

## MAY-JUNE

## 2002

### NEW SALES STRATEGIES

By Chip Doyle  
 Sandler Institute.

Please plan on attending; the June 4<sup>th</sup> meeting at Michaels At Shoreline. Many ERA members have attended our functions before and remember sharing interesting and informative sessions designed to give new insights into problems faced daily.



Our presentation outline states, “If you have spent significant money on turnover of salespeople that didn’t work out then you can’t afford to miss this insightful presentation. Learn how to *manage your OWN selling process* and duplicate that success systematically.” At no time in the history of your business has this last sentence made more sense. Hear how to . . . “Find out why you can predict sales success in weeks instead of months even when you have a long selling cycle.”

During this highly interactive presentation, you will hear guidelines on how to answer the following questions:

1. Do you and your salespeople seem busy but sales revenue isn’t keeping pace?
2. Does your pipeline look full but only droplets come out?
3. Have you spent months (or years) “waiting” for a salesperson (customer? Principal?) to be successful?

### Break the Rules... And Close More Sales. Learn . . .

- How traditional selling turns reps into “unpaid consultants”
- Why people who should be good at sales don’t work out
- To Ask... Don’t Tell
- Hidden Weaknesses and Undermining Attitudes -- How to uncover them in yourself and your sales team
- How to Create a “Cookbook” for Selling Success
- The art of Managing “Ramp Up Time” for new salespeople

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**NCALERA NEWS**

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R.W. (Bob) Parsons, editor

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**MEETINGS & SPECIAL EVENTS**

- June 4 Michaels at Shoreline  
Regular Meeting
- June 13 Michaels at Shoreline  
Owner's Forum
- August 6 Michaels at Shoreline  
Regular Meeting
- September 30<sup>th</sup> Crow Canyon  
Golf Club -- Annual  
Golf Tournament

**We Have A New Website**

By Ed Blake, Web Co-Chairman

Your Northern California ERA Website Committee is proud to announce to all of the members that we have turned on a newly configured web site. The cutover took place over the weekend of May 18 – 19. To



visitors who viewed our website on Monday morning, May 20<sup>th</sup>, it was apparent something had changed. It is not complete, but soon will be.

The new website contains features not before available. Now, the ERA website will act as a true portal to guide visitors to members, their product lines, and the manufacturers they represent. One of the key ingredients of this site is the use of Microsoft's *Access* database, which has been written to accommodate every member's complete information. In addition to the basic name and address information, the site page includes:

- Lines represented
- Links to both the member's custom website and his principals' websites
- E-mail links

- Ability to list branch offices
- Product designations (e.g. capacitors, resistors, semiconductor) that correspond to your respective product lines
- The MAJOR difference to this site is that the member firm becomes responsible for the information on his page. This means that the member firm enters, edits, adds and removes information about their web page, including product lines or any other changes that take place. And, it can be done anytime they want. (The Chapter Office will *activate* the changes, but they are prepared by the member.)

When one visits the site for the first time it will be obvious that there are still some areas where we need to smooth over some rough edges. You will note that there are some references to the Southern California Chapter of the ERA. These little annoyances will be worked out as we go through the fine-tuning process. We ask your patience in this matter.

The first order of business for all Northern California members in good standing is to get their information entered onto the site. The directions are quite simple and you will be receiving them directly from the Chapter Office when the site is ready. Depending on how much data you are entering and how you are connected to the Internet, the amount of time required to do this should range between 20 – 50 minutes. Watch for the instructions!

## **ERA ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT DATE SET**

by Ron Jenkins

The date for this year's Golf Tournament has been set for **Monday, September 30<sup>th</sup>** at Crow Canyon Country Club in Danville. This is the week after WESCON, which is in Southern CA this year.

Please mark your calendar today. Crow Canyon requires that we guarantee 100 players. We will need your support and suggest that you pass the word to your rep, distributor and direct factory friends that may be interested in this event. Golf will be followed by dinner and awards at the Club House.

Please call if you have any questions or care to make any suggestions: Ron Jenkins, Westech (650) 961-1422

Look for updated information in subsequent issues of ERA News.



**An un-named distributor from last year**



**Ron Jenkins**

**NEWS & VIEWS**

By Bob Parsons

**NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES (NBO)**

As we approach summer, it is good to start planning on new and exciting things to do on a vacation. One of the best things one can take on a vacation is *a higher level of confidence about our business' profit level*. One of the secrets of greater profits is the more efficient development of New Business Opportunities (NBO) and reporting them to the powers-that-be in a manner that gets their attention.



Well, guess what? Help is on the way! On June 13, 2002, we will be holding our first 2002 . . .

**REP OWNERS FORUM.**

Those attending will be in for a real treat. Mark Conley, our National Director, (shown at left) will be giving a repeat of his dynamic presentation at Tampa in April on **Standards of NBO Reporting**.



The program takes place **Thursday, June 13** at Michael's At Shoreline, 11 AM sharp. This will be

a working lunch. Here ideas will be presented, reviewed and then commented upon. Plan on getting out of the meeting by 2 PM, give or take a few minutes.

