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Today's technology gives operators an
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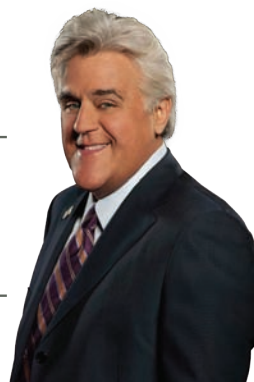
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KEYNOTE SPEAKER
JULIE SEITZ
WORKPLACE 2020
THURSDAY, APRIL 23

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- **BLOG: Operator Perspective On 'Final' FDA Guidelines - You May Not Have Been Told The Whole Truth**
www.vendingmarketwatch.com/12027038
- **ON TREND: Snack Apps Arrive**
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Snackworks, Inc., Bradenton, FL

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Abandon the abacus

Technology could be the answer to that which ails your business.

Whether your operation is growing, struggling or somewhere in-between, adding some form of technology could provide benefits. Consider how technology can solve common business problems. It can make management more effective and employees more productive. It can identify profitable products and the effectiveness of marketing. It can make a business bigger, without adding a single employee.



UPGRADING technology can be critical to success.

Reinvestment hard to quantify

I've heard operators ask, "How much of my company's revenue should I reinvest by adding technology?" That's universally difficult to determine. It varies not only by the location and company size, but is also based on the structure of the organization and how it utilizes technology. Regardless,

in today's business environment new technology is increasingly important.

The National Small Business Association (NSBA) did a 2013 survey on how business has changed from 2010 in regards to technology. A key finding was that in 2013, 70 percent of business owners said technology, and keeping up with new technology, was very important to the success of their company. That was up 5 percent from three years before, when it was still a majority. While NSBA covers

different industries, I see this happening in the vending area. When a company is large enough and invests in technology like telemetry, vending management systems and pick-to-light systems, it allows them to harness more than companies not utilizing as much technology.

When a small business stalls

What about increasing customers? Surely technology can't do that. Wrong. Many businesses today make purchases online. In the NSBA survey, 85 percent purchased supplies online. That means your customers are comfortable buying via the Internet or email marketing. Make sure you are giving them the opportunity with a well-designed and working Web presence. That is the first place today's consumer goes to research a new company or business partner.

If your Website allows purchasing online, don't forget payment security. It's a must in this world of data breaches and identity theft. Most small businesses contract that out in order to ensure their customers' data is well protected.

Technology does come with a cost, in both dollars and time. Researching, implementing and learning how to use new technology can't be overlooked. However, on the end of the learning curve, technology offers huge potential. Computers allow instant research to be done on any topic. Email and chats offer dialogue within seconds rather than 3 to 5 business days. Communication platforms allow meetings from different locations. Smartphones allow all these capabilities wherever the user goes. Taking these into your business and using them to be more effective is worth the resources. | ◀

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Moving on with fond memories

I'm transitioning to a new role, but the publication's vision remains steadfast.

As we really start getting into 2015, I wanted to let you know of some changes here at *Automatic Merchandiser*/VendingMarketWatch.com. After much reflection, I have decided to accept an opportunity with another publishing company in the business-to-business (B2B) industry. It wasn't without difficulty. I've been with this publication for more than five years, becoming publisher in 2012. It has been a great ride. As I've said before, once you experience

this industry, it gets into your blood and you can't get enough of it. While the industry has seen quite a bit of change/consolidation/challenges over the years, vending still plays a vital role to consumers. I've enjoyed being part of the publication that brings you news, technologies, equipment and products that help you run your businesses and make vending users a fan for life.

Moving in a digital world

My time spent leading the publication has been nothing short of blessed. However, throughout the years, I have been very interested in digital media and the new and exciting opportunities

that it has given to publishers like myself and advertisers. That is why when the opportunity came to lead the digital sales efforts for a number of different publications at another B2B media company, I couldn't refuse. This

"I look forward to meeting and working with all of you in this exciting industry."



Ron Bean, Publisher, *Automatic Merchandiser* & VendingMarketWatch.com

media company doesn't have a vending, micro market or OCS property, so I unfortunately won't be working with this industry; instead, I'll be making new friends and colleagues in other industries. I hope they will be as welcoming.

Introducing Ron Bean

While I am departing, there is someone I want to introduce to you. His name is Ron Bean, the new publisher of *Automatic Merchandiser* and VendingMarketWatch.com. Many of you will have heard from Ron already, but if you haven't, be sure to reach out to him at Ron.Bean@VendingMarketWatch.com or 920-568-8386. He will be attending the NAMA OneShow in April as well. Ron comes from KeHE Distributors where he was an event, sponsorship and publications sales coordinator. He has worked in the publishing industry at different publications and in different roles for more than 20 years, so he brings plenty of experience. I know I am leaving the publication in good hands.

In closing, I just want to say this. *Automatic Merchandiser* and VendingMarketWatch.com had an absolutely fantastic year and I know that the property will continue to be the source for relevant and timely information to the industry. It has truly been a pleasure working with all of you and my best wishes for a successful 2015. | ◀



IT'S truly been a pleasure working with all of you — my best wishes for 2015.

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Operator Only Newsletter



Featured



Operator Confidence Index Reaches 130.60 For September 2013

U.S. operator confidence is middle of the road with a more positive feeling over last year. Vending, micro market and OCS operators report being...



2014 Employment Law Alert

Was your New Year's resolution to confirm you're up-to-date on new employment laws for 2014? It should have...



Sneak Peek: 2013 Route Driver Of The Year Winner

More than one hundred drivers. Only one winner. Announcing the 2013 Route Driver of the Year - Mike Edwards of...

5 Tips for Family Business Succession Planning

These tips will help you develop a plan that helps the senior generation leave with ease and welcomes the...

Breakfast trends: Changing with the consumer

In 2014, consumers want convenient, healthy and good tasting morning meals.

Media Center



OneShow Preview 2014

With the 2014 NAMA OneShow only weeks away, Joann DeNardis, director of education/certification at NAMA offers tips...



2014 NAMA OneShow Attendee Reflections

Operators showed positive feedback at this year's NAMA OneShow. Many were interested in finding new products...



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NAMA Shares Update, Guidance On Calorie Disclosure Rules



Ronnoco Coffee Acquires U.S. Roasterie

► Huron Capital Partners announced that its portfolio company Ronnoco Coffee, LLC has acquired the assets of Des Moines, IA-based U.S. Roasterie, Inc. Howard Fischer, U.S. Roasterie president and CEO, will remain in his current position for at least two years. Fischer confirmed that nothing will change for current customers. "All blends, packaging and outstanding customer service will remain the same," he said.

