

SDTA NEWS

SEWING DEALERS TRADE ASSOCIATION

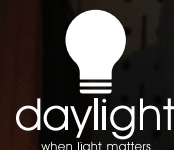
The trade publication for the independent retailer
June 2017 | ISSUE 143 www.vdta.com



SEWING
QUILTING
EMBROIDERY
Professional™

Why the light you use really matters!

Page 26-27



**Brother Dealer
Passes Down
Passion, p. 34**

**NEW Sew Much Cosplay™ Brand
Comes to Stores Nationwide, p. 28**

**Sulky's 30th
Anniversary,
p. 14**



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SDTA

SEWING DEALERS TRADE ASSOCIATION

www.vdta.com

S SEWING
Q QUILTING
E EMBROIDERY

SQE Professional™ is a business-to-business trade magazine published monthly by the Vacuum & Sewing Dealers Trade Association (VDTA•SDTA). It is designed exclusively for the sewing, quilting and embroidery industry and all related products. SQE Professional™ is distributed to sewing, quilting, fabric retailers, manufacturers, distributors and suppliers located in the U.S.A. as well as around the world. The entire contents copyright 2017 by CD Management. Printed in the U.S.A. All rights reserved. Permission must be obtained in writing to reuse contents in any form prior to reuse.

ASSOCIATION STAFF

CHAIRMAN: Charles Dunham

PRESIDENT: Judy Patterson

MANAGING EDITOR: Tonya Tienter

ART DIRECTOR: Heather Hall-Dahl

ACCOUNT MANAGER &

CONTRIBUTING WRITER: Craig Dorman

ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE: Sherry Graham

SENIOR PRESS OPERATIONS: Terry Jackman

PRE-PRESS: Doug Millang

Advertising can be e-mailed to:
ads@vdta.com.

For advertising rates, e-mail:
craig@vdta.com.

News releases can be submitted to:
tonya@vdta.com.

Membership inquiries can be directed to:
mail@vdta.com.

Fax address changes to 515-282-4483 or mail to:
VDTA•SDTA

2724 2nd Avenue, Des Moines, Iowa 50313
800-367-5651 or 800-4-SEWING (800-473-9464)
Phone: 515-282-9101 Fax: 515-282-4483

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Do you receive the monthly
VDTA•SDTA E-newsletters?

Call 800-367-5651 if you aren't getting
your industry news by email. Stay
connected with your association!

Upcoming VDTA Events

Summer Niagara Falls Show

September 9-10, 2017

Hotel Information

Hilton Niagara Falls / Fallsview Hotel & Suites

6361 Fallsview Blvd

Niagara Falls, Canada L2G - 3V9

Group Code: VACU

Phone: 1-905-354-7887

Cut-off Date: August 1, 2018

The VDTA Summer Niagara Falls Trade Show will be held in Canada. You will need a passport to enter and leave the country. Make sure you apply for your passport early! For more info, visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports>.

VDTA International Trade Show and Convention

March 24-26, 2018

For 2018, we're moving from Vegas to Charlotte for VDTA's International Trade Show and Convention. Get ready for a fun adventure!

Hotel Information

The Westin Charlotte

601 S. College St.

Charlotte, NC 28202

Phone: 1-866-837-4148

Website: www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/2018VDTAandSDTA

Remember to mention the 2018 VDTA•SDTA Trade Show when calling for reservations. Room rate based on availability. Check hotel for cancellation rules.

brother
at your side

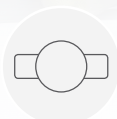
2016-2017 Platinum Sponsor

ricoma EM-1010

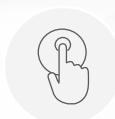
10-Needle Home Embroidery Machine

UNIQUE FEATURES

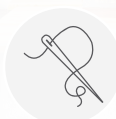
- 4 Hoops - (2.8", 4.3", 7.5", 12.2")
- Cap attachment
- Lightweight - only 99 pounds!
- Max speed - 1000 SPM
- Wilcom Software
- 20 million stitch memory
- 7" HD color LCD touchscreen
- Automatic thread trimming
- Automatic color change
- 25-year limited warranty



Preset Hoops



Intuitive 7" HD Color Touchscreen



10 Needles



12.2" x 8.2" Embroidery Area



Patented Intelligent Thread Break Detection Technology



Low Power Consumption - Only 80W



Exclusive Regional Dealership Opportunities Available

Enhance your productivity with our easy-to-use, lightweight, 10-needle, portable embroidery machine.



The EM-1010 is a single-head, 10-needle machine designed for home embroidery enthusiasts, hobbyists and crafters. With a 7" user-friendly LCD touchscreen, it is truly redefining what a home embroidery machine can be.

The EM-1010 comes complete with an industry-leading 25-year warranty. It is also fully loaded with a 7-piece accessory kit, including a cap attachment.

The EM-1010 has become the first choice of embroidery enthusiasts because of its affordability and user-friendly design. The machine itself allows you to simply upload (either via USB or LAN) a digital image and within a few clicks, you are ready to start your next creation.

Included with the EM-1010

Stand with wheels
20,000 stock designs
Starter Kit

Software
Toolbox
Hoops + Cap System!

Hatch
by **WILCOM**

Hatch embroidery software by Wilcom
bundled with each EM-1010

Ricoma Headquarters in USA
Ricoma International Corporation
3450 NW 114th Ave., Miami, FL 33178, USA

Tel: (305) 418-4421
Toll Free: 1-888-292-6282
stitchable.com | info@stitchable.com

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June 2017 | www.vdta.com



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Classifieds

BUSINESS FOR SALE: New to Market, Profitable South Florida Vacuum Sales/ Service/ Repair Business. Owner retiring. Long-term lease in busy shopping center in an upscale family community. \$125,000 with \$100,000 down. Call Russell Cohen Murphy Business 954-646-7651. (1-2)

HELP WANTED: We are a growing company looking for a motivated, experienced embroidery digitizer to add to our team. Proficiency of Microsoft Publisher, PowerPoint, excellent writing skills, and knowledge of quilting and sewing a plus. If this is you and you are ready to hit the ground running, email resume to aubrey@hoopsisters.com. (1-1)

To place a classified ad, contact VDTA at (800) 367-5651 or see form online at www.vdta.com



Why do Dealers **LOVE** RNK?

Because of **INCREDIBLE** seasonal promotions that **MAKE MONEY!**

Promotions Like...
Christmas in June



Retail Value: Over \$250

Only \$99.99!
Consumer Special

Floriani's Home Sweet Home bundle! Includes gorgeous Home Sweet Home design set with 30 vibrant Floriani thread colors!



Only \$79.99!
Consumer Special

Retail Value: Over \$120



Quilters Select's Holiday Stars Quilt bundle! Includes instructions and some materials needed to make this beautiful quilt from Alex Anderson!

Want to become an RNK Dealer? Join us by calling (877) 331-0034 or visiting www.RNKDistributing.com!

Don't Miss the Retail Sales and Marketing

Workshop at VDTA in Niagara Falls September 8th

Join us from 9:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. and plan your success

WHO WANTS TO BE A MILLIONAIRE???

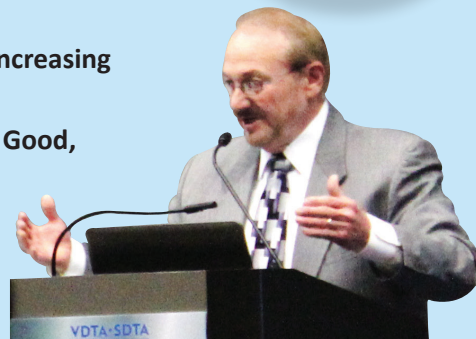
Discover how you can increase profits with these topics:

- Cost effective ways to increase customer base or market share when operating on a limited budget.
- The most effective ways to increase Sales without increasing your advertising budget.
- Making A Profit Must Be A Priority. Making Sales Is Good, Making A Profit Is Essential.
- If You Want to Get More Than You Are Getting, You Have To Do More Than You Are Doing!

OPEN TO ALL ATTENDEES!



Ricky was one of the industry's most successful retail store owners ever and is the General Manager and Co-Founder of RNK Distributing, recognized as THE independent retailer's source for quality products guaranteed to make a profit!



The Niagara Falls workshop will be conducted by Ricky Brooks.

Fall into Sales in Niagara

VDTA•SDTA

VACUUM & SEWING DEALERS TRADE ASSOCIATION

Summer Trade Show

September 9-10, 2017

Scotiabank Convention Centre

Niagara Falls, CANADA

www.vdta.com • 800-367-5651

Sponsored by



and its



Retractable Hose



VDTA•SDTA 2017 Niagara Summer Show Registration

2724 2nd Ave., Des Moines, IA 50313 • 800-367-5651 • Fax: 515-282-4483 • mail@vtda.com

Visit www.vtda.com for complete schedule and updates.

Company Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Is this your first convention? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What hotel are you using? _____

☐ **Yes, I want to become a member and pay a rate of \$130, which waives my convention registration fee.**

Badge Names

For additional names use separate paper

Name: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

☐ Register for RNK Workshop
Number Attending _____

RETAIL SALES & MARKETING WORKSHOP

September 8th, 9 AM – 5 PM

OPEN TO ALL RETAILERS

Conducted by Ricky Brooks, RNK Distributing

RNK is recognized as an independent retailer's source for quality products that are guaranteed to make a profit.

Some of the topics covered in the workshop:

- Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?
- Cost effective ways to increase customer base or market share when operating on a limited budget.
- The most effective ways to increase Sales without increasing your advertising budget.
- Making a Profit Must Be a Priority. Making sales is good, making a profit is essential.
- If you want to get more than you are getting, you have to do more than you are doing!

CLASSIFICATION

- ☐ Independent Dealer
- ☐ Fabric or Quilt Shop
- ☐ Manufacturer
- ☐ Distributor
- ☐ Educator
- ☐ Manufacturer Rep.

MEMBER STATUS

- ☐ Independent Dealer
- ☐ Associate Member
- ☐ SEA Member
- ☐ Non-Member

PRODUCTS SOLD

- ☐ Vacuum - Domestic
- ☐ Vacuum - Commercial
- ☐ Central Vacuum
- ☐ Janitorial Supplies
- ☐ Air Purifiers
- ☐ Rental Equipment
- ☐ Small Appliances
- ☐ Sewing - Domestic
- ☐ Sewing - Commercial
- ☐ Sewing - Notions
- ☐ Quilting Equipment
- ☐ Fabric

TRADE SHOW

Scotiabank Convention Centre
6815 Stanley Ave • Niagara Falls, CAN

EXHIBIT HOURS

Sept 9: 12 PM NOON - 9 PM

Sept 10: 9 AM - 4 PM

PASSPORT INFO

Website: <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/information/card.html>

AIRPORT SHUTTLE SERVICE

Website: www.niagaraairbus.com

Phone: 905-374-8111 • **Code:** 456

Email: airsales@niagaraairbus.com
from Toronto Pearson, Buffalo &
Niagara Falls, NY International Airports

HOTEL INFORMATION

Hilton Niagara Falls Hotel & Suites
6361 Fallsview Blvd • Niagara Falls, CAN

Group Code: VACU

Phone: 1-905-354-7887

Cut-off Date: August 1, 2017

CONVENTION FEES

*Fee for each Additional Person

All Fees in U.S. Dollars

Independent Dealer

Member: \$30/*\$25

Non-Member: \$175/*\$50

Manufacturer / Distributor

Assoc. Member: \$750/*\$250

Non-Member: \$1200

Convention fee \$ _____

Membership fee \$ _____

Total due \$ _____

PAYMENT METHOD ☐ Check enclosed (Payable to: VDTA•SDTA)

I authorize a charge of \$ _____ ☐ Visa or ☐ MC

CC# _____

Exp. Date: _____ CCV #: _____

Name as appears on card: _____

Signature: _____

Is this a one time membership payment?

☐ Autopay (next membership payment due in 12 months)

☐ This a one time payment, thank you.

2017 VDTA•SDTA Independent Dealer of the Month

Nybakke Vacuum Shop Inc.

Bloomington, Illinois

With much pleasure, VDTA•SDTA honors Nybakke Vacuum Shop Inc as the 2017 June Dealer of the Month. Located at 814 IAA Drive in Bloomington, IL, Nybakke Vacuum Shop has been serving their community since 1932 and celebrated their 85th year in business this past May! Owners David and Terry Nybakke have learned that continuing a successful family business requires creating lifetime value.

The business first began in Ben and Gladys Nybakke's home with the selling of Kirby vacuum cleaners. Around the start of World War II, the couple decided to brand the business with their last name as "Nybakke Vacuum Shop," which stayed in the same location in downtown Bloomington for almost 40 years.

Then in 1967, their son and daughter-in-law – Bernie and Carol Nybakke – took over the operation, while other sons David and Terry joined the business a few years later. In 1993, the Nybakkes built a new building off Bloomington's main traffic corridor, which is where it stands today. Terry's daughter, Megan, joined the family business in the early 2000s and heads the service department, and employees Mike Rath and Randy Short have worked with the Nybakkes for many years and are invaluable to the business.

Nybakke Vacuum Shop carries upright vacuums, robotic vacuums, and central vacuums, including lines from Riccar, M D Manufacturing, Fuller Brush Co., Sanitaire, Centec, Royal, and Woolzie. In addition to sales, the store provides service and installations. The Nybakke "Lifetime-Value-Service Plan" (L-V-S Plan) was inspired by founder Ben's old Rolodex and his policy to call every single customer once a year to have them bring in their vacuum for a service. With the L-V-S Plan, customers receive lifetime free annual tune-ups and labor, 14-day money back guarantee, 10-year motor protection plan, free 24 hour rentals of Nybakke Dry Carpet Cleaning systems, and more.



Look for another article in next month's issue as we interview the Nybakkes more about their 85th Anniversary festivities!

