



Member's Corner

No business like show business

by Peter Bang-Knudsen

Former IHRA President & Chairman

I have just returned from my fourth show in less than 5 months. The San Francisco Gourmet Show rounded out a season begun by the Chicago Housewares Show, punctuated by the Frankfurt Show and Seattle Gift Show.

Had I worn a blindfold and not been told where I was there would be few clues about what show was in progress. Conversations usually start with something like this: *"When did you get here..." "Traffic is.....(bad, good, average)" "The weather is... (cold, hot, unusual, wet, but you are used to it where you come from...)" "The industry is changing..." "Nobody... (writes orders here, makes show appointments...)" "There's nothing new at this show..." "Business is sure to improve after (the war, recession, elections, tax time, terror alert, weather improves....)*. Food in exhibition halls is universally bad but restaurants outside give you the impression that you are somewhere different than before.

The top topic at Housewares and San Francisco Gourmet Shows was next year's schedule change. The shows will be a few weeks apart in the Spring. Both are changing floor plans and booth locations. The drift of most conversations was that there is not enough business for both shows and that one show will kill the other. The fact is that shows are bigger than ever in terms of numbers of exhibitors and exhibit space. The Housewares Show has grown from one large hall (East/Lakeside) to three mammoth halls, with miles of walking from one to the other. The Gourmet Show began in a small auditorium in the San Francisco Mart and now takes most of two

Rep Management

Abolish call reports!

by Jack Berman, Sales Management Consultant

Fact

Management needs to know what is happening in the field on a daily basis.

Fact

Salespeople rarely turn in call reports on a daily basis - they are generally submitted weekly.

Fact

Call reports are rarely turned in voluntarily - they are required by management.

Fact

Management rarely reads all of the call reports that are turned in by salespeople.

Fact

Call reports are turned in weekly because they are rarely made out daily.

Fact

For call reports to have valid information, salespeople are expected to make them out immediately after the call is ended.

Fact

Even if they are made out immediately after the call, salespeople can't remember all that happened.

Fact

If they are made out immediately after the call, salespeople waste valuable selling time. They should be on their way to the next call.

Fact

The first opportunity to make out call reports is at the end of the day. Being with the family, checking into a motel or cleaning up loose ends nearly always takes precedence over call reports.

continued on page 2

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Peter Bang-Knudsen (from page 1)

large exhibition halls. Fact # 2 is that there are less stores, less buying offices, less buyers attending shows than when the shows were held in smaller venues. Conclusion: less people walking more miles of exhibit halls than before. In Germany there were two large housewares shows overlapping, until this year when Cologne's Domotechnica was cancelled at the last moment.

For years we had two Chicago Housewares shows a year, Hardware Show in summer, plus two New York tabletop shows, and the Atlantic City China & Glass Show. The same buyers made the rounds of most of those shows. There has been a shift of shows centering on East Coast and Midwest chain stores, to shows focusing on buyers in the West

and South. In the glory days of yesteryear Sears, Wards, Marshall Field, Ace, Cotter, Carson's, Spiegel and stamp companies were reason enough to hold two shows a year in Chicago, while dominant Eastern department stores kept the Tabletop and China & Glass shows busy.

When the Chicago Housewares show moves to March buyers who want to start shopping early in the year may go to Atlanta in January, Frankfurt in February, and to any other trade shows filling the gap between January and March. The large chain stores and catalogs will find March to be too late for their needs. Specialty stores and many high-end chains will still attend the Gourmet Show to find small entrepreneurs with fresh new products.

Manufacturers have asked if they should drop out of one show or the other. My answer is "**neither**" because each show caters to a different clientele. Both shows are needed for their target audience. Our world is changing, and to expect trade shows to remain the same is unrealistic. Discussions about shows are similar to what Mark Twain had to say about weather: "...everyone talks about it, but nobody does much about it...". Despite the advent of our electronic age and cyber everything, people still like to go to the bazaar and feel the buzz, the excitement and to learn what's new and what everyone else is doing. For independent manufacturers' representatives there is nothing quite like a show to stir the creative juices.

