
Rep Association Execs Explore Synergies

A veritable menu of cooperative ventures was explored this summer when MANA hosted a meeting of 12 rep association managers and officers. Formerly known as the Alliance of Manufacturers' Representative Associations (AMRA), the group was convened to explore the continued sharing of materials, educational programs, lobbying activities and other areas in order to better serve the constituencies of the participating organizations.

Included in the topics that were explored and the agreed-upon results were:

- Further organizational and financial sharing of state commission protection activities. This year saw the passage and adoption of a new commission protection act in Connecticut thanks to the cooperative efforts of some members of the group.
- Ongoing support of Small Business Legislative Council federal legislative activities on behalf of professional sales companies.
- Generic participation in regional rep chapter meetings to stimulate local networking education and camaraderie for the members of all rep associations.
- Continued financial and promotional support for the CPMR program and joint conferences such as *Keystone 2005*.
- Promotion of the rep method of going to market in the National Association of Manufacturers' *Leadership for Manufacturers* magazine and other media.
- Promoting the concept to manufacturers that rep-friendly policies are beneficial to both partners' bottom lines.

Generic Rep Meetings to be Explored

Commenting on the meeting and what the association executives accomplished, Jerry Leth, MANA's manager of membership, noted that "at the end of the day there was clearly a sense of unity and cooperation among the members of the group."

To that end he pointed to the discussion that took place on the subject of generic regional rep chapter meetings. Such chapters, according to Leth, would not be affiliated with any specific rep association.

Rather, they would operate in a non-industry-specific manner similar to those chapters already in operation in Cincinnati (MAC) and Milwaukee (WAMA). "We're exploring the possibility of creating a number of these chapters and having them supported on a national basis by the rep associations," said Leth. "Our goal here is to be able to cross industry lines and take advantage of the involvement and leadership talent of local reps." He added that ideally the local rep organization would do all the strategic planning, e.g. when and where meetings will take place and what the subject matter of an event would be. A committee composed of Leth, Tess Hill of ERA, Dennis McGillis of ERA Southern California and Alyson Cody of MAFSI will meet to explore this possibility.



The group will meet again on March 9-10, 2006. Association execs will meet on Thursday (March 9) and then be joined by board members from their respective associations on Friday. For more information regarding participation in this group call Jerry Leth, (949) 859-4040. □

Those attending the forum and their associations:

- **Rick Abraham**, Foodservice Sales & Marketing Association
- **Hank Bergson**, National Electrical Manufacturers' Reps Association
- **Gary Brusacoram**, CPMR, Manufacturers' Representative Educational Research Foundation
- **Alyson Cody**, Manufacturers' Agents Association For The Foodservice Industry
- **Ray Hall**, Electronics Representatives Association
- **Susannah Hart**, Manufacturers' Representative Educational Research Foundation
- **Karen Hone**, Health Industry Representatives Association
- **Jerry Leth**, Manufacturers' Agents National Association
- **Gregg Marshall**, United Sales Association
- **Joe Miller**, Manufacturers' Agents National Association, Association of Independent Manufacturers'/Representatives, Inc., Power-Motion Technology Representatives Association
- **Ken Reynolds**, The Foodservice Group, Inc.
- **James B. Surpless**, CPMR, North American Industrial Representatives Association

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