When paying tribute to Nybakke Vacuum Shop's many years of service, Illinois Senator Bill Brady said: "I want to congratulate Nybakke Vacuum Shop for 80[+] years of business here in central Illinois. I am proud to know the 4-generation Nybakke family business that cares about the vacuum cleaners they're selling and the people who they sell them to. Nybakke has also made a name for themselves around the state of Illinois for selling mostly American-made vacuum cleaners and products. Supporting 'Mom and Pop' local businesses that this country was built on and buying American-made products keep our communities strong and local economies thriving."

Each year, Nybakke Vacuum Shop receives an award from Tacony Corporation for being a highly successful dealer. Yet as David and Terry also say, "The award from our community is that after 85 years in business, they continue to support us and allow us to serve them with our sales and service."

Congratulations to David, Terry, and the staff at Nybakke Vacuum Shop for being named VDTA's June Dealer of the Month!

VDTA•SDTA Dealer of The Month

Company Name _____ Phone _____

Owner's Name _____ Web site _____

Address _____ E-mail address _____

City, State, Zip _____ Local Newspaper _____

1. What year was your store established? _____

2. How many stores do you operate? _____

3. How many employees do you have? _____

4. What product lines do you carry? _____

5. What services do you provide? _____

6. Is your business family run? How many generations? _____

7. What is your age group: ☐ 40 – under ☐ 41 – 50 ☐ 51 – 60 ☐ 61 plus

8. Check all equipment that your business carries:

☐ Vacuum ☐ Vacuum/Central Vacuum ☐ Vacuum & Sewing ☐ Janitorial

☐ Sewing Machines ☐ Quilt Shop with Sewing Machines ☐ Longarm machines

☐ Quilt Shop without Sewing Machines ☐ Other _____

9. Do you have and maintain e-mail lists of your customers? ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. Do you have and maintain direct mail lists of your customers? ☐ Yes ☐ No

11. Do you have a rental program for sewing machines? ☐ Yes ☐ No

12. Do you rent time on a longarm quilting machine to quilters to machine quilt? ☐ Yes ☐ No

13. Do you offer sewing /quilting classes in your store? ☐ Yes ☐ No

On a separate sheet of paper or email (to mail@vdt.com) please answer the following

14. How often do you offer classes and what age group do you target?

15. Community projects you participate in or support.

16. Marketing plans you have done that draw people to your store.

17. Any awards received from a manufacturer or from your community.

18. What tips of success or advice do you have for other independent retailers in the industry?

19. Share a paragraph about the history of your business and how it has grown?

20. How often do you attend the VDTA•SDTA Annual Convention? IE: Every year, every 2 yrs, etc:

21. What makes your shop stand out in your community.

23. Are you a member of the VDTA•SDTA? ☐ Yes ☐ No

24. What year did you join? _____

Fax to: 515-282-4483

Mail to: Dealer of the Month, VDTA•SDTA, 2724 2nd Ave, Des Moines, IA 50313.

E-mail to: mail@vdt.com.

You may also visit www.vdt.com, click on "Members," and fill out the form online and submit.
You must be a current member of VDTA•SDTA to be selected as the Dealer of the Month.

Thank You

The following is a list of members who recently renewed their membership or joined VDTA•SDTA or SEA. This is only a partial list of members. For a complete list of members visit www.vdta.com.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

| ASSOCIATE MEMBERS | | MEMBER SINCE | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------------|-----------------|----------|
| M D Manufacturing Inc | Bakersfield, CA | Apr 1996 | Jean-Marie's Fabrics & Sewing Machines | Springfield, OR | Dec 1996 |
| Suzhou Minkang Filter Co Ltd | Xiangcheng District, CHINA | May 2012 | Longview Sewing and Fabric | Longview, WA | Jan 2015 |
| | | | Low Country Vacuum & Sew | Charleston, SC | May 1998 |

INDEPENDENT DEALER MEMBERS MEMBER SINCE

| | | | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------|
| GLOBALTEK GmbH | Dornbirn, Germany | Jun 2010 | Low Country Vacuum & Sew Maggie's | Charleston, SC | May 1998 |
|----------------|-------------------|----------|-----------------------------------|----------------|----------|

INDEPENDENT DEALER MEMBERS MEMBER SINCE

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| A Clean House | West Des Moines, IA | Jan 2011 | Marqiotta's Sewing Ctr Inc | Charleston, SC | May 2006 |
| A to Z Vac N Sew LLC | Norfolk, NE | May 2016 | Meissner Sewing & Vacuum Ctr | Sacramento, CA | Jan 1997 |
| A-1 Vacuum Cleaner Co | Roseville, MN | May 1989 | Modesto Vacuum & Sewing | Modesto, CA | Feb 2001 |
| A-1 Vacuum Sales & Service | La Crosse, WI | May 1992 | Neal's Vacuum & Sewing Center | Muscatine, IA | Apr 1989 |
| Ace Parts Company Inc | Ashtabula, OH | April 1988 | Newman's Vacuum & Appliance | Santa Monica, CA | Feb 1987 |
| Alexander's Sewing & Vacuum | Durham, NC | Dec 1981 | Quality Sew & Vac | Escanaba, MI | Mar 2002 |
| B F Vacuum Cleaner Centre Ltd | Ottawa, ONT, CAN | Apr 2002 | Rejje's Vacuum Center | Pensacola, FL | Oct 2014 |
| B Right on Sewing & Vacuum | Brighton, CO | Jan 2004 | Reliable Vacuum Store | West Fargo, ND | Aug 2013 |
| Bay Vac and Pedal | Bay City, MI | May 2016 | Sandhills Sewing & Vacuum | Miles City, MT | Mar 1991 |
| Boulevard Vacuum | Los Angeles, CA | Dec 1987 | Satin Stitches Sewing & Embroidery | Columbia, MO | May 2011 |
| Brookfield Vacuum Cleaners | Brookfield, WI | Feb 1986 | Sewing Machine Services | Mississauga, ONT, CAN | Apr 2002 |
| Charlottesville San Supply Corp | Charlottesville, VA | May 1989 | Sewing Machines Express Inc | Springfield, MO | May 2004 |
| Choice Vacuum Inc | Sarasota, FL | May 1990 | Shapple Sew & Vac | Memphis, TN | June 2003 |
| Close to Home | Glastonbury, CT | May 2008 | Sierra Sewing Center | Reno, NV | May 2014 |
| Crafty Corner | Worthington, MN | June 2013 | Smith Floor Care | Glenville, PA | Jan 2016 |
| Dixie Vac Service Inc | Louisville, KY | June 1983 | Star D LLC | Abilene, TX | Apr 2017 |
| Dupage Vacuum Inc | Wheaton, IL | Feb 1985 | Sunwest Janitor Supply | Albuquerque, NM | Apr 2017 |
| Ekker Vac & Sew | La Crosse, WI | Feb 1986 | Swift's Vacuum Cleaners | Cary, IL | May 1982 |
| Fix-It Shop | Toledo, OH | Dec 1982 | The Vac Shack Inc | Sioux City, IA | Mar 1982 |
| Forx Vacuum | Grand Forks, ND | May 2007 | Tom Dodge Central Vac | Greensboro, MD | Mar 2015 |
| G T Sew & Vac Warehouse | Colton, CA | Jan 2007 | Vac World | Portage, MI | Apr 1985 |
| Heyde Sewing Machine Co | Saint Louis, MO | Jun 2000 | Vacserv Vacuum Cleaner Repair | Spring, TX | May 2012 |
| Inspired to Sew | Cedar Rapids, IA | Jan 2016 | Vacuflow Of Kentucky Inc | Louisville, KY | Jun 2011 |
| | | | Vacuum Center of NMB Inc | N. Myrtle Beach, SC | Jun 1995 |
| | | | Vacuum Rebuilders of Montreal | Montreal, QC, CAN | May 2000 |
| | | | Viking Sew & Vac Ctr | Renton, WA | Feb 2004 |

VISIT CHINA: Cultural and Business Exchange

Join the VDTA • SDTA & China Feiyue

for their 4th Cultural & Business Development Exchange

Tentative Schedule

- Day 1: Depart U.S. to Xi'an
- Day 2: Arrival in Xi'an
- Day 3: City Center Tour
- Day 4: Terracotta Army
- Day 5: China National Silk Museum & Zhejiang Sci-Tech University
- Day 6: Local Attraction
- Day 7: CISMA: China International Sewing Machinery & Accessories show
- Day 8: CISMA and Depart to U.S.

**Deadline
June 15th**



This is truly the trip of a lifetime!
Contact China Feiyue now! Cost = USD \$2688.
Single occupancy additional rate = USD \$300.
USD \$1000 non-refundable deposit is required at
time of booking. Deadline date to book is June 15, 2017.
Call for availability after June 15. **Limited capacity.**

Contact:

Web: www.feiyueusa.com

Phone: 1-888-8FEIYUE; 909-613-1817

*Professional English speaker tour guide will be available in portions of the travel.
**Total cost includes airfare departing from Los Angeles, and while in China:
ground transportation, hotel accommodations, and meals. Does not include cost
for obtaining Chinese entry visa. Proof of International Medical Insurance must be
provided at least 30 days prior to departure.



September 21-28, 2017

Pacific Community Ventures and Aspen Institute to Create Quality Jobs at Retail Small Businesses

Pacific Community Ventures will participate in Reimagine Retail to investigate strategies for collaborating with employers on job quality and worker advancement.

The Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program announced that it has awarded a grant of \$200,000 to Pacific Community Ventures to take part in Reimagine Retail, a project made possible through a \$5.5 million grant awarded by the Walmart Foundation to the Aspen Institute in 2016. Over a two-year period, Pacific Community Ventures will engage retail employers and explore strategies to improve job quality and support advancement for retail workers.

Workforce development organizations, retail businesses, and other partners have potential to collaborate to improve the quality of jobs for workers in entry-level positions, create pathways for advancement in retail and related sectors, and increase employee engagement, productivity, and retention. To explore open questions about how to expand opportunities for working people, leaders in these fields will need to build capacity, experiment with new and innovative strategies, and learn from their experiences.

Through Reimagine Retail, the Aspen Institute Economic Opportunities Program (EOP), Pacific Community Ventures, and five additional local partners across the country will investigate approaches that aim to improve job quality and worker advancement opportunities in retail and related sectors.

Over the next two years, Pacific Community ventures will pilot and publish a quality jobs toolkit focused on retail small businesses. Small businesses are a big part of the US retail sector, as 98% of retail businesses have fewer than 50 employees, and small retail businesses are one-third of all retail jobs. The quality jobs toolkit has the potential to

enable meaningful improvements in job quality in an industry that relies on a significant number of frontline workers and operates with limited resources – and once it's proven out across the retail industry, it can be adapted to restaurants, health services, and on and on.

Over a two-year period, EOP will offer Pacific Community Ventures and other local partners opportunities to experiment with new ideas, learn from their peers, and participate in research activities to explore the outcomes of their work. They look forward to learning alongside this group and sharing findings with a broader community. EOP will share findings from partners' work broadly to advance promising practices for expanding economic opportunities for workers in retail and adjacent sectors.

“We believe that we must equip small businesses with the practical tools and resources they need in a way that balances their business needs and bottom lines”

“As part of our vision to make quality job creation the norm, we believe that we must equip small businesses with the practical tools and resources they need to offer higher quality jobs in a way that balances their business needs and bottom lines with better wages and benefits for

their employees,” said Mary Jo Cook, President and CEO of Pacific Community Ventures. “We know that small businesses want to provide good employment opportunities for their workers – but they are often uncertain of how to do so in ways that make sense for their business. We’re committed to enabling them to succeed and believe a simple, practical quality jobs toolkit will help spur them to action.”

“We have found that learning and evaluation methods that engage program leaders and other stakeholders in the process have been critical to developing a practical understanding of why and how specific initiatives achieve their outcomes, building practical knowledge about efforts that address complex economic and social challenges,” said Maureen Conway, Vice President for Policy Programs and Executive Director of the Economic Opportunities Program at the Aspen Institute.

“We are excited about bringing this engagement approach to Reimagine Retail so that the lessons we learn about this emerging area of practice can be applied and adapted in other communities.”

Reimagine Retail is one of several interrelated projects supported by a \$5.5 million grant provided by the Walmart Foundation to the Aspen Institute as part of Walmart and the Walmart Foundation’s Opportunity initiative, a five-year, \$100 million sector-wide effort aimed at strengthening the transferability of skills of the US retail workforce and developing ways to make it easier for frontline workers to advance their careers.


“Through our collaboration with the Aspen Institute, we aim to further strengthen the retail workforce ecosystem by creating greater opportunities for workers to build long-lasting careers,” said Kathleen McLaughlin, president of the Walmart Foundation and chief sustainability officer for Walmart. “By engaging six local partners in communities around the country, our work together will help ensure that frontline workers have access to the training and tools needed to achieve upward mobility.”


More information about Reimagine Retail and each of the six local partners is available online at: <http://as.pn/reimagneretail>.

About the Organization: Pacific Community Ventures is a nonprofit social enterprise that engages small businesses, investors and policymakers to build an economy that works for everyone. To achieve their mission they provide small businesses working in underserved communities with access to capital and mentoring, test new approaches to creating quality jobs which can be scaled through partnerships, and conduct research and evaluation so that impact investors will deploy more capital more effectively to underserved communities.

About the Organization: The Aspen Institute is an educational and policy studies organization based in Washington, DC. Its mission is to foster leadership based on enduring values and to provide a nonpartisan venue for dealing with critical issues. The Institute is based in Washington, DC; Aspen, Colorado; and on the Wye River on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. It also has offices in New York City and an international network of partners. For more information, visit www.aspeninstitute.org.

About the Program: The Economic Opportunities Program (EOP) advances promising strategies, policies, and ideas to help low- and moderate-income Americans connect to and thrive in a changing economy. Over its 25 years of work, EOP has focused on expanding individuals’ opportunities to connect to quality work, to start businesses, and to build assets and economic stability.





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Sulky's 30th Anniversary: Where It All Began

By Nikki Means

This year marks 30 years of Sulky! I met with Fred and Joyce Drexler, the founding partners, to discuss the history of Sulky and where it all began....



