpaying) commissions due?
We have recovered millions in commissions for reps.

Need a rep, sub-rep or employment contract drafted or reviewed?
We have decades of experience preparing rep contracts.

Terminated after landing the big customer?
We know how to obtain payment.

Buying, selling or merging a rep firm?
We have lawyers experienced in rep firm economics.

FREE
20 MINUTE
Initial Consultation
with **NO** obligation.

Just mention ERA.



We'll help you get there.

CONTACT: 312.648.2300

GERALD NEWMAN
gerald.newman@sfnr.com

ADAM GLAZER
adam.glazer@sfnr.com

SalesRepLawyers.com

222 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 2100 • Chicago, IL 60606 • 312.648.2300



Adam Anderson, CPMR
Sales Engineer
Norris & Associates

With so many ERA members, it is not easy to get to know every rep, manufacturer and distributor in the business. "Someone You Should Know" is The Representor *department that gives readers the chance to learn about fellow ERA members, including how their time is spent both in and out of the office.*

Meet Adam Anderson, CPMR, sales engineer at Norris & Associates located in Hingham, Mass.

The Representor *asked Adam a few questions about his time in the rep business and his experiences with ERA. Here is what he had to say.*

Tell us a little about yourself.

I am a sales engineer at Norris & Associates in Massachusetts. I studied mechanical engineering at Tufts University and have been in the electronics industry for 15 years. I am a native of New England, and my sales territory includes eastern Massachusetts and Rhode Island. I have two teenagers and have been married for 20 years. I am currently a board member of the New England Chapter of ERA.

What are some things you enjoy outside of the workplace?

When I am not working, I like to run, hike, play tennis and exercise. My family has a beach cottage on Cape Cod where we spend most of our weekends during the summer. We like to sail and spend lots of time at the beach.

How long have you been an ERA member and how long in the rep business?

I have been an ERA member for five years and have been in the rep business for 10 years.

How did you become interested in being a rep in the electronics industry?

When I was in my mid-20s, I went back to graduate school for an MBA. After graduating, I was looking for a career path that would utilize the technical training of my engineering degree with the business skills I learned in business school. Before long, I had the opportunity to work as a field sales rep for Arrow Electronics. This experience provided a great introduction to the electronics industry, and I found that I really enjoyed working with customers on new designs. After five years at Arrow, I had the opportunity to make the transition from distribution to the rep business.

What have you found to be most rewarding about the rep business?

The most rewarding aspects of being a rep are the opportunities for continuous learning and the ability to solve customers' problems. We are constantly being challenged to learn more about our customers, the manufacturers that we represent and the ever-changing technology that drives our business. It is also a great feeling to participate in a customer's design process and then see our solution used successfully in the customer's final product.

Briefly describe your rep firm.

Norris & Associates is based in Hingham, Mass., and was founded by Dave Norris in 1988. We provide sales coverage for the six New England states and are engaged with customers in a wide range of markets. The company has grown steadily and continues to invest in people and technology to support its customers and principals.

What recent innovations, best practices and/or changes has your company made?

We recently launched an all-new company website. Having a well-designed website is critical in today's world, and we are striving to make sure our site is a source of useful, updated content for our customers and principals.

What have you learned and/or what contacts have you made through ERA that have had the greatest positive impacts on you and/or your business?

One of the most significant impacts that the ERA has had on me has been my participation in the CPMR program. I had the opportunity to attend CPMR classes from 2014-2016, and I found it to be a very beneficial experience. It was great to be able to take some time away from my day-to-day business to learn about best practices, growth strategies and better ways to engage with customers and manufacturers. I also have learned a lot by attending several of the ERA national conferences; these events always offer lots of great information and speakers. My participation at national and local ERA events has enabled me to develop valuable relationships with other reps from around the country.

Are you active on social media? Do you follow ERA? Have ERA updates via social media been helpful to you?

In addition to following ERA on LinkedIn, I follow a number of ERA members around the country. Seeing daily posts from ERA and others about consumer trends, new technology and manufacturer news is helpful and a great way to keep tabs on changes in our industry. The ERA updates also keep me informed about upcoming teleforums and other ERA events. I also make sure to follow my customers on LinkedIn and Instagram in order to keep up with new product launches and other company news.

What is one interesting fact that people may not know about you?

After college, I served as an officer in the U.S. Navy. I spent four years aboard a guided missile destroyer based in Norfolk, Va. It was a great experience that taught me lessons that are still useful in my job today.

by Gordon Hunter

New energy markets are driving opportunities for increased sales

Back in February, at the ERA 2017 Conference in Austin, Texas, I conducted a presentation about the changes in the energy markets and how these developments may bring new opportunities for sales growth.

Looking at energy markets from the rep opportunity perspective, we focused on three segments:

- Energy generation;
- Energy efficiency; and
- Energy connectivity.

When thinking about energy markets, it is easy to jump to the topical area of renewables, the changing landscape of generation and the impact this has on the grid. While this is important, there are many other areas of sales opportunities that are being created by the developments in energy efficiency and connectivity.

Figure 1.

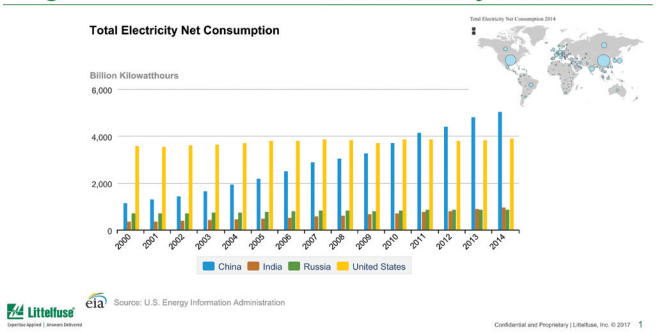
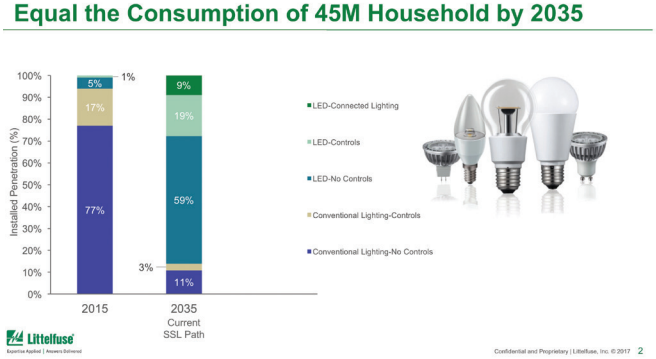


Figure 2.



Energy generation

First, let's take a look at energy generation. Figure 1 shows a dramatic contrasting picture of the worlds' two largest economies — USA and China.

Over the past 14 years, there has been very little growth in energy generation in the U.S. while China has seen tremendous growth over the same time period. More and more devices have been invented and connected to the Internet over this period; however, it has largely been offset in the U.S., including significant population growth over this period, by the increased focus on energy efficiency in areas such as electric motors, lighting and appliances.

That said, there are significant opportunities in the growth areas of solar and wind energy because these systems are still being developed and improved and are far from standardized. As a result, there is a need for new product development in the areas of components for inverters, combiner boxes and micro inverters with a focus on more efficient energy conversion.

Energy storage: A related area to generation is energy storage, which is an emerging and growing market. There are component opportunities with battery protection and charging/discharging controls. This segment is in the very early stages of growth at the residential level, but it is projected to have significant growth for some time.

Electric vehicles: Another fast-growing segment is the rollout of charging stations for the emerging electric vehicle (EV) market. The growth of charging stations installed in commercial and retail buildings is expected to accelerate as faster charging protocols are developed and make EV ownership much easier for those without home charging.

Energy efficiency

Solid state lighting: Moving on to the growth area of energy efficiency, the most noticeable change for the consumer in the last few years has been the adoption of solid state lighting using LED technology. See Figure 2.

Solid state lighting is still in the early years of adoption, but as prices come down and control efficiency increases, there are many years of growth ahead. There are component opportunities in the driver and control circuits, sensors, as well as circuit protection. U.S. Department of Energy forecasts show rapid growth over the years ahead, especially in connected and controlled lighting as we see these segments emerge, along with connected thermostats, as a standard app for every smartphone.

There are also many areas of energy efficiency in industries which are much less visible, such as

electric motors, HVAC units and industrial controls. There are significant developments of more efficient electric motors, inverters and other systems which begin to adopt more software control and new materials such as silicon carbide.

At the consumer level, almost all appliances have undergone significant improvements in energy efficiency as well as improved connectivity.

Smart meters: The growth of smart meters across the world is another indicator of both consumers and utilities continuing to pay increased attention to energy efficiency. In all of the areas of appliances, meters and industrial controls, there are new opportunities for component sales as these areas continue to work toward optimized designs.

Energy connectivity

The impact of connected devices in energy markets is expected to increase significantly as Industry 4.0, smart cities and the connected office/home continue to drive the projected increases in IoT connections. See Figure 3.

Machine to machine connections continue on the path to outstrip the number of people and computer connections.

As IoT grows, there are multiple opportunities for new components to be developed in the actual front line devices such as wireless components, smart sensors and power control. Behind all of these devices are the backhaul systems that power, process and store all the data from IoT. As an example, in the area of security and surveillance, the technical progress in cameras, sensors, storage and increasingly AI, will drive the need for new components in this growth segment.