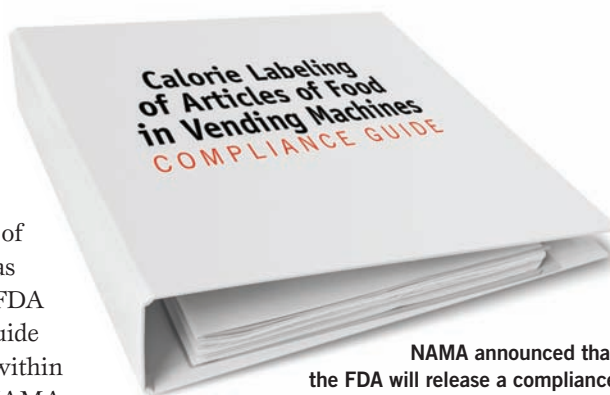
Google Purchases Softcard Technology

► Google has acquired technology and patents from Softcard, the joint mobile venture between AT&T Mobility, T-Mobile USA, Inc. and Verizon Wireless. Google announced, "Under this relationship, the Google Wallet app, including the tap and pay functionality, will come pre-installed on Android phones (running KitKat or higher) sold by these carriers in the U.S. later this year."

365 Retail Markets Acquires AirVend

► 365 Retail Markets has announced that it is celebrating the addition of AirVend into its family of products. "We formally acquired [AirVend] and are taking steps to merge our teams, our products and our operations, to the betterment of both of our customer bases," said Erin Calkins, product specialist at 365 Retail Markets.

On December 1, 2014, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) published its final rule on Calorie Labeling of Articles of Food in Vending Machines with an implementation date of December 1, 2016. NAMA has recently announced that the FDA plans to issue a compliance guide on its calorie disclosure rule within the next month. Therefore, NAMA recommends vending operators and suppliers delay making any changes to meet the new rule until the FDA's small entity compliance guide has been issued.



NAMA announced that the FDA will release a compliance guide on its calorie disclosure rule.

NAMA's remarks

"Since the issuance of the rule, NAMA has been working hand-in-hand with individual vending operators, food and beverage suppliers and others impacted by the rules," NAMA's Government Affairs Division commented. "NAMA is also partnering with other national trade associations to address challenges within the rule, and has hosted the FDA at member locations to provide them with further education on the industry." The FDA has provided the email address CalorieLabelingVend@fda.hhs.gov for questions regarding the new rule. NAMA asks that questions for the FDA be reviewed by NAMA before being emailed to the FDA. Email calorie labeling questions to NAMA at edell@vending.org.



Avanti Buys BYNDL

► Avanti Markets has purchased mobile transaction service provider BYNDL for an undisclosed sum. Lori Salow Marshall will become president of both BYNDL, which is remaining an independent entity, and Avanti Markets. Jim Brinton will be CEO of both companies. Marshall explained the sale as mutually beneficial. BYNDL's mobile services will

be available to the industry as a whole and the company will continue to work with other vending technologies, payment processors and micro market partners.

Canteen Introduces enr.G Wellness Vender

► Canteen announced the launch of enr.G, a fresh, wellness-focused vending alternative. The enr.G's product line can pair with an existing client-branded wellness platform and comes in three vending machine color options. Initially, the enr.G line will



include a full snack machine plus a combination snack and beverage machine. Every enr.G snack and beverage includes at least one of the following dietary attributes—all-natural, organic, gluten-free, non-GMO, vegan, Kosher and Choice Plus.

Sysco Agrees To Sell 11 US Foods Distribution Centers To PFG

▶ Sysco Corporation announced that it has reached a definitive agreement to sell Performance Food Group 11 US Foods facilities related to its pending merger with US Foods. The divestiture package is contingent on consummation of the proposed merger of Sysco and US Foods announced in December 2013.

KEURIG KOLD



Keurig Green Mountain To Launch Keurig Kold

▶ Keurig unveiled its cold-beverage system — dubbed Keurig Kold — at the Consumer Analyst Group of New York conference. The counter-top system uses pod-based technology to create cold beverages. Keurig Kold will offer cold drink pods from Coca-Cola and Dr Pepper Snapple Group, as well as from its own brands. The beverages will be chilled to 38 degrees Fahrenheit and will not require a CO₂ canister for preparation.

Compass Group Adopts “Menus Of Change” Principles In 2015

▶ Compass Group USA is proud to announce the adoption of four new, key initiatives based on the Menus of Change Principles of Healthy, Sustainable Menus beginning immediately. The goal of the initiative is to bring together representatives from all areas of foodservice — including everyone from chefs and nutrition and environmental scientists to farm and fisheries experts to foodservice executives and policy makers. It is this collaboration that inspired and informed the Menus of Change Principles.

NAMA Dental Vision Plus Plan Available To All Member Companies

▶ NAMA announced that it will offer the NAMA Dental Vision Plus Plan to all NAMA member companies. The NAMA Dental Vision Plus Plan is provided in partnership with Careington International Corporation. This member benefit is not insurance, it is a plan that provides NAMA members access to discounts on dental care, vision care, LASIK vision correction, prescriptions and more.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 22-24

2015 NAMA OneShow
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Las Vegas, NV
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www.namaoneshow.org

APRIL 30-MAY 3

The London Coffee Festival
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MAY 3-6

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MAY 9-11

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www.chinavmf.com

People in the News

Classic Coffee Systems Co-Founder Dies

Charles “Charlie” Chiarello, co-founder of Classic Coffee Systems located in Valley Stream, NY, passed away on Feb. 1, 2015 at the age of 63 after a long illness and courageous battle. Chiarello co-founded Classic Coffee Systems in 1980, which he owned and operated for 34 years.



Chiarello

PFG Names New President, CEO Of Performance Foodservice

Performance Food Group, Inc. (PFG) announced that it has named Dave Flitman to the role of president & CEO of its Performance Foodservice broadline business segment reporting to George Holm, PFG president & CEO.



Flitman

Dave Meeker Joins CoffeeMatt Corp.

Dave Meeker, formerly of Vendors Equipment Inc., has joined The CoffeeMatt Corporation to assist in spearheading the company's continued growth.

AVS Names Cortney Kinzler As Director Of Marketing

American Vending Sales (AVS) announced that Cortney Black Kinzler has assumed the role of director of marketing for the Illinois distributor effective January 1, 2015. Kinzler will now head up all marketing initiatives for AVS across the amusement, gaming and vending divisions.



Kinzler

Flowers Foods Announces Transition In Manufacturing Leadership

Flowers Foods, Inc. announced two executive transitions in the company's manufacturing leadership. Michael A. Beaty, formerly executive vice president of supply chain, will retire in spring of 2015. Until then, he will serve as executive vice president and oversee special projects for the company. Robert L. Benton, Jr., formerly senior vice president of manufacturing and operations support, has been named senior vice president and chief manufacturing officer.

Mondelez Adds Roberto Marques

Mondelez International announced that Roberto Marques will join the company in mid-March and become executive vice president and president, North America.