Q: What was your vision for Sulky when you started?

Fred / Joyce: Our vision for Sulky of America when we first began in 1987 was to create a company that would focus on educating consumers and sewing store owners to the joys of Creative Sewing as a fun, interesting, and rewarding hobby that they would love to do with our 193 colors of super high quality, silky, shiny, Sulky 40 wt. Rayon Threads.

The seeds for this educational program were sewn eleven years earlier in 1976 when Joyce first started teaching free-motion embroidery in the sewing store that we owned. Within the first couple of years, as women spread the word about how much fun they had in Joyce's class, hundreds more flocked to our store to learn this intriguing art form. For most, this led to a life-long passionate pursuit of self-expression as a creative hobby.

I began my career in the Sewing Industry at age 23 in March, 1965 as a Singer Salesman, when the vast majority of women who used a sewing

machine did so to save money for the family. However, even then, women were beginning to work in jobs outside their homes in ever – increasing numbers.

Fast forward to 1969 when I opened my own Singer Sewing Machine Dealership, to 1974 when I met my future wife, Joyce. In 1976 she started teaching in our store and we began to realize that many of these working ladies no longer had the time and/or inclination to sew to save money when they got home. However, they absolutely loved spending their evenings and Saturdays in our store. In 1980 Joyce founded *Speed Stitch* to teach her methods to store owners and consumers all over the United States and Canada. Finally, in 1987 we partnered with a German thread manufacturer to begin Sulky of America.



Before they bought the rights to the name Sulky, their publication was known as Speed Stitch.

Little did we know that what began as a fun-filled, one-day, 6-hour lesson would spawn the Home Embroidery explosion that we have experienced over the last 23 years.

Q: How is that different from what the company has become?

Fred / Joyce: It is interesting to reflect on the difference between what our initial vision for Sulky was compared to what it has become. Our vision for Sulky of America when we first began in 1987 was to create a company that would focus on educating consumers and sewing store owners to the joys of Creative Sewing.

I believe that by staying true to that vision for the past 30 years, we have been able to grow the company far beyond our wildest dreams. Today in Sewing, Quilting, and Craft Stores all over the United States and Canada, and on our website www.sulky.com, millions of sewers, quilters, and crafters are able to purchase and enjoy over 4,000 of the highest quality Sulky Products to make their fun, interesting, and rewarding hobbies far more enjoyable.

The path to get here has been filled with industry educational milestones including conducting thousands of Sulky Sew Exciting Seminars in retail stores based on 22 Sulky publications. Sulky has also trained numerous aspiring teachers in the Sulky Certified Teacher Training program and conducted hands-on "Embroidery Zen" programs for consumers to learn in-depth ways of getting the most out of their embroidery machines. We have showcased thousands of works of wearable art during the 10 years of the "Everyone Loves Sulky Challenge" contest and have made frequent guest appearances on Sulky-sponsored PBS Sewing shows.

Q: How is Sulky of America approaching the digital age?

Fred / Joyce: The digital age has ushered in the availability of numerous online Sulky courses for consumers to broaden their creative knowledge at home, on their own machines, and at their own pace. Free Sulky Webinars 4 to 6 times per year along with our involvement on Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, and of course, this Blog have helped grow the Sulky community tremendously over the years.

While our vision when we started Sulky of America in 1987 was to grow the company by focusing on education, we never imagined how many rewarding avenues we would be able to open and follow to make this happen.

Q: Do you have a favorite memory from the past 30 years?

Fred / Joyce: I have loads of great memories from the past 30 years but I would like to share one of my favorites today.

A thread manufacturer from Mexico was trying to get Sulky to market his thread a few years ago. After he did a careful study and analysis of both his thread and Sulky thread, he told me, "Fred, you have too much quality in your thread. You don't need that much quality."

This only reconfirmed my belief that we would always strive to have "Too Much Quality."



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Currently, Sulky has 6 National Educators teaching five different "Sew Exciting" seminars, which are conducted in retail stores throughout the country. Each year, Sulky educators also teach at more than 25 consumer shows, and Sulky has a very active program that it presents to Sewing Guilds and Quilting Guilds all across the country.



Fearless Free Motion Stitching taught by Eric Drexler, son of Fred and Joyce

Visit Sulky's blog at <http://blog.sulky.com> for more great articles, and look for more history of the Sulky brand to be reprinted with permission in SQE Professional.

SEAMS Speakers for 50th Anniversary Spring Conference

Industry analysts and executives shared their experiences and views on the trends and opportunities that will shape the next 5 Years at the SEAMS Spring Networking Conference, May 16-17 at the OMNI Grove Park Inn in Asheville, NC.



SEAMS, the National Association for the U.S. Sewn Products and Textile Industries, gathered an inspiring lineup of speakers for its 50th Anniversary Spring Networking Conference in Asheville, NC. Themed “Shaping the Next 50 Years,” the May 16-17 event explored future trends and opportunities through a combination of keynote and featured presentations, a panel discussion, breakout sessions, and numerous networking opportunities.

Sharon Graubard, Founder & Creative Director of MintModa, delivered the keynote presentation entitled “Sewn in the USA: Making Meaningful Products for a New Era” explaining how products and companies can tell a compelling story that will engage users and motivate business; and how certain emotional, sensory, and aesthetic drivers can make clothing and brands meaningful and desirable.

Milliken Vice President of Human Resources Dan Garrison shared his experiences on “Attracting and Retaining Talent,” discussing direct hiring, staffing agencies, and other innovative HR recruiting practices; as well as employee onboarding, training, engagement, and company culture.

In “The World of Trade Shows” interview, Dennis Smith, President of Messe Frankfurt USA/Mexico, answered questions posed by moderator Will Duncan, CEO of Will Duncan and Associates, on the future of trade shows and provided insight into how show exhibitors can better leverage their investment dollars and attendees can more effectively perform show coverage.

AAFA Executive Vice President Steve Lamar informed attendees “What’s Up in Washington?” with questions like: What new tax and trade initiatives can we expect? What are other regulatory changes planned? And most importantly, how will the resurgence in domestic manufacturing respond to these new policies?

William D’Arienzo, Ph.D., CEO of WDA Brand Marketing discussed “The Supply Chain Revolution: What the Future Holds for SEAMS Members.” He shared how, in the future, “Supply Chains” will morph into “Supply Systems” & “Competitors” will become “Collaborators.”

A panel discussion on “Opportunities in Non-Apparel Sewn Products” featured Frank Henderson, President of Henderson Sewing Machine Co.; Pat Hickey, Acting President and Director of Minnesota Knitting Mills; Sherry Scyphers Hungate, Vice President at Goodwill Industries of South Florida; Jeremy Wooten, President of HomTex; and Rick Ludolph, President of Productive Solutions.

Attendees had the option to choose to attend one of three concurrent breakout sessions that covered “Availability of US Textiles” led by Ron Roach, President of Contempora Fabrics; “Value-Added Contract Services” facilitated by Jackson Burnett, President of Vapor Apparel; and “Domestic Production and the Trade War” moderated by Michael M. Woody, CEO of Trans-Tex, LLC.

SEAMS Conference attendees had the opportunity to introduce their company to all attendees, meet industry-focused benefits providers, and visit special products/services displays during the conference. A local plant tour of IFB Solutions, a golf outing, and a dinner reception preceded the one-day conference session. Textile and sewn products industry professionals may learn more by visiting the SEAMS website or phoning +1-803-642-1111.

About the Association: SEAMS, the National Association for the Sewn Products and Textile Industries, promotes the continued growth of the USA fashion, sewn products, and textiles industries through educational programs, networking opportunities, business opportunity matchmaking, industry collaboration, and special member benefits packages.

SEAMS members comprise textiles providers, contract manufacturers, brands, vertical retailers and their suppliers, and service providers to collectively represent the complete concept-to-consumer supply chain. Softgoods industry executives, managers, professionals, and entrepreneurs leverage their SEAMS membership to gain new business, stay informed of industry issues and trends, find solutions to productivity and operational challenges, manage costs and increase productivity. For more information, visit the website at <http://www.seams.org>.

Productivity Tip: Always Have Extra Time

High performers often find themselves lacking extra time, which can unfortunately lead to ongoing frustration. Consider if you're one of those people who likes to have every minute of the day planned out.

This isn't a horrible strategy, and I think it's a good idea to plan for your day. The problem is that we often forget the other variables affecting our productivity – the simple things eating up your time.

For instance, I recently received a new credit card, which meant I had to update some recurring online payment information with various merchants. In most cases, this took about a minute. I'd log-on to the company website and update my card.

Sometimes the fastest route to productivity involves slowing down a little.

But for a certain company, I was unable to type in my new information. Instead, I was told to call the company with the new number. I did that and while the process wasn't too painful, it took about fifteen minutes, as most of that time was spent on hold.

While I was able to do some minor tasks while on hold, I couldn't focus entirely on a big project with a looming deadline. In the end, something that I thought would take a minute ended up taking fifteen. If your day is so jam-packed with things you need to do, finding extra time can put you into a panic. All of your other tasks will be rushed, you may have to stay late, or things won't get done.

These little, unexpected delays can appear at the worst times. Have you ever wanted to buy a quick cup of coffee, only to have the line brought to a standstill by someone paying with pennies?

While you can't expect these things, they will happen. You will be met with important requests or unplanned conversations that are worth having or something else entirely. Leave some open time in your schedule so you don't fall behind when these delays occur.

If everything in your day goes to plan, you'll enjoy some bonus time. That extra time can be spent on other projects, big picture thinking, or used as a well-deserved break. Sometimes the fastest route to productivity involves slowing down a little.

About the Author: Ken Okel speaks to smart leaders and associations who want to unleash employee production, performance, and profitability. He introduces them to lessons learned from his time in TV News, Disaster Relief, and running a Professional Ballet Company.



He is the author of the book, *Stuck on Yellow: Stop Stalling, Get Serious, and Unleash Your Productivity* and the host of the *2 Minute Takeaway Podcast*. See and hear Ken in action at: www.KenOkel.com.



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Are You an “Oh, my gosh!” Person?

Last month I wrote about our store implementing a priority service charge on same-day sewing repairs. It seemed like a great idea at the time, but when we started receiving negative feedback and when a good customer told me that our new policy invited a feeding frenzy (complaints) during a quilting retreat, we decided to modify it. But the damage was already done.

It happened that one of the retreaters had called our store, and the staff member answering the phone told her the new store policy off the bat. The customer took offense, with that leading to the complaint session at the quilt retreat. The whole thing may not have happened if our person had taken the time to listen more closely to the customer. Or perhaps the whole issue was the customer not hearing what she wanted to hear. Either way, we have temporarily lost at least 2 customers... that we know of. They removed their names from our e-mail list and said they were no longer going to shop in our store. Not good!

Maybe our staff person was stressed and came across as apathetic or maybe the customer was having a bad day. The whole situation was exacerbated and grew into something much bigger than it really was. It is a good example of negative thinking and the damage it can do.

Let's face it: it's human nature to talk negatively at times, but negativity breeds negativity. By the same token, positive thinking usually leads to even more positive thinking. While we can't always sugarcoat things, there is a positive way to react when your day doesn't go exactly as planned. Having an alternative option or saying "Yes" to a revised plan is usually a possibility. None of us like to be given a flat "No" as the answer to our problem.

As an owner or manager, we set the tone for our staff. It's easy to fall into the negativity trap and have a negative reaction when things go wrong. Think about it: when things have really gone wrong and we felt the need to be negative, what good has it done? Does it make us feel better? Sometimes, yes. Does it yield results? Sometimes, but usually not.

Sometimes the problem is an employee. It's then up to us to change how we do things or change how the employee does things, pushing the issue until the

employee either conforms or quits. That could be a good thing or it could lead to months of frustration trying to find and train a new employee. Either way, negativity usually leads to high emotions, which then lead to situations not appropriate in the workplace. Come to think of it, I don't want high emotions in our home either.

Have you known a person who can take almost any issue and turn it into something bigger than what it really is? Supersize it. I call them "Oh-My-Gosh" People. Perhaps they follow the Internet every chance they get with a knack for picking out bad news and building it up as something (in their mind at least) everyone should be concerned about.

Sometimes they are lonely people begging for attention. Sometimes they just enjoy creating issues. The Oh-My-Gosh-Person is also hard to work with. They have a tendency to drain the life out of the people around them. Ask me how I know...

While these people need help, we are not in the therapy business. Of course, we need to care about our coworkers and staff, but we can't let negative people pull the life out of us. They either need to change or need to move on.

Over the years, I have encountered a few Oh-My-Gosh-People. Most have lasted a few months, some even longer. Again, negativity is contagious and has no place in a retail store. If the negativity is coming from you, STOP IT NOW! As an owner or manager, you do set the example in your store. Be honest, work hard, and be happy! Your staff and your customers will appreciate it!

REMINDER! If your store is active in charitable giving or volunteer work in your community, please share! We would like to acknowledge you and spread the word. Let's make this world a better place because we were here!

E-mail your comments, ideas and suggestions to jimbarnhardt@msn.com



Jim Barnhardt,
J & R Vacuum and Sewing
VDTA • SDTA Board Member

Creating a Successful Aftermarket Business

SVP WORLDWIDE

By Vivian Lavinskas, SVP Worldwide

Did you know that aftermarket sales often exceed machine sales for both profit and revenue generated?

Aftermarkets which include sewing machine accessories like software, hoops, and presser feet; notions like stabilizers and thread; and other items like cabinets, pressing equipment, and cases help bring the customer back into your store. In a recent study conducted by SVP Worldwide, statistics showed that the majority of sewists prefer to return to their dealer to buy add-ons for their machine. If you don't offer a variety of products, you are intentionally sending your customer to your competitor.

Aftermarket products are very appealing to sewing retailers because they have the potential to be sold repeatedly to your entire customer base. If handled correctly, the Aftermarket items that you carry in your store will bring a long-term and stable stream of revenue.

"In a recent study conducted by our company, statistics showed that the majority of sewists prefer to return to their dealer to buy add-ons for their machine."

