

It's Trinkle Time - and a Special Occasion for SoCal



Bob Trinkle

Why Reps Vs. Direct: a discussion of sales force philosophy" is the title of the talk and Bob Trinkle is the speaker and, well, it just doesn't get any better!

The occasion is the first Chapter meeting of the Millennium year and ERA will get things off to a rousing start January 18 at the California Yacht Club in Marina Del Rey. The Trinkle talk will begin the meeting at 4 p.m. and you can be sure the aftermath comments will continue full bore through a cocktail reception and dinner to follow.

ERA Today On-Line

ERA Today is available on-line at the ERA website - www.erascal.org - to members and electronics industry professionals. It is readable with Adobe Acrobat which can be downloaded free of charge by clicking the appropriate program on the website. Hardcopy of ERA Today may be obtained in black and white format only on request to the ERA office.

"Trink," to cite an understatement, is a captivating speaker. People who have heard him, usually at ERA National Conferences, remember his messages for years and generally prosper if they put his suggestions to work. For the first time, Trink will appear at a Chapter meeting on the West Coast.

A successful rep for many years in the Philadelphia area, his experience and expertise qualify him to speak as an authority on these topics:

- ◆ The importance of defining a rep's role and the economic relevance to reps, manufacturers and customers.
- ◆ How reps add value to principals, customers and distributors
- ◆ Myths about manufacturers' reps - and how to set the record straight
- ◆ The true cost of an outside salesperson
- ◆ Values of a rep that a direct sales force can't offer
- ◆ Threats and opportunities
- ◆ The people business
- ◆ The value of the sales professional

The importance of Trink's message suggests his presentation deserves the attention of the electronics industry at large. Thus, the Chapter is encouraging attendance at the meeting by manufacturers, distributors, purchasers and even customers and non-member reps. Non-member guests will be charged \$40 per person as opposed to the member cost of \$25. However, non-members specifically invited by member firms can get in for the member price.

Bob Trinkle concluded his career as a rep on New Year's Eve, 1999, after some four decades in the business. He was an officer of the MidLantic Chapter for six

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OCEE - an Entry to Membership in Orange County 'Tech Coast'

By Harrison Frank / HFA

Numerous articles in the LA Times and the Orange County Register have presented convincing evidence that a real Orange County Electronics Community is alive and functioning. The Tech Coast Alliance (www.tech-coast.com) recently launched an Orange County business incubator with the goal of making the name "Tech Coast" carry the same weight as Silicon Valley.

Of course, we reps are part of the Orange County Electronics Community as are our customers and local distributors. If this concept really flourishes, we all become part of the same team. What's important to reps is that team members give preferences to other team members.

We can promote this "community" concept in many ways. One of the

most important ways is the Orange County Electronics Expo.

- It is the Community trade show and exposition.

- It is becoming a place where the team members can meet to talk business, to learn from each other, and to socialize.

- It is a way for you and your principals to establish a position as a member of the Orange Electronics Community.

The OCEE will be presented March 22 and 23. Check out www.vts.com/ocee for the facts and for your exhibitor registration material - or phone (858) 459-1682 to have it sent to you. You and your principals will be happy you did. Don't delay - act now!

Fullerton Extension Offers Programs In Marketing / Sales

Cal State Fullerton is offering programs in marketing and sales for the Spring 2000 semester, with studies leading to certificates in marketing of high technology, direct marketing, international marketing and sales, exhibits and trade shows and e-commerce and retailing and merchandising.

The courses are among the more than 50 certificate programs for professional development and other continuing education plans offered by the university's Extended Education Division.

Marketing of high technology is designed to help sales people in high technology companies improve their marketing skills and sell products more effectively. Entry-level sellers of direct marketing services and those working in the direct marketing field are the target group for the direct marketing program.

International marketing and sales is designed to provide an applied understanding of concepts and practical knowledge for the export/import trade arena.

Exhibits and trade shows is a new certificate program for those who need the tools, skill and knowledge to develop workable strategies for management of trade show programs.