Marques



Dark roast beans contain an oily sheen.

Bring on dark roast coffee

More than half of consumers are opting for the intense flavor of dark roast coffee.

by Adrienne Zimmer, Managing Editor

There is an idiom that reads, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” The same can be said for coffee blend preference. Does the consumer favor a coffee with distinct origin flavors? Then they are likely to enjoy a light roast blend. What about a coffee with muted acidity, but a little bit of roasted taste? Then perhaps a medium roast. For the consumers who prefer a smoky, bittersweet cup of joe, dark roast will hit the spot. Some consumers describe the dark roast flavor as ‘burnt’. But it doesn’t stop them from drinking it. As a matter of fact, research by the National Coffee Association finds that the majority of coffee consumers opt for the bold, low acidic taste of dark roast coffee: 52 percent.

Big retailers are recognizing this preference, too. In 2014, Dunkin’ Donuts added dark roast coffee to its product line-up, proceeding Tim Horton’s 2013 pilot test of the dark blend in U.S. and Canadian markets. Dark roast coffees contain a strong, smoky

flavor, low acidity and a plethora of health benefits. With many dark roast options available, it’s easy to bring this consumer preference for a bold blend into the office.

So what is dark roast coffee?

Dark roast coffee is commonly described as having an intense, full-bodied, bittersweet and bold flavor, largely due to the roasting process. Coffee beans for a dark roast reach internal temperatures of 430°F or higher, compared to the light roast’s internal temperatures of 356 to 401°F. As the temperature of the coffee beans increase, the sugars in the coffee progress from caramelization to a carbonization state, according to Spencer Turer, vice president of Coffee Analysts. “The sweetness and aromatics of the coffee changes from bright and crisp to winy and mellow,” he said. “High quality coffee will still be recognizable at dark roast levels to many people.”

Research shows that darker roasts have less caffeine than lighter ones.

As the coffee progresses to dark roast, some of the caffeine changes from a solid to a gas and disperses. However, caffeine content also depends on the type of bean, the grind, the roast and the brew method. “Arabica coffee has about 1.2 percent caffeine and is sweeter and more aromatic than Robusta which has about 2.2 percent caffeine and a stronger, more earthy flavor,” said Turer.

Additionally, dark roast coffee beans lose more than caffeine during the roasting process. Coffee beans lose mass as temperatures increase during roasting, therefore, it takes more dark roasted beans to match the weight of light. In turn, a cup of dark roast coffee will contain more caffeine when brewed by weight. If brewed by volume, however, it’s likely that the dark roast would contain less caffeine than a light roast coffee.

Health benefits

The benefits of dark roast coffee don’t end with taste. In fact, dark roast coffee has been linked to several health benefits. Research in Molecular Nutrition & Food Research found that dark roast coffee is more effective than light roast in restoring red blood cell vitamin E and glutathione. The same study reported that dark roast coffee led to body weight reduction in pre-obese volunteers. And for those consumers who avoid coffee due to gastric irritation, a 2010 study indicates dark roast blends are better for those with coffee sensitivity.

Dark roast coffee just might be the option that keeps the customer coming back. | ◀





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Big investments, bigger growth

By Adrienne Zimmer, Managing Editor

Meticulous investments have helped this Tennessee vending operation grow to include micro markets, coffee service, cafeterias, janitorial and catering services all while keeping family and community at its heart.

Fifteen miles north of the Alabama border sits Fayetteville, TN, a small city with big ideas. Fayetteville produced notable sports figures Anthony Shelton and Bob

Higgins. It boasts the slogan *Where tradition meets tomorrow*. It is also home to Lincoln County Vending.

Not all businesses have personality, but Lincoln County Vend-

c a n
L.C. V

Always Fresh, Always

Dan Holt and his wife, Pattie, (center) are surrounded by their four children Holly, Carlie, Daniel and Levi who all work at Lincoln County Vending.

ing does. Its personality takes the shape of those who work inside its walls and live in the surrounding community. Much like the city in which it resides, Lincoln County Vending is a small company with big ideas. Like most vending operations, Lincoln County Vending began as a family business based out of a garage. Although the garage has now turned into a 7,200 square foot warehouse and office space, the company remains family and community focused.

Customer service is a top priority for the company not because it makes them money, but because their customers are their friends, their neighbors and the reason for

their success. It is the company's credence to provide the best quality service to local businesses so those businesses can focus on being the best at what they do.

And as the community grows, so too does Lincoln County Vending. What once began as a two-man vending operation, Lincoln County Vending has now been in business for twenty-five years and expanded its offerings to include micro markets, coffee service, cafeterias, janitorial and catering services.

To ensure its future in the vending industry and place in its community, Lincoln County Vending has made several key investments in areas such as technology and micro markets. In just the last ten years Holt has seen his business grow 700 percent and his staff develop to 45 employees.



Path to vending

Lincoln County Vending opened its doors for business on February 1, 1989 as a Tom's Foods distributor called Dan's Snack Sales. The company consisted of nine machines, one truck and two men—father-son duo Dan Holt Sr. and Dan Holt Jr. “We started out with absolutely nothing,” recalled Holt. “We would service machines, come home and count the coins on the kitchen table once a month. But we grew our vending business by adding one machine at a time.”

Although Holt enjoyed servicing retail with product as a distributor, he had bigger ambitions for vending. When Holt's father decided to retire, Holt purchased his father's share of the business and renamed it Lincoln County Vending (LCV).

Through the 1990s, Holt remained a Tom's distributor but continued



David Talley, head maintenance technician at Lincoln County Vending, is a valuable member of the LCV team.

growing his vending business. “I saw an opportunity in vending and just decided that was where I wanted to go,” he recalls. And in 2005 LCV left

the distribution segment and became a Canteen franchise. “We had seen all that they could do in vending and we were very eager to jump on board,” said Holt.

But Holt wasn't the only one eager about vending. His wife, Pattie, and their four children Holly, Carlie, Daniel and Levi helped run the company early on and continue to aid in its growth. “We all spend a lot of time together, and we're a stronger family because of it,” Holt said.

Family involvement has been instrumental. “When the company began to grow in the 1990s, my wife would take the kids around after school to fill the machines,” said Holt. “Nowadays I feel secure that our business will be here for years to come.” Holt jokes that he is waiting for the time when his grandkids come of age and can join the business. “We'll make them work.”

It's because his family, his employees and his community count on the success of LCV that Holt considers every risk and opportunity before investing in anything, and at first, that included technology.

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Community conscious

Lincoln County Vending supports and gives back to its surrounding community because of all that the community has done for it. Dan and Pattie Holt have established and awarded multiple scholarships each year to college students in the area, including the Lincoln County Vending Scholarship and the Shoney's Fayetteville Scholarship at Motlow College. "We do what we can for the community," said Holt, "because they give so much to us."