SO HOW DO YOU CREATE A SUCCESSFUL AFTERMARKET BUSINESS?

- When you sell a sewing machine, **offer a short class** on how to use the machine. This will bring that customer back into your store with the opportunity to sell more accessories and other sewing-related notions to accompany the machine.
- **Provide short, free "How To" demos** on using different feet and accessories. These can be done in a group setting and can be conducted on a bi-weekly or monthly basis. If you know of a customer who is very knowledgeable when it comes to a specific foot, hoop, or other



A positive after-sale experience strongly influences the perceived value of your store.

accessory, invite them to share their tips and tricks. They will be flattered that you value their knowledge and expertise, and you will be surprised at how willing many customers are to share this information.

- **Schedule special events with the educators** that your sewing machine supplier provides. They can customize an event based on the aftermarket products you carry in your store or you can choose to hold a pre-set event they have organized. Most importantly, they are experts and will help you promote the brand and the products that you carry.
- **Ensure that customers are using the aftermarket products** you sell them. Aftermarket sales are strongest when customers trust their dealer and know that they can rely on them for expert service.
- Make sure that you **carry disposable goods** like stabilizers, thread, etc. These types of products run out quickly and will require your customer to come back into the store to buy more. You'll have another opportunity to sell additional aftermarket products.

A successful business is all about loyalty. You can build *customer loyalty* by offering the right products, exceptional customer service, and a sewing experience that they can't access anywhere else but at your location.

Tapping the Talent of the Future

We live in a very dynamic world. What we know now will not be good enough for the future, and we need to focus on selecting people who can move us forward by their willingness to learn.

When asked what young people need to do for their career goals, Steve Jobs stated: "Think about what it is that you really want. Go ahead and put in the time and energy to learn new skills, acquire new knowledge, and experience new things. Invest in building the relationships you will need to call upon when you're ready. Most people never pick up the phone and call; most people never ask. And that's what sometimes separates the people that do things from the people that just dream about them."

According to a survey conducted by *UNC Kenan-Flagler Business School* in 2014, 84% of talent development professionals surveyed reported that the demand for high-potential talent has increased in the past five years, driven primarily by growth (74%) and competitive pressure (61%). Almost half (47%) of those talent development professionals stated that the current pool of high-potential talent does not meet the anticipated future need. Another 18% of those surveyed didn't know if the current pool of high-potentials will meet future needs.

In my book, *Moving Up*, I tell readers it's about your life...it's about succeeding. It's about taking chances, dreaming big, being proactive, and being ready when opportunity presents itself.

Making the Difference

When we involve and value people, engagement and performance will increase, and profit will follow.

Howard Schultz, chairman and founder of Starbucks, was asked what he would say to a young person who wants to be the next Howard Schultz. His answer, in part, was this: "Define what your dream is. Dream bigger than that and don't let anyone tell you [that] you are not good enough, not smart enough, that your dream can't come true. And don't settle, because you are going to find yourself at 30, 40, or 50 years old saying, 'I could have done that.' And you probably could have."

1. Feel good about yourself. The way you feel about yourself is the way others see you. Build your self-confidence, because self-confidence is power. It leads to improved performance, which leads to improved pay. Don't wait for others to validate your efforts; concentrate on your strengths and recognize the importance of the role you play in the organization.

- 2. Learn.** The more knowledgeable you are, the more successful you will become. Learn as much as possible on your own time about your job, your industry, your customers, personal relationships, and anything else that will help you move up the ladder of success.
- 3. Invest in yourself.** You can't wait for your company to send you to training programs; you must take the initiative. Set aside a specific amount of money each year to use to train yourself. Read at least one self-improvement book a month for the rest of your life; it's the best investment you will ever make.
- 4. Set written goals.** Those goals don't have to be lofty, but they do have to be realistic. Look at those goals every day; make them part of you. Visualize achieving those goals. As you reach one goal, set another that will have you reaching a little higher.
- 5. Deliver.** Deliver what you promise. Do what you say you will do, and do it with quality and speed. If you say you will complete a report by Monday, do it. Manage your time. Get organized. If you go above and beyond the call of duty, you will be noticed, you will be promoted, and you will make more money.

The greatest limitations you will ever face in your job and in your life are self-imposed. Your future is in your hands. You need to stand for something and make a difference in your life and the lives of the people around you. You have the power to choose your experience.

"We all know that no matter what we know now, it's not good enough for the future, because we live in a very dynamic world."

—John Tschohl

About the Author: John Tschohl is an international service strategist & speaker. He is founder and president of the Service Quality Institute in Minneapolis, MN. Described by *Time* and *Entrepreneur* magazines as a customer service guru, he has written several books on customer service. He just released the 10th Edition of *Achieving Excellence Through Customer Service*. The Service Quality Institute (<http://www.customer-service.com>) has developed more than 26 customer service training programs that have been distributed and presented throughout the world. John's monthly strategic newsletter is available online at no charge. He can also be reached on Facebook, LinkedIn & Twitter.





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VDTA•SDTA's Niagara Summer Show

Why Niagara Falls is the Perfect Destination for Business and Leisure

VDTA•SDTA wants to take you on tour... to Niagara Falls! This September, VDTA will host a 2-day trade show event for independent floorcare, sewing, and quilting retailers at the Scotiabank Convention Centre in Niagara Falls, Canada. With accommodating exhibit hours from Noon – 9 PM on Saturday, September 9th and 9 AM – 4 PM on Sunday, September 10th, you have plenty of time to site-see during this weekend getaway.

As a tourist destination for more than 150 years, Niagara Falls, Canada offers stunning attractions.

For those who want to see the falls up close, hop aboard a boat tour. You might check out *Hornblower Niagara Cruises* for a "Voyage to the Falls" FULL-MIST experience. Two Catamarans alternately depart every fifteen minutes for a twenty-minute tour of the Canadian Horseshoe Falls. Mist gear is available, though if your goal is to see the falls AND stay dry, inside viewing is available. If you don't mind a poncho and the roar of 600,000 gallons per second cascading down a 170 foot drop, then step out to the Hornblower's tiered decks designed for 360 degree viewing. And of course, savor the feeling of standing as close as humanly possible to the mighty Niagara Falls.

If you're more of a night owl, then take advantage of the Hornblower's nighttime "Illumination Cruise." You can enjoy the beauty of the illuminated falls for a full 40 minutes aboard the *Niagara Wonder* or *Niagara Thunder*. The Canadian Horseshoe Falls are lit promptly at 8:30 PM and dress the landscape until Midnight. A view of the fall's enhanced colored lighting with \$4 million, fully-programmable LED technology will take your breath away.

Hours and Prices of Hornblower Niagara Cruises

Daytime "Voyage to the Falls"

\$25.95 CAD (adult); 8:30 AM – 8:30 PM

Nighttime "Illumination Cruise"

\$39.95 CAD (adult); 9:30 PM – 10:10 PM

As another option to satisfy your thrill-seeking side, consider a soaring view from the Skylon Tower. The Skylon Tower opened in 1965 and stands 520 feet tall from ground to beacon and almost 800 feet about the base of the falls. A ride to the top of the tower via its iconic "Yellow Bug Elevators" takes a mere 52 seconds.

At the top, choose a view from 3 different observation decks, indoor and outdoor, with an 80-mile visibility on a clear day. If you're staying for dinner, a meal in the revolving dining room won't disappoint.



Hours and Prices of Skylon Tower Viewing

Elevator to Observation Decks

\$15 CAD (adult); 8 AM – Midnight

Perhaps a little less-soaring but still extraordinary is a view of the falls from the Niagara SkyWheel. Canada's largest observation wheel, the Niagara SkyWheel in the Clifton Hill attraction district looms 175 feet high and offers a 15-minute Ferris wheel ride. Enclosed, climate-controlled gondolas seat up to 6 occupants each and make the SkyWheel an ideal experience any time of year, day or night. The Niagara SkyWheel was built in 2006 and replaced the Falls Tower Ride.

Hours and Prices of Niagara SkyWheel

\$11.99 CAD (adult); 9 AM – 1 AM after May 19th

For more information about attractions in Niagara Falls, Canada, visit <https://www.niagarafallstourism.com>

**Register now for VDTA's
Niagara Summer Show,
see page 7!**

**For more info about the VDTA•SDTA
Niagara Summer Show, visit
www.vdta.com/2017Canada**

Letter from our Members:

I attended the 2017 VDTA•SDTA Trade Show and Convention in Las Vegas. I wanted to make sure that I let you know how I felt about the show.

I want to thank the VDTA for putting on a great show this year. I had attended a show a few years back, and I must say this show was much more relevant and informational. I particularly enjoyed the "Vacuum Roundtable" and the "Everything Has Changed" seminars. The keynote speaker was also quite motivational.

It is amazing to me how such small changes in one's business can have such a big impact. I came back from the show "fired up," motivated, and ready to implement the knowledge we learned. In just a couple of days, we increased our Facebook following by 5%, increased our Facebook interest by over 200%, and have readily made changes within the front of our store. Our doors have been swinging and EVERY customer has walked out with product over this week. The show was so informational that I found I did not have enough time to visit every booth I wanted to. We are excited to see where our store(s?) can be by the next show. Keep up the great work, and we look forward to being at the next show!

*Lloyd and Sara
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BERNINA of America Introduces Bernina 350 Special Edition Cotton+Steel Sewing Machine

***Limited special edition sewing machine offers two unique faceplates
“Hello Lovely” & “I Love Sewing”***

BERNINA of America, a premier manufacturer of sewing, embroidery, and quilting machines, is pleased to introduce its new BERNINA 350 Special Edition Cotton+Steel (B 350 SE) sewing machine with two unique faceplate options. BERNINA partnered with Cotton+Steel (C+S), a contemporary fabric design company, to design two faceplates – “Hello Lovely” and “I Love Sewing” – for the new B 350 SE sewing machine.

The “Hello Lovely” faceplate features a brightly colored floral design with two flying birds. The “I Love Sewing” faceplate features a colorful design with scissors and thread, perfect for any sewist. The B 350 SE sewing machines are now available at BERNINA dealers nationwide with an MSRP of \$1,899.

“Our partnership with Cotton+Steel has enabled us to provide not only a quality machine for sewists but one that showcases creative faceplate designs inherent of the sewing and quilting world,” said Paul Ashworth, President of BERNINA of America. “Additionally, the machine is not only eye-catching and fun, it comes with 7 of BERNINA’s full-shank presser feet to provide the sewist with an array of sewing and options.”

In addition to the two custom-designed faceplates, the B 350 SE sewing machine comes equipped with a slide-on extension table, the BERNINA Free Hand System, and seven BERNINA full-shank presser feet. The seven BERNINA presser feet include the Reverse pattern foot #1, Zipper foot #4, Blindstitch foot #4, 3-Groove pintuck foot #30, Patchwork foot #37, Buttonhole foot with slide #3A, and Walking foot #50 with three soles.

Other features include 191 total stitch patterns, a maximum sewing speed up to 900 stitches per minute, and a stitch width up to 5.5 mm. The B 350 SE also has a direct-selection function that allows sewists to switch quickly between 18 utility stitches and 63 decorative stitches, including 11 quilting stitches. Additionally, a high-precision buttonhole function with two programmed buttonhole styles gives users the ability to sew buttonholes of the exact same length every time. There’s also enough memory space to permanently store up to 30 stitches as well as a bright LED sewing light. For more information, visit www.bernina.com/3series.

About the Company: Cotton+Steel (C+S), a division of RJR Fabrics, was founded in 2013 on the ideas that there is strength in collaboration and value in good design. C+S strives to honor the traditions of creativity, resourcefulness, and innovation innate in the sewing and quilting world. The four contemporary designers who designed the colorful and fun faceplates include Melody Miller, Rashida Coleman-Hale, Alexia Abegg, and Sarah Watts. For more information, visit www.cottonandsteelfabrics.com.

About the Company: Founded in Switzerland more than 100 years ago, BERNINA is a world premier manufacturer with a proven reputation for offering quality state-of-the-art sewing, quilting, and embroidery machines, overlockers, and embroidery software. BERNINA’s leadership is marked by an impressive number of ambassadors, industry leaders, influencers and bloggers who chose to partner with the company. BERNINA products are sold in the United States through a network of over 400 fully trained independent dealerships that also offer support and education. BERNINA products are designed for beginning to advanced sewists and priced to meet a variety of budgets, with new products being introduced every year.

You can follow BERNINA on:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/berninausa

Instagram: @BERNINAUSA

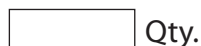
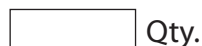
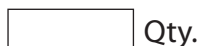
Pinterest: www.pinterest.com/WeAllSew

BERNINA’s WeAllSew blog at www.weallsew.com.



**To learn more about BERNINA
and to find a Dealer,
visit www.bernina.com
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BROCHURES



REPAIR TAGS

[illegible]

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Let's talk daylight

daylight presents to you the products that inspire you to create! daylight lamps are the first step on your creative journey, equally as important as your needle, thread, and fabric.

daylight guides you through every step, stitch, and moment – helping to **keep your eyes safe**, your hands nimble, and your colors true. daylight lamps are **flexible** and **portable** – with the lowest heat, highest quality, clarity, and true color.

Lighting is a necessity, never an accessory.

Photography by Modern HandCraft



Luminos LED Table Lamp



Wafer Lightbox



Halo Table Magnifier

WHY THE LIGHT YOU USE REALLY MATTERS!

The right light brings solutions. It is never too hot and always remains cool to the touch. It is bright, clear, long-lasting, and simple to work with. The right light sets up quickly and stays put wherever you need it. It's never in your way and takes little to no table space. The right light is a daylight!

Brightness: a daylight lamp is perfectly balanced to give you the exact amount of light that your task requires.

Ergonomics & Design: A daylight is designed to not only produce the light you need, but it's meant to be as beautiful as it is functional.

Flexibility: You can position your daylight where you need light the most. Because daylight lamps use LED's, the light is directed at the task at hand, giving you full control.

