

ERA Today



**ELECTRONICS REPRESENTATIVES ASSOCIATION
SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER
May 2006 Newsletter**

The Northrop Grumman Show

Our March 14, 2006 Tabletop Show



On a beautiful March day we were guests of NGC in Woodland Hills to show our wares in an outdoor venue.



Many engineers and reps found each other in this three hour event. Cafeteria access kept us from going hungry



Northrop folks and ERA members enjoyed getting together to talk about products and solutions.



The ability to connect easily with a couple of hundred engineers made a productive day for exhibitors.

Our popular tabletop shows in customer facilities were started by chapter members in 1968. This recent in-plant show continues the events which worked well almost 40 years ago and are still enthusiastically embraced by reps, distributors and customers today.

The "Goleta" Show

Our April 4, 2006 Tabletop Show

A repeat performance of our oldest continuously operating tabletop show, staged annually since 1969. Although held in the Santa Barbara Elk's Lodge with a Santa Barbara address, it has traditionally been called "The Goleta Show" since many local customers are in the adjoining city of Goleta. Open 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM with a light lunch and soft drinks, it is a pleasant time for vendors and customers alike.



Customers like the ability to find solutions and talk with dozens of sales people in a short time.



Exhibitors find the tabletop show format to be an easy way to meet current and future customers.



The relaxed atmosphere leads to easy discussion of customer problems and vendor solutions



Reps and distributors can see a couple of hundred customers and prospects in a three hour show.



Problem solving is what sales people do and the discussions never seem to stop.

Lessons learned from my life as a rep – with Jim Jordon

Our May 10 Chapter meeting

Using a few PowerPoint slides, Jim wove for us the story of his years at a major rep firm, Moxon – and starting up a new rep firm, Jordan Electronics. Amid all this activity he went through the board chairs of ERA SoCal and was chapter president in 1988.

In 1991 he sold his rep firm to their largest principal and coordinated the acquisition of six other rep firms by Network General, creating a national direct sales force in less than six months. In 1997, Jim joined Netcom Systems (now part of Spirent) and built another team of over 240 technical sales people worldwide.

Speaking from the perspective of both rep and manufacturer Jim told us principals love reps who integrate them into their data systems for reporting of follow up, customer contact information, etc. He feels manufacturers will have no reason to “go direct” and replace such reps as long as they get equal or better visibility of their marketplace from the reps than they would from a direct team.



Chapter VP, Gary Smith and chapter president, Tom Felts present Jim with a token of our appreciation.



John Buffa and Jim Jordan relived some fun moments from their many years of ERA association



Jim presented a few facts and figures to demonstrate his points. From his easy demeanor and comfortable flow, it was obvious he has made many presentations.



Bob O'Brien, Ben Dixon, Ed Reese, and Dean Marxer share a laugh

President's Message

By Tom Felts
ERA Southern California Chapter President,

ROI

Return On Investment. Every one of us would like to maximize the ROI in our financial situations by making intelligent decisions to invest in vehicles that we believe will multiply our resources, thereby enriching our coffers in the process. Good luck with that endeavor, as there is a certain amount of gambling and risk taking involved in all these activities. But nothing ventured, nothing gained, right? Investment brokers will take all the money you want to throw at them. That is the only thing guaranteed.

There is another ROI that leaves less to chance and brings tremendous satisfaction. That is the investment you make in yourself by learning and interacting with your peers. There is no better place to do that than within the ERA. Your Chapter puts on fantastic events, programs, seminars and meetings all focused on bringing our members a better forum to learn about and grow in their chosen field of endeavor. Return guaranteed.

Listening to Jim Jordan last week at our Chapter meeting reminded me of the more than 30 years knowing both Jim & the ERA. I have learned so much from the many experiences of listening to my peers and contemporaries over the years, that I find it very hard to believe that more members don't avail themselves of the opportunities to rub elbows with their fellow Reps and learn from the pertinent experiences and view points of others who are in the same lifelong learning process we all are.

I maintain that one of the best ROIs you can get is the investment of your time in your SoCal Chapter's activities. They are custom created and organized for the express purpose of improving our member's understanding and livelihood. But unless you attend these events and make room in your life to learn, and volunteer your time to get better at what you do, and indeed get active in the organization, you're losing a valuable and enjoyable life experience. Nothing invested, nothing returned.

After all those 30 years, I know I'm still learning about how to be better in my chosen profession. How about you? Got time to improve? Get active in your Chapter and enhance your ROI.