Some of the key questions that will be addressed and answered will cover the whys and wherefores of the topic. Why report at all? How do you get your sales people to make the reports in a timely manner and still get their jobs done? How do we get our principals to read and react to the information? Is there a way to make the data available on the web without giving away the store?

We talked with Mark to get a better idea of how he put this program together. It turns out that he has spent hours talking with reps all over the country, gathering ideas, opinions, cussing and discussing, generally sweating out the details of his talk. The results were good and you will profit by coming to this event.

☀ There is every likelihood that we will be holding one of these Forums every month or so as part of a continuing dialog. For instance, this topic is a natural lead-in to better overall business planning for every rep that sells in this Northern California marketplace. We may very well find ways to talk to our principals in such a positive way that changes for the better can be put into effect. Reps could be freed from the tail-chasing brought on by frequent and diverse out-sourcing.

☀ Don't be surprised if you see a lot more activity from our Education Chair, Michael Onken of Bridge Marketing (shown below). He is being encouraged to start new activities.



One we can talk about is an upcoming program featuring a member of the Palm staff who will give us ideas and tips on how to efficiently use the Palm PDA to make

our businesses operate more smoothly. (Track NBO's?)

There is also talk of presentations on ACT! 2000 and how to use the features added to enhance the sales effort of the user.

We can't help but observe that this owner's forum is a natural follow-on to Chip Doyle's presentation at the June meeting. (See Page 1 of this newsletter.) Chip talks about better utilization of personnel, including the owners themselves. Mark corrects one of the possible deficiencies shared by many rep firms in dealing with their principals.

**WEB SITE CHANGES**

Watch for some major changes in the web site. If you haven't looked in on it lately, you may be in for a large surprise. Ever watchful for ways to improve, our Internet

committee found a worthwhile ally in the Southern California ERA Chapter who had in turn collaborated with the Southwest (Texas) ERA Chapter to create a way to give the web site new powers of persuasion and ease of use for each of the members.

Soon, everybody will have a page on the web site, as a result of being a member of the Chapter. Changes, always a pain in the past, will now be made by the individual member-company so that the currency of their page will reflect how quickly they have changed it. New lines, new people, new locations (or the negative side of such changes) are all recorded at will, whenever they occur. There will still be hyperlinks provided for those who have their own, proprietary pages. This could be the best of all worlds for us.

For a while, members of the Internet Committee will monitor alteration-activities. Instructions will be posted and there will be periodic classes covering the modification-of-site techniques. We are confident that NCALERA's Internet Guru's will be creative in the site creation area.

☀ The **product/company/rep cross-reference** that proved to be an insurmountable task in the printed directory will come to reality on the new web site. Not only will such pages be present, the program structure is such that when you make a change, the cross-reference data changes automatically.

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As a result of this, we will no longer publish a printed directory. A few may be printed right off the web site, however, for each member company. And, provisions will be made for visitors to the site to print their personal version. Certainly, they can print out the pages of those reps that are of interest to them.

**PRESIDENT'S COLUMN**

By Brian Everhart



Sometimes the pressures of business prevent busy reps from doing everything they should, particularly things like writing columns. Fortunately, we have enough activities going on in the Chapter that just going over a review of them makes for a lot of interesting reading.

When you think about it, we already have new things happening that are destined to make this a successful, growing chapter. Next week, several of us will be visiting Southern California, mainly to see our new Webmaster. Ron Jenkins, Bob Parsons and I will be spending the day getting acquainted with the new system. Ron will do the technical stuff and we will try to follow along with what is going on. (More on the new website in Ed Blake's article {Page 2} and in News & Views(Page 4).)

Everyone is quite excited about our up-coming Owner's Forum. Mark Conley has agreed to present his well-received program on New Business opportunities and reporting them to our principals, first given in Tampa at the ERA Conference. I'll be there and hope that you will be too.

Even our up-coming Golf Tournament gets its share of publicity, the first announcement here in this newsletter. Be sure and advise Bob Parsons and/or Ron Jenkins of any *visiting principals who play golf* who might be here during that period. We'll send them a personal invitation. And that goes for your distributors, as well.

We are planning on a complete review of our Chapter financial system. There are things we need to do to keep ourselves on a par with the rest of the world. We have to make certain that we have the funding each year to support setting in motion the new and progressive ideas needed for growth. This may mean an adjustment in dues, or the development of new revenue producing activities.

Thanks for your continued support of our Chapter. We have been number one before and we will be there again!