E-commerce is the integration of all aspects of business operations, including marketing, customers, suppliers, distributors and inventory by and through the Internet. The study guides the development and/or implementation of an e-commerce business strategy.

For more information on these and other business development courses, visit the Cal State Fullerton Extended Education website at 278-2611 www.TakeTheLead.fullerton.edu or telephone (714) 278-2611.

Calendar

January

Each Friday

Orange County Reps Friday Breakfasts, Mimi's Cafe, 17th Street and 55 Freeway, Tustin, 7 a.m.

January 14

San Fernando Valley Reps Friday Breakfast, Lamplighter Restaurant, Nordhoff and DeSoto, Chatsworth, 7:30 a.m.

January 18

ERA Chapter meeting, California Yacht Club, Marina Del Rey, 4 p.m.

February

February 3-4

National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) International Music Market, Los Angeles Convention Center

February 4

Communications Division, Sheraton Hotel, City of Industry, 11:30 a.m.

Each Friday

Orange County Reps Friday Breakfasts, Mimi's Cafe, 17th Street and 55 Freeway, Tustin, 7 a.m.

February 7

Owners' Forum (Impact of the World Wide Web on the rep business), Summit House, 11:30 a.m.

February 11

San Fernando Valley Reps Friday Breakfast, Lamplighter Restaurant, Nordhoff and DeSoto, Chatsworth, 7:30 a.m.

February 27-March 2

Nepcon West, Anaheim Convention Center

February 28-March 1

Wireless - CTIA, New Orleans

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How Do You Spell Chapter Directory? www.erascal.org

The 2000 ERA directory has gone on-line.

The annual publication listing participating member firms, their lines and their staffs is using the Internet, rather than print, as its principal venue. While a limited number of copies will be available in print, the new emphasis will be on the webpage. Information is at the click of a keystroke and much faster and more flexible - and more accurate because directory pages will be updated whenever there is a change.

It also includes a product cross reference, manufacturers' roster and a list of staff members of participating firms. Photos on individual pages will be added shortly. With webpage flexibility, members can file revisions with the ERA office whenever there are changes - daily,

weekly, monthly - and under normal circumstances changes will be on the web within 24 hours. The printed version is a static document with changes registered only on an annual basis.

Another feature: A member firm can elect to join the directory listing at any time - just advise the office. This means companies which join ERA in mid-year or determine in March or June or February or pick a month to list can do so almost immediately. The billing procedure also is changing. Member firms will be charged \$20 per month and billed quarterly instead of paying \$250 per year with a single billing.

ERA firms wishing to join the directory are encouraged to contact the ERA office - phone (310) 446-8370 or e-mail Lee Myers at lee@myers-smith.com.

Surviving Loss of Income From Principal Actions

Harrison Frank / HF A

The ERA Southern California reps who attended the December 13 Owners' Forum agreed that the most significant effect on their rep businesses from adverse principal actions, such as buyouts, mergers, management changes and termination, is loss of income. They also agreed that once the principal makes the decision to take the adverse action, it is usually too late for the rep to do anything to prevent the principal from completing the action. Sort of like getting a traffic ticket: when the cop starts writing, it's all over. Here are the actions the reps felt they could take to prevent their principals from completing adverse actions, or at least minimize their effect on the business:

Never let it get started in the first place.

Never let any line become more than a certain percentage of your gross commission income. The owners' judgment of that number ranged from a low of 15% to a high of 50%. My view is that it should not be higher than 30%. You accomplish this by increasing commission income from your smaller lines, not by limiting the growth of your larger lines.

