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Donna Hall, CEO

PHYSICAL ADDRESS

45 Potter Drive
Belleville, MI 48111

MAILING & SHIPPING ADDRESS

1653 Morning Sun Lane
Naples, FL 34119-3316

Phone•734.699.6767
Fax•734.699.7363

Email•donna@mippa.org

"Nobody gets to live life backwards, look ahead, that is where your future lies."

~ Ann Landers



*"Did Ann Landers really say that?"
....well according to Google she did!*

In my 19 years with MiPPA, we have never been afraid to look to the future. When I first started, our name was the Specialty Advertising Association of Michigan (SAAM) branded in Humphrey Bogart style "Play it again SAAM." Shortly after that we were re-named the Michigan Promotional Products Association (MiPPA) branded with our own "M" style logo—although I secretly yearned for the "M—go blue" logo. Finally in 2009, we became the Michigan Promotional Professionals Association—hence our current logo depicting our great state and the fact that this is an association of professionals not products.

The explosion of social media in 2009 and 2010 has literally changed the face of the promotional products industry and made us seasoned professionals fully aware that the up and coming movers and shakers have a whole new way of doing things and a whole different viewpoint on what they want out of their association. MiPPA is stepping up to the challenge by

listening to our audience and getting them involved as well as teaching our "old dogs" new tricks (that would be me!)

2011 is going to be a good year and in the words of the "Black Eyed Peas", "We're gonna have a good night..... We're gonna have a good, good night!"

To get this year started, the 2011 Rock Solid Diamond Showcase has to be on your to-do list. This is a brand new year and more suppliers are signing up to do our show, the education line up is going to be great and the party..... Well let's just say you better bring your A-game to the table because the competition is on from foosball and air hockey to name a few along with Wii sports and more—possibly even a "make your own" music video/ DVD! Here's how you get signed up for the action to take place on March 7th and 8th at the newly renamed Suburban Collection Showplace formerly known as the Rock Financial Showplace in Novi, Michigan.:

Suppliers Click Here:

[MiPPA Rock Solid Exhibitor Contract](#)

Distributors Click Here:

[Distributor March Show Registration](#)

See you in 2011.....Donna Hall, CEO

Membership—Join or Renew Here

Haven't joined MiPPA yet? Or, did not send in the renewal? Now is your chance to be an exciting part of your industry's regional association; and we don't want you to miss one minute of it—starting with the 2011 Rock Solid Diamond Showcase to be held on March 7th and 8th. Click here to complete your application or renewal now if you haven't already done so: [FillableMembershipForm](#)

MiPPA President Roger Burnett of Competitive Edge Promotions



As you're reading this, it's the New Year; Time for resolutions, promises that we all make to ourselves to be better than we've been before. Generally speaking, those resolutions are driven by dissatisfaction....an overall feeling that we are not where we'd like to be.

The New Year presents itself as an opportunity for renewal. What better time than the passing of the New Year than to make an attempt to become that which we strive to be – a better, more improved version of ourselves.

As a business owner, I often make decisions about spending money based on one of two factors; will the investment I'm about to make either save me money or improve my opportunity to make money? If the answer to one or both of those questions is no, I will be VERY reluctant to make the purchase. I believe MiPPA's responsibility to you as members is the same. For your participation in the organization, we MUST provide you opportunities to save money and ways for you to learn how to make more money. I know there are members that participate for reasons other than the two I've articulated, and for that I thank you, but these are difficult times. Be certain that your Board is laser-focused on finding ways to do both of these things. We MUST provide value for your investment if we are to expect your continued endorsement in the form of renewals.

For years, the main revenue generator for MiPPA has been your dues and our trade shows. The shows are also the avenue for us to provide an education forum, giving you an opportunity to learn new skills; skills that enable you to earn more money by improving your ability to sell while learning about new products from our stellar supplier partners.

It's no surprise to anyone that our trade shows are under attack from a host of other providers who seek your participation at their events. It seems as though not a month in the year goes by that there isn't one show or another rolling thru town. The value we provide you as members by hosting our trade shows is diluted by the quantity of other places you can go to see product.

Back to New Year's Resolutions. While this is the first you're hearing of it, your Board has been working for the last year to figure out how to make MiPPA a better, more valuable organization for our membership. Over the last year, we've worked diligently to provide more ways to save our members money. This year (and for the near future as well), our collective focus turns to ways to make our members more money. We're banking on the notion that you'll see loads more value in us when we help you learn how to grow your business. This is done through education.