Southern California Electronics Expo to be More Helpful Than Ever

By Harrison Frank

We have some good news, better news, and wonderful news for you regarding the Southern California Electronics Expo. By popular demand, we have moved the event date to Wednesday, September 20, 2006. It is a one day show, with exhibit hours from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm to accommodate more attendees. Set up, at the Orange County Fair and Exposition Center, is on Tuesday afternoon (or early Wednesday morning if you're quick), You'll be done with the show on Wednesday evening, and have all day Thursday to follow up all of those leads. Pretty efficient huh? That's the good news.

The better news is that we will turn the entire exhibit hall into a wireless hot spot. Imagine! Taking care of business over the internet while having face time with new customers and existing ones without ever leaving your booth.

The wonderful news is that we are further expanding the attendance promotion to cover all of Southern California, and increasing the number of technical programs. We learned these programs are the most popular facet of the show for many attendees.

Summing it all up, we have a new date, wider attendance promotion, more and better technical programs, cost effectiveness for exhibitors, and a wonderful venue for your customers (or potential customers) to learn what you do and to interface with you.

It is easy to reserve and choose a great booth location at www.socallee.com. Please do it now while there are still plenty of good locations available. If you prefer the personal touch, just pick up the phone now and talk to Frances at (949) 551-2890.

This is going to be the best Southern California Electronics Expo ever. We hope that you'll be exhibiting your products there to profit from it.

Popular Owner's Forums Continue

These popular lunchtime events continue to be valuable, with reps gathering to discuss common problems and solutions. Owner's Forums typically do not have presenters, only reps sharing their own considerable expertise.

The Chapter Directory

Is your directory page up to date? Our chapter directory remains the gold standard among rep organizations and the one way prospective customers and principals can find member firms by product, manufacturer and company name. The directory should always be up to date since information is supplied by members directly to their own page at www.erascal.org

Who do I talk to at ERA So Cal?

Do you have a suggestion or comment about chapter operations or an event and not know who to call? At each chapter meeting chapter officers are present wearing gold badges, you can simply talk with any of them. Also, in this newsletter and on the chapter website is a list of chapter officers and committees, feel free to call anyone listed.

CPMR? Need CEUs?

ERA Chapter Meetings and Owner's Forums can be used for CEUs. It's one more good reason to participate.

ERA Friday Breakfast

San Fernando Valley and Orange County groups meet early to share food, news, camaraderie and solutions to problems. It is one more benefit of membership. A tradition since 1996, Friday breakfast is a great way for reps and distributors to meet informally on a regular basis. The information shared is valuable to all and helps to maintain our ongoing sense of community

ERA Southern California Chapter

We offer many activities and resources: professional seminars, business and sales training, regional trade shows, weekly newsletter, the ERA Today newsletter, and much more. For information call 949-551-5200 or email mcgillis@erascal.org

Who should I talk to at ERA So Cal?

Do you have a suggestion, comment or complaint about the chapter, it's operation, or an event and not know who to call? At each chapter meeting chapter officers are present wearing gold badges, you can simply talk with any of them. In this newsletter and on the chapter website is a list of chapter officers and committees, feel free to call anyone listed.

ERA SoCal 2006 Officers

President

Tom Felts, Techrep Components
310-539-9070

Chairman of the Board

Steve Geldman, Image Associates
805-777-1106

Vice President

Gary Smith, G.L. Smith Associates
714-701-1800

Treasurer

Bill Greenfield, Texel
714-281-4916

National Delegate

Gary Smith, G.L. Smith Associates
714-701-1800

Membership Chairman

Jay Walters, Signal Enterprises
951-317-6144

SOCALEE Show Director

Bill Herold, Conquest Technical Sales
805-241-5118

Government Affairs Director

Ed Reese, Motion Components
714-255-1080

Distributor Chairman

Rick Balentine, Prime Electro Products
310-379-3642

Who is ERA Southern California?

The Southern California Chapter is one of the largest in the ERA. Our activities encompass education, training, publications, trade shows, networking opportunities and the opportunity to interface with reps, distributors and manufacturers for discussion of issues and problem solving .

The Southern California territory stretches from Central California through Orange County and the desert counties into Southern Nevada. Many Southern California reps have extensive business operations in San Diego and Mexico.

Members in Southern California are professionals; ERA helps them maintain that sharp edge with services, programs and benefits that enhance their knowledge and expertise.