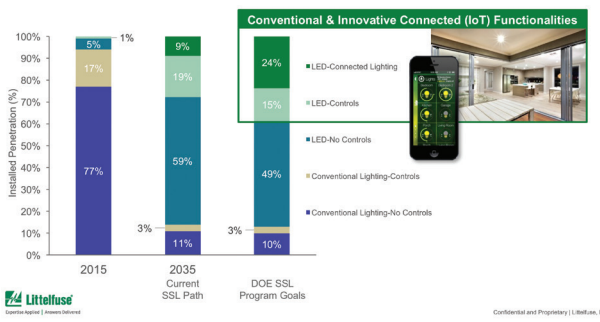
In all three areas of energy generation, efficiency and connectivity, there have been impressive technical developments in both large companies and in small start-ups. The fact that development is alive and well in many "garages" is evidence that there are plenty of opportunities in many of these segments. Several startup companies have been acquired at very attractive valuations, which is another indicator that the opportunity for continued investment in these areas is attractive.

Finally, the breadth of the areas of opportunities is spread across many technical segments and geographies, which makes the next few years increasingly attractive to so many areas of the country where invention and development are taking place.

The rep network is ideally placed to be in an influential position to capitalize on all of the new opportunities in these areas and to work with manufacturers to develop the components of the future. We can all work together to prosper in this significant opportunity that we face over the next few years.

Figure 3.

Connectivity Important Driver To Reaching Full Potential Energy Savings In Buildings and Homes





Gordon Hunter

Gordon Hunter is executive chairman of Littelfuse, Inc., a global electronics company that offers the broadest line of circuit protection components in the industry. Hunter has served as a director of the company since June 2002, and joined Littelfuse as chief operating officer in November 2003. He assumed the role of chairman, president and chief executive officer of Littelfuse on Jan. 1, 2005, and held that post until Dec. 31, 2016.

Before joining Littelfuse, Hunter was a vice president at Intel Corporation, the world's largest chip maker and leading manufacturer of computer, networking and communications products, headquartered in Santa Clara, Calif. He also served as general manager of Intel's Optical Products Group and was responsible for managing the access and optical communications business segments. Before that, Hunter served as president of EloTouch Systems in Fremont, Calif., a worldwide leader in the manufacturing and sales of computer touch screens.

Hunter received his Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from the University of Liverpool, England, and his MBA from London Business School.

You can reach Gordon Hunter at ghunter@littelfuse.com.

Tools of Our Trade –
Constructing a Successful Future

ERA's 49th Management and Marketing Conference
February 25-27, 2018 • AT&T Conference Center, Austin, TX





Be ready to update your toolbox while you learn and network with your peers and partners this February!

ERA extends its deep thanks to these generous organizations that have already signed on as sponsors of the 2018 conference.

Aces North America / DNA Group
American Bright Optoelectronics Corporation
Bivar
Brainard-Nielsen Marketing, Inc.
Cain-Forlaw Company
Catalyst Sales, Inc.
CC Electro
Chicagoland-Wisconsin ERA
Control Sales, Inc.
Conquest Technical Sales
Cornell Dubilier Electronics
Dedicated Computing
Digi-Key Electronics
D-M Associates, LLC
Doran Associates
Empowering Systems, Inc.
EK Micro
English Technical Sales
Mel Foster Company
Fralia Company & Associates
GSA Parallax
The MacInnis Group
R. C. Merchant Company
Michigan ERA
Net Sales Company
Newark element 14
O'Donnell South, Inc.
Pinnacle Markting
Qualtek Electronics Corporation
Schaffner EMC
Schoenberg, Finkel, Newman & Rosenberg, LLC
Sensata Technologies
Signal Enterprises, Inc.
G. L. Smith Associates
South Atlantic Component Sales (SACS), Inc.
TDK-Lambda Americas
Triad Magnetics
TTI, Inc., Sager and Mouser Electronics

For current details on ERA's 2018 Conference, go to era.org.

Arm yourself with the new tools and attitude for success



by Walter E. Tobin
ERA CEO
e: wtobin@era.org
p: 617-901-4088

As many of you know, the 2018 ERA Conference theme is "Tools of Our Trade — Constructing a Successful Future." Conference Committee Chair Rick LaPiana is leading the way, along with our sub-committees, to come up with a full suite of topics to ensure attendees will leave the conference armed with specific TOOLS that will help them become more productive, improve sales, provide a stronger succession plan, help them hire millennials, etc. So, be sure to mark your calendars for Feb. 25-27, 2018, in Austin, Texas, for this CANNOT MISS EVENT!

Using NEW TOOLS can be both exciting and challenging. For many of us (or perhaps just me), change can be something that we want to publicly embrace while privately resisting. Change makes us do things differently and takes us out of our comfort zone. Yet, no one wants to appear to be a "fossil/dinosaur" who is not open to the new wave of technology, which helps us do things better, faster, smarter, and ultimately come out of the process as more productive members of the electronics industry.

The word "electronics" is the first word of ERA's name. As such, we strive to keep up with technology developments. Recently, the staff of ERA National had to go through the process of moving its mail server to Google Suite, allowing us to connect, access shared calendars and unlimited storage, and ultimately manage our data securely and easily. This change was necessary to allow ERA National to be able to execute more reliably, faster and to become more productive as an organization.

Who would not want to sign up for this? Who would say: "No, thanks, we will remain as we always have been doing things — the old way!"

No one could/would walk away from these NEW TOOLS which help us become better.

So we dove into the process ... a few small wins, and then, Murphy's Law! Unexpected small issues/challenges that prompted some of us [well perhaps just me] to want to "stop the presses" and go back to the old system ... the old ways of doing things ... to go back to our (my) comfort zone! Give me back my Day-Timer planner where I had everything at my fingertips, all in my own handwriting! ARGH!

As you prepare for the 2018 ERA Conference, I urge you to come with an open mind, listen to the presentations, go back home and put the new tools into action.

Thanks to the expertise and insistence of the ERA staff, along with help from a few Web and IT consultants, ERA National was able to cut through the Gordian Knot of change and emerge as an organization that can now use 21st century tools, communicate via Google Calendar, have everything connected and do things in a more high-tech manner.

This entire process was a clear example of how taking advantage of the "Tools of Our Trade" allowed us to be smarter, more productive and happier about using technology in a more pervasive manner. Even if the process was a bit scary for some of us (me), the end-result was well worth the angst.

As you prepare for the 2018 ERA Conference, I urge you to come with an open mind, listen to the presentations, go back home and put the new tools into action. If I can do it as a former baby boomer who now calls himself a perennial, it should be a piece of cake for the rest of you!

The professional field sales firm members of

Florida-Sunshine ERA

know **YOUR** markets and **YOUR** customers!

To discover all the value ERA members bring to YOUR company, contact one of these focused-on-quality rep firms.

Brandel-Stephens & Co., Inc.
Contact: Ted Toomey
ttoomey@brandel-stephens.com
561-998-2790

CBC Electronics, Inc.
Contact: William Keikes
bill@cbcelectronics.net
352-735-2242

CBX Electronics
Contact: Pat Walsh
jpw@cbxelectronics.com
407-774-9100

Conley & Associates, Inc.
Contact: Mark Dietrich
mdietrich@conleyrep.com
407-365-3283

Cornerstone Technical Sales
Contact: Doug Martell
doug@ctsrep.com
727-789-4802

Current Solutions
Contact: Al Johnson, Jr., CPMR, CSP
aljr@currentsolutions.com
813-996-1922

Graham Performance Tech, LLC
Contact: Art Scornavacca, Jr.
art@gptrep.com
772-463-1056

HHP Associates, Inc.
Contact: Barry Farber
bfarber@hhpai.com
407-468-0841

PANAMTECH, Inc.
Contact: Ric Carreras
carreras@panamtech.com
954-587-3769

Phoenix Components, LLC
Contact: Rick Tally, CPMR
phnixhqs@cfl.rr.com
321-723-4414

Precision Marketing Services
Contact: Joe Penna
joe.penna@precision-marketing.com
954-752-1700

South Atlantic Component Sales
Contact: Keith Bonucchi, CPMR
kbonucchi@sacs-rep.com
813-855-6542

Southeastern Sales RF
Contact: Glenn Oliver
goliver@sesrf.com
321-591-0349

Sun Rep
Contact: Brian Gunnin
bgunnin@sunrep.com
813-884-4805

Sunland Associates
Contact: Rick Callinan, CPMR
rickcallinan@sunlandrep.com
407-365-9533

Florida-Sunshine ERA is the proud sponsor of the annual Florida DTAM data collection and reporting project, annual scholarship awards to member firms and many educational programs. For more information, email rtally33@cfl.rr.com.

CHAPTER AD

Trusted partners — looking beyond the metrics and data of performance



by David Norris
Norris & Associates, Inc.
ERA President
e: dnorris@norrisrep.com

"Trusted partner" is an often used phrase these days as all in our ecosystem strive to engage with those who will honor their relationships and serve them in a way that respects both parties and yields long-term, sustainable and mutual benefit.

Certainly there are metrics to help measure the success of our business relationships — performance to plan, size of funnel, wins ratio, velocity, year-over-year growth, percentage of focus product sales, etc., etc., etc. We live in a world of constant measurement, and the more data that can be generated, the more ways our performance can be sliced and diced.

Similarly, our business partners are subject to their own derivative of the numbers game. Those we serve measure our performance to plan or commitment as a way to quantify our performance.

Though there are countless ways to measure our relationships, true, "trusted partnerships" exceed plan, so to speak, in a way that is not captured by numbers alone.

Though there are countless ways to measure our relationships, true, "trusted partnerships" exceed plan, so to speak, in a way that is not captured by numbers alone.

Our association, ERA, now includes not only representatives and manufacturers, but our trusted distributor partners as well. We continue to grow the distribution membership as more distributors join our ranks to show support and respect for the representatives community.

Together with our principals and distribution partners, we work to grow our businesses together and meet the many challenges that face us all in today's business dynamics.

