

REPRINTED FROM

agency sales[®] magazine

february 2010 • vol.40, no.02

16A Journey, Suite 200
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656-3317

toll-free 877-626-2776
local calls 949-859-4040
fax 949-855-2973

MANAonline.org

COPYRIGHT ©2010, MANUFACTURERS' AGENTS NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (MANA)
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION WITHOUT PERMISSION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.





REP FINDS IT'S EASY BEIN' GREEN

BY JACK FOSTER

The pressure is on for businesses to “go green.” Manufacturers can choose to sell through reps for a cost and energy-saving sales force, while reps can make simple changes to lessen their own impact on the environment.

More than 30 years ago, Frank Sinatra and Kermit the Frog put a relatively negative spin on being green in their popular renditions of “It’s Not Easy Being Green.” Mike Jandacek, however, takes a decidedly positive stance when he considers the benefits of being a green rep.

Jandacek, American Industrial Solutions, Batavia, IL, considered,

while en route to visit a customer, the contributions that reps make to the environmental movement to “go green.”

According to the PTR A rep, “Being green is something that has been important to me and my family for a long time. Long before it became the thing to do, we’ve been recycling and doing all we can to avoid waste. Even before it became

convenient to recycle at the curbside, we made the effort to take our trash to recycling locations.”

He recalls that the need to go green probably dawned on him as early as his college days, back in the 80s. “I’ve been married for 22 years, and we’ve been recycling all that time. I’ve also made the effort to replace the lighting in my home and office. The benefit of

that is that I've seen my electric bill go down noticeably."

Jandacek explains, "Perhaps I first started thinking about how the rep business model contributes to the recycling, or the green, movement as I was driving through a wind farm on my way to visit a customer. I love the concept of wind energy, and perhaps it was just seeing the farm that got me thinking about the fact I represent a number of manufacturers' lines. Since I was driving to see a customer, it occurred to me that I was burning a certain amount of gas and naturally contributing to the size of my carbon footprint. But, think for a moment about what would happen in my absence? A number of factory-direct salesmen, each of whom would be representing a single line, would be burning even more gas and creating an even larger carbon footprint."

The rep continues, "You hear it everywhere these days. Going 'green' is all the rage in this age of global warming and skyrocketing energy costs. Businesses are doing their best to convince their customers that they are the green alternative, and many customers have begun to look for green providers of their needs. Most people do not realize that the manufacturers' representative business was a green business before 'going green' was cool."



A Truly Green Business Model

"If you consider the business model, a multi-line manufacturer's representative not only pro-

vides his principals with excellent variable-cost and professional sales services, but helps to minimize the carbon footprint of the sales function. Using my rep firm as an example, we currently represent eight manufacturers, covering four states. A direct sales business model would demand eight different salespeople at a minimum. Each of these salespeople would have their own car and office. Through the synergistic sales model of a manufacturer's representative, seven of those cars are eliminated, along with the resources consumed and the associated carbon footprint generated by each salesperson."

"While that's important, the green business model of the manufacturer's representative does not end with the carbon reduction of eliminating cars and mileage. Many reps work from a home office, eliminating an additional fa-



cility with its HVAC and electrical loading, thus saving on carbon footprint once again.”

“Another area in which a manufacturers’ rep firm can positively impact the environment is through the choices of the management. My firm recycles every possible byproduct, whether used electronics or office paper products and packaging. We can choose more energy-efficient cars, office lighting, recycled paper, and less disposable products in our business without having to form a committee to make it happen.”

Every Little Bit Helps

He notes that in addition to these considerations, “the fact that I, just as so many other reps, work out of a home office, also contributes to the green movement. Consider for a moment the fact that I’m not out there commuting to some distant location every

single morning. I’m also in control of my work environment so I see to it that there’s not a great deal of waste. I see to it that the heating, air conditioning and lighting are not overdone. All these little steps come together to make a real contribution.”


“The very nature of a manufacturers’ rep firm is a green business model. We can further improve our impact on the environment through the choices we make in our daily endeavors of running our already green businesses.”

When Jandacek is asked why he feels it’s important for him to articulate his thoughts on green business, he answers simply, “Because I have to. It’s important. No matter how small a contribution an individual makes, it’s a contribution to the betterment of all of us.”

He admits that his green thoughts have been more internal

than anything else. “I haven’t really done much with my thinking in terms of communicating to principals and customers. I have brought it up to some principals that don’t use reps, however. My major message to them is that if they look closely at the rep model, they can immediately see the savings that can accrue via independent manufacturers’ reps.”

“When I raise the subject in conversation, I generally find that it’s something most people haven’t really thought about. But, it’s something we should spend more time on.”

It would appear that Jandacek shares the same sentiment as Sinatra and Kermit at the end of their song: “...I am green and it’ll do fine, it’s beautiful and I think it’s what I want to be.” 



GETTING GREEN

PROVE
YOU'RE
GREEN

LET THE
WORLD
KNOW YOU
ARE **TAKING**
ACTION WITH
OFFICIAL
CERTIFICATION

GREEN SEAL



Since 1989, Green Seal has been using science-based certification standards to evaluate the environmental practices of U.S. businesses. Hundreds of products and services from companies like 3M and Benjamin Moore have been certified by Green Seal, with over 40 business categories covered by the non-profit. Certification requirements vary by industry, but complete information is available online. They work with countless industry sectors, manufacturers, purchasing groups and governments at all levels to “green” the production and purchasing chain.

WWW.GREENSEAL.ORG

U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL



The U.S. Green Building Council certifies buildings as being green using the LEED Green Building Rating System™ (LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). It's one of the few benchmarks being adopted by municipalities, and it's gaining ground fast. The organization monitors both construction and building renovations by evaluating the design, materials and construction practices used. Operating in a LEED-certified building is an enormous indicator of a company's commitment to green practices.

WWW.USGBC.ORG

CERTIFIED STARTS HERE.

GREENERGY2030



Greenergy2030 offers two levels of certification, with different benefits packages and requirements. They also certify businesses of all shapes and sizes, all the way down to small companies with 1-5 employees. The organization provides certified companies with quite a few on-line resources, including "Green Toolkits" and access to their large community. Greenergy2030 touts the value of gaining access to the growing green marketplace, claiming there's a \$230 billion market of buyers who purchase based on "personal, social and environmental values." They predict an \$845 billion market in just five years.

WWW.GREENERGY2030.COM

GREEN BUSINESS BUREAU



Becoming green certified can seem like an insurmountable task, so it might make sense to hire a consultant to guide you through the process. The Green Business Bureau offers businesses both a clear roadmap to eco-friendliness and different levels of certification. Once certified, your business is included in the GBB directory listing; other benefits are offered, depending on your level of certification. Also on the site: a green business calculator, which tells you how much money you could save depending on your green tendencies.

WWW.GBB.ORG

INSTITUTE FOR GREEN BUSINESS CERTIFICATION, INC.



The Institute for Green Business Certification, Inc. (IGBC) sustainability program outlines several key areas and their guidelines, to make certification easier to come by. They address 10 major areas concerning environmental responsibility and sustainability. Subjects include recycling, office paper use, energy and water consumption/conservation, solid waste reduction and environmentally friendly purchasing. Most guidelines are built around compliance with elements of EPA and OSHA regulations. Like other groups, the IGBC offers a reduced fee structure for small businesses.

WWW.GBCERTIFIED.COM