Little or no heat: Unlike any other type of light on the market, daylight LED's produce little or no heat.

True Color Matching: daylight lamps simulate natural daylight so you can see colors, fine lines, and details as they truly are. daylight lamps are also easier on your eyes and reduce eyestrain; they also aid in preventing tired eyes.

WHY CARRY DAYLIGHT?

With over 30 years of research, product development, and testing, daylight knows what your customers need and want. We have designed a full line-up of lamps specifically with the quilting and sewing enthusiast in mind. How? The same way you have: by spending years going to quilt shows, listening to customers of all ages and experience, and asking them what they need and want.

NEW SOURCE OF REVENUE

When a person comes to your store looking for a new sewing machine or cabinet, they are prepared to spend serious money, and they will lean on your expertise to offer them a complete package. In our world of sewing and quilting, one of the fastest growing add-on sales is lighting. Why? As the average person hits the age of 60, our bodies change and need 3 times more light.

According to Quilt Inc., the average quilter is 60+ years old and has 3 or more machines. The data suggests that one of the best ways to keep him/her sewing is by adding specialized lighting to sewing machines or work stations.

Often, the first place sewers and quilters say they need more light is on the front working surface of the machines. Although new machines may have LED's, they do not offer enough light, especially if you are sewing during the late hours of the day.

"The obvious solution - adding overhead lighting - does not always correct the problem and instead, can create shadows on the surface of the work station, not to mention the soft yellow light that can lead to eye strain."

The best solution is daylight. Our specialty lights are designed to illuminate hard-to-see areas and reduce shadows. The lights can be positioned below the sewer or quilter's eyes and above their hands. This configuration creates an ideal fun and safe work environment that allows for creativity and production.



Slimline LED Table Lamp

THE NEED FOR LIGHT

There's a certain amount of pride in offering your customer a product that you know will make a huge difference in their lives: daylight is one of those products.

DESIGNED TO NOT LOOK LIKE A LIGHT

daylight lamps are designed to be both effortlessly **functional** and **stylish**. One of the comments we hear often in particular to our Slimline LED table lamp is... *"Wow I didn't know that was a light!"*

daylight lamps are designed to fit and add beauty to your workspace by highlighting your masterpiece, not taking attention away from it.

HAPPY CUSTOMERS

As a store owner, you've worked very hard to gain the respect and trust of your customers. This was accomplished by always guiding them, helping them, and making sure that you always put your best foot forward. daylight shares the same strong values, but don't take our word for it...

"I ordered and received my Luminos this week... I will never be able to say enough great things about it! I already am having more patience with my sewing... I can see!! It is already worth every penny spent... Thank you for bringing this to light (Yep, pun intended)." ~Susan V.

Ed Ras

Vice President of Sales

(732) 684-4443

ed.ras@daylightcompany.com

www.daylightcompany.com



New Partnership Brings Cosplay to Sewing Stores Nationwide



Senior editor of *GenQ Magazine*, Tracy Mooney, and art quilter Cheryl Sleboda introduce Sew Much Cosplay™, a new brand that, in partnership with RNK Distributing, will manufacture and distribute the Sew Much Cosplay™ line of products designed specifically for the market of Cosplayers.

Cosplay is a portmanteau of “costume” and “play” and Cosplayers like to dress up as their favorite characters from TV, movies, cartoons, comic books, and more. In re-creating “screen perfect” costumes, the typical Cosplayer at 18 - 29 years of age spends upward of 200 hours and anywhere from \$200-\$2000 on one costume, which may only be useable for the short term until the next Cosplay event. The partnership between Sew Much Cosplay™ and RNK Distributing hopes to bring new and better products to this underserved sewing market.

“I think that there is not only a lot of room for improvement with the products currently on the market, there is a lot of room between the armor-making and the sewn costumes. There is so much room for improvement in stabilizers and interfacings that would be more realistic to what Cosplayers see on the screen,” says Tracy Mooney.

The Sew Much Cosplay™ product line includes a variety of tools specifically geared for Cosplayers like specialized scissors, heat cutting tools, heat guns for fabric adhesion, punches, rivets, etc. and will integrate the capabilities of 3D Printers into product creation. In addition, the Sew Much Cosplay™ website – www.sewmuchcosplay.com – will feature tutorials, products, and book reviews. Plus Tracy and Cheryl look forward to educating stores about attracting this underserved buyer. As with all brands RNK Distributing is licensed to manufacture and distribute, dealers can expect the same level of top-notch RNK dealer support.

“This new thing, idea, concept called cosplay has captured the newer, younger demographic we have been looking for,” says Ricky Brooks of RNK Distributing. “Whether it’s a love of comics, movies, or video games (and more!), this passion is driving them to the sewing machine to bring their favorite characters and styles to life.”

Cheryl Sleboda and Tracey Mooney were noted presenters at the 2017 VDTA Trade Show and Convention in Las Vegas, explaining the kinds of products independent retailers need to attract this young market, and how to talk to these shoppers to maximize profit. The Sew Much Cosplay™ brand and collaboration with RNK Distributing made its debut at Spring Quilt Market in St. Louis, May 19-21, 2017.

About Tracy Mooney: In her work as Senior Editor for *Generation Q Magazine*, veteran quilter Tracy Mooney designs projects, writes patterns, and has been instrumental in creating *GenQ’s Cut & Sew Club*, a curriculum-based program giving dealers and quilt shops the tools needed to create successful kids sewing classes. Tracy also blogs and lectures through her brand, *Sew Supportive*, about strategies, tools, and equipment to help people with health challenges continue sewing and enjoying the many health benefits that sewing and quilting provide.

About Cheryl Sleboda: Cheryl is a 20-year veteran executive of the pop culture and comic book industry and has been sewing for over 25 years. Trained in theatre costuming, she is an award-winning art quilter who teaches and speaks nationally. Cheryl has worked with national sewing brands about the Cosplay market and has appeared on *It’s Sew Easy TV* in 6 episodes demonstrating projects for Cosplay. Cheryl has a line of heirloom sewing tools and patterns as part of her efforts to make heirloom sewing “cool” again. She can be found online at www.muppin.com.

About the Company: RNK Distributing is a manufacturer and distributor of high-quality, specialty Sewing, Quilting, and Embroidery Supplies for both the Commercial Embroidery and Home Crafting Industries including stabilizers, software, needles, thread, and tools. Their brands include Floriani, Jenny Haskins, Quilters Select, and Sew Much Cosplay™.

For more information, visit
www.sewmuchcosplay.com
Don’t let this opportunity pass you by!

How Relevant is Social Media Marketing?

Last month we discussed the importance of an updated and responsive website and how it can help grow your business. But having a professional and well-established website is no longer enough. Successful businesses must have a strong online presence as well. Using Facebook as a platform for advertising is an effective and affordable method to reach your existing customers and to gain new ones.

Facebook is the hub where everyone seems to meet. It is the most common social media channel. Here are 3 reasons why you should utilize Facebook as a part of your marketing strategy:

Targeted Audience

Facebook follows its users' online behaviors. When you click on a Facebook ad or shared link, Facebook documents it. So, as the #1 used social media channel in the world with over 1.7 billion monthly users, there is no reason why finding your customers cannot be achieved.

Identify who your customers are now. Who do you sell to? What are their hobbies, age group, geographic locations? Use these key demographics to identify your targeted audience and focus your budget and efforts towards connecting with your ideal customers.

Variety

Facebook offers many variations of marketing. You are not limited to just one ad design. Businesses can boost "posts" to increase engagement. You can create an ad that is displayed in various spots of a newsfeed, and you are able to create promotions and sales directly through your Facebook business account.

People like to see diverse content, and by using Facebook's variety of marketing methods, you will be able to keep your Facebook feed current and unique while driving more business to your Facebook page and store.

Cost Effective

Marketing can be expensive if not carefully considered. But that isn't ever a concern with Facebook. You have the opportunity to choose who your advertisements are shared with, therefore making every penny count when investing in Facebook ads. Facebook ads can be customized, and you can set your budget daily or for the entire campaign life.

No matter the budget, you are given an estimated reach based on the demographics and budget you set. You no longer have to wonder how a campaign is doing. Facebook makes you the manager of your marketing and allows you to see the daily analytics behind each ad and dollar spent.

If you are not currently using Facebook ads as a way to grow your business, now is a good time to start! If you would like us to review your campaigns or talk with you about the benefits of Facebook marketing, please reach out to Josh Sutherland at josh@sewandvacmedia.com or 209-509-7908 or visit our site: www.sewandvacmedia.com

Josh Sutherland
Sew & Vac Media





Summer Business Blockbusters:

How the Movie World Can Help Earn You Profit

In the summer months, movie buffs gear up for star-studded, action-packed blockbusters. While movie theaters rejoice at the surge in ticket sales, other industries find summer to be slow. Wouldn't it be lovely if customers lined up to buy sewing machines and vacuum cleaners like they do to see Tom Cruise on the big screen? That dream may border on wishful thinking, but what if we take a cue from the movies and incorporate cinematic strategy into business?

In his book *Get to the Heart: How Movie Storytelling Secrets Can Make Your Presentation Clear, Compelling, and Earn You a Seat at the Table*, author Ted Frank discusses how adopting the movie format in presentations can help sell stakeholders on your ideas.

While you don't likely spend your days making PowerPoint slides for marketing strategists or a boardroom full of execs, Frank offers some useful information that can be transferred to retail and help you sell products instead of just ideas.

First, I think it's important to acknowledge how Frank's use of cinematic strategy with business presentations differs from your demands as a retailer – namely, time.

- In a business presentation, the presenters are given a certain amount of time to make their pitch, whether that's with video, PowerPoint, charts, graphics, etc. The stakeholders are required to sit through the presentation. In retail, customers are NOT required to give you their time. They can leave the store any time they choose.

With this difference recognized, 3 of Frank's key ideas about WHY movie-making strategies are good for business presentations might offer you some new ideas about sales.

1. **A Whole New World.** Frank tells his readers point-blank to get stakeholders "into the world of your story." Good movies do this when you feel trapped on the Death Star with Luke and Han and Leia or relive the days of childhood with Buzz, Woody, and Andy's other Pixar toys.

As a retailer, you too might think about the world of the story. Specifically, which world - YOURS or the CUSTOMER's - serves profit best.

For instance, let's say "Mallory" enters your sewing shop looking for a new dress pattern. She's in YOUR world now, looking at your display of machines, your bolts of fabric, your wall of notions. She likes your store because it's a place to escape her normal routine.



Mallory likes being in YOUR world, so capitalize on it! Recommend product and encourage her to come back to see what's new and sew her dress pattern in one of your classes. Keep her "in the world of your story" so she becomes and stays a happy sewer and patron.

On the other hand, don't forget about the customer who feels most comfortable sewing, quilting, and crafting in THEIR world. Focus on how he or she can use the products you recommend in their own space, and by putting this customer back into THEIR world, they visualize and anticipate a reality with your products and service.

Of course, you'll also have customers who like to balance these two worlds - the world of YOUR store and the world of THEIR sewing space.

2. **Inner Arc versus Outer Arc.** Frank explains that good movies often have two character arcs: an outer arc that follows what a character **wants** and an inner arc that reveals what a character **needs**. The outer arc is the surface story where much of the action takes place, while the inner arc leads to a personal revelation or "moral of the story."

Take *The Wizard of Oz* for example. Dorothy's outer arc is finding her way back to Kansas through Munchkinland, Emerald City, and the Wicked Witch's palace. Dorothy's inner arc is a lesson in appreciation, that she needs to feel "There's no place like home."



Like Dorothy, consider your customers' differing arcs. If we visit Mallory again, we might consider her outer and inner arcs: what she wants and what she needs. She may WANT to buy new fabric, thread, and scissors to complete her dress pattern. It's the tangible goal. Her inner arc though, may be a NEED to express her creativity since her 9-5 job at the insurance agency doesn't leave much room for expression and individuality.

Tapping into that inner arc, that need, may help you better connect with Mallory or any customer to make that sale.

3. **The Elephant of Emotion.** A final point that Frank reveals is the need for emotion. Movies rely on emotion to get viewers invested in the story.

He illustrates this point by calling to mind an image first presented by Chip and Dean Heath in their book, *Switch*. The image is this: a man riding an elephant, with the man representing "the rational" and the elephant,

"the emotional." Technically, the man - the rational - is the rider in charge, but in reality, that man isn't going anywhere unless the elephant - the emotional - decides to move.

Frank contends it's the same with a boardroom full of executives hearing a presentation, and I believe it can be true with your customers too.

If you're trying to step Mallory up to a machine better equipped for fashion sewing, you'll tell her all the facts and let her rationalize the decision: there's more types of stitches, a faster stitch speed, a better touchscreen, it's only "X" amount of dollars more. While she needs this information to make an informed and responsible decision, she also needs her emotional side to get involved.

You might mention how much more CREATIVE she can be (since creativity is part of her inner arc) with these extra features, how HAPPY she'll be at her new machine following a wearisome work day, and how CONFIDENT she can feel knowing that you give 5 free lessons and have an excellent warranty policy. These emotions might just get Mallory's elephant in motion and on the way to buying a new machine from you.

Ted Frank's book *Get to the Heart: How Movie Storytelling Secrets Can Make Your Presentation Clear, Compelling, and Earn You a Seat at the Table* may not be geared for retailers, but his advice and suggestions are certainly applicable to the retail world.

To read more of this compelling, visual, and enlightening book, check with your local bookstore or online at Amazon.com.



A "blockbuster" is defined as a movie released mid-May to mid-August with a box-office of more than \$100 million upon release in North America. Blockbuster movies are usually populated by big-name actors and often rated PG-13 to attract teenage viewers.

For our store's success we have to continue bringing cutting edge innovations for machine embroidery. The Vintage Events & Products are this year's success!
-Ron & Barbara Goldkorn



The best dealers stay on top of the competition by offering their customers what's trending now. And they have the sales to prove it. Sew Much More in Austin, Texas sold almost \$100,000 in 8 hours with just 65 students. Call Wayne Walker 918-207-7735 to learn how you can do it too!