For several years LCV has been involved in the community's Jack & Back Bike-A-Thon, a Tractor Day for a local high school, Safety Rewards Events and summer picnics. They have even purchased scoreboards for the local high schools. "In our case, we get the most pleasure out of giving to others," said Holt.

Growing with technology

For over a decade Holt had grown LCV one machine, one truck, one employee and one decision at a time. He and his staff would meticulously study the industry to determine which investments would help grow the company. In 2002 that scrutiny focused on technology when Holt traveled to his first annual NAMA show. "I remember going around and talking with the VMS distributors, looking at the bill and coin counters and just being so excited," he said. "At that time we were still counting everything by hand and entering it in on a spreadsheet." When MEI told Holt he could purchase an all-in-one mechanism that would count the money for him and file data electronically, he was blown away. "Technology changed my life and my business," he said.

Since that day nearly 13 years ago, Holt has continuously looked at ways to improve and upgrade the

company through technology. "No one has to convince or sell me on the importance of technology anymore," he said.

All of LCV machines going out in the field now have credit card readers and it's Holt's goal to transition the other active machines to 100 percent cashless within the next year or two. Currently 30 percent of LCV vending machines are cashless. "We are at the same point now with credit card readers as we were with bill collectors 25 years ago," he said. "Today you'd never think of putting out a vending machine without a bill acceptor, and it's got to be the same sentiment with credit card readers." Integrating technology has streamlined Holt's business, cut down on route time and increased sales for drivers.

Holt does admit that with new technology came a lot of data he and his employees had to learn to interpret. "Technology was hard at the



The advertisement features a blue sky background with a green grassy field at the bottom. A green banner with white text reads: "...a fresh approach to Micro Markets ...with even more features". The deORO microMARKET logo is at the top right. Below the banner, a list of features is presented with icons: credit card, fingerprint, smartphone, padlock, bill/coin, user account, and a stack of coins. At the bottom, pricing and contact information are listed.

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beginning to learn, but we did it.” He advises other operators who want to stay in business to do the same thing. “Invest in technology,” he stressed. “There will always be a return on investment when it comes to technology, so why not invest in something that will get you more money?”

Here to stay

One of Holt’s most recent investments took a little convincing. When the micro market segment was first introduced, Holt was hesitant. “I wasn’t sure I wanted to do it,” he said. But as he watched other operators place micro markets, he realized that it was a segment that wasn’t going away. And he wouldn’t be left behind. In 2013 the company opened its first Avanti Market. Now LCV has grown to 14 micro market locations and is about to add a second micro market route.

Multiple business interests

Dan Holt is a serial entrepreneur. In addition to his vending company, Holt and his family own five restaurants in the Fayetteville, TN area. “Our ownership of restaurants came out of our cafeteria business,” said Holt. “We began with one restaurant, did pretty well with it so we bought another one and so forth.” Holt just signed a deal to build three more restaurants.

It didn’t take long for Holt to see the positives of micro markets, and that includes the return on investment. “I’ve had some micro market locations that are double the sales that

vending would be,” he said. “A vending location will have its best sales in its first week, whereas micro market sales will increase for a few months.”

LCV has also been able to use the commissary it purchased in 2004 to offer fresh food to micro markets. “With our commissary, we’re able to make anything and we’re able to do it in a timely manner,” said Holt. Other micro markets, he says, will have to wait a few days to get fresh food, but his company can make it and get it out to the market within a day or two.

Although LCV is limited in its territorial expansion, it has been able to grow year-by-year because of its micro market and OCS segments.

Premium coffee

Part of Holt’s job is to study the industry and watch trends. Just as he recognized that micro markets were becoming part

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Lincoln County Vending has always been a family business. Holt, pictured here with his sons Daniel and Levi, says he works to grow the business for future generations.

of the industry, he also saw the opportunity to expand coffee service. Five years ago, he would not have believed coffee would be one of his most successful segments, because not much attention was paid to the service. The rise of single cup and the coffee house experience, however, changed that.

Company Profile

Founded: 1989
Headquarters: Fayetteville, TN
Owners: Dan and Pattie Holt
Number of employees: 45
Number of routes: 9
Annual sales: Not revealed

“We were missing out on coffee back then,” he remarked. “But not anymore.”

LCV services OCS accounts in large industrial plants and small offices. In all locations, Holt sees continued growth and higher profits as more consumers are becoming aware of ‘premium’ blends. The company has its own private label specialty brand called Highland Estates Coffee, which it markets as a premium

blend. “We have seen that better coffees drive the market,” said Holt.

Single-cup coffee has been selling well in many of Holt’s locations, except in micro markets. “We haven’t had a good response in micro markets with single cup, and I believe that’s just because people don’t want to make their own cup of coffee.” As his micro market locations grow, Holt plans to monitor the best way of selling coffee in them.

So much more to come

Holt is excited about the future of Lincoln County Vending and the industry in general. Even more rewarding for him, however, is that he gets to share the company’s future with his family, his employees and his community. “We rely on one another,” he said. “We need to be the best at our jobs so our customers can do the best at their jobs.” | ◀

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OneShow 2015: Go where everybody

by Adrienne Zimmer, Managing Editor



The 2015 NAMA OneShow will feature educational sessions taught by industry peers and a show floor of more than 250 exhibitors. Don't miss this opportunity to find new products, learn new techniques and meet new and old friends.

“There is so much to gain by simply being on the show floor and speaking directly with suppliers and manufacturers.”

LyNae Schleyer
NAMA vice president
of events



For the first time since 2006, the biggest vending event of the year will come to the Las Vegas Convention Center.

The NAMA OneShow has always been *the* place for operators to assess business needs, learn industry trends and catch up with old friends. In fact, in a 2014 NAMA OneShow attendee survey, 90 percent of operators and other attendees said that going to the NAMA OneShow was valuable for business. This year is no different. The 2015 NAMA OneShow, which kicks off from April 22 to 24, will focus around the peer-to-peer experience.

During this three day event, attendees will have the opportunity to have their most pressing questions answered during the nearly twenty educational sessions offered. Operators will even have the opportunity to have those questions answered by their friends and colleagues. LyNae Schleyer, vice president of events at NAMA notes most educational sessions are led by peers and specialists within the industry. “We’ve always found that that has been of great value for attendees, to hear from experts in the field,” she said.

Wrap It Up

There are more than **40 hours** for possible networking, including a new event put on by NAMA this year: **The Friday Wrap**. From 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Friday, April 24, exhibitors will be hosting drawings, raffles and giving away prizes to celebrate an end to the show and to add to the attendee experience.

Power and strategy sessions

The educational sessions will be split into three types. The 90-minute Power Sessions will focus on future trends and innovations. “These sessions will look towards ‘what’s next’ in the industry,” said Schleyer. “They will help attendees begin future forward conversations.” One must-see Power Session includes a presentation entitled, *Applying C-Store Merchandising, Research and Trends to Your Micro Market Business* led by Ludi Marche, associate director of Consumer Insights and Strategy for Food Service at Kraft. Marche will show attendees how

Exhibitors by the numbers

250+
companies will be represented.