On a recent trip to Old Head in County Cork, Ireland, I saw the ancient Stone of Accord. It sits by the first tee box at this magnificent golf course built atop the cliffs that spill out into the ocean in Southeast Ireland. Back in the day, before contracts, funnels, spreadsheets or even currency for that matter, agreements were consummated by a handshake executed through the hole in the center of the Stone of Accord by two parties standing on either side.

Contracts and measurements do serve to protect us all in our partnerships to be sure. If we were asked to sit down and make a list of our true "trusted partners," however, my hunch is that we would look beyond most of the data and verbiage to a simpler, more visceral sense of who our real trusted partners are.

We are all lucky enough to have many in our business lives — those we would trust with a handshake through the Stone of Accord. Take some time to remind yourselves who they are and make sure, in the midst of all the world's metrics, they know you value them as trusted partners!



SAVE THE DATES!

ERA's 49th Management and Marketing Conference returns to the AT&T Center in Austin, Texas, on Feb 25-27, 2018. For details, visit era.org.



These companies joined ERA during the third quarter of 2017.
(The ERA chapter of each rep firm is listed in italics after the company name.)

REPRESENTATIVES

DEG Components
(Northern California)
Dave Gastel
degcomp.com

HIP-Spectrum Marketing, LLC
(Southern California)
Larry Wiemann
hip-marketing.com

L-Mar Associates
(Empire State)
Ed Lepkowski, Jr.
L-mar.com

Parallax South Inc.
(Mid-Lantic)
Peter Conlan
parallaxsouth.com

Semisource
(Northern California)
Kenny Kumar

MANUFACTURERS

Dedicated Computing
Mike Speckman • Dave Guzzi
dedicatedcomputing.com

Ja-Bar Silicone Corp.
Scott Ackerman
ja-bar.com

Max Echo Technology Corp.
Jude Huang
maxencho.com.tw

Multek Flexible Electronics
John Voultos
multek.com

Nichicon (America) Corp.
Kevin Sheldon
nichicon.com

PIC Design
Jim Rubino
pic-design.com

Para-Light Corp.
Gary Yeung
paralightusa.com

Power-Sonic Corporation
Jeff Shelby
power-sonic.com

Virtex Assembly
Will Oliver
virtexassembly.com

DISTRIBUTORS

Hughes-Peters
Jeff Sam
hughespeters.com

RFMW, Ltd.
Joel Levine • Amy Hain
rfmw.com

UNIVERSITY

This convenient, low-cost educational service offers **ALL** ERA member company personnel (and your families) **HUNDREDS of ONLINE COURSES** to boost your knowledge, skills and professionalism.

ERA UNIVERSITY, in partnership with **ed2go**, an affiliation of 1,500 U.S. educational institutions, delivers:

- **Instructor-facilitated classes** with live interaction to connect with both faculty and fellow students.
- Access to lessons **when** you choose, **where** you choose, any time, **24/7.**
- A vast array of courses, covering **sales and marketing, business skills, software training and technology, personal development** and much, much more.
- Easy **online registration** ... with NO textbooks required ... and NO minimum or maximum class sizes, so there are NEVER any cancellations.
- **Certificate of completion** for each course.

Most classes run for **six weeks** and include 12 two-hour lessons (that's **24 hours** of instruction!) for just **$79** per course. To view the entire catalog ... read all the details about each class and instructor ... and then register, go to **ed2go.com/era**.

The rep model — the key that opens doors to building a better business



by Ken Bellero
President
Schaffner EMC, Inc.

For the past five years, Ken Bellero has been the president of Schaffner EMC, Inc., the U.S. subsidiary of the international leader in the development and production of solutions which ensure the efficient and reliable operation of electronic systems. He has worked in the electronics industry for more than 25 years and is a member of the ERA Executive Committee.

During his 17-year tenure at Schaffner, Ken was the vice president of sales for the Components Division, national sales manager, eastern regional sales manager and inside sales manager.

Previously, Ken worked for Newark Electronics as a branch manager and outside sales manager in New Jersey for 12 years. He started his electronics career at Alpha Wire as an inside sales associate.

You can reach Ken Bellero at ken.bellero@schaffner.com.

It is certainly a thrill for me to be writing the first article for the column "From the Floor," representing the manufacturers' point of view for ERA. Some of the main challenges I feel that are facing us today are:

- Establishing strong customer relationships;
- Having a good knowledge of new design activity;
- Finding new accounts to call on; and
- Gaining mindshare for your products.

The first topic of discussion, that in my mind is the most important, should be whether or not manufacturers should use the rep model as part of their sales channel. It is one of the more prominent issues facing manufacturers, especially those in larger multifaceted companies. However, this struggle does occur not only for large companies, but also for the smaller, more focused manufacturers.

This is the one topic that, as a manufacturer executive I feel very strongly about, and that affects not only manufacturers but also reps and distributors. It is what drives me to be more involved with ERA. I believe that it is virtually impossible to properly handle a specific territory without local representation by a qualified organization that not only knows the area but has built relationships and partnerships with the key customers in the territory. This knowledge and expertise are invaluable to understanding what the customer really needs and what projects and designs are in process.

It is truly hard to believe that a manufacturer's regional sales manager can completely understand and handle every territory within his or her responsibility effectively when physically he or she can be present only a few times within any given quarter. Building a solid partnership and understanding the local culture are best left to the local rep who lives and breathes the same experiences as the customer.

I think it is important for manufacturers to engage the rep model to better address the local customer's needs. The rep also forms a closer relationship not only with the customers but with the distribution sales reps and field engineers in the territory who also support customer activity. This partnership consistently leads to more opportunities and a better chance of finding new market opportunities within a territory. Most engineers today rely on the distributors to supply them with new products and the samples necessary for new designs and upcoming projects, so having a partner close to the distributor outside salesperson helps uncover these opportunities.

> *Manufacturers who choose the rep model approach will have a better handle on the upcoming market trends within a region ... they will find new opportunities faster and more efficiently than those who choose to handle the territory with direct sales contacts.*

Manufacturers who choose the rep model approach will have a better handle on the upcoming market trends within a region. I believe that they will find new opportunities faster and more efficiently than those who choose to handle the territory with direct sales contacts.

From the manufacturers' point of view, cost of sales always becomes a main topic of discussion. Many fail to see the value that the rep model offers because for them it is only a financial decision. The direct sales approach can be more costly due to the recurring expense versus the commission structure of the rep model. There are several manufacturers who have flipped back and forth between using reps and direct sales, and I feel this uncertainty as a strategy actually hurts a company rather that makes it stronger.

Schaffner EMC, Inc. is a strong supporter of the rep model and firmly believes that there is so much more you can learn about your customers from the local rep. In our mind, we see our reps as an extension of our sales force and not a separate organization. We treat them as though they are employees and work with them as a team with the same goals for success.

We have had long-term relationships with many of our reps, and this has helped build a better business model for our company. Some of our reps know more about our products

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

than some of our own employees because of the longevity representing our line. They can open doors to prospective customers by leveraging other manufacturers' products and introduce ours on new designs.

Recently, Schaffner held a national rep sales event in New Jersey where we invited all of our reps to attend a two-day meeting to review new products and markets, share success stories, and to pass along important company strategies and goals for the next three years. The meeting was a great success due to the fact that we wanted to listen to what our reps had to say and expected them to share experiences with each other that, in turn, have made us a stronger sales organization. Understanding the needs of the reps and how important it is for them to feel like they are a part of the team allows for us to grow together.

Manufacturers, both large and small, can gain so much knowledge and expertise from a local rep who, I believe, has the best understanding of the customer's wants and needs. The more I work with ERA and understand the value proposition that reps bring to my company, the better are our sales results. Time and time again, I see examples of success within a regional territory with a customer because the rep has the ability to get my direct team (both engineers and regional managers) into a key account at the right time. I don't believe that would be possible with just a direct sales force. Another advantage for using the rep model is that reps can provide smaller manufacturers a much larger customer audience due to the relationships they have with the larger lines they also represent.

The key to ongoing success with the rep model is communication between the manufacturer and rep, always working on engaging with each other and sharing information to help support growth. This will also help give your products more mindshare.

As the president of Schaffner EMC, Inc., I wholeheartedly support using manufacturers' reps to cover the U.S. territories. This model has helped our company really focus on the opportunities that will actually increase sales and not just waste our regional sales managers' valuable time and energy. I urge other manufacturers to take some time and look at the true value the rep model brings to an organization. ■

INTRODUCING THE NEW...

AccountManager App

- Key AccountManager functions are now available directly on your smart phone
- Quickly and easily create, update, and view key sales pipeline data
- Spend more time selling and less time on admin functions

Download on the App Store

GET IT ON Google Play

DIAMOND SPONSOR
2018 ERA Conference

Visit www.empoweringsystems.com
to see our New Demonstrations

Empowering Systems

Automate · Collaborate · Innovate

sales@empoweringsystems.com 888-297-2750

Micromanufacturing and 'The Third Wave' — a transition into the information revolution



by Chris Beeson
Executive Vice President,
Sales & Supplier Management
Digi-Key Electronics

Chris L. Beeson, executive vice president of sales and supplier management at Digi-Key Electronics, has been driving global business innovations at Digi-Key for more than 12 years and has been instrumental in creating the company's unique business model for the electronics industry. Beeson has more than 30 years of experience in the electronics distribution industry and is currently responsible for global sales and the management of more than 650 industry suppliers. Chris is a member of the Electronics Representatives Association (ERA) Executive Committee and is involved in many industry organizations, including the Electronics Component Industry Association (ECIA) and numerous supplier representative councils.

You can reach Chris Beeson at chris.beeson@digikey.com.

In business today we are currently undergoing a revolutionary shift, often referred to as "The Third Wave" or information revolution. During this transformation away from the industrial revolution, we will see less capital and labor and more knowledge and information. The ages of manufacturing and distribution have given way to the ages of information and the customer. Most importantly, the idea of mass production, made popular by Henry Ford, is being replaced by a new form of production called, "micromanufacturing."

