

ERA Today



Newsletter of the ERA Southern California Chapter

March 2003



Bryan Shirley gave a dynamite presentation on rep firm Mergers and Acquisitions at our January 30 Chapter Meeting. He has since done it in San Diego and Northern California.

For 90 minutes on January 30th Bryan reminded us of everything we ever thought we knew about buying, selling and merging manufacturer's rep firms. He documented the process from start to finish. Not fancy or particularly difficult, just the right way to do it. Fifty-five owner and non-owner ERA members participated. He fielded dozens of questions and also questioned the group. Social time and dinner followed and everyone was gone by 8:00 PM. This session is a must-see for anyone even thinking about selling or buying a rep firm. Many present had already been involved in the process. No one took issue with anything Bryan said, he was right on target.



Members found Bryan's talk full of interesting information.



Six folks from Carlberg Associates attended and enjoyed the dinner.



Tom McCarthy of Quadrep and Laurie Sullivan of EBN share some industry information.

SoCal Electronic Distributors And Representatives Meet To Discuss Mutual Concerns

Our March 19 chapter meeting proved to be a very open and frank discussion of all that is good and bad in the relationships between distributors, reps and manufacturers. A panel of folks from all three areas talked freely about common and unique problems facing each of them in these difficult times, including basic relationships, policies regarding direct orders, POS and its problems and labor requirements, CEMs and the increasing percentage of product going to them on behalf of OEM customers.

Audience participation was highly active and discussions started during the program continued

through social time and right on into dinner. The forum was well accepted and there were discussions about making this an annual event for the benefit of all concerned.

Only three business days later, Laurie Sullivan had an article in EBN about it:
www.ebnonline.com/printableArticle.jhtml?articleID=8100013

Thanks to Dave Burgener of ERA member distributor Projections Unlimited for putting this meeting together. Also thanks to panelists Dan Beingessner of ERA manufacturer's rep firm Luscombe Engineering, Marla Downs of ERA manufacturer's rep firm Carlberg & Associates, Jim Goss of ERA member distributor Prime Electro and Carl Rhoads with manufacturer Sanyo-Denki America.

Not All Customers Have Moved to China!

By Harrison Frank, SOCALEE Show Coordinator

Well, where are they if they haven't moved to China? Mexico? Taiwan? Malaysia? Thailand? Temecula? Of course, many of them have flown the California coup in search of cheaper manufacturing conditions. Primarily the "A" accounts. But not all of them. And many have left the product design staff behind at their same old locations in California. Most of the former "B" and "C" accounts are still here because it hasn't yet become economical for them to bail out. So how does a rep make a living in this new-reality marketplace?

The answers are simple. The devil is in the execution. Here are some thoughts:

- ❑ Figure out a way to get paid for design wins and split commission from the “A” accounts.
- ❑ Increase your commission rate on sales through negotiation with your principals or by brokering some of your sales.
- ❑ Get more lines— synergistic with your key lines of course.
- ❑ Face reality, the former “B” and “C” accounts are your new “A” and “B” accounts.

Most reps and distributors did not pay a lot of attention to the “B” and “C” accounts in the heyday just passed. In fact, many don’t even know who they are or where they are. How do you find them? One easy and economical way to establish quick connections with these folks is to exhibit your stuff at the Southern California Electronics Expo, September 24, 2003 at the Orange County Fair and Exposition Center. Over 1300 engineers and purchasing professionals from these companies will be there to talk to you. The rest is up to you.

Log on to www.socalee.com and sign up for your exhibit space now. If you like the personal touch, just call (949) 551-2890. Frances will help you take care of the details. Good booth locations are still available.

OCEE is now Southern California Electronics Expo

The new name reflects the fact that promotional efforts now include all of Southern California. The show will be September 24, 2003 in the Orange County Fair and Exposition Center. For exhibiting information: 949-551-2890
info@socalee.com
www.socalee.com

The Computer Projector

Chapter owned, it is available for your presentations and meetings. still only \$100 per day. Just call the office. 949-551-5200

Chapter Meetings are the “big events” that draw a lot of members together to enjoy meaningful and educational programs, have a little social time, eat a nice dinner and head for home by 8:00.

ERA National – Member Benefits

By Jay Ownby, ERA SoCal National Delegate
Need new lines? More lines? Better Lines? Who doesn't? ERA National publishes *Weekly Lines Available*, a listing of a dozen or so manufacturers looking for reps. *Weekly Lines Available* is emailed only to ERA National members. Non-members may learn about a manufacturer of interest who has published in *Weekly Lines Available* from other sources, but by that time they are likely to be well behind the curve.

Just one good line that you wouldn't have gotten a shot at otherwise can pay your ERA National dues for many years.

Need CPMR CEUs?

Did you know educational ERA chapter meetings and Owner's Forums can be used for CEUs? It is another good reason to participate.

A Successful Las Vegas Show

A big room full of manufacturer's representatives and distributors hosted dozens of Las Vegas electronics engineers and purchasing folks on March 13 at our first-ever tabletop show there. While attendance numbers were not huge, exhibitors seemed satisfied with the level of quality and interest. One exhibitor reportedly received an \$8000 order a few days after the show from a previously unknown customer.



Las Vegas Show customers talked to a lot of rep folks in a short time.



There was also a lot of product for customers to see at distributor tables.



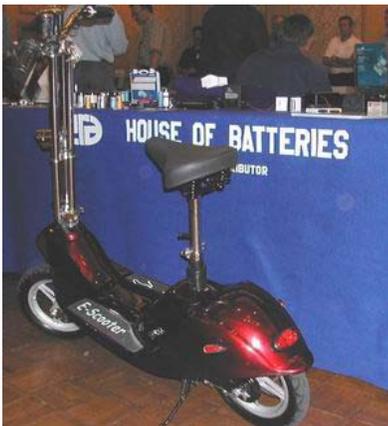
The crowd was small but customers needed our exhibitors' products.