50
companies are first time exhibitors.

30+
companies are international.

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to learn from c-store trends and how to use this information to capture the market of the on-the-go consumer.

The Power Sessions will be followed by 60-minute Strategy Sessions that will pinpoint specific strategies attendees can take back to their business and begin implementing right away. Dr. Claudine Kavanaugh, an interdisciplinary scientist in the Office of Foods and Veterinary Medicine at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, will cover vending machine calorie labeling disclosure rules and provide guidance on what the new rules entail.

Critical conversation

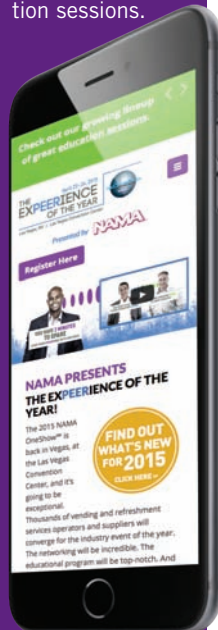
Finally, the 60-minute Critical Conversation educational session discussions will surround current issues attendees are facing. One Critical Conversation session consists of a small operator roundtable discussion. Vend operators managing no more than 4 routes and fewer than 10 employees are encouraged to attend and discuss the unique challenges and advantages of running a small business. Attendees of this session will drive conversation on topics such as technology, micro markets, expansion and pre-kitting and best practices as they determine how to grow their business.

“There is so much value for an attendee coming to the OneShow. There is a lot of leadership at the show in addition to the value in the educational packages, supplier events and networking opportunities,” remarked Schleyer. | ◀

Oldies But Goodies

Operators can look forward to once again experiencing the OneShow with a visit to the **learning lab**, the center for community and the product showcase.

Its signature **mobile app** will be available for download in late March and will help operators navigate the show floor and education sessions.



Schedule of Events

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2015

1:30 PM - 4:00 PM

NAMA Research Triple Play: Just Released, Cutting-Edge Insights Specific to the Industry, Micro Markets and Consumers

Trends and Solutions for Vending and Refreshment Services

- Small Operator Round Table Discussion
- Marketing Your Micro Market

1:15 PM - 3:00 PM

Opening General Session featuring the NAMA Industry Awards, CEO & Chair Remarks, and Headliner Jay Leno

3:00 PM - 6:30 PM

Show Floor Open

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 2015

8:30 AM - 10:00 AM

- Applying C-Store Merchandising, Research and Trends to Your Micro Market Business

- What's Trending in Vending, Refreshment Services & Micro Markets

- Living the Dream: How to Find your "Why"

10:15 AM - 11:15 AM

- Across the Pond: An International Perspective on Consumer Engagement in a Micro Market
- Vending Machine Calorie Labeling Disclosure Rules: Presenting the Rules, Answering Questions and Providing Guidance
- Specialty Beverages
- Get LinkedIn or Locked Out
- Putting Intelligence in Intelligent Technology

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM

- Micro Market Regulatory Update
- The Snacking Story:

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 2015

9:30 AM - 11:00 AM

NAMA Annual Meeting and Keynote by Julie Seitz

11:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Show Floor Open

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Network Reception

INDUSTRY CROSSOVER

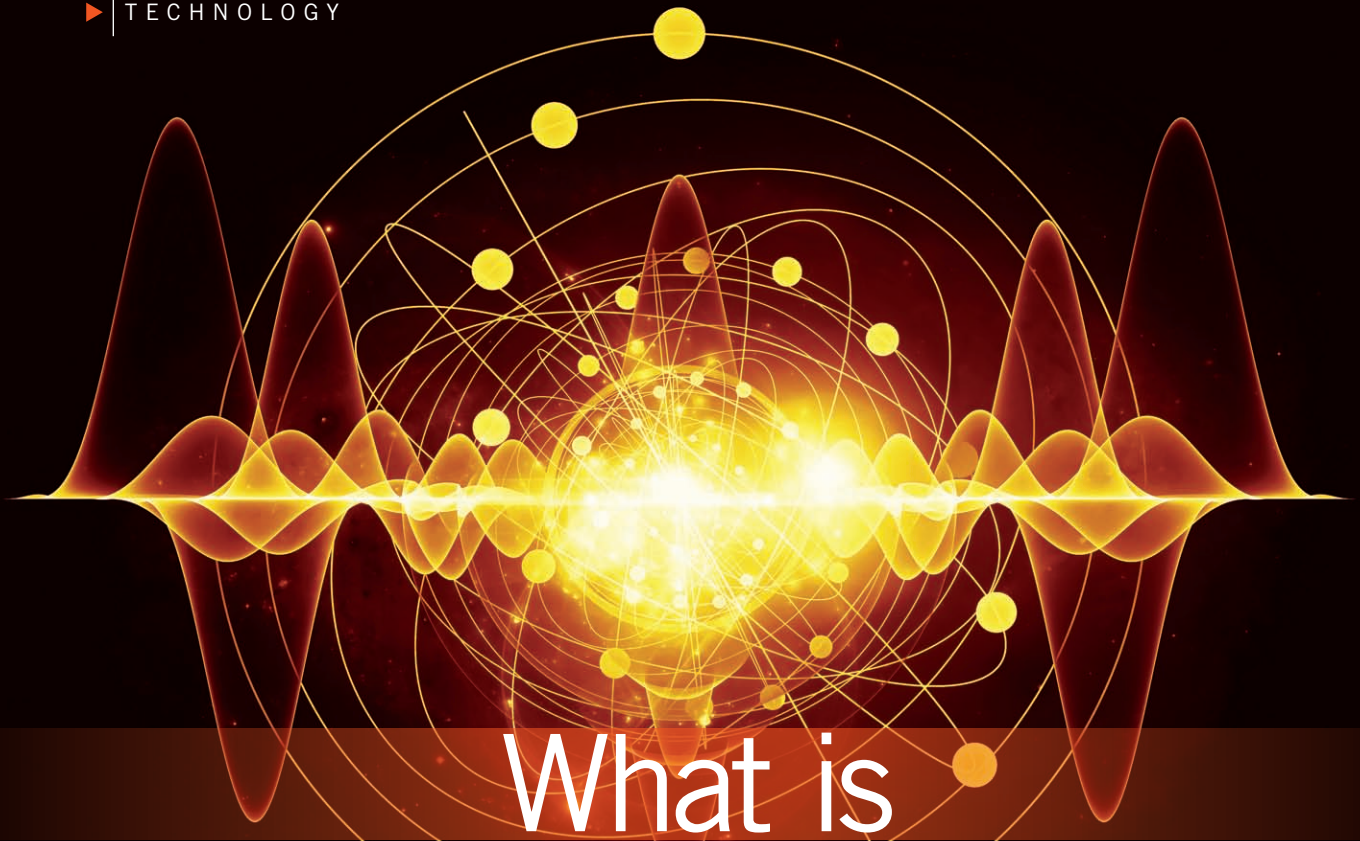
On Thursday, operators can participate in a **badge share day** with the Water Quality Association's WQA Aquatech USA and The Car Wash Show 2015.



FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 2015

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

The Friday Wrap/Show Floor Open



What is Big Data?

By Emily Refermat, Editor

Today's technology gives operators an unobscured view of their operation. Data gathered from technology can be used to increase profitability, sales and customer service, but it can also be overwhelming. Learn what other operators do with their facts and figures.

Big data is proof that you must indeed be careful what you wish for. With technology integration comes an onslaught of confusing information. On one hand, vending operators utilizing most of what today's industry technology has to offer can see every aspect of their business. A vending machine becomes a dynamic automatic retailer that via MDB, DEX and telemetry offers data about equipment

status, payment acceptor jams, item level product sales, cash in, sellouts and service.

On the other hand, big data doesn't stop there. Micro markets provide invaluable data of their own. Suppliers have specific systems that report on products sales, customer preferences, loyalty programs and more. Coffee service data contributes either as part of the vending management system (VMS) or sometimes on its own.

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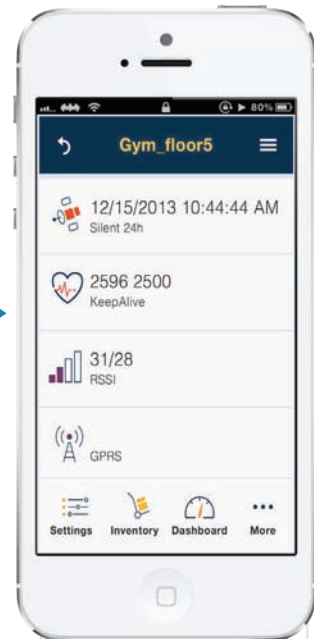
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Outside the industry-specific systems, savvy operators are also looking at online data — visits to their Website, social media interaction, SEO (search engine optimization), consumer trends and a lot of non-structured data that all melds together to give operators an idea of how their businesses are ranking in the local area and with customers.

That is big data, the tsunami of information that the industry can now gather. For most it's overwhelming, and equally staggering to turn that data into action.

The good news is that big data is a revolutionary force that allows operators to maximize their opportunities. Although it is a difficult force to tame, here are five tips from successful operators who are working to harness vending's big data.

Focus on key metrics daily

First, look at how and where you are getting the data. Focus on some important metrics to start.

"We use remote machine monitoring [telemetry] on machines to collect data for sales, inventory and machine errors," said Jeffery Smith, President and CEO of All Star Services, Inc. based in Port Huron, MI. He reviews this information daily. "The data can be very overwhelming," he said. Despite this, Smith understands that data can help him improve his level of service to the customer and operational efficiencies as a company. "We like to use the data not just to identify issues and set corrective action, but also to answer questions about the business."

In addition to capturing the data, Smith has created an internal process where changes based on the analysis can be done very quickly, often the next day. "This is very key as we can see items of interest that sales have increased and it would allow us to make a conscious decision to add facings of a specific item to ensure sufficient inventory on site," said Smith.

Meskin's telemetry how-to

HOW MANY DAYS CAN I GO BETWEEN SERVICES?

- **Aim to collect \$100 to \$150 dollars each visit**
- **Look at all machines at a location** — If a snack machine needs service, check if the inventory levels of the drink machine will hold until the snack vender's next service. If not, the drink machine may need filling even though it only has \$50 inside.
- **Aim for the middle** — Maximize collections without hurting customer satisfaction by balancing par levels and sellouts.

HOW CAN I USE DATA FOR MERCHANDISING?

- **Look at products by location** — Your bottom seller should be at least 20 percent of your top seller. If sales of the top sellers are causing you to fill the machine often and the average collection is below \$100, consider removing the slowest items and doubling up on the best sellers.
- **Look monthly at turns per item per location** — High turners in a single machine could be sleeper items that will sell well in other locations.
- **Don't compare healthy items to your top selling traditional items** — Remember to compare them to the average selling traditional items.
- **Create variety in transient accounts** — B&I accounts have set programs so daily consumers can count on their favorite snacks. We tend to change only the slowest movers to keep things new/gain sales. In transient locations, we change offerings more often including new and higher priced items since the consumers change on a daily basis.
- **Streamline the warehouse** — I look at how many machines I'm selling an item in and I make decisions monthly as to keep that item and increase the amount of machines we sell it in or cut it completely.

WILL MY TELEMETRY DEVICE AND VMS WORK TOGETHER?

- **If you're new to telemetry, try a single provider** — I started telemetry before the option of telemetry and VMS being an all-in-one system. If I made the decision today, I would prefer an all in one solution. The interfacing between multiple systems is possible, but can cause extra steps which always leads to human error.

Break it down to now, and later

Operators are capturing a lot of different forms of data, often more than they can analyze initially. It's important to capture data and implement a long and short term analysis strategy.

"Today we're collecting SKU turn data (vending), UPC turn data (micro markets) cash sales, cashless sales, connectivity reports, user frequency, emails and even cell numbers," said Jeff Whitacre, CEO of Food Express located in Greensboro, N.C. and founder of

USConnect. Whitacre considers the data streams invaluable in running his business profitably. He focuses on which machines to service when and what products to offer, thanks to his VMS. At the same time, he outsources the user data collection. It's important to him, but something he can't dedicate his resources to right now. "We are still figuring out how to assimilate it all into useful streams, but I'm happy with what we're collecting today and look forward to expand-

ing into more complex user data,” Whitacre said.

Make sure you understand the VMS

One of the challenges operators must overcome in the big data world is finding the right system and the right person to dedicate to technology. Bill Meckstroth, co-owner of Midwest Refreshments in Dayton, OH, knows firsthand how difficult it can be if you don't speak the language. “Telemetry systems are very costly,” said Meckstroth. Getting some onsite training to go with a telemetry system adds more to the cost, but is important. “I'm not an IT guy,” said Meckstroth. “I can't talk their language. They need to speak our language to be successful.”

Meckstroth went through a number of telemetry systems looking for the one that best fit his needs of clear

CLOUD-BASED VMS allows users real-time data from any computer or mobile device.

understanding and service. Right now he uses ParLevel's cloud-based VMS. “Cloud-based is the only way to go,” he said. It allows him to call up reports and real-time service logs from any computer or mobile device, including when he's presenting a proposal to a location.