Mass production in the industrial age allowed companies to make products for scale, capacity and at low cost. In many cases, however, they had to sacrifice choice, flexibility, nimbleness and uniqueness. Micromanufacturing, a phenomenon historically and generically referred to as "high mix/low volume," allows for mass customization and gives manufacturers the ability to cost effectively produce products in smaller lot sizes. In the current age of the customer, empowered consumers demand a new level of instant gratification and flexibility. The customer demand is more interested in niche, specialized products than ones that are uniform and mass-produced.

In the current age of the customer, empowered consumers demand a new level of instant gratification and flexibility. The customer demand is more interested in niche, specialized products than ones that are uniform and mass produced.

Real-life examples of this phenomenon can be seen through traditional mass-production companies such as Harley-Davidson, Nike and Dell. These companies have migrated and pioneered lean manufacturing techniques to offer customized products to the masses. In contrast, however, perhaps the best example of micromanufacturing can be seen in the rapidly growing popularity of microbreweries across the U.S. Consumers now prefer small batch, individually brewed beers in craft breweries over the mass-produced beers brewed by large breweries and beer distributors.

The electronic components industry has already begun to embrace the revolutionary shift by catering to a new subset of engineers, commonly referred to as "makers," a tech-influenced DIY community. The combination of creative makers and innovative technologies, such as the Arduino microcontroller and personal 3D printing, are driving innovation in small-scale manufacturing, engineering, industrial design, hardware technology and education.

The demand for personalized, complete solutions, such as development kits and boards, is giving a rise in popularity to maker-friendly brands such as Arduino, Raspberry Pi, Adafruit and more.

The higher functionality contained on standard development boards is allowing for a new generation of makers, and the advancement in both robotics and lean manufacturing is allowing for cost-effective personalization of product at smaller lot sizes. Lean manufacturing is being supported by the advancements in the Internet of Things (IoT) and connected or smart factories. It is becoming easier than ever to have machine-to-machine (M2M) connectivity controlling all aspects of manufacturing and distribution processes. Traditional manufacturers are witnessing this movement and are adopting business practices which incorporate micromanufacturing.

To support the personalization trend, customers want access to a wide breadth of product to support bills of material that are changing daily, ship from stock capability,

(continued on page 22)

*For a complete list of ERA's **Recognized Resources,** check out the Member Services page at **era.org.** Then link to a service provider's home page for more information. Or take advantage of services from companies like **Avis and Hertz Car Rentals** (which are accessible ONLY via the ERA website).*

ERA RepProtect is an insurance resource for manufacturers' representatives. Full package coverage is available, including commercial general and product liability. Unique to ERA, professional liability is available for reps who advise or provide design assistance which goes past what general liability covers. Learn more at normanspencer.com/erarepprotect, or call Byron Spencer at 800-842-3653, x223.

ITEM Media is a results-driven marketing company that serves electronics manufacturers, suppliers and representatives. The company specializes in brand awareness, content creation, online event creation and lead generation. Visit item.media for details.

The SALESWISE ACADEMY is specifically designed for engineers and other technical salespeople. Nicki Weiss offers bi-weekly, 10-minute audio lessons with follow-up calls to help participants feel more confident in working with customers. For a free trial, go to saleswiseacademy.com/era.

RPMS offers sales analysis, commission reconciliation and sales force data exchange software designed exclusively for manufacturers' reps. For more information, go to rpms.com.

REPFABRIC is a mobile efficiency tool that speeds up the entire workflow of business including email, opportunity tracking, commission reconciliation and principal reporting. Contact Repfabric at info@repfabric.com, or call 844-737-7253, x225, to schedule a consultation.

SPYRE GROUP offers resources that help sales rep firms provide value to the manufacturers they represent and increase efficiencies for their sales teams. It provides Web, print and presentation development services, along with packaged solutions. For details, contact Patrick Knoelke at 913-499-6014, or visit spyregroup.com/reps.

EYOND brings you Software as a Service (SaaS), an application that integrates customer relationship management (CRM), sales force automation (SFA), invoice and commission tracking, document management, reporting, data analysis and more. For details, visit mrsware.com, or call 866-795-8386.

BUDDE MARKETING SYSTEMS is a leading provider of point-of-sale (POS)reporting. With 15+ years of experience, BMS provides solutions to drive business growth, improve efficiency and maximize profitability. BMS offers a vast selection of standard reports or can customize reports to achieve your business goals. For details, call 708-301-2111, or email sales@buddemarketing.com.

EMPOWERING SYSTEMS offers ERA members discounts on its CRM tools for both reps and manufacturers. Online demos are available for both the AccountManager and AccountReporter programs. For information, visit empoweringsystems.com.

JJM SEARCH is the global executive search firm founded by Carla Mahrt, a 20-year electronics industry veteran. JJM is part of the MRI Network – leaders in the search and recruitment industry for over 40 years. Let Carla connect your company with bright, qualified candidates for your openings. For details on JJM, go to jjmsearch.com.

SCHOENBERG, FINKEL, NEWMAN & ROSENBERG, LLC, offers legal Expert Access services to all ERA members. An initial consultation on any commission recovery or other rep-related business matter is available without charge. Visit salesreplawyers.com. Or call Gerry Newman or Adam Glazer at 312-648-2300.

UPS is now ERA's member service provider for shipping of all kinds. For discounts of up to 34 percent, call 800-MEMBERS (636-2377).

REMBRANDT ADVANTAGE offers tools for employee selection, development and evaluation. ERA members say they can't do without this company when bringing new people on board or evaluating current personnel. For details, visit rembrandtadvantage.com.

ERA UNIVERSITY provides members, employees and families with hundreds of online college, business, technology and special interest courses through 1,500 educational institutions. The instructor-led classes offer live interaction and access to lessons 24-7. Most classes run six weeks and include 12 two-hour lessons for $79. For details, go to ed2go.com/era.

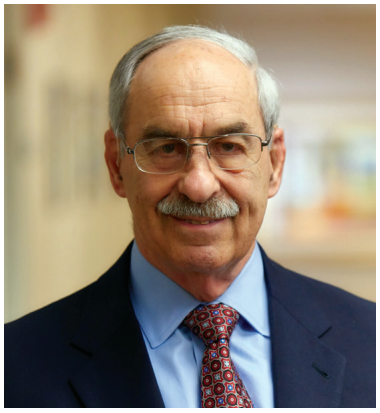
TSJM Group offers successful client and candidate placements within sales, engineering, quality and executive leadership, both in North America and internationally. For details, call 603-560-1673 or email slcolantuone@tsjmgroup.com.

ALL ERA TELEFORUM AUDIO FILES, covering 30+ educational topics for both reps and manufacturers, are now available at no charge to members. To review the teleforum library and download files, go to era.org.

INSPERITY provides human resources and business solutions designed to help improve business performance. For more information, visit insperity.com/era, or call 800-465-3800.

Changing a commission plan is no shoo-in

SFNR
Forward Thinking
Strategic Counsel
snfr.com



by Gerald M. Newman
ERA General Counsel

Gerald M. Newman, partner in the law firm of Schoenberg, Finkel, Newman & Rosenberg, LLC, serves as general counsel to ERA and is a regular contributor to The Representor. *He participates in Expert Access, the program that offers telephone consultations to ERA members.*

Gerry co-authored this article with his partner, Adam Glazer.

You can call Gerry Newman or Adam Glazer at 312-648-2300 or send email to gerald.newman@sfnr.com or adam.glazer@sfnr.com.



Adam Glazer

In the novel "Insurgent," second of the popular "Divergent" trilogy of novels by Veronica Roth, the narrator Tris observes: "The truth has a way of changing a person's plans."

As most sales reps already know, manufacturers' profit margins often work a lot like truth.

Unscrupulous principals might originally plan to pay the agreed-upon commissions to their reps, and will perhaps honor the contract terms for a while, or at least until the orders start coming in reliably. When the prospect of keeping the business while shedding the commission obligation crystallizes, however, the agreed-upon plans can change significantly.

Unscrupulous principals might originally plan to pay the agreed-upon commissions to their reps, and will perhaps honor the contract terms for a while, or at least until the orders start coming in reliably.

A change of plans

So learned Iris Topletz, a Dallas manufacturers' rep. Topletz attended a Las Vegas trade show where she met Dominique Barteet, the owner of Quick Change Artist, LLC (QCA). Under the trade name "Onesole," QCA manufactures women's shoes and accessories. The Onesole products are shoe soles to which various tops can be fastened.

Topletz soon began representing Onesole shoes and accessories pursuant to an oral agreement with Barteet. That agreement called for QCA to pay Topletz a 15 percent commission on all sales to customers she procured. This included the initial orders, reorders and orders placed directly with QCA.

For the first few years, the agreement's terms were honored and the business was built up. Then, plans changed.

QCA unilaterally designated shoe orders received directly from Topletz's customers as "house accounts" and stopped paying commissions on those orders. Not one to be walked all over, Topletz filed suit for breach of contract in the Dallas County court.

Custom and practice and past practices

The dispute proceeded to trial where QCA acknowledged the original oral agreement to pay 15 percent on all sales. Central to the court's ruling was whether the agreement encompassed orders placed directly with the company.

To familiarize the court with the relevant industry customs, Topletz called an expert witness who explained that paying on all orders, including direct orders, was entirely consistent with custom and practice in the sales rep industry. Topletz also introduced documentary evidence showing that, for the last three years, QCA paid her on all orders, specifically including direct orders.

Rounding out her trial presentation, Topletz sought to prove her lost profits for the period when QCA did not pay on direct sales by offering evidence of the volume of sales and commissions over the prior three years.