ERA manufacturer's representatives are highly motivated, independent business people who sell electronic products for more than one manufacturer to customers in an exclusive geographic territory. In our case, the southern part of California.

Our members are experts who know the territory and are skilled in identifying new customers and opportunities. They add customers, serve existing customers and manage strategic accounts. Their customers range from giant companies to emerging accounts.

The ERA Southern California Chapter offers many activities and resources such as professional seminars, business and sales training, regional trade shows, a weekly email newsletter, this ERA Today newsletter, regular breakfast meetings, and much more. For more information, call 949-551-5200, check our website www.erascal.org or e-mail the Chapter office: mcgillis@erascal.org

2006 EVENTS CALENDAR

Jan 25, 2006

JOEL GIRSKY, JACO CEO

Chapter Event

Old Ranch Country Club

March 14, 2006

NORTHROP GRUMMAN SHOW

Electrotech Tabletop Show

Woodland Hills

March 21, 2006

MANAGING YOUR COMPUTER SYSTEM

ERA Owner's Forum

Backup. Protection from viruses, spam and spyware.

The right software for your business. Staying in touch while out of the office. Where to get help.

Apr 4, 2006

GOLETA SHOW

Electrotech Tabletop Show

Santa Barbara Elks Lodge

May 10, 2006

An ERA SoCal Chapter Event.

JIM JORDAN

My Forty-Six Years As A Manufacturers Rep

Keeping principals informed. Handling transitions from Rep to Stocking Rep to Distributor and back to Rep. Useful lessons for today's Manufacturers' Rep.

Cypress Courtyard by Marriott

4:00 Program, 6:00 Social time, 6:30 Dinner

May 25, 2006

An ERA SoCal Owner's Forum

COLUMBUS WAS WRONG. THE WORLD IS FLAT

- Big OEMS have gone to China, Malaysia, Indonesia, etc.
- Design work has gone to India.
- Where does a Southern California Rep go to make a living?
- At the May 25 Owners Forum we'll find out.

Reservations are needed.

11:30 to 1:30 over lunch.

Chanteclair in Irvine

July 19, 2006

An ERA SoCal Owner's Forum

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

A popular path to rep firm growth and a way to cash out after a successful run. Many have done it. We'll learn about the opportunities and hazards.

11:30 to 1:30 over lunch. Chanteclair in Irvine

Reservations are needed.

September 20, 2006

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA ELECTRONICS EXPO

Orange County Fair & Expo Center, Costa Mesa

9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

949-551-2890

www.socalee.com

dennis@socalee.com

For current information and more event pictures:

www.erascal.org/calendar.asp

FRIDAY BREAKFAST

TUSTIN

Every Friday at 7:00

Mimi's Cafe, 17th Street at 55 freeway

CHATSWORTH

Second Fridays at 7:30

Mimi's Cafe 19710 Nordhoff Place

(One block north of Nordhoff & Corbin)

ERA Southern California Committees

Committees are at the heart of chapter activities with members involved in every aspect of chapter operations. Most business is conducted by the office and board with committee support. Their actions and recommendations make things happen. Below is a list of Chapter Committees. Please contact any committee chairman for more information.

ERA SoCal Committees

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dan Parks, Chairman
Harrison Frank
Bob Baxter
Bob O'Brien

BYLAWS

Tom Felts
Ed Reese
Gary Schoenbachler
Bill Greenfield

FINANCE

Bill Greenfield, Chairman
Steve Goldman
Tom Felts
Gary Smith

PROGRAM PLANNING

Gary Smith, Chairman
Jim Harper
Bob O'Brien
Joseph Dulansky
Rick Balentine
Tom McCarthy

MEMBERSHIP

Jay Walters, Chairman

TABLETOP SHOWS

Bill Herold
Tom Mueller

OWNER'S FORUMS

Harrison Frank, Chairman
Jim Hill
Jim Mahon
Jay Ownby
Candice Scanlon
Gary Smith

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

Ed Reese, Chairman

WEBSITE

Steve Goldman, Board Chairman
Tom Felts, Chapter President
Gary Smith, Vice President
Bill Perry, Webmaster

ERA Southern California

is a trade association for Manufacturers' Representatives and Distributors serving the electronics industry. See more about us at www.erascal.org

Association Office

Executive Director, Dennis McGillis
Assistant Director, Frances McGillis

15186 Normandie Ave.
Irvine, CA 92604-2933
949-551-5200 phone, 949-551-1162 fax
www.erascal.org mcgillis@erascal.org