Vintage Chic Event

A textured approach to machine embroidery



THE
FUTURE
OF MACHINE EMBROIDERY IS
vintage!

- + MEN'S APPAREL
- + WOMEN'S CLOTHING
- + CHILDREN'S WEAR
- + HOME DÉCOR & ACCESSORIES



Leading dealers across the USA are hosting the industry's hottest event: Vintage Chic. This 4-hour in-store interactive class is produced by the embroidery experts at Designs in Machine Embroidery (dime). If you're wondering what all the hype is about just look in any retail store and you'll see big, bold stitches in matte threads on knits, denims and linen. The long stitch length and thick threads result in low-stitch count designs making garments so comfortable. There's no need for heavy cut-away or fusibles; just lightweight water solubles or tear-away wash-aways give all the support that's needed. Vintage embroidery is fabric-friendly and embroiderer-friendly!

Tracking New Patterns: Ghee's #521 Zip to Shape

This quirky little drawstring bag is designed to lay flat for storing and **Zip to Shape** for using. The multi-sized pattern includes 4 sizes, however it is easy to alter to other sizes:

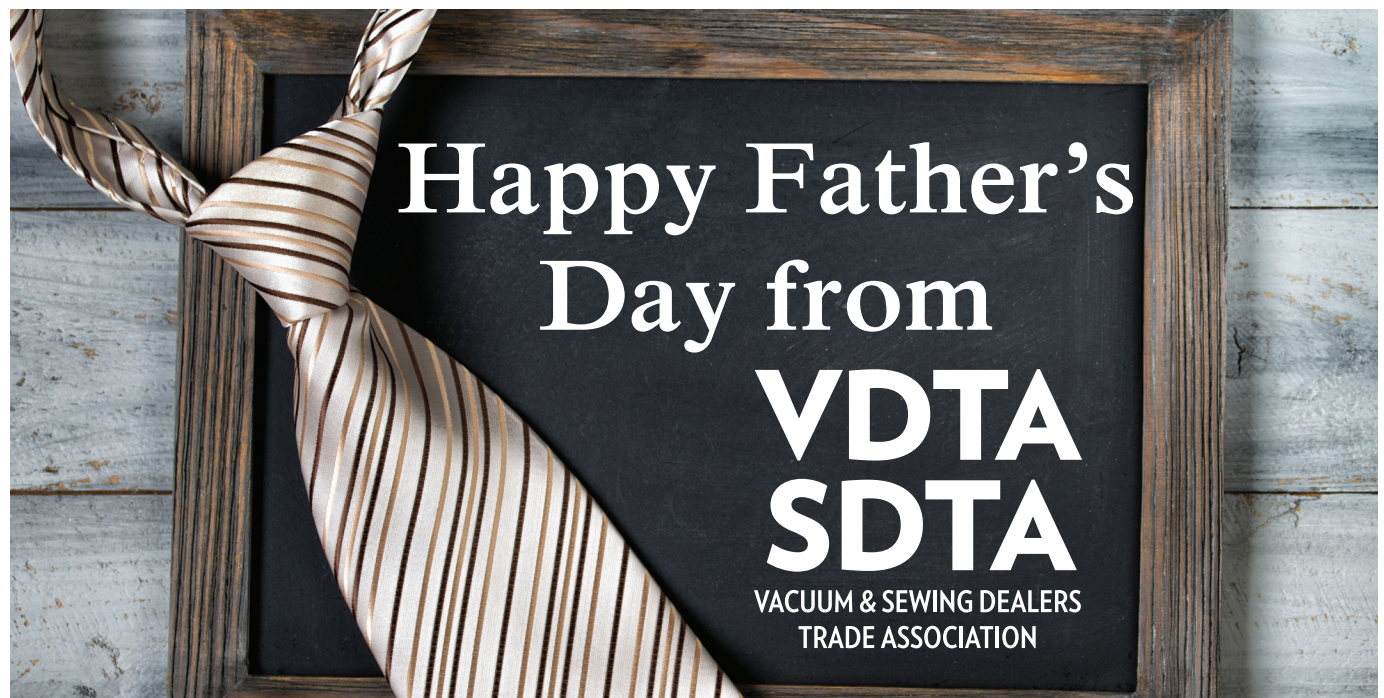
Extra Small: 3½" W x 6" H
Small: 3¾" W x 9" H
Medium: 6" W x 12" H
Large: 6½" W x 13" H
(all sizes are finished dimensions)

The extra small is perfect for a small child or jewelry. Other sizes are appropriate for evening or day. Designed with a band around the bag for extra support and styling, **Zip to Shape** offers the perfect palette for ribbon, border prints, patchwork, embroidery, threadwork, appliqué, kaleidoscope prints, or other favorite embellishments. Like other Ghee's patterns, the **Zip to Shape** has a secret pocket in the bottom.

The extra small and small sizes are fat quarter friendly. Use a #3 size zipper on the two smaller size bags. A #5 zipper is appropriate for the two larger sizes, yet a #3 works fine. Nylon Coil Zippers are preferable, however Plastic Teeth Zippers may be used.



Visit Ghees.com for more information!





"We have confidence selling Brother machines, knowing our customers won't have to learn an entirely new machine if they choose to step up to a more advanced one. Brother makes it so easy."

Sheila Sapp, co-owner of Couture Sewing Center

Brother Dealer Passes Down Passion For Sewing Through the Generations

Love of creativity and continuing their mother's legacy are the inspirations for sisters Lynn Gramley and Sheila Sapp, co-owners of Couture Sewing Center, an Authorized Brother Dealer in Macon, Georgia. For the past 36 years, Couture Sewing Center has been a household name in the community and is known as the sewing shop where everyone is treated like family.

"Our mother, Monique, was an amazing seamstress," said Lynn. "With three daughters and a passion for sewing, our mom sewed clothes for myself and my two sisters, Sheila and Cheryl. There was nothing she couldn't do," said Lynn. Lynn explained how her mother opened Couture Sewing Center in 1981 and wanted to nurture both her craft and her family by hiring Lynn and Sheila to work at the store. "We sold a competitor's brand up until 14 years ago," Lynn said, "And

then word was out that Brother machines were the way to go." It didn't take long before they learned firsthand how Brother machines would move their business to the next level.

"We love Brother!" exclaimed Sheila. "Not only are the machines user-friendly, but the technology is amazing." Sheila said Brother has cornered the market on building consistent technology into all their machines, making it an easy transition for users to go from lower-end to higher-end machines. "Our customers can grow with Brother," said Sheila. "We have confidence selling Brother machines, knowing our customers won't have to learn an entirely new machine if they choose to step up to a more advanced one. Brother makes it so easy."

A few years ago, Monique passed away, leaving her legacy and her store to Lynn and Sheila. "Our family-

owned business is more than just blood relatives," Lynn explained. "We still have some of the same customers that visited our shop when our mother was alive. I guess you can say we have an extended family that keeps our mom's memory alive."

As word grew about Couture Sewing Center carrying Brother machines, so did their clientele. Lynn and Sheila moved into a larger location to accommodate their growing business. 'Middle Georgia,' as they call their area, draws enthusiasts who love to do it all, explained Sheila. "Sewing, embroidery and quilting are tied as the top crafts for our clientele, and Brother hits the mark for all three." Their two top selling Brother machines are THE Dream Machine® 2 and the Entrepreneur Pro X PR1050X. "With these two powerhouse machines, our customers can't get enough



of a good thing – and neither can we,” Sheila said laughingly. Both sisters agree that anyone can sell anything to anyone if they’re passionate about it. “We gravitate toward THE Dream Machine 2 because we love it! We love the large, 10.1” high-definition LCD display, which is 23% larger than previous Brother screens,” Sheila said. Both Lynn and Sheila have their favorite features and said they love the machine for the specific projects that each of them enjoy working on. Sheila’s favorite features include the Droplight™ LED Embroidery Positioning Marker, which is critical for embroiderers, and the MuVit™ Digital Dual Feed System, for smoother feeding of fabric. Lynn has a passion for quilting, so her favorite features include the oversized hoop, InnovEye® 2 Technology (which provides a live and up close view of the needle area), the library of built-in quilting stitches, and the fast sewing speeds of up to 1,050 SPM.



Both Lynn and Sheila understand that every customer has their own specific needs. “It’s important to us that our staff is educated on every Brother machine we sell, so we can match our customers’ needs to the perfect machine,” they said. They explained how they never let any customer walk out their door unless they are instructed on how to use their machine, inside and out. “Education is a

customer base, Lynn and Sheila know firsthand the importance of attracting new customers. They use social media outlets such as Facebook to promote their business and events. “We are constantly evolving to transform our store into a fresh, welcoming place,” said Lynn. Couture Sewing Center offers several sewing, embroidery and quilting classes at every skill level, and hosts specialty events such as Anita Goodesign Embroidery parties.

As an exclusive Brother dealer and a long-standing business in their community, Lynn and Sheila believe their success stems from their mother’s inspiration, as well as from selling the best sewing machines in the industry. “We are blessed to have a store that can be called home to so many of our customers,” said Lynn and Sheila. “Just as

"It's important to us that our staff is educated on every Brother machine we sell, so we can match our customers' needs to the perfect machine."

Sheila Sapp and Lynn Gramley, co-owners of Couture Sewing Center

big part of our business,” Lynn said. “Every customer receives one-on-one instruction on every machine we sell for one year. It’s important to us to help them nurture their craft.” Although they pride themselves on having a dedicated and established

our mother introduced us to her customers, we in turn are continuously introducing them to the amazing technology Brother has to offer. We are passing down Mom’s passion and legacy from one generation to the next. It’s our tribute to her.”



National Thread the Needle Day

Celebrated on July 25, “Thread the Needle Day” seems a perfect occasion for sewing retailers, though this unofficial holiday actually has less-literal originals. According to *Days of the Year*, Thread the Needle Day is a day set aside to appreciate the struggle of a “difficult position.” Or as the calendar writers say, “Having to navigate your way through two positions of equal delicacy.”

To this editor though, “threading the needle” has never been a phrase about finding a complacent middle way. I see threading the needle as having the courage to try something difficult, knowing practice is needed before it comes easy, accepting a few failures along the way, but never giving up.

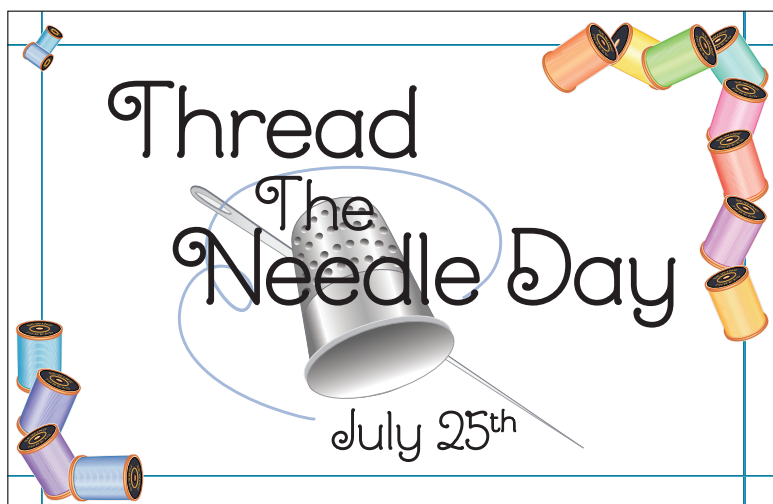
Can you remember the first time you thread a needle by hand? Or the first time you thread a machine? How many tries did it take? Did it make you stop wanting to sew? No.

So on Thread the Needle Day, encourage your customers to try something new and challenging with their sewing. Ask them if there’s a sewing technique they’d like to learn or perfect, and then show them the machine feature and accompanying notions that can help make that happen. Ask them if there’s a pattern they’d like to try, and suggest one of the classes you offer that teaches this pattern.

For more of a profit, ask your sewers if they’d ever like to try embroidery. Ask your embroiderers if they’d like to try quilting. Ultimately ask them to thread their own needle of “what’s next?” You can step them up to a higher-end machine this way and put some extra money in the bank.

Here is a poster the VDTA has created promoting National Thread the Needle Day. If you’d like to use this poster in your store, email VDTA Art Director Heather Hall-Dahl at heather@vdt.com, subject line: Needle Day. You’ll receive a FREE copy of the digital file to print at your own costs.

**Let’s make
“Threading the Needle”
a string to success!**



Insight From The Work Bench

It is hard to believe that this month marks my 5 year anniversary of writing this column. I'd like to thank everyone at the VDTA•SDTA who work so hard for all of us in this business. I can't imagine what it takes to stay on top of all the things they do. Just getting this magazine to all of us every 30 days has to be a daunting task. Plus the work they do planning the yearly convention, the scholarships, keeping up on new products, and on and on. Our association president, Judy Patterson, is to be commended. I'm amazed at the VDTA Convention as I watch everyone pulling at her attention to fix this or handle that, which of course she does and makes it all look easy!

If you aren't going to the VDTA convention each year, you need to make it happen. If you don't spend any time outside your store to learn something new, you are becoming stale in your business. You can feel changes coming in the business when you attend these conventions. You also learn different approaches to different issues from other dealers.

Like any business, ours can be operated in so many different ways. The basic description is the same: "Sales and Service" of sewing machines and/or vacuum cleaners. However, we all bring our own set of values and meaning into our policies and define them differently. For instance: length of service warranty, refund policy, return policy, payment types, levels of service and their costs, customer wifi usage, etc.

In my service classes, we talk about many topics and share different viewpoints. It is one of my favorite aspects of my class. Hearing how a problem was solved by a dealer in North Dakota and watching it help another dealer from New York is exciting. Over the years in my classes, I have seen similar responses to certain topics. For instance, people tend to get intense when we talk about service pricing and length of the warranty period.