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The 2000 directory is on line now - and lists these member firms:

A-F Sales Engineering	English Technical Sales Co.,	Motion Components
Angle Associates	Inc.	Nelson & Associates
aSTron Electronics	Goldenwest Sales &	O'Donnell South, Inc.
Bassett Sales Corporation	Associates	The Pentagon Company
C & N and Associates, Inc.	Van Gott & Associates	Petra Products Inc.
CalRep	Gravley & Associates Inc.	PMC Technical Sales
Cal-Ward Sales	Groh Associates	Prism Associates Inc.
CERCO	Heeger Inc.	Rock and Associates
Champa Associates	HMC Incorporated	The Sales Group, Inc.
Chuck Cooper Co.	Image Associates	Seevid, Inc.
Component Marketing, Inc.	Impact Electronics Inc.	Signal Enterprises Inc.
D & D Engineering	InterRep, LLC	Spectra-West Sales, Inc.
Delta Design &	Interconn Technical	TechRep Componets
Development Corp.	Marketing	Texel Ltd.
Electro Venture South Corp.	Interstate Marketing	Vale Electronic Associates
Elkins & Associates	Associates	Wallace & Wallace
Elotek Systems Inc.	Lorill Electronic Sales, Inc.	Westrep
ELSCO Electronics, Inc.	Marble Associates	Winco Marketing
	MASCO Electronics	

ERA Office Moves

The Southern California ERA office has moved.

The new address:
799 North Beverly Glen,
Los Angeles, CA 90077
The new phone: (310) 446-8370
The new fax: (310) 446-8390
The e-mail address:
myers@erascal.org
(which remains the same)

Please adjust your records to reflect the new location.

New Laws Affect State Businesses

More than 1,000 bills signed into law by California Gov. Gray Davis took effect January 1, 2000. Here is a look at some of the more important new laws relating to business and employment. More information on these and other legislative actions can be obtained by viewing the State Senate webpage at <http://www.sen.ca.gov>

Eight-Hour Day — Non-exempt (hourly) employees must receive time and one-half for more than eight hours of work in a workday, more than 40 hours in a workweek and the first eight hours on a seventh day of a workweek. The law also entitles non-exempt employees to double time for more than 12 hours of work in a workday and more than eight hours of work on a seventh day. Exemptions for qualified executives, administrators and professionals remain intact but there are new salary and exempt duty standards.

Sick Leave — Employers who provide sick leave must permit employees to use up to half of their

sick days to care for ill children, parents or spouses. Employees who are denied sick leave can sue for reinstatement and reimbursement of lost wages.

Age Discrimination — Employers are prohibiting from firing older employees simply to replace them with lower-paid and younger workers. The law specifies that a court may find that the use of salary as the basis for differentiating between employees when terminating employment constitutes age discrimination if its use disproportionately affects older workers.

Domestic Violence — Employers cannot discriminate or otherwise punish a worker who is a victim of domestic violence and takes time off work for court appearances to obtain restraining orders or other injunctive relief necessary to ensure health and safety. The employee must give the employer reasonable notice except in emergencies.

Sources for this material include the Los Angeles Times and the law firm of Shepard, Mullein, Richter & Hampton.

Chapter Offers Contract Model

The Southern California Chapter has developed a new model for rep-principal contracts, updating an agreement form to encompass new laws and practices. And it's available to member firms for the asking.

The new model includes guidelines covering split commissions, "house accounts," termination clauses, payment schedules and resolution of disputes. In the main, the contract leans favorably toward the rep, reflecting input from Chapter members at a legal briefing. The model was written by attorneys Sharon Mazin and Leslie Marell.

The new contract is available at no charge in hardcopy and electronic (Word7) formats. It is available to members by phoning (310) 446-8370, faxing (310) 446-8390 or via e-mail at myers@erascal.org.

Web Sites For You!

- ERA Southern Californiawww.erascal.org
- ERA National.....www.era.org
- Orange County Electronics Expowww.vts.com/ocee
- Wescon.....www.wescon.com

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March

Each Friday

Orange County Reps Friday
Breakfasts, Mimi's Cafe, 17th Street
and 55 Freeway, Tustin, 7 a.m.

Mar. 10 San Fernando Valley Reps
Friday Breakfast, Lamplighter
Restaurant, Nordhoff and DeSoto,
Chatsworth, 7:30 a.m.