Jack Berman (from page 1)

Fact

If the call reports for the week are due on Monday, they are usually made out on Sunday night or early Monday morning.

Fact

Even salespeople with outstanding memories cannot remember with accuracy what happened on the last call on Friday, let alone what happened on the first call last Monday morning.

Fact

The result is generally more right-brain activity on call reports than even on expense reports.

Fact

When salespeople make out call organizers instead of call reports, they have the golden opportunity to control the customer call.

Fact

When salespeople write down what they want to happen, and then write down what is happening as it is happening, they record accurate information and eliminate paperwork.

Fact

When salespeople later review call organizers, they remember more clearly what happened and automatically establish their goals on the calls they are about to make.

To get a basic template of a standard call organizer, please visit my Web site at: www.bermaninformation.com and download the section on How to Design Your Own Call Organizer and How to Use Your Call Organizer More Effectively.

Jack A. Berman is a faculty member of the CPMR Program, an ERA Hall of Fame member, author of Synergistic Selling for the 21st Century, and heads Berman Information Services Inc., which conducts surveys of reps and manufacturers and e-mails selling tips every two weeks. He has been a manufacturer, a rep and a sales trainer.

2003 INDUSTRY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

May

All Candy Expo
May 13, 2003 - May 15, 2003
Chicago, IL

NRA Restaurant, Hotel-Motel Show
May 17, 2003 - May 20, 2003
Chicago, IL

SOURCES

May 17, 2003 - May 19, 2003
New York, NY

National Stationery Show
May 18 - 21, 2003
New York, NY

June

IDDBA Show
June 01, 2003 - June 03, 2003
Las Vegas, NV

Coffee Fest Atlantic City
June 06, 2003 - June 08, 2003
Atlantic City, NJ

Gourmet Awards
June 06, 2003 - June 08, 2003
Dallas, TX

Dallas International Gift & Home Accessories Market
June 20, 2003 - June 24, 2003
Dallas, TX

NASFT Summer International Fancy Food Show
June 29, 2003 - July 01, 2003
New York, NY

July

Atlanta International Gift & Home Furnishings Market
July 11, 2003 - July 15, 2003
Atlanta, GA

Fall Gift & Home Furnishings Market
July 15, 2003 - July 22, 2003
Los Angeles, CA

California Gift Show
July 19, 2003 - July 22, 2003
Los Angeles, CA

Washington Gift Show
July 27, 2003 - July 30, 2003
Chantilly, VA

August

Orlando Gift Show
August 02, 2003 - August 05, 2003
Orlando, FL

New York International Gift Fair
August 09, 2003 - August 14, 2003
New York, NY

CGTA Gift Show
August 10, 2003 - August 14, 2003
Canada

41 Madison Gift Show
August 10, 2003 - August 14, 2003
New York, NY

Seattle Gift Show
August 16, 2003 - August 20, 2003
Seattle, WA

Tendence
August 22, 2003 - August 26, 2003
Frankfurt, Germany

San Francisco International Gift Fair
August 23, 2003 - August 27, 2003
San Francisco, CA

SIAL Mercosur
August 26, 2003 - August 29, 2003
Buenos Aires, Argentina

September

Natural Products Expo East
September 04, 2003 - September 07, 2003
Washington, DC

Philadelphia Candy Show
September 07, 2003 - September 09, 2003
Philadelphia, PA

New York Home & Textiles Show
September 19, 2003 - September 22, 2003
New York, NY

Dallas International Gift & Home Show
September 20, 2003 - September 22, 2003
Dallas, TX

October

Anuga
October 11, 2003 - October 15, 2003
Koln Messe - Cologne, Germany

Atlanta Gourmet Show and Gift & Accessories Market
October 13, 2003 - October 16, 2003
Atlanta, GA

Coffee Fest Seattle
October 24, 2003 - October 26, 2003
Seattle, WA

New York Fall Tabletop Market at 41 Madison
October 25, 2003 - October 30, 2003
New York, NY

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Company _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Business Phone _____ Fax _____

Room Type _____ Rate _____ Single ___ Double ___

Credit Card & # _____ Exp Date _____

Arrival _____ Departure _____

Comments or Special Needs _____

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