In response, Barteet and another QCA witness testified in an attempt to convince the judge that earning a commission requires continuously servicing a customer, a standard Topletz presumably could not meet. QCA also argued that offering evidence of past sales did not serve as proof of the sales period at issue.

The court considered the proof and the credibility of the witnesses, and found "the testimony of Iris [Topletz] to be more credible than the testimony of QCA." The evidence offered by the plaintiff that Barteet agreed to pay 15 percent on all orders was deemed more compelling, and the past sales history was accepted as admissible evidence.

Judgment was entered in favor of Topletz,

(continued on next page)

(continued from previous page)

and she was awarded nearly $250,000, comprising her lost profits, some $80,000 in attorney's fees, and sanctions against QCA. Not surprisingly, QCA appealed.

The strong appeal of the rep's damages

The Court of Appeals of Texas readily upheld the finding that the parties' contract called for a 15 percent commission on all orders procured by Topletz without exception. Respecting how the trial court was in the best position to judge the credibility of the witnesses, the appellate court refused to second guess its favoring Topletz's evidence, and upheld the finding that QCA improperly withheld commissions on direct orders procured by Topletz.

With the liability issue settled, the appellate review turned to consideration of the three categories of damages awarded at trial: lost profits, attorney's fees and sanctions.

1. Lost Profits: QCA challenged the calculation of damages in the trial court, arguing that the best means to perform the calculation was by using its Quick Books file, and Topletz failed to do so.

The record revealed, however, that Topletz's efforts to obtain QCA's Quick Books file in discovery were met with stiff resistance. Two motions to compel and a court order were necessary for the data to be produced, and then a software issue prevented Topletz from accessing the data.

Confronted with a party who obstructed the discovery process, and then had the nerve to complain its opponent did not rely on the data it produced belatedly and with impediments, neither the trial nor the appellate court was concerned that Topletz chose to present alternative damages models.

As the appellate court recognized, the law does not require lost profits to be proved with exact precision. It is necessary only that a plaintiff "show the amount of the loss by competent evidence with reasonable certainty." And proof of lost damages can satisfactorily be accomplished with evidence of the profit history.

The most recent three-year sales history established that QCA paid Topletz an average commission of more than $128,000 per year. This evidence enabled the trial and appellate courts, after finding that Topletz would have continued earning comparable dollars had QCA not breached their agreement by refusing to pay commissions on orders placed directly, to conclude that relying on the earnings history was an acceptable means to award lost profits.

2. Attorney's Fees: Although Topletz's attorneys were engaged on a contingency fee basis, she was still entitled to receive reimbursement for their professional services calculated at their regular hourly rates. Interestingly, rather than see Topletz's net recovery diminished by the agreement to pay her attorneys 40 percent of the recovery, the trial court decided to assess fees against QCA by applying a multiplier of 1.5 percent to the total hourly fees to compensate the attorneys, and the appellate court upheld this assessment.

3. Discovery Sanctions: The final component of Topletz's recovery came in the form of monetary sanctions entered against QCA for its conduct in discovery. In addition to the difficulties QCA caused with the Quick Books file, Barteet failed to appear for his properly set deposition. The court had no difficulty finding QCA's delay tactics in discovery merited the imposition of sanctions.

Reps need not always turn the other cheek

As Topletz demonstrated by defying her principal's attempt to change the commission rules all the way up to the Texas Appellate Court, sales reps victimized by attempts to rewrite their contracts after they have already performed are not powerless. Reps like Iris Topletz with agreed upon contract terms, even oral agreements, under which both sides operated for years, can generally get the terms enforced by courts.

While the truth may indeed change a person's or manufacturer's plans, agreed upon contract terms comprise the greatest truth, with the potential to change those plans right back. ■

ERA

MEMBERS

SAVE

UP TO

34%

ON UPS®

SHIPPING!

CALL:
1-800-MEMBERS
(1-800-636-2377)

ups

Trickle-down economics — pondering the theory



by Stanton B. Herzog, CPA
ERA Tax, Audit & Accounting Consultant

Stanton B. Herzog, CPA, principal in the firm of Applebaum, Herzog & Associates, P.C., Northbrook, Ill., serves as ERA's accountant and is a regular contributor to The Representor. *He is available to speak at chapter or group meetings on a variety of financial and tax-related topics. He also participates in Expert Access, the program that offers telephone consultations to ERA members.*

You can call Stan Herzog at 847-564-1040, fax him at 847-564-1041, or email him at sherzog@theahagroup.com.

As Congress debates a new tax law, I can no longer resist the temptation to open for discussion some theories I have created over the years about the purpose and effect of taxation.

One of the great theories of the last 40 years is that of trickle-down economics. The idea is that by lowering taxes, the wealthy will have more money to spend, and thus money will flow down through the economy and everyone, even the indigent, will benefit. The most recent example is the laws passed during the George W. Bush administration. We know that the economy collapsed in a heap. But why? I have a theory; it's called "accumulation."

When people start to acquire wealth, they spend it on things they want and can use — a house, cars, clothes, etc. These acquisitions filter money throughout the economy. As wealth grows, however, the need for more "stuff" diminishes. As one man famously said, "How many cars do I need?" That is the beginning point of "accumulation."

Most people begin with stocks. Some people are content to buy and hold stocks for a long period of time, while others buy and sell constantly. The idea is that they buy to make even more money, and they accumulate more stocks as their savings increase. Note that stocks may not be involved. There are many routes — classic autos, jewelry, gold, paintings, horses, etc. The idea is the same: buy low and sell high.

The important consideration here is that the groups are more or less finite. There are only so many stocks on the market and only so many paintings worthy of collection. They are owned by relatively wealthy people, selling to wealthy people for, in general, more than they paid originally.

The wealthy get wealthier as the stock market rises (classic autos and famous art go for exotic prices), but NONE of this reaches the average American worker. Companies do not benefit from higher prices on their outstanding stock.

There is a second, even more telling, problem with low tax rates. The beneficiaries of low tax rates are the high-income earners. When it costs very little in taxes to accumulate wealth, people are encouraged to save, not spend. A businessman making "enough" money from his business may be satisfied to not expand his business if he can put that money into investments; businesses cut costs, including payroll, and pocket the profits.

The beneficiaries of low tax rates are the high-income earners. When it costs very little in taxes to accumulate wealth, people are encouraged to save, not spend.

So we have Macy's with one salesperson on a floor wondering why people find it more satisfying to go online where they can select from a wide range of items, each reasonably described and priced to sell.

Eventually Mr. and Mrs. Middleperson can't find jobs, can't afford anything except the basics, and the economy falters.

My theory is that reasonably high taxes will provide an opposite result. High-income earners will try to obtain more money by putting money back into their businesses rather than giving most of it to taxes, and they will have to hire people to make it happen. The government will have more money to help the poor, and the cumulative effect is the economy will be boosted by spending. You can look to the Clinton administration to see that it works and the Obama administration for recovery and further verification. It's also wonderful for accountants because it gives us the opportunity to save our clients a lot of money with just one idea.

OFF THE SHELF: 'The Third Wave'

(continued from page 17)

and which contain broken pack quantities to allow them to build to order without experiencing supply chain delays or a buildup of excess inventory on their end.

As a result, customers need efficient access to partner information in addition to price and availability. Thus, the current movement of companies is toward a digital supply chain solution, or application program interfaces, commonly known as APIs. With this technology, a customer's software can retrieve real-time data, such as stock and pricing information. This real-time data help customers make a decision comparing their needs with a supplier's ability to satisfy them. Speed and instant access to rich information flow have been the defining characteristics of the information and customers ages.

The Third Wave is evident by the growing customer demand within the electronic components industry. As Chris Anderson highlights in his book, "The Long Tail: Why the Future of Business is Selling Less of More," we have clearly moved away from the industrial age in which scale lowered the cost point to make product available to the masses to the point that consumers want personalization. Supporting small-lot runs takes a different type of business model that allows supply chain partners to add value; cost is always a consideration, but the primary differentiation in this segment is speed and quality. This need for speed will continue to force a higher integration through M2M communication through APIs and other medium to connect distributors with their customers. ■



- 10-minute lessons for sales managers, reps, and sales engineers that can last a career.
- Keep your sales team focused, motivated, inspired, and skilled.
- Specifically for highly technical, complex sales.
- Add millions to the bottom line.

saleswise


Nicki Weiss

The SalesWise Academy delivers the tools and support you and your team need.
Visit **www.saleswiseacademy.com** or contact us at **(416) 778-4145** or e-mail **nicki@saleswise.ca**

OFF THE SHELF, CON'T.

Electronics Representatives Association

ERA Officers

Chairman of the Board:
Dan Parks, CPMR
dan@westelec.com

President
David Norris
dnorris@norrisrep.com

Senior Vice President/Fiscal & Legal:
Chuck Tanzola, CPMR
ctanzola@fusionsourcing.com

Senior Vice President/Education:
John O'Brien, CPMR
jobrien@cbane.com

Senior Vice President/Membership:
Kathie Cahill, CPMR
kcahill@netsalesrep.com

Senior Vice President/Industry:
Bob Evans, CPMR
bevans@ekmicro.com

Manufacturer Delegate:
Ken Bellero
ken.bellero@schaffner.com

Distributor Delegate:
Chris Beeson
chris.beeson@digikey.com

Chief Executive Officer (Ex-Officio):
Walter E. Tobin
wtobin@era.org

ERA Staff

Chief Executive Officer:
Walter E. Tobin
wtobin@era.org

Executive Assistant:
Karin Derkacz
kderkacz@era.org

Conference Coordinator:
Tess Hill
thill@era.org

Database Manager and Webmaster:
Katherine Green
kgreen@era.org

Chapter Management & Social Media Coordinator:
Stephanie Tierney
stierney@era.org

Communications Director:
Neda Simeonova
nsimeonova@era.org

Finance Director:
William R. Warfield
bwarfield@era.org

ERA Office:
1325 S. Arlington Heights Rd., Suite 204
Elk Grove Village, Illinois 60007
Phone: 312-419-1432 • Fax: 312-419-1660
Email: info@era.org • URL: era.org

ERA 2018 CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES THEME AND KEYNOTER

The Electronics Representatives Association (ERA) Conference Committee has announced the theme of the association's 49th Management and Marketing Conference, scheduled Feb. 25-27, 2018, at the AT&T Center in Austin, Texas. Conference Committee Chair Rick LaPiana, president of the Cain-Forlaw Company, says the theme, "Tools of Our Trade — Constructing a Successful Future," was selected because "this conference will heavily focus on practical takeaways that can be readily implemented. In my experience, ERA has a rich history of delivering use-it-now information and advice to the reps, manufacturers and distributors who attend our conferences, and this year our emphasis will be even stronger on tactical know-how and resources."