Mar. 22-23 Orange County
Electronics Expo (OCEE), Orange
County Fairgrounds, Costa Mesa

Lines

Tri-Star Engineered Products, Inc.
351 Thor Place
Brea, CA 92821
Phn: (714) 671-1545
Fax: (714) 671-1124
Email: tssales@tri-star-epi.com
Webpage: www.tri-star-epi.com

Manufacturer of printed circuits board products, specializing in time critical quick-turn prototypes with the lead times down to 24 hours; in business for 21 years. Product line and technical capabilities include single-side through 10-layer PCBs, blind and buried vias and SMT.

Contact: Mike DuValle

ERA Today

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Death Takes Chuck Fetty

Chuck Fetty, President of the Southern California Chapter in 1958-59 and one of the prime movers in securing ERA a sponsorship role in Wescon, died January 4. The 83-year-old Fetty had suffered a bout of lung cancer before succumbing to a heart attack.

A Naval aviator in World War II, he was a co-founder of the Fetty-Schoenduve firm in the late 1950s and was a partner with Howard Schoenduve for 25 years. He later operated the FSI rep firm until his retirement in 1988.

Fetty was among a group of ERA Southern California members who negotiated the Chapter's securing of a percentage of ownership in what is now Electronics Conventions, Inc., parent company of Wescon. He served as Treasurer of ECT during its formative years.

Funeral services were held January 8th at Trinity Lutheran Church in Reseda. The family suggests any remembrances in Chuck Fetty's name to the Trinity Lutheran Church, 18425 Kittridge St., Reseda, CA 91335.

Holiday Shopping Rules - Tips for the Future

The Southern California Central Credit Union, ERA's member credit union, has some tips for- "responsible" holiday shopping - and it's never too early to start. The suggestions are good advice for the future.

1. Begin to save for the holidays at the beginning, rather than at the end of the year. Take advantage of sales to purchase gifts throughout the year.
2. Limit your gift list. Consider a secret gift exchange among family members and place a limit on price.
3. Create and stick with a holiday budget. Remember, in addition to gifts, to include cards, decorations, travel and restaurant expenses.
4. Limit your gifts purchased to one credit card in order to track your holiday budget.
5. Avoid last-minute shopping. You'll be assured of obtaining gifts which the recipients will truly appreciate and not items that are simply available.
6. Be creative. Some of the best, most appreciated gifts don't necessarily cost a lot of money.

Trinkle

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years and a National officer for eight years, serving a term as National President. He's been accorded just about every honor ERA can bestow - Key Award, Honor Award, ERA Education Award and the select ERA Hall of Fame designation. January 18 is a special day for the Southern California Chapter. You'll want to attend to reap the professional and business benefits. It's probably fair to say the only disappointed members will be those who miss the meeting.

Surviving Loss of Income

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Never ignore negative hints about your company or your employees. Hints can come from anyone within your principal's organization, from customers or from other people in your industry. Chase every one of them down, and take them all seriously. Address each one of them in a positive way to the appropriate parties. Change the way you do business if the principal is important enough.

When there are management changes within your principals' organizations, it is prudent to check out the new individual almost as thoroughly as you would do for a prospective employee in your company. Then show that new person how you can help the principal company achieve its goals.

Develop advocate relationships with people in your existing principals' organizations at least one rank higher than you normally deal with. Develop value added characteristics in your company that are valuable to the principal. Make sure they know about it.

ERA Owners' Forums Schedule

The 2000 schedule with meetings scheduled at the Summit House is as follows:

February 7 - The impact of the World Wide Web on the rep business - Moderator Bob Baxter

April 17 - Profiting from missionary lines - Moderator Rich Grenn

June 12 - The secrets of becoming a stocking rep - Moderator Rich Grenn

August 14 - Company growth and expansion - Moderator Harrison Frank

Meeting notices are sent to each member firm about three weeks prior to each forum and signups are on a first-call, fax or e-mail basis.