When I share with dealers that I have a 2-year guarantee on my service work, you can feel the air get sucked out of the room. I then hear about other

people's 90 day or 1 year or 6 month coverage. I may use too strong of wording when I condemn a 90-day warranty, but I believe that it's an insult to the customer and indicates a store doesn't think much of their tech's ability if the repair might only last 3 months.

I then ask them if they would charge someone again who brought a machine back at 91 days because of an issue. I always get the same answer: No we wouldn't. So then why not make your warranty longer?

The argument is always the same: they don't want to do another service for free if it's the customer's fault for the failure. They feel like the customer would pull one over on them, and that the 90-day warranty is their protection.

*Stay true to quality and honesty
with your policies and make sure
they are benefitting the customer.*

Now get this: instead of having all the other customers tell their friends about the incredible service guarantee from their friendly, local dealer, they all leave with a feeling of a short warranty period just hoping their machine works right. It can

also make people run right back if they have the slightest issue. A short warranty appears to benefit the dealer and not the customer. A long warranty benefits the customer and shows confidence by the dealer. If it is abuse, you still make the call to cover it or not. Analyze your service returns, and if your tech is good, you don't get many anyway. So there is really no down side to extending the length of warranty.

Pricing is more difficult. When I started teaching, pricing was a front and center topic. Years ago, \$69.99 or lower was what I witnessed most stores charging. I was at \$125.00 and heckled at my first class about it. My point has always been that your level of service needs to match your level of pricing. If you see service returns too often, figure it out. Do not blame the customer! Get more training; call your vendor's service desk people for help.

I have spent hours and hours on one machine to figure it out. How is your commitment? What are you investing in yourself? Being honest with yourself on your ability is crucial.

Do you really understand timing relationships, how they work with each other, and how they affect the stitch? How about tension values? Not just the number of grams on the gauge...

Have you experimented again and again with small changes in your settings and tested your results? Can you look at a stitch sample and tell when a bad stitch is not tension-related but adjustment-related, like when the cause is feed timing?

Do you blame the machine's problems on the last tech? Are you opening machines you aren't a dealer for and voiding the customer's warranty?

I know my viewpoint isn't for everyone. Being the owner and the technician has good and bad aspects. Some things I cover won't apply to you if you are a tech working for an owner. Some owners push their techs to do jobs they shouldn't just to get money. Now that I'm the old guy in the business, I see the importance of being a specialist, not trying to please everyone, and pricing myself accordingly.

Whatever style you are going for right now, it will change as you grow or economize your business. Stay true to quality and honesty with your policies and make sure they are benefitting the customer. Watch your bottom line in terms of profit and set your prices accordingly. Don't price yourself to match your competition's price if you are better.

Better service commands better money. I am blessed that my path mostly crosses with like-minded dealers who value integrity and value.

Don't price yourself to match your competition's price if you are better. Better service commands better money.

Norm Himebaugh
Himebaugh's Vacuum
& Sewing Center



Your association now has a **NEWSROOM!**



Visit www.vdta.com for press releases from VDTA•SDTA to be shared with other media outlets.

You'll find: announcements, dates, and other information

Fast-Fold Hexies from Pre-cuts & Stash

A quick and easy technique for hexagon quilting

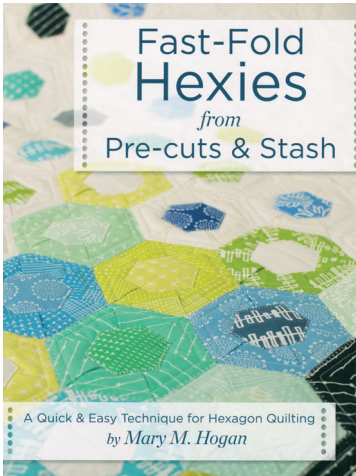
Quilt makers will be in awe of Mary M. Hogan’s newest innovation – fast-fold hexies! Just when you thought that there can’t be anything new beneath the hexagon quilting sun, along comes a new and clever technique to make what quilters love easier and faster!

Hexagon quilts are certainly on-trend today, and have been around since the 1880s. Quilters love their versatility because they are so adaptable to both modern and traditional designs. Yet hexagon quilts can be challenging to piece, and so readers will rejoice at a new technique that streamlines the process.

Fast-Fold Hexies from Pre-cuts & Stash is a slender book jam-packed with how-to wisdom. It takes readers through the step-by-step process to create each unit from a folded circle of fabric, inserting a hexagon-shaped piece of batting, and then adding another, smaller hexie on top to hide the raw edges. Quilters can sew by machine or by hand when out and about. The technique creates one complete hexie unit, and when you sew the units together, you get a two-sided quilt with no separate batting, backing, or binding!

Readers will find the following in *Fast-Fold Hexies from Pre-cuts & Stash*:

- 4 projects: from a trivet to a lap quilt
- Easy how-to and step-by-step: clear photography makes the hexie units’ construction a snap
- Includes templates for fabric circles and hexagon-shaped batting
- Online links to coloring diagrams and additional projects
- 16 pages, only \$12.95



Author: Mary M. Hogan
16 pages, Saddlestitch
ISBN 978-1-935726-95-1
SRP \$12.95 US, \$15.99 CAN



HTC Offers Armo Weft Fine Tailoring Interfacing



When using an interfacing for a tailored garment, sometimes a softer look is desired. HTC Retail’s Armo Weft, #88001, is perfect for this need. This fusible medium-weight weft insertion interlining is a knit fabric with threads woven through it. It combines the stability of a woven with the drapeability of a knit. It is a softer alternative to hair canvas.

Offered in a 1.6-ounce weight, Armo Weft can be used for fusing the full or partial front of a garment, lapels, pockets, as well as an interlining for leather. It is made of 60% polyester/40% rayon and comes in a 20-inch wide 25-yard bolt. It can be machine washed or dry-cleaned, and it comes in white and black.

For more information or find the dealer nearest you, visit www.htc-retail.com or call (800) 275-4275; fax: (212) 545-0603; email: info@htc-retail.com.



be the *ifference* **365**TM
*Raising Hope. Targeting Ovarian Cancer.
...365 Days a Year.*

**OVER 14,000 WOMEN WILL DIE
FROM OVARIAN CANCER THIS YEAR.
IF DETECTED EARLY, 90% COULD SURVIVE.**



How can your store be the difference in the fight against ovarian cancer?

Beyond Elegance Handbags



Luxury Wraps



Pretty Pincushions



Wardrobe Accessories



It's simple - 4 projects, 4 ways to profit. Commit to host an event in your store, and let us handle the details. We provide you with the materials needed to complete each project and market the event to customers in your area. It's a fresh and innovative way to get customers through your door while supporting women in their fight against ovarian cancer.

FotoJet Online Invitation Maker

Enables Users to be a Professional Invitation Designer

A straightforward & powerful invitation maker, FotoJet provides a convenient way to help users get select custom invitations for different events and occasions with ease.

FotoJet (developed by PearlMountain Limited), is an online invitation maker that enables users to design unique invitation cards quickly and easily with the well-designed invitation templates and delicate art resources. As a web-based graphic design tool, FotoJet makes it possible to get professional invitations in minutes without downloading and registration. Many templates and art resources are available for all users, so FotoJet gives users the ability to get a selection of professional invitation card designs for free.

Making invitations has never been easier with the help of stunning templates covering many themes. Various template designs are embedded with beautiful pictures, choreographed backgrounds, and correlative default text so that users can create professional-looking invitations just by typing in personal information to get designs for their events and occasions.

Dozens of stylish fonts ensure a special way to show the invitation details. People are able to type in personal information and style the text by applying artistic fonts and modifying the size, alignment, color, and effect as they need. FotoJet also allows users access to upload personal photos and add a personal touch to give them a charming look.

There are also hundreds of clipart images provided for users to add artistry on the design. And every clipart image can be freely edited to make sure that it is a harmonious piece of the creation. It is also available to change the background by selecting a color or pre-designed background picture. What's more thoughtful is that FotoJet capacitates users to upload a personal photo as a new background.

When all adjustments are done, it is time for users to print invitations out and give them away to the invitees. Users can save the invitation on the computer and send it via email or directly share it on social media platforms. Just go with FotoJet to find how easy it is to design like a pro and start an invitation design at <https://www.fotojet.com/features/photo-card/invitation.html>.

About the Company: FotoJet is an online photo editing and graphic design tool developed by PearlMountain Limited. FotoJet is dedicated to graphic design and image processing technology, to provide users with the most convenient image editing services. Currently FotoJet already has millions of worldwide users. Learn more at <https://www.fotojet.com> or email info@fotojet.com for feedback and cooperation.

Hosting a class
or event?
Do you need
an invitation?

Check Out Our Web Site!

www.vdta.com

- Membership Information & Benefit Details
- VDTA/Epstein Scholarship Application
- Convention News
- Consumer Information
- Dealer Locator
- Educators You Can Hire To Teach Classes
- Sewing Educators Alliance Member List
- Breaking News
- Classified Ads
- Hall of Fame Award Recipients
- Hall of Fame Nomination Form
- Flip Versions of the Current Trade Magazines

HoopSisters Mystery Quilt is Here!

Each June, HoopSisters releases their annual Mystery Quilt and this year's Mystery Quilt is titled **Wild Good Chase!** Customers come from all over to download the Mystery Quilt, having no idea what it actually looks like! Each week they receive a new set of design files and over a six week period, use those files – including written and video instructions – to make the blocks. As the weeks pass, customers continue guessing how the layout will piece together. By the sixth week, customers have all the design files and finally get to see the quilt layout they've been making.



When customers visit the HoopSisters website to purchase the Mystery Quilt during the month of June, they get the files at a special price of \$79 for designs valued at \$280! After June 30th, the price goes up. When purchasing, customers are asked to name their local quilt shop, and HoopSisters then uses that information and any EmbroidaBlock of the Month dealers also participating in Mystery Quilt to give away a free HoopSisters pattern for every customer who listed their shop! It's a great way for HoopSisters dealers who are running EmbroidaBlock of the Month classes to earn free inventory to use for classes or just to sell.

For shops, this requires no sample making, no file distribution, and no classes! It's simply telling your customers to list your shop. And it brings in shoppers who need supplies to make the Mystery Quilt. Shops see fabric sales, Trimmer By George 2.0 sales, Battilizer sales, and more!

If a shop is not an EmbroidaBlock of the Month dealer, the shop can't benefit from the free patterns for inventory... but they can still benefit from the add-on sales of supplies their customers will need to make the quilt.

It's a lot of fun so encourage customers to check it out! The Fabric & Thread Key is available now for download, and the design files will be available for purchase June 1st. By downloading the fabric and thread key in advance, customers were entered into an All Access Pass drawing to win the Mystery Quilt files for free!

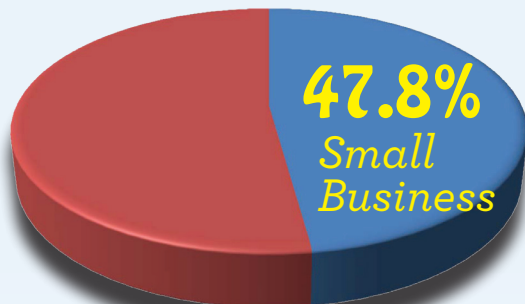
VISIT WWW.HOOPSISTERS.COM

National Small Business Week 2017

FACTS ABOUT SMALL BUSINESS

Businesses across the nation celebrated National Small Business Week April 30 - May 6. The VDTA joined in the celebration by collecting these inspiring facts about small businesses.

Percentage of
U.S. Private Workforce



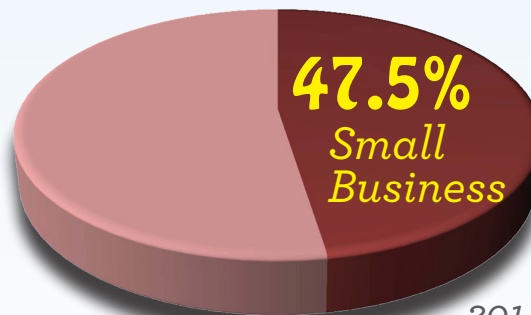
*Which translates into
57.9 million people*

2014

Percentage of
All U.S. Businesses



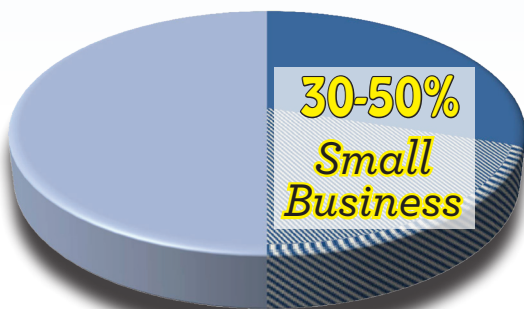
Percentage of
U.S. Jobs Created



*In 2014, approx. 2.95
million jobs were
created in the U.S.,
and small business
contributed 1.4 million
net jobs to that number.*

2014

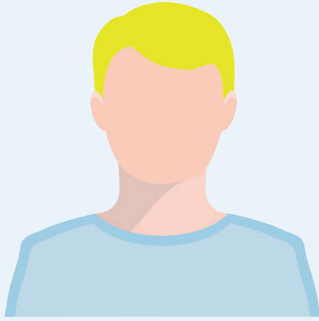
Percentage of
U.S. Commercial Space



*Which equals an estimated
20-34 billion square feet.*

Percentage of
all U.S. Sales (\$)





63% of adults under the age of 30 want to run their own business someday.



Small businesses garner 13x more patents per employee.



The number of U.S. small business employees would equal the 24th largest country in the world, just below Italy.



543,000 new businesses are created each month.

SMALL BIZ = 4 million new jobs since 1990, while big biz = (minus) -8 million jobs since 1990

SMALL BIZ = 49% increase in number of Small businesses since 1982

SMALL BIZ = 66% of all net new jobs since 1970

SMALL BIZ = 55% of all jobs since 1970



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Brand Your Business to Be Heard Above the Crowd!