The Conference Committee has also announced that the 2018 keynote program will be delivered by Wayne Cotter, a well-known humorist, self-described electronics "geek" and former electrical engineer who was one of David Letterman's favorite guest comedians." Ken Bellero, president of Schaffner EMC and chair of the Conference Keynote Sub-Committee, says, "Wayne Cotter's background as an electrical engineer along with the right amount of comedy, humor and experience as an entertainer will provide a unique start to this year's conference."

Further details about the conference, including online registration and a link to make hotel reservations, are available at ***era.org***.

MRERF NAMES NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Manufacturers' Representatives Educational Research Foundation (MRERF) recently announced the hiring of a new executive director. Kate Rhoten, whose experience includes 20+ years in sales and training as well as working in the non-profit sector, joined the foundation in August. Susannah Hart and Liz Beerman, both of whom have served as executive directors of MRERF in the past, are continuing in support roles with the organization.

The final MRERF event of this year is slated Oct. 10-13 when the Certified Sales Professional (CSP) course is offered in Chicago. For details, go to ***mrerf.org.***

EMPOWERING SYSTEMS ACQUIRES MACS

Empowering Systems, Inc., one of ERA's long-time Recognized Resource providers, reported in late September that it had acquired MACS Software and would be transitioning all MACS Software employees to Empowering Systems. Scott Mayo, founder and senior partner of Empowering Systems, comments, "For over 20 years, we've pursued growth primarily through organic channels. (Now) we are excited that the acquisition of MACS brings us to the next step of our company's evolution."

LINKEDIN INVITATIONS DO NOT VIOLATE NONCOMPETES

A panel of the Illinois Appellate Court has held that networking with a former colleague on social media does not amount to a violation of a noncompete agreement. Howe & Hutton, Ltd., a Chicago law firm whose clients include many not-for-profit trade associations, reported in a recent newsletter on a case involving a former employee of an insurance company who was sued by that company for violating a noncompete agreement when he invited three of the company's current employees to connect on social media. The court's opinion included the caution that, "as social networking websites continue to grow, the issue of social network usage will repeatedly arise in noncompete cases." Howe & Hutton lists several key facts in the court's decision in this case, i.e., that the LinkedIn page didn't mention either the worker's former employer company or his new employer company, contained no suggestion that anyone view the worker's job description and offered no solicitation for anyone to leave his former employer company.

SEMICONDUCTOR INDUSTRY IS BOOMING

The semiconductor industry just experienced one of its best second quarters in revenue growth, driven by the memory device market, says a recent report by EPS News, and the DRAM market, in particular, is expected to reach record levels in 2017. The semiconductor industry posted 6.1 percent growth compared to the first quarter, reaching near record growth in the second quarter of 2017, according to the market research firm IHS Markit. "This is the highest growth the industry has seen in the second quarter since 2014," states IHS. Over the past few months, market analysts have increased their overall semiconductor growth forecasts due to continued tight supply and higher tags in the memory market. IC Insights expects the DRAM market to be the fastest-growing IC segment in 2017, increasing by 55 percent this year.

COMPONENTS

Bob Evans, CPMR
EK Micro
Rolling Meadows, Ill.

Is the 'A' word imminent?

At the beginning of this year, an EPSNews article by Bolaji Ojo cited: "Wariness in manufacturers to increase capacity based on a lack of confidence in sales forecasts." The headline read: "Severe Electronics Components Shortages Possible in 2017." That was in February.

In the March TTI MarketEYE Resource Center, Dennis Zogbi of Paumanok Publications declared, "Lead Times for Passives Extend into the Twilight Zone." Zogbi spoke at the ERA-ECIA Breakfast Program at EDS 2017 in May and reiterated some of his concerns.

At that time, I suspect many of us were already hearing grumblings about lead times from customers and distributors alike. In addition, there were warnings from our principals to speak to our distributors about laying in inventory. How many of those warnings were heeded? It seems we are learning that now.

ECSN Chairman Adam Fletcher, in July, said the supply chain is experiencing a "perfect storm" and suggested that lead times could continue to increase. He was credited with the following quote on ElectronicsWeekly.com: "Stronger-than-forecast global demand for components has followed an extended period of low capital investment by the companies that make them. Assuming that growth will continue at a similar pace in Asia-Pacific in the second half of 2017, manufacturer lead times are likely to continue to extend."

And as recently as August, the folks at EPSNews noted, "Strong demand across all sectors, particularly industrial automation and automotive, has led to increased lead times across several component segments." In its Market Conditions Report Q3 2017, Future Electronics reported "... Increasing lead times on MOSFETs, diodes, transistors, many passives and most memory products with some going to allocation." There, they said it, that word, the "A" word.

Dictionary.com says that to allocate is "to set apart for a particular purpose," and to many of us that purpose may not include our particular customers. Common synonyms for allocation are to "allot, apportion, appropriate, designate or earmark." Again, you may be wondering exactly who is earmarked.

So, buckle up, it seems the ride is just starting. Component lead times are moving out rapidly, and increased capacity is not necessarily on the horizon any time soon.

ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

Gary Ponto, CPMR
GP Marketing
Kirkland, Wash.

New solutions are entering the AV market

In the AV industry, "Dante" network communication protocol seems to be sweeping the new IP addressable product connectivity releases from every manufacturer. It is an IP communication protocol that allows direct communication to each devise for control and monitoring. Dante seems to be replacing Cobra Net, which was the first adopted IP control protocol, very quickly. Cobra Net is still holding market share, but the new designs seem to be favoring Dante.

I am not seeing many applications for IP systems asking for either Cobra Net or Dante communication protocols yet. I believe some of this is because it is an expensive solution versus a traditional 70-volt solution, and the integrator would need to have networking knowledge. These systems need to piggyback on an existing network via a "V-Lan" to keep the traffic separate from the standard company network, or the sound contractor would need to establish its own dedicated network. This is really in the structured cabling company's wheel house. Sound contractors could subcontract this portion of an installation to an IT division of an electrical contractor, or a structured cabling company, but these are the wolfs at their front door they have been fighting off for several years.

The more this technology is adapted, I believe, the more we will see the customer base for AV shift. The larger AV companies will adapt and hire the techs they need to deploy IP-controlled systems. This is not a huge stretch from Crestron / AMX programing companies. But I also think the datacom installers will see this as a new market because it requires a network connection and

is not a search for them to install.

This may also change the way factories go to market. Can traditional AV sales reps support IP deployment Dante systems, or will network companies need to be brought in to support these systems?

The security market is growing as well. Higher megapixel cameras are being requested by customers at lower prices, and many are being introduced by manufactures. The new H.265 compression standard is being adopted and is reducing network bandwidth of IP cameras by 50 percent. This is allowing end users to increase the camera resolution and camera count per system without impacting their network bandwidth and recording disk space.

I am also seeing more analytic software being introduced that really works. A few years ago, analytics was the buzz in the industry, but it was not always 100 percent reliable.

I am seeing more of this business run through national distributors for pricing and payment terms. The design and demonstrations, however, are still being done by the local reps or factory direct salespeople, depending on the product line. I think that national distribution accounts are going to gain more of this market than in the past years.

In closing, I know that we all wish the hurricane victims across this great nation our very best.

MATERIALS, ASSEMBLY, PRODUCTION & SUPPLY

Troy Gunnin
Sun Rep
Tampa, Fla.

Emergency preparedness is key for all businesses

As I'm writing this column, we are making preparation for a visit by Hurricane Irma. If the current projected track holds, we will experience the most powerful hurricane ever in the Atlantic basin. By the time you read this column, you will know if we "dodged the bullet" or are in the midst of recovering.

Our friends in Texas just experienced one of the most devastating natural disasters ever to hit the U.S. It will likely be years before they are back to normal. It is entirely possible that we will experience much of the same.

In preparation for what could happen, we make plans and prepare options and try as best as we can, all the while expecting the unexpected.

Events like these make us pause and consider what is important. Material things can be replaced, but not life. While making these plans, the safety of our families and employees is most important; we make sure to put them first and then plan for preserving the essentials, both personal and business.

From a business standpoint, proper planning prevents panic at the last moment. In today's computerized environment, we operate much of our communication "in the clouds." All of our records are continually backed up to "hopefully" prevent catastrophic disruption of our day-to-day activities. This is something that every business should consider. It's much cheaper than having a professional recover data (voice of experience). Operating from the cloud has allowed us to calmly discuss what we need to physically remove from the office because we may need it immediately. That took us no more than five minutes. Then we could focus on securing the building. As I write this column, we are waiting to make the decision to stay or leave.