Meckstroth sees the need for an employee with technical expertise as very strong and getting stronger. One reason is the firmware upgrades done by manufacturers. “It's my belief that in the next 5 to 7 years, every vending company that wants to succeed with technology will have to bring on board

an IT person or contract a third-party IT company,” explained Meckstroth.

Operations and prekitting are key

Telemetry often pays for itself through improvements in product inventory, sales and scheduling. Using the sales data it provides to merchandise the vending machine provides returns over and above the investment.

“The way I sleep at night is that the data is just an extra add-on benefit,” said Scott Meskin, president of Black Tie Services Inc. in Baltimore, MD. When he opted to add telemetry, he focused on the company's ability



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to dynamically schedule, prepack with a 99 percent accuracy and to know exactly how much money was in the vending machine when it was serviced. Then he was able to control inventory on his delivery vehicles and the SKUs in the warehouse. “To get the ROI, you don’t have to use the product sales data,” said Meskin. “But if you do use the data, you will get even more.”

One difficulty Meskin has found is in identifying and acting on data. “There is always data coming in. The challenge is not only noticing what has to be done, but also sending people out to make it happen,” he said. In some VMSs, swapping one product for another across all locations, a global change, can be difficult and time consuming. Vending machines are often individualized allowing unique planograms, but this means going into each machine in the VMS to change the product. “That can be hundreds of machines,” said Meskin.

To make a global change, Meskin has the new product added to the pick line. It’s pre-kitted and the driver is told what product the new one is replacing. The driver will place the new product behind any old product left in the spiral. For a few weeks, Meskin will have to call up sales of the new product under the old name until all the machines are changed out in the VMS. “It takes a while to do,” he added.

For micro markets the data comes with the systems. Meskin looks at micro market sales data mostly to identify potential marketing promotional opportunities for locations. For example, if 200 people buy a cup of coffee at a location, Meskin might try to identify an item he can bundle with the coffee to encourage incremental sales. “The same with sandwiches...I’ll bundle a sandwich, chips and a soda to encourage the customer to make a bigger purchase,” he said.

6 Ways Big Data Could Damage Your Business—and What to Do About It

Nowhere is the influx in big data more apparent and useful than in marketing. Information about what is bought, when and by whom is invaluable to retailers whether they are divining trends or preparing bundling and promotional opportunities. Owen Shapiro, 30-year marketing veteran sees big data as a tremendous opportunity to connect with customers in amazing new ways. However, there are dangers. While preparing to take maximum advantage of all the glorious opportunities big data offers, Shapiro warns of six ways big data could damage a business and how each can be avoided.

1. Secure Your Data
2. Try Not to Drown
3. Don’t Get Outsmarted
4. Mind the Store
5. Listen to the Machine
6. Instant Dissatisfaction

Read the full article online at vendingmarketwatch.com/12050127

Measure results and look for opportunities

For Sandy Thornton, co-owner of VendEdge in Ringgold, GA, it was obvious from day one that the investment in technology was paying off. “Our route cost decreased significantly with the implementation of remote monitoring,” she said. In the warehouse, a pick-to-light system increased the efficiencies right away.

“It is important to maintain or increase route collection averages, have a low out of stock ratio and keep an ear toward our employees to listen for issues that they encounter or suggestions that they make for improvement. These can then be verified through data we have collected,” explained Thornton. After the efficiencies and collection averages, Thornton set about looking at analytics. The data allowed the company to rework planograms and uncovered areas where it was necessary to change the tray configurations in the snack machines as well as the spiral counts.

Thornton looks at daily sales reports along with maintenance logs and the route compliance logs (which reflects if the driver serviced every machine that was assigned for the day, what time it was done and how much the collections should be as well as the actual amount collected). She believes strongly that good data is paramount to getting the most out of analytics. “The info that comes into the system from drivers using their tablets is critical to maintain correct inventories in the field. If that process slips, the data is corrupted and becomes much less valuable. The same is true for purchases being entered into the system consistently and correctly,” said Thornton.

Another piece to maintaining good data is ensuring the Cellular/DSL connections. “The remote vending devices rely on a cellular connection to transmit the DEX info to the VMS. Without good cellular signals at each machine, we have installed Hi Gain antennas to overcome most of those issues. As for the DSL lines, those are our live connections to the markets.”

Data is a powerful tool. It gives an operator facts, not impressions, about what sells and when. It saves time, energy and money when used wisely with good, usable data, solid cellular/DSL connections and regular review. | ◀



PepsiCo introduces its **Mtn Dew® Kickstart Strawberry Kiwi**, available in vending. Mtn Dew® Kickstart Strawberry Kiwi fuses an energizing blast of DEW® with real fruit juice, coconut water and just the right amount of kick. The product is 60 calories per 12-ounce can.

vendingmarketwatch.com/12037862



Inventure Foods, Inc. introduces **Vidalia Brands™ Zesty Ranch Sweet Onion Petals**. Zesty Ranch Sweet Onion Petals include ranch seasoning, which offers a new spin to the snack line's original Sweet Onion Petals variety. The product is baked, gluten-free and features zero trans fats.

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AdvancePierre™ Foods extends its premium Pierre Signatures line with the **Spicy Breaded Chicken Breast with Cheese Sandwich**.

Each chicken sandwich features a breaded chicken breast filet topped with cheese on a corn-dusted roll.

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The Promotion In Motion Companies, Inc., announces the launch of **Welch's® Apple Orchard Medley Fruit Snacks** featuring fruit flavors such as Granny Smith Apple, Golden Delicious Apple, Red Delicious Apple, Apricot and Juicy Pear. The product contains 100 percent of the daily recommended value of vitamin C, and 25 percent of vitamins A and E.

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How to produce publicity

By Ben White, Contributing Editor

Promote your business without spending a fortune by marshalling local resources and talent.

Publicity plays a critical role in the overall success of a business. Offering an outstanding service that no one knows about doesn't generate a great deal of income. Some entrepreneurs like P.T. Barnum (who is credited with saying "There is no such thing as bad publicity") are natural born promoters and make it look easy to market a business or service. But many business owners find generating publicity to be difficult, time consuming, expensive and just plain exhausting.

Fortunately, growing the awareness of your company is possible with only a moderate investment of time, resources and capital. Business pro-

motion can even be energizing and exciting by following a 3 step process for success:

- Decide what story about the business is worth sharing with others.
- Discover who would be interested in listening to the story.
- Use local tools and people to help tell the story A.F.A.P. (As Free As Possible).

Step 1: Develop a story to share with others.

Every business has a story to tell. Perhaps the business was created from a passion, or the business was resurrected after a period of decline. Maybe the business is dedicated to a cause, or is motivated to succeed due to a family member's battle with illness. Whatever story a business owner is interested in sharing with others should be the basis for all publicity work. Defining and developing "your story" creates a clear, confident message that can easily be shared with anyone and everyone who's interested. The story need not focus on the nuts and bolts of the business — publicity is about awareness and does not mean closing a sale. Publicity creates interest, and as many good salespeople will affirm, warm potential customers are far easier to close than cold ones.