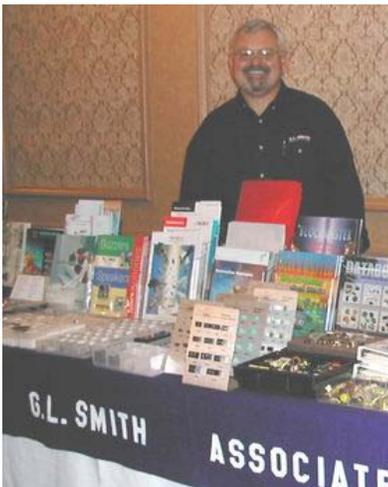
Many customers arrived with applications in hand.



The opportunity for Reps to talk to reps is an important aspect of any ERA event.



Electronic products did not stop at components. The manager of the facility bought this scooter!



Gary Smith, Shows Committee Chairman, was particularly happy with attendance in the final hour.

The New Southern California Electronics Expo Website

The new site is up and running well. Go there to rent a booth, check the hours, see who is exhibiting:
www.socallee.com

Chapter Directory

Our ERA SoCal chapter directory remains the standard for the industry. This resource provides the one way prospective customers and principals can find member firms via the web. Members enter and update their own data without intervention by the office. Data entry is quick and easy. Users can easily use the cross references and find members by product, manufacturer or company name.
www.erascal.org

Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo ELECTRO-TECH Shows

April 9 and 10 ERA SoCal will do tabletop shows in Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo.

**Apr 23, 2003
 ERA SoCal OWNER'S FORUM
 Profit from the new rep bonanza that lies ahead**

Cypress Golf Club, Los Alamitos
 Reservations are needed

Apr 25-26 ERA Small Rep Firm Forum

(Not a chapter event)
 Baltimore, MD
www.era.org

May 7 & 8 Del Mar Electronics Show

(Not a chapter event)
 Del Mar, CA
www.vts.com

May 13-15, 2003 EDS

(Not a chapter event)
 Las Vegas
www.edsc.org

**June 3 ERA SoCal Chapter Event
 TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT**

- Sales Technologies:
 How customers use technology to find product and technologies used to sell products.
- Getting Around:
 Traffic reporting, short cuts, best places to eat and stay.

ERA Friday Breakfast

with your ERA friends continues to be a fun and productive way to share information and solutions to problems. You enjoy people who share your Interests and still get to the office at a reasonable time.

- * **ORANGE COUNTY:** Tustin
 Every Friday at 7:00
 Mimi's, 17th Street at 55 freeway
- * **SOUTHBAY:** Manhattan Beach
 First Fridays at 7:30
 Luigi's 5267 W. Rosecrans
- * **THE VALLEY:** Chatsworth
 Second Fridays at 7:30
 Lamplighter, DeSoto & Nordhoff

Chapter Officers:

- President,** George Gibbons
- Chairman of the Board,** Dan Parks
- Vice President,** Bob O'Brien
- Treasurer,** Steve Goldman
- National Delegate,** Jay Ownby
- Membership,** Tom Felts
- SOCALLEE Show Director,** Gary Smith

Trustees:

- Bill Sullivan
- Harrison Frank
- John Buffa
- Rich Grenn

**Association Office
 Executive Director**

- Dennis McGillis
- Assistant Director,**
 Frances McGillis

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ERA SoCal Committees, 2002 – 2003

Committees are the heart of ERA with members involved in every aspect of chapter operations. Chapter business is conducted by the chapter office and Chapter Board with committee support. Their actions and recommendations make things happen. Below is a list of ERA SoCal Chapter Committees with phone numbers of chairmen so they can be reached with comments or suggestions.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Bill Sullivan 949-770-6229 Chairman
John Buffa 714-692-8880
Harrison Frank 760-758-2400
Rich Grenn 714-731-2222

BYLAWS COMMITTEE

Jay Ownby 949-581-1211 Chairman
Bill Quinton
Gary Schoenbachler
Ed Reese
Ted Wiltse

FINANCE COMMITTEE

Steve Goldman 805-777-1106 Chairman
George Gibbons
Bob O'Brien
Bill Greenfield

PROGRAM PLANNING COMMITTEE

Bob O'Brien 818-957-0640 Chairman
Dave Burgener
Roy Burtrum
Bill Greenfield
Mark Sabine
Gary Schoenbachler
Bob Stukenberg
Don West

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Tom Felts 310-539-9070 Chairman
Steve Goldman
Mark Thompson
Tim Wolfe
Roy Burtrum

SOCAL EE COMMITTEE

Gary L. Smith 714-701-1800 Show Director
Steve Tennesen Asst. Show Director
Harrison Frank Show coordinator

OWNER'S FORUM COMMITTEE

Harrison Frank 760-758-2400 Chairman
Tammy Bailey
David Derksen
Jimmy Hill
Gary Luthy
Dave Weathers
Ted Wiltse

SHOWS COMMITTEE

Gary L. Smith 714-701-1800 Chairman
Dave Snyder

TECH FOCUS COMMITTEE

Jay Walters 818-957-0640 Chairman
Doug Johnson
Jeanne Ogren
Kelly Carlberg

TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE

Jay Walters 909-317-6144 Chairman
Don Blankenberg
Kelly Carlberg
Doug Johnson
Jeanne Ogren

WEBSITE COMMITTEE

Dan Parks 714-375-6500 Chairman
George Gibbons
Bill Perry