As I watch the chaos around in preparation, I can't help but be reminded that in our day-to-day business activities, a good dose of proper planning could prevent many of the problems we encounter. As the good carpenter says, "measure twice, cut once." We should plan, refine our plan as we move forward, and work our plan to success.

Hopefully our "survival plan" is good, and we see it through to a successful conclusion.



Chapter News reports the local activities of the 22 chapters of ERA. The chapters sponsor educational and training workshops, local trade shows, legislative and industry projects to enhance the professionalism of individual members and to advance the goals and mission of the national association.

ARIZONA

On Aug. 31, the Arizona Chapter hosted a networking program titled, "Best Practices between the Representative and the Distributor." The chapter also held an In-Plant Show at the Medtronics facility on July 20.

CAROLINAS

The Carolinas Chapter is continuing its monthly networking breakfasts throughout the fall. The chapter also held a September program titled "Learn How to Challenge the Status Quo in Sales." The presenter was Debbie Castrodale, a certified business and sales coach/consultant and noted public speaker.

Carolinas ERA also held its 14th annual golf tournament on Oct. 16, benefiting the scholarship fund. Contributions were made to the American Diabetes Association in memory of Dick Paden. For many years, Paden planned events and raised funds for CERA's scholarship.

CHICAGOLAND - WISCONSIN

On Aug. 2, the chapter held a networking event at Guaranteed Rate Field to see the Chicago White Sox vs. Toronto Blue Jays. Seventy-four people attended the event.

The chapter also hosted a succession planning program in Kenosha, Wis., on Sept. 22. John L. Vrablic of T.I.P.S. 4 Reps was the guest speaker at the event.

Chicagoland-Wisconsin ERA is very proud that board member Rick LaPiana is serving as the 2018 ERA National Conference Committee Chair.

DIXIE

In an effort to grow chapter activity, Dixie ERA held a networking event on Sept. 25. ERA CEO Walter E. Tobin was the guest speaker. The informative session provided attendees the opportunity to discuss current chapter initiatives in Huntsville, Ala., Atlanta and surrounding areas.



Carolinas ERA members gathered on Sept. 19 for a program with Debbie Castrodale, a certified business and sales coach/consultant. The session was titled "Learn How to Challenge the Status Quo in Sales."

EMPIRE STATE

The Empire State Chapter held its annual golf tournament on Aug. 7 at Ravenwood Golf Club in Victor, N.Y. With more than 70 golfers participating, the chapter was able to present a $1,000 scholarship to a college freshman dependent of a rep member and raised $750 in donations for Coaches v. Cancer.

The tournament remains a signature chapter event and has been held annually for more than 10 years. Special thanks to the tournament volunteers and committee for organizing and running a great event.

INDIANA KENTUCKY

Indiana-Kentucky ERA held another successful golf tournament with 61 golfers in attendance. The tournament took place on Sept. 8.

MID-LANTIC

The Mid-Lantic Chapter held a breakfast meeting on Sept. 12. ERA CEO Walter E. Tobin and John Beaver, president of GSA Tech, delivered a brief update on the value of ERA National and its current activities, and helped identify and address chapter member needs.

NEW YORK

The chapter held its 2nd Annual Metro New York Charity Golf outing over the summer, which raised money for Long Island Cares to benefit disabled veterans. The chapter also plans to hold a follow-up dinner and board meeting.

Robert Foertsch of Win-Cor Electronics Sales, the chapter's newest board member and an Advanced Life Support Provider (AEMT) with ***www.centereachfd.org***, encouraged board members to donate blood at the Centereach Fire Department's Semi-Annual Blood Drive. As a result, the chapter board made three much-needed blood donations.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

On Nov. 9, the Northern California Chapter of ERA will host the first-ever Electronics Industry Night Out. Designed for reps, distributors, manufacturers, customers and peers, this social event will offer hors d'oeuvres, cocktails, dancing, entertainment and networking opportunities. The much-anticipated event

is expected to attract 150 guests, including some local dignitaries and corporate VIPs. The chapter will donate 25 percent of ticket sale proceeds to local charities. For more information about this event, or to purchase tickets, contact Antoinette at ***events@ncalera.org***.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

The Pacific Northwest Chapter held a networking event on Oct. 2, in Seattle. ERA CEO Walter E. Tobin was the event guest speaker and provided an update from ERA National.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

On Aug. 10, the chapter held its 14th Annual ERA Summer Social at the Sagebrush Cantina in Calabasas, Calif. Distributors, reps, OEMs and customers enjoyed the networking event. In addition, Bobbi Scobie attended as the Southern California chapter director. This was her first ERA event in her new position.

SOUTHWEST CHAPTER

Southwest ERA will hold its next event on Nov. 3 over lunch at Cover 3 in Austin, Texas. The chapter will continue to hold breakfast meetings every six to eight weeks in Dallas for members and anyone who would like to meet with the chapter to learn more. If you would like to attend an upcoming breakfast meeting, contact Tobi Cornell, chapter secretary, at ***tcornell@kruvand.com***.

SPIRIT OF ST. LOUIS

The Spirit of St. Louis Chapter will hold a meeting on Nov. 6. A holiday party date is going to be announced soon as well.

REPS, DISTRIBUTORS AND MANUFACTURERS:

Access to ERA education programs has **NEVER** been easier or cost less! All **ERA WEBINAR** files are available for just $20 per program for members ($30 for non-members). Listen and learn **WHENEVER and WHEREVER** you choose.



TITLES AVAILABLE:

- Becoming Your Reps' Emotional Favorite
- Boosting Your Time Management Skills
- Closing for Commitment Starts in the First 10 Seconds
- Consultative Selling Skills for Reps
- The Five Worst Mistakes Reps Make and How to Fix Them
- Goal Setting: If You Don't Know Where You're Going, You'll Probably End Up Somewhere Else!
- I Hate Cold Calling: Alternatives for High Impact Prospecting
- Managing Your Line Portfolio
- Negotiating with Both Customers and Principals
- Redesigning the Rep-Principal Relationship
- Strategic Planning for Any Size Rep Firm
- Time and Territory Management: Parts I and II
- Turning Objections into Sales
- Valuing, Buying, Selling or Merging a Rep Firm

For details and an order form, go to era.org.

REPS AVAILABLE

New brand...
Same dedication
to **exceeding expectations!**

MacInnis Company
New England

CFE-MacInnis
Metro New York, New Jersey

CFE-MacInnis
Mid-Atlantic

MacInnis Group
Manufacturers' Representatives

375 Vanderbilt Avenue, Norwood, MA - 781-762-8090

1650 Sycamore Avenue, Suite 9, Bohemia, NY - 631-567-3377

ecia MEMBER

Dytec-NCI Inc.

317-578-0474

www.dytecnci.com

Since 1975, Dytec-NCI has been providing professional technical electronics sales representation in the Midwest (IL, IN, IA, WI, OH, MI, W. PA, KY) region.

- Are you a technical salesperson looking for a new challenge? *We currently have openings for outside Sales Engineers in our IA, WI, and IL markets.*
- Are you looking to merge or sell your rep firm?
- Are you a manufacturer looking for sales representation?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, Please contact Dan Connors at 317-919-0000 or email dconnors@dytecnci.com to discuss further.

~ Over 35 Years of Integrity, Determination and Results ~

CC ELECTRO

"THE RESPONSIVE COMPANY"
Manufacturers'
Representative

Responsive to Customers,
Distributors and Principals

IN/KY/OH/MI

715 N. Senate Ave.,
Indianapolis, IN 46202

317-612-5000 FAX 317-612-5005
carol_cohen@ccrep.com
www.ccrep.com

DORAN ASSOCIATES

Serving the Pacific Northwest since 1968

OREGON
1500 NW Bethany Blvd. Suite 200
Beaverton, OR 97006
503.640.4500

WASHINGTON
19125 Northcreek Pkwy. Suite 120
Bothell, WA 98011
425.488.1200

Engineered Component Sales
Serving OEMs & Distributors

DoranSales.com

RMA TECHNOLOGIES
Electronic Mfg Representative

19 Years Serving the SW
PCB Design, Fabrication & Assembly, Flex Circuits, Metal Fabrication, Wire & Cable Assembly, Precision Machining

BILL MILLER • bill@bmatech.com
Call 972-740-0993
Visit www.bmatech.com

RAH ASSOCIATES

Our most important assets are customers and principals.

For experienced, professional representation in Chicagoland, Wisconsin and NW Indiana, contact

Rich Hobby, CPMR
219-226-0539
richh@rahassoc.com

Classified ads continued on page 30

ERA Member Service Action Lines

Avis Car Rental.....era.org
(Click the link on the Member Services page.)
Budde Marketing 708-301-2111
buddemarketing.com
Empowering Systems.....888-297-2750
empoweringsystems.com
ERA Customized Survey Service.....era.org
(Click the link on the Member Services page.)
ERA RepProtect.....normanspencer.com/erarepprotect
ERA Teleforum Audio Library.....era.org
ERA University (online courses).....era.org
EYOND: MRSware.....866-795-8386
mrsware.com
Hertz Car Rental.....era.org
(Click the link on the Member Services page.)
Insperity.....www.insperity.com
ITEM Media.....http://item.media/
JJM Search.....402-721-6590
jjmsearch.com
MRERF (CPMR/CSP programs).....mrerf.org
Rembrandt Advantage.....800-292-7182
rembrandtadvantage.com
Repfabric.....844-737-7253, x225
RPMS software.....800-776-7435
rpms.com
Spyre Group.....spyregroup.com/reps/index.htm
TSJM Group.....603-560-1673
UPS shipping.....era.org
(Click the link on the Member Services page.)