For years, I've heard complaints about the "old school promo salesperson", the one that arrives at a customer's location with a bag full of product, intent on walking out with an order for the "hot new widget". If only we could teach that old dog some new tricks...and yet, the irony of this discussion is that our main economic engine of the association, the thing you know us and love us for, is a product-based trade show! How might we include more interaction with the skills involved with being a great salesperson with the product based education you already know us for?

The argument from our distributor partners often is couched in the notion that it is too difficult and time consuming to take salespeople out of the field to provide them selling skills training, even IF we could get notoriously restless salespeople to sit still long enough to BE taught.

Herein lies our biggest challenge AND our biggest opportunity. And, as any one of us does as we approach the New Year, we are taking on a resolution. We're ready, willing and able to be your personal sales training department. We intend to build a web-hosted, video-based sales training platform, designed specifically for the promotional products distributor. You have plenty of opportunities to learn about product, and our new platform will continue to provide you that chance as well, but our objective is to give you a chance to learn how to be a better salesperson by providing you video-taped interactions to learn how to improve your selling skills. These videos would be available to you, in the comfort of your home, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Learn at your OWN pace, about topics that YOU see as interesting, WHEN you are ready. Consider us the YOU-TUBE of the promotional products selling skills industry.

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CHARLES RIVER
APPAREL

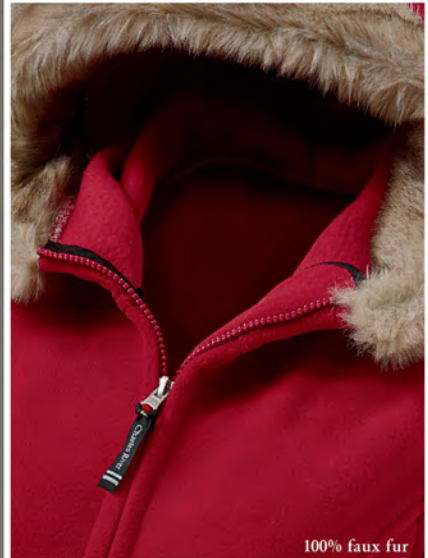


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Continued from Page 2

We've test-marketed the concept to suppliers and distributors alike with a resoundingly positive response.

What are we waiting for, you ask? Money. We need sponsorship to get the platform built. This will require a few key suppliers to recognize the value in that which we are attempting to do, and to sign on as a sponsor to make our vision a reality. We've crafted a proposal that provides substantial benefits to participating sponsors; we merely need the proper audience to deliver our proposal.

Here's where YOU come in. It's time to rally the troops to a call to action! Do YOU have a personal relationship with a high-ranking individual at one of the industry suppliers? Do YOU see the potential value in being able to learn how to be a better salesperson in the comfort of your own home, in non-selling hours? May we ask that you make a personal introduction between your contact at the supplier and one of the MiPPA Board Members, so that we might have a discussion with them about the benefits of our program? I will be at EXPO in Las Vegas, and would welcome the chance to have specific discussions with your contacts while at EXPO.

Ours is an ambitious goal, no doubt. With the right combination of people believing in what we're trying to accomplish, however, I have no doubt that we can make this a reality. Let us know if you are willing to steward the project toward fruition. I look forward to the positive momentum MiPPA can create when we all work together toward a common goal. Thank you in advance for your support of MiPPA, and we'll be sure to keep you updated on our progress via our Facebook page, our LinkedIn Group, as well as in the space dedicated to this letter from the President in each newsletter.

Looking forward to a great year.....more updates next month.

Roger

(Roger Burnett is the owner of Competitive Edge Promotion, RAC Board Secretary and MiPPA's RAC Delegate.)

"And now let us welcome the New Year, full of things that have never been!"

—Anonymous



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SHOWDOWN DISPLAYS adds Dan Ball as National Sales Manager

RAMSEY, MN –

Showdown Displays, a Supplier of Visual Communication and Tradeshow Display products to the Promotional Products industry, announced that Dan Ball has joined Showdown as National Sales Manager.

For the past eleven years, Ball was National Accounts Manager with Advance Corporation in St. Paul, MN, an Awards and Recognition Supplier.

"We're excited to have Dan join us because Dan is well-regarded within the industry. He has a great background and will bring us all the benefits of his knowledge and experience, and all the great Distributors he knows," said John Lundberg, Vice President of Sales of Showdown.