I know an OCS operator who started his business because of a crazy obsession to always have the perfect

“Many a small thing has been made large by the right kind of advertising.”

— Mark Twain from his novel, "A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's court" 1889



cup of coffee at work. His passion for quality hot beverages was a very compelling story and he mentioned it to everyone he came in contact with. The more he shared his message, the more people asked him to provide a top quality OCS service. This gentleman now has a successful 10-year-old company and enjoys every single day he gets to spend at work — all because he had a story he was willing to share with others.

Step 2: Discover who would be interested in listening to your story.

Publicity, much like a snowball rolling downhill, gains momentum over time. Discovering who is interested in “your story” may seem to be a daunting challenge at first. But the more “your story” gets told,



“The only thing worse than being talked about is not being talked about.”

— Oscar Wilde

the easier it becomes to tell, and as it's retold again and again, more and more potential customers become aware of your products and services. Start by Googling groups who are interested in the same things as your business. For example — If I were interested in starting a micro market business that focused on locally sourced fresh food selections, I would seek out local farmers' market groups, growing co-ops, health clubs, Trader Joe's fan clubs...anyone who may be glad to hear that a micro market stocked with local ingredients is available in their area. These people may be the very decision makers who would ask to have a micro market at their workplace.

Step 3: Use local resources to tell “your story” A.F.A.P. (As Free As Possible).

Perhaps a video of “your story” would be a great way to spread the message of the company. Video productions are powerful tools, but they can be difficult to develop and expensive to produce. That's where local help can come in handy. Search for students or volunteers willing to work in exchange for experience or credit on a project. Community colleges, vocational schools, drama clubs and local media centers all contain willing volunteers who would love to help you get “your story” on recorded media. Having a recorded message makes it easy for local broadcast outlets to feature your business in a feature or special.

Look internally for someone with excellent written communication skills or a creative marketing background to assist in producing “your story” in a text format. The story should be interesting to a broad segment of the population and written like a profile in a magazine. Focus on facts and give the writer some good quotes from you that are both memorable and personal.

Getting a family member or intern to start a social media campaign to share “your story” online can also be beneficial. The most important component of social media, as a publicity tool, is time. Posts need to be made regularly, daily in most cases. It can be a challenge for some business owners to work into their schedule, so paying a small stipend to an employee or getting a family member with a vested interest in the company to handle the social media aspect, with your input, is an ideal way to build awareness of your business.

The ideas and methods of generating publicity are certainly many and varied. But developing a story and spreading it locally can go a long, long way in helping a business grow and succeed. | ◀



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ben White was the general manager at Monumental Vending in Beltsville, MD. for many years.

He recently started Vending Insights, Inc. to help operators incorporate technology and advance large projects such as micro market development. Contact White via email at ben@vendinginsights.com



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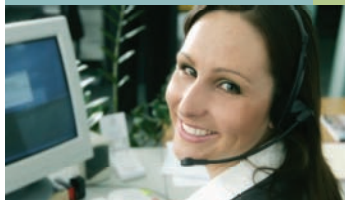


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2015 ROUTE DRIVER OF THE YEAR QUARTERLY WINNER

Candi Greenwald

Snackworks, Inc., Bradenton, FL

Candi Greenwald finished 2014 with a 5 percent increase in sales.

Greenwald's 'take ownership' attitude is a gift to Snackworks and makes her an indispensable member of the team.

By Adrienne Zimmer, Managing Editor

CANDI GREENWALD gets the job done. Amazing customer service? Check. Consistent machine maintenance? Check. Affinity for vending? Check. When it came to nominating a route driver for the 2015 Route Driver of the Year award, filling in Greenwald's name was a no-brainer for Lisa Leuchter, vice president of Snackworks. "Candi possesses all of the attributes each and every one of us in our industry wishes our route drivers to have and demonstrate on a regular basis," she said. Leuchter considers herself and the company fortunate for having hired Greenwald, who will reach her five year anniversary with the company in July. "Candi is trusted and well-liked by all in the industry," said Leuchter. "She is a real star in the world of vending."

One step further

Not every route driver will go the extra mile to ensure that all equipment is working properly, all customers are taken care of and all machines are fully stocked. But Greenwald does, and it shows. "In addition to her superior attitude and work ethic, Candi has great knowledge of the equipment she is responsible for on her route," said Leuchter. In Greenwald's five years with Snackworks, she has trained herself and others to

"She is a real star in the world of vending."



fix and clean machines. Leuchter can always count on Greenwald to take ownership of her work and never has to ask twice. "Machines are routinely cleaned, coin mechs filled and mechanical issues are successfully dealt with by Candi."

Persevere for excellence

Greenwald's perseverance for excellence is in her bones. She doesn't do a good job to keep her job, she works hard because failure is not an option. "The pride and dedication Candi has for a job well done is evident by the unsolicited positive comments her customers provide to us," said Leuchter. Customers appreciate Greenwald's optimistic personality. "She listens to customer requests and constantly engages consumers,"

said Leuchter. "Snackworks never receives complaints from customers. Our 'eyes in the field' always note how well she fills and cleans machines on her route."

Company-wide pride

Although some operators have seen vending numbers plateau in 2014, Greenwald finished the year with a 5 percent increase in sales. Greenwald, who services snack, beverage and cold food machines, doesn't simply make her company proud by delivering in numbers. It really comes down to her positive attitude. Greenwald is proud of the work she does for and with the Snackworks team. "I want to thank and recognize all of my coworkers at Snackworks," said Greenwald. "This is a team award, not just a personal one. Also a special thank you to Lisa and Josh for letting me shine and helping me become a successful driver." ◀

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Every route driver nominee will receive a baseball cap embroidered with the *Automatic Merchandise* logo and the words: Route Driver of the Year nominee.

Quarterfinalists will be featured in a one-page profile in ***Automatic Merchandiser*** magazine in 2015. They will also receive a \$250 cash prize.

The grand prize winner will receive a trip for two to Chicago, Ill., to attend the NAMA OneShow and receive their award. The grand prize winner will also get a TV. The 2016 Route Driver of the Year winner will be profiled, along with the winner's company, in the April 2016 issue of *Automatic Merchandiser*.

To nominate a driver or view complete contest rules, visit vendingmarketwatch.com/awards/route-driver-of-the-year



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Nominations must include route driver name, company name, address and telephone of the nominee, as well as the name, company name, address and telephone number of the person submitting the nomination. Nominees must be employed as a route driver of a vending operation on April 30, 2016. Entries will be reviewed by *Automatic Merchandiser* personnel ("the judges"). Determination of the winners shall be made by the judges in their sole and absolute discretion, and such determination shall be final and binding.

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