**SURVIVING THE DOWNTURN**

By Hugh Shyba

*Editor's Note: We have talked with many members over the past two years about many subjects. One important issue is admirably covered in this feature by one of our long-standing members. Follow these simple guidelines and your troubles will diminish.*



- 1- **Have a business plan that foresees this problem.** The first item on that plan should be cash reserves and how long you will deplete cash reserves to continue the business organization. Make sure these are in cash or secure liquid assets, not the stock market.
- 2- **Reduce fixed costs.** Office space is one of your largest fixed costs. Sub-lease or negotiate a smaller office within your building or space that may be under the owner's management. Consider moving to a home office.
- 3- **Insource/outsource.** Review functions that you have traditionally had an outside service do for you and bring them back inside. Or vice versa. Look into Payroll, accounting, data input and computer services.
- 4- **Reduce variable costs.** Re check your phone bills, reduce the number of incoming lines, cell phone bills and amount of minutes used, long distance service, supplies purchased & auto expense.
- 5- **Layoff employees.** Since we are known for our quality people, delay layoffs as long as you can. The number of people you have can help to win new product lines. Start with your non sales people then move to the least productive.
- 6- **Contract out your sales force.** Use independent contractors to cover the less productive territories or specific accounts. This is not a recommended ERA method of covering accounts. These arrangements can be useful , however and need to be carefully monitored.
- 7- **Back-sell your principals.** How are your sales comparing to other Reps? Know if you are in or out of favor and move quickly to remedy the situation. Pay attention to the details.
- 8- **Seek new lines.** Hold on to what you have and seek new to replace a line that may be unproductive. Look for lines in the Industrial, Electrical and Medical market place. Niche lines. Look for lines that have the top distributors Avnet, Arrow & Future under contract.
- 9- **Work yourself harder and smarter.** Make only those account calls that can pay the bills. Check resources that can tell you the financial well being of a company before you find out they have run out of money. Call on Contract Manufacturers. They have the orders to place and they can tell you how to win the business. Fight for your splits. Find ways to track the business.

**Work closely with your fellow ERA Reps to hold up our value and demand payment of commissions. Do not take on a line that has not paid the last guy! Call around before you put on a line to see how reputable they are. Do not sell out! Ask for ALL the business --no house accounts. Keep commission rates up, do not accept lines with lower commission rates. We need to work together as an organization to keep the manufacturers honest. Look for incentives and higher commissioned lines. Let your organization know. once you know you are going to loose a good line so another ERA member can have a chance to pick it up.**

*Editor's Note: WOW!*

The Northern California Chapter of ERA is one of the more active chapters within the national association. We have received numerous national awards to prove it. Our success is a direct result of the interest and effort put forth by its members and the officers listed below, all volunteers.

**CHAPTER OFFICERS, CHAIRPERSONS & DIRECTORS**

<b>OFFICERS</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>COMPANY</b>	<b>A/C</b>	<b>PHONE</b>	<b>FAX</b>
Chairman of Board	Chris Jumper	JEM Electronics	925	417-1033	417-1458
President	Brian Everhart	Everhart, Inc.	408	865-0344	865-0343
Senior V.P.	Bill Hedgpeth	Z-Tech Sales	408	257-5371	257-5651
Treasurer	Bill Hedgpeth	Z-Tech Sales	408	257-5371	257-5651
Mmbrshp V.P.	Chris Straube	Straube Assoc.	650	969-6060	964-6526
Secretary	Eric Robinson	E.S. West	408	565-9050	565-9055
Past President	Bill Walsh	Westech Associates, Inc.	650	961-1422	968-9898
Past President	Lon Hudson	Ross Mktg.	408	988-8111	492-0197
National Director	Mark Conley	O'Donnell Assoc. No.	408	456-2950	943-8243
Alternate Nat'l Del.	Lon Hudson	Ross Mktg.	408	988-8111	4920197

**DIVISION V.P.'S**

Communications	Hugh Shyba	Shur Sales	408	399-7487	399-4767
Components	John Latimer	Luscombe Eng.	408	370-2020	374-8663
Computer Prods.	Eric Robinson	E.S. West	408	963-1008	565-9055
Instrumentation	Brian Levien	Sentech Measurements	530	792-0175	792-0515
Materials	Doug Evans	Paxcell Group	775-	831-1333	831-1367
RF/Microwave	Charlie Dickinson	C/G Associates	510	790-1193	790-1383
SAVE	Phil Kipnis	Pacific Coast Visions.com	408	988-1444	988-1707

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS**

Ambassador	Hugo Shane	Executive Director	408	243-3372	246-4413
Ambassador	Tom Mollard	Life Member	650	968-1581	
Archivist	Jean Lape	J.E. Lape Co.	650	345-3021	345-3952
Directory	Steve Ross	Ross Marketing	408	988-8111	492-0197
Education	Michael Onken	Bridge Marketing	650	827-3600	827-3609
Golf Tourney	Ron Jenkins	Westech Assoc.	650	961-1422	968-9898
Internet	Edward Blake	Edward Blake Assoc., Inc.	408	934-3955	956-9732
Scholarship	Brian Trankle	Jack Logan Memorial Fund	650	343-2416	
Distributor Coord.	Shirley Burres	Recht Associates	650	964-6321	964-8165
Nominating	Chris Jumper	JEM Electronics	925	417-1033	417-1458
Newsletter	Bob Parsons	Chapter Office Manager	408	243-3372	246-4413

**SERVICES, INC.**

President	Bill Walsh	Westech Assoc.	650	961-1422	968-9898
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**CHAPTER STAFF**

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