In addition, Andy Hurry has been promoted to Distributor Sales Support. He had been managing shipping and receiving functions for the company but his supervisors found that he had a natural ability in serving customers. So he was moved into this new sales capacity.

"We continue to seek out ways to leverage our people assets", said John Bruellman, President of Showdown Displays. "Sometimes when we spot great talent, we just know how they will fit with our growth plans."

American Ad Bag Announces new Rep for Midwest Territory

American Ad Bag (UPIC: ADBAG) is pleased to announce Bill Hess and Associates will be representing our product line in the Midwest States (IA, IL, IN, KY, MI, MO, MN, ND, NE, OH, SD and WI).

+ NEW! FOR 2011 **plus EMT™** The PLUS That Makes The DIFFERENCE!

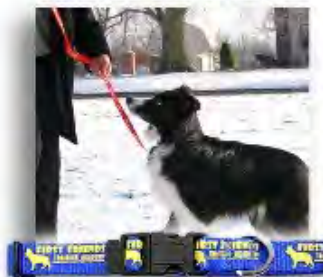
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January 23-25	ASI Orlando	1035
February 16-18	ASI Dallas	2016



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Wanna **Kick Back**
 And *Relax* at The
 PPAI Expo?



3,500 booths can be a lot to cover in just 3 days. Even the heartiest promotional products professionals need a break. As a member of a Regional Association, why not take advantage of the **Regional Affiliate Lounge**? Located at Reef F, Level 2, the Lounge gives you the perfect place to sit, relax, grab a snack and rest your weary feet.

Concessions		Regional Affiliate Lounge	
Coffee/Lemonade	\$3.00	Coffee/Lemonade	\$0
Danish	\$2.50	Danish	\$0
Pretzels/Chips	\$2.00	Pretzels/Chips	\$0
Computer	\$10.00/hr	Computer	\$0/hr
Chairs	Limited	Chairs	Plentiful

Join or renew your membership with a Regional Association by 12/31/10 and you're all set. For RAC information, visit www.regionalassociation.org.



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Choose from one of the industry's deepest inventories, with over 60 leading brands and more than 1,400 styles, including our newest additions for 2011: **Hilton Apparel**, **Liberty Bags** and **Rawlings**. Add to that, our competitive pricing and unsurpassed customer service, and you have the ultimate resource for imprintable apparel.

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Get what you need, when you need it. We deliver to 35 states in one or two days.

Customized to sell

Use our online resources to create a custom website and watch your sales take off. And, our custom catalog is a simple and effective way to build the reputation of the most important brand name of all – yours.

See the S&S advantage for yourself. For a copy of our exciting new 2011 catalog, contact us at 800.523.2155 or ssactivewear.com.

IF IT'S HOT, IT'S HERE.



MIPPA Rock Solid
Diamond Showcase



Are you ready to
shine
in 2011?

Save the Date • March 7-8, 2011
MIPPA Rock Solid Diamond Showcase

MIPPA doesn't just scratch the surface. We look into every facet of your business. That's why our premier event – the MIPPA Rock Solid Diamond Showcase – is the most comprehensive promotional products event in the Midwest, including:

- Exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities
- Professional development sessions
- Networking event for exhibitors and distributors
- Hundreds of product lines and more...

Save the Date • March 7-8, 2011

Suppliers Sign Up NOW!

Don't Miss Out on Early bird Discount!

The 2011 MiPPA Rock Solid Diamond Showcase is right around the corner. We have some exciting things planned for 2011. We are shaking things up once again and have a lot of surprises in store.

CLICK HERE: [MiPPA Rock Solid Exhibitor Contract](#)

Distributors—Mark Your Calendars

Save the date now for the March Rock Solid Diamond Showcase returning to Suburban Collection Showplace—Novi, MI
Hope to see you at Expo!

Join the Discussions



Find us on
Facebook

[MiPPA Facebook Page](#)

**Now Here's a
Sharp Idea!**



Upcoming Events

March 7 and 8, 2011

**MiPPA's Rock Solid Diamond Showcase
Suburban Collection Showplace
(Formerly the Rock Financial Showplace)
Novi, Michigan**

EXHIBITORS CLICK HERE TO REGISTER:

[MiPPA Rock Solid Exhibitor Contract](#)

DISTRIBUTORS CLICK HERE TO REGISTER:

[Distributor March Show Registration](#)