Consultants Available for Expert Access

Accounting & Taxes: Stan Herzog.....847-564-1040
Executive Searches: Carla Mahrt.....402-721-6590
Insurance: John Doyle.....888-243-0174
Legal: Gerald Newman.....312-648-2300
Rep & Mfr. Services: Bryan Shirley, CPMR.....267-620-6000
Rep Network Mgmt.: Cesare Giammarco.....401-595-7331
Sales/Business Strategy: Craig Conrad.....817-917-8268
Sales Consulting/Coaching: John Simari.....214-325-4117
Sales Team Mgmt.: Timothy L. Conlon.....314-378-3612
Start-ups: Alex Gabbi.....alex@alexgabbi.com

Other ERA Services & Publications
(Call 312-419-1432 or go to era.org.)

- Locator Online Directory of Manufacturers' Reps
- Lines Available Service
- Guidelines for: Becoming a Successful Rep; Establishing and Benefiting from Rep Councils; Agreements between Sales Reps and Manufacturers; Agreements between Stocking Reps and Manufacturers; Agreements between Reps and Sub-Reps; Agreements between a Rep Firm and Its Salespeople; Evaluating a Prospective Principal; Evaluating a Prospective Rep; Developing New Markets with Professional Field Sales Reps
- Line Portfolio Evaluation
- Outsourced Field Sales: Adding Value for the Customer (CD)
- Outsourcing Field Sales (Fortune Magazine Reprint)
- The Value of Outsourced Field Sales (EBN Reprint)
- Selling Through Manufacturers' Representatives
- ERA Code of Ethics
- Recommended Technical Standards for Distribution Point-of-Sale Reporting
- FAQs Manufacturers Ask About Representatives
- Split Influence Recommendations for the Electronics Industry
- State Rep Commission Protection Acts
- ERA Membership Pins
- ERA Logos

ERA Meetings & Programs

- Board of Directors Meeting - Oct. 26, 2017
- 49th Management and Marketing Conference - Feb. 25-27, 2018

A book review and recommendation by Dan Beaulieu

The Inspiration Code: How the Best Leaders Energize People Every Day

by Kristi Hedges
Copyright: 2017 Amacom
Price: $24.95
Pages: 261 with Appendix and Index

How to be a better leader, as well as one who inspires

No matter who you are, no matter what you have done, no matter where you have been or where you are in your life journey, this book can help you inspire others. Not all of us are inspirational by nature. Most of us are just regular people who lead regular lives. For the most part, we have done nothing dramatic enough to inspire others. We did not save lives like the pilot Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger, who successfully ditched his passenger plane on the Hudson River. We did not change the world like Steve Jobs, or walk on the moon like Neil Armstrong. We have led our lives the best we can, while trying to help others along the way. If you think that you are one of the regular people, one of us, then this book is for you — a person who wants to inspire those around you to greatness.



This book is literally a systematic manual on how to inspire others — from showing people how much you care, to intentional listening, to encouraging dialogue. This book provides everything a person needs to be an inspiration to those around him or her.

The author, Kristi Hedges, makes the case that to be an inspiration is to energize the people around you to do things far beyond what they thought they could do. She focuses on honesty in conversation, authenticity in what we say and even how we say it.

Here are four steps that take people up the "inspire path," as Hedges calls it. Inspirational leaders are:

Present - They are focused on the person in front of them. They are not distracted, visibly stressed or bound to an agenda. They are open-minded and let the conversation flow.

Personal - They are authentic and real, and listen generously. They know how to find and expand potential.

Passionate - They infuse energy, calibrate it and manage it as one of their greatest skills.

Purposeful - They are intentional and willing to have courageous discussions about purpose.

The book discusses how to apply these four steps in different situations, such as one-on-one conversations, or when giving a presentation to a room full of people.

Frankly, I think this is a book about leadership in general — good leadership, which in the end, leads to inspirational leadership.

If you are serious about your role as a leader, or even a team member who strives to get the best from your team, this book is a great way to get started.

Dan Beaulieu is the president and founder of D.B. Management, LLC, a consulting firm specializing in all aspects of sales, marketing and branding with a focus on rep-principal relationships. His latest book is **The PCB 101 Handbook** *which can be purchased online by emailing* ***danbbeaulieu@aol.com.*** *Dan is also the author of* "It's Only Common Sense," *a weekly sales column appearing at* ***pcb007.com.*** *Dan can be reached at 207-649-0879.*

(continued from page 28)

REPS WANTED

PCB
PROTOTYPES
PRODUCTION

Proven
PCB Source
Since 2003

Super PCB
www.superpcb.com

Quality PCB Supplier seeks sales representation.

Rigid PCB, Flex PCB, Rigid-flex PCB, Aluminum PCB, RF PCB, etc.
Fast turn prototypes and high volume productions.
Quality certifications (IS9001, UL and TS16949).
We make it easy for you! Bring us RFQs, we handle the rest!
Very competitive pricing means you can close a high percentage of sales!

High quality + low cost = great earning potential!!

Contact us today!
Jeff James
E-mail: jeff.j@superpcb.com
Phone: 214-550-9837, Ext. 710

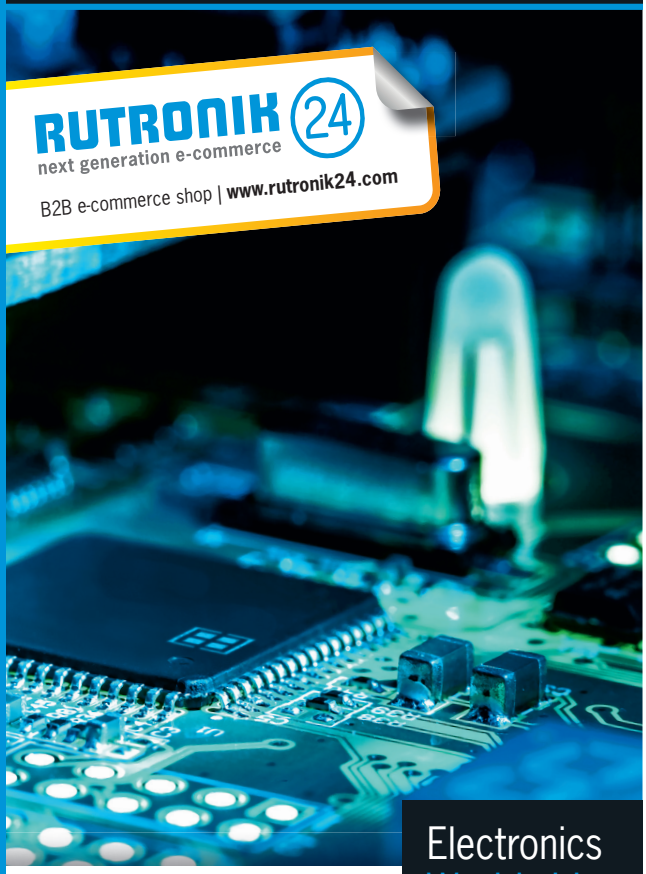
Reps wanted. All territories.
Full line manufacturer/importer.
Strong in PC boards & plastics.
URD AC & D.C. Current Sensors.
Must have following.
949-735-8446
larrysultan@eeurd.net
www.eeurd.net

The deadline to advertise in the Winter Issue of *The Representor* is Dec. 1, 2017.

Email info@era.org.

PRODUCTS

RUTRONIK
ELECTRONICS WORLDWIDE



Electronics Worldwide

High-Tech Components for Your Innovations

As a leading distributor of electronic components we are able to offer you a wide portfolio of products, expert technical support for product development and design-in, individual logistics and supply chain management solutions as well as comprehensive services.

- Semiconductors
- Passive Components
- Electromechanical Components
- Displays & Boards
- Storage Technologies
- Wireless Technologies

For more information about RUTRONIK:
sales-na@rutronik.com | www.rutronik.com

Committed to excellence
Consult | Components | Logistics | Quality

MRERF

designs and delivers
classes and certification
specifically for Manufacturers
and Manufacturers' Reps



MANUFACTURERS' REPRESENTATIVE EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH FOUNDATION

ENROLL OR CALL US TODAY! WWW.MRERF.ORG 303.463.1801

- IMPACT your bottom line, energize your management & sales teams
- IMPROVE your rep / manufacturer relationships and partnerships
- DEFINE and IMPLEMENT your success goals more effectively

2018 MRERF CLASSES

CPMR: 2018 (Certified Professional Manufacturers' Representative)

Your opportunity to access exceptional subject matter experts, build and develop your business foundation and avoid the rep firm potholes on your path to success. Set yourself apart from the pack as a CPMR.

AUSTIN, TX January 7-12, 2018
at the AT&T Conference Center

CSP: 2018 (Certified Sales Professional)

Becoming a sales professional didn't come with a user's manual. Get the consultative selling tools, and certification you need, right here!

March 5 - 9	Atlanta, GA
April 2 - 6	Dallas, TX
September 10 - 14	Denver, CO
October 8 - 12	Chicago, IL

MBP: 2018 (Manufacturers Best Practices)

Facilitation and conversation with MRERF certified subject matter experts, and manufacturers across industries, will uncover tools and resources to boost your processes and bottom line.

March 20 - 21	Atlanta, GA
May 22 - 23	Denver, CO
September 25 - 26	Chicago, IL

SALES MASTERY: Lead Generation (5 week, 1 hour/week, online)

Starts January 23 until February 20

IPA MRERF

ENROLL OR CALL US TODAY!
www.mrerf.org 303.463.1801

ADVERTISEMENT

Electronics Representatives Association
1325 S. Arlington Heights Road, Suite 204
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

Road Warriors Welcome

Let Allied's Sales Offices throughout North America be your home base for:

- Local account and territory planning
- Joint customer fairs
- Joint sales calls
- Local training



ALLIED ELECTRONICS®

thinkallied.com • 1.800.433.5700

© Allied Electronics, Inc 2017.