Small Business Articles from Make-It-Fly®
By Victoria Munro



Experts tell us that we're exposed to more than 5,000 marketing messages every day. Your clients and prospects are on marketing overload, and getting your message heard above the crowd can be a challenge. Branding your company can help you do just that, and to survive and thrive in today's competitive marketplace you need to be heard!

Contrary to what you might have heard, branding doesn't have to cost a fortune. Large corporations certainly spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to brand products. However, solopreneurs and consultants, willing to invest the time and effort, can brand their services and products affordably.

BRANDING BASICS: WHAT IS BRANDING ANYWAY?

Branding encompasses the entire "feel" associated with your company. It's expressed in your every communication: the way the phone is answered, the look of your printed materials and website and how you network in the community. It's your company's reputation within your particular marketplace. It's an implied promise made to your customers that helps build trust, confidence and loyalty.

For a small business, the brand is inextricably linked to the owner. It represents your values, expertise and personality. To some degree, it will take on your personality.

BRANDING BENEFITS

Branding your business:

- Enables you to attract the right clients by reaching them with a relevant message that speaks directly to their need
- Communicates a clear and consistent message that builds credibility and trust
- Helps to develop strong, loyal relationships between you and your target customers
- Gives a competitive edge that helps customers and prospects to easily remember your services and products when they have a need

When a company's printed materials, website and signage send a consistent message with similar text, graphics and colors, it conveys a solid, professional image. It provides the level of comfort a potential client may need to do business with that company. Check to see if you are communicating a mixed or confusing message that might undermine your credibility and professionalism. Perhaps use a focus group to give you objective feedback.

SEVEN STEPS TO BRAND YOUR BUSINESS:

1. **You are the key, so before you begin, it's essential to review what is really important to you and your business.** Understanding your core values personally and as a business is an essential foundation.
2. **Identify your target market.** Select a specific market niche. When you want as many customers as possible, cutting out the larger market to concentrate on one small segment can appear to defy logic. However, the narrower your niche, the more effectively you'll be able to communicate your message.
3. **Learn everything you can about your clients' businesses. Understand the challenges they face, and their greatest needs and desires** that your services or products meet.
4. **Know your market.** Know your competitors, their strengths and weaknesses, what they are known for, what they claim to do best. Identify your position – where you fit within that market.
5. **Pick your differentiator.** Stand for one thing that sets you apart: that single unique quality that gives you a competitive advantage – your unique selling proposition. You probably do many things well, but you can't effectively communicate a laundry list of strengths.
Warning: You can't brand "excellent products" or "good service." Your customers automatically expect this.
6. **With the above information in mind, write your Branding Proposition.** Keep it simple, and make sure it's easy to understand. You must captivate your audience immediately with a relevant and compelling message that includes your logo. In studies, people shown text with graphics remembered more than when shown text alone.
7. **Consistently communicate your message across every medium you use** – print, web and telephone contact. Ensure that employees, clients and strategic partners understand and can explain your brand.

© 2005-2007 Victoria Munro.

About the Author: Victoria Munro is co-founder (along with husband Dave Block) of Make-it-Fly® LLC, a company dedicated to creating success for small-business owners through creatively designed programs and tools. Victoria has started and run nine different businesses. To receive FREE business success articles with tips to help you with your business, sign up for their award-winning ezine, "In-Flight Refueling," at: www.Make-it-Fly.com, and receive a free copy of the eBook, *Get More Done in Less Time: 101 Quick and Easy Time Tactics & Tips*.

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Letter from the Editor:

“R” You Dissimilating Duties?

Read the following sentence: The caterpillar went berserk after a surprise visit from a particular butterfly.

Nothing too special about this sentence, right? Now count the number of “R’s.” Did you get 11? (cateRpillaR, beRseRk, afteR, suRpRise, fRom, paRticulaR, butteRfly)

Think about that sentence again. How many r’s did you actually pronounce? The vast majority of people will only pronounce between 7 - 9 of the r’s without actively thinking to do so.

In theory, all the r’s should be pronounced, as they aren’t designed to be silent like the “K” in “knife” or combined with another letter to make a new sound, like “Sh.”

Why do we neglect the r’s? According to *Mental Floss*, “Given certain conditions having to do with word stress and the other sounds in a word, we simply do not like to have two r’s so close to each other. The name for the linguistic process where one sound drops out because another of the same sound is too close to it is dissimilation, and it affects lots of languages.”

R Dissimilation haunts many other words in the English language including gove(r)nor, entrep(r)eneur, the(r)mometer, and most notably, Feb(r)uary.

So besides giving you a factoid that might someday win you a million dollars on Jeopardy, what is the point? Why should you, independent sewing and floorcare retailers, care about a blip in common pronunciations?

My answer lies in a metaphor.

We do not like to pronounce the r’s in certain words because it’s not easy. It is uncomfortable. But that does not mean it can’t be done. With active thinking and practice, you can train your brain to say “caterrrrpillar” every single time.

We don’t like to perform certain tasks at our jobs either, because they are not easy and not always pleasant. While owning your own business is an extraordinary and gratifying opportunity, think about a few of your less comfortable responsibilities. Do you train yourself to deal with these uncomfortable, challenging duties straightforward and head on? Or do you let these duties slide more often than you should? Do you actively plan for the more bothersome tasks? Or do you get to them whenever you can...in a week...two weeks...a month.

Just like the dissimilated r’s, consider the duties you’ve been neglecting or need to perform more consistently. This might be something as simple as checking your email regularly or it might be more pressing matters like taking inventory.

On the flip-side of our discussion, did you know that ADDING r’s to words is also a linguistic coping mechanism? Consider: “Fa(r)miliar,” “Perse(r)vere,” and “Sherbe(r)t.” I can tell you now that I’m guilty of all three, and words are what I do for a living.

Are there certain r’s that you’re adding to your *To-Do List* unnecessarily? Are they taking away your time from other, more important tasks? Would these “r” items be better delegated to staff members?

Reevaluate your responsibilities as an owner/manager and the responsibilities of your employees. What “r’s” are you and they neglecting to do and how could a renewed commitment to them affect your business? What “r’s” should be reappropriated to make your time at work most valuable?

“R” you surprised we can learn so much from one little letter? I am, but as the editor of your association, I am always willing to learn for your success!



Tonya Tienter
Managing Editor

Shannon Fabrics Collections

Introduced at Spring Quilt Market 2017

Embrace™ Double Gauze Metallic Prints

BRAND NEW and first to the market, Shannon Fabrics now has metallic prints on Embrace™ double gauze 100% cotton. Beautiful and on-trend, the collection features cotton Embrace™ double gauze with metallic foil printing. These prints are not only soft but shimmery and bring a fresh, modern look to the Embrace™ double gauze collection.

- Lambchop Metallic Embrace™ Silver features sweet sheep and stars in silver on a snow white ground.
- Starry Night Metallic Embrace™ Cloud/Silver is a timeless classic print with silver stars of different shapes and sizes tossed on a snow white background.
- Make A Wish Metallic Embrace™ Blush/Gold is perfect for baby and has a dandelion puff motif floating in gold on a blush background.

Approximate Suggested Retail Price: \$12.99/ yard

Shannon Studio Cuddle® Prints

There's something for everyone in the newest collection of Shannon Studio Cuddle® prints. Adorable and cute designs with bunnies, lambs, and barnyard animals are so sweet for baby. Colorful prints with trucks, rescue vehicles, monsters, and dinosaurs will appeal to toddlers and children. The collection also has a wide variety of charming on-trend prints such as llamas; birds with flora and fauna; owls and bears in a woodland setting; and a Southwest theme. Rounding out the collection are three gorgeous abstract and sophisticated large scale florals.

Approximate Suggested Retail Price: \$17.99/ yard



Blossom Cuddle® Bluebell



*Starry Night Metallic
Embrace® Cobalt/Silver*



E-I-E-I-O Cuddle® Sea Spray



*To The Point Metallic Embrace®
Royal/Silver*



No-Prob Llama Cuddle® Blush

yStats.com releases a Free Report on Global E-Commerce and Online Payment Markets

Germany-based secondary market research firm yStats.com has issued a special Free Report, containing valuable insights from its highly-regarded publications regarding B2C E-Commerce and Online Payments worldwide. The report is available for download at www.yStats.com.

This unique free report titled “Global B2C E-Commerce and Online Payment Developments” is a composite of text and graphic charts from reports as published by yStats.com in 2016, with the same authentic, carefully researched information as in the publications purchased by clients of yStats.com, which are sector-leading companies worldwide.

The footnotes showing information about the original source are included, reflecting the company’s methodology of secondary research from a wide variety of respected, authoritative primary sources to insure reliability of the information for the end users. Readers can see data on the vertiginous growth of the use of mobile payments in South Korea, the evolving use of omnichannel purchase methods such as click and collect in the United Kingdom and the penetration of cross-border shopping in Canada, among other topics. The charts in this free report represent the wider and deeper coverage in the complete library of yStats.com reports: over 70 markets in all global economic regions.

This invitation to request our sample free report conveys our desire to be of assistance to a wider audience in providing data to guide informed decisions in the fast-growing fields of online retail and payments.



Know someone
graduating in June?

Tell them about the VDTA/Epstein Scholarship!

Available for dealer members,
their dependents (including grandchildren),
employees, and employee dependents.

The Scholarship Application is available online at www.vdta.com

This is a Members-Only Benefit

How the VDTA/Epstein Scholarship Works

PURPOSE: The purpose of the VDTA/Epstein Scholarship is to assist the youth of our industry in attending college. The scholarship is available for VDTA•SDTA dealer members, their dependents (including grandchildren), employees, and employee dependents. The dealer member must be current and in good standing with their VDTA•SDTA membership in order for the student to apply for, receive, and continue receiving scholarship payments.

CRITERIA: The basic criteria for a scholarship recipient are: must have a minimum 2.5 GPA, attend college on a full time basis (12 credit hours or more), and be active in extra-curricular activities that focus on community, humanitarianism, and/or sports. Each individual is awarded up to \$5000, though total scholarship dollars are determined by the student's year in school at the time of the award. Financial need is not used in determining scholarship recipients.

HISTORY: The VDTA/Epstein Scholarship is funded solely through donations. The VDTA/Epstein College Scholarship Fund was founded in 1993 and named after businessman Bernie Epstein of State Vacuum in Tampa, FL. Bernie was quite a philanthropist and known for his community service, humanitarian ways, and ongoing love of sports. Bernie was also very well-known in our industry as caring and loving toward others less fortunate. Over the years, he touched many lives in Tampa and throughout the country.

APPLICATION PROCESS: Scholarship recipients first apply by completing the VDTA/Epstein Scholarship Application found online at VDTA.com and in *SQE Professional™* and *Floorcare-Central Vac Professional™* magazines. In addition to basic contact information, the application instructs students to submit certified school transcripts, a letter by their referring VDTA•SDTA dealer member, and additional reference letters from 3 individuals. Students must also submit 2 essays (100-word minimums, each): One essay asks students to discuss their educational objectives and planned future career; the other essay asks students to describe their involvement in extra-curricular activities that demonstrates a love of sports, community involvement, humanitarianism, AND/OR leadership ability.

THIRD-PARTY JUDGING: After completing and signing the application, acquiring reference letters and transcripts, and writing the required essays, students mail all of these materials to VDTA headquarters in Des Moines, Iowa. VDTA staff are not involved in the scholarship selection process. All scholarship materials are forwarded to third party individuals qualified to assess scholarship applications. The applications are then scored and ranked by these third party individuals to determine the male and female scholarship recipients.

CONTRIBUTIONS AND DONATIONS: Scholarship donations, including individual money donations, are accepted year-round and at VDTA special events. In 2017, the annual VDTA/Epstein Charity Night was held on the trade show floor in Las Vegas. Attendees could choose to join the fun at a table, spin the wheel for prizes, or simply cheer on their friends. Tables were sponsored by ESSCO, Janome, RNK Distributing, Steel City Vacuum Company, SVP Worldwide, and Wonderfil Specialty Threads. Food and beverage were sponsored by Steel City Vacuum Company, Janome, Elna, and VDTA•SDTA.

Prizes donated for the spinning wheel were sponsored by many generous distributors and manufacturers including: AccuQuilt, Arrow Cabinets, Blank Quilting, Air Lite Manufacturing, Clover Needlecraft, Dyson, Fresh Wave, Janome, Sew Steady, The McCall Pattern Company, American and Efid, Electrolux, Shannon Fabrics, Steel City, Cyclovac, Sulky of America, SVP Worldwide, e-cloth, Vapamore, Reliable Corporation, Decorating Diva, The Embroidery Store, VDTA•SDTA, and more. Several other exhibitors also chose to make prize donations on the spot, and we thank them for their generosity as well!

In upcoming months, look for the 2018 VDTA/Epstein Scholarship Application in the pages of our magazines as well as articles on past scholarship recipients and where they are now, thanks to a great education funded in part by our industry!



The 2018 VDTA/Epstein Scholarship Application is available online NOW!

VDTA•SDTA, 2724 2nd Ave. Des Moines, IA 50313
Call 800-367-5651 or fax 515-282-4483 • apply online at www.vdta.com

Company Information

Name: _____ Title: _____
Company Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State/Province: _____ Zip/Postal Code: _____
Phone: _____ Fax: _____
E-mail: _____
Website: _____
Number of stores? _____ Years in business: _____ Submit Copies of Business and Tax Certificate

Membership Category

☐ **Independent dealer Initial enrollment: \$130.**

Identified as any dealer whose principal business is the sale of merchandise and services directly to the consumer (end user). Yearly renewal \$110.

☐ **Associate member: \$625 each year.**

Identified as a wholesale manufacturer/distributor/supplier. Businesses located in the U.S. or International.

☐ **International member: \$150 each year.**

Identified as a dealer not located in the U.S. or Canada.

☐ **Miscellaneous Membership: \$150 each year.**

Includes: Manufacturer representatives, independent consulting firms, and advertising agencies.

FLOOR CARE

- ☐ Hand/Stick Vacuums
- ☐ Central Vacuums
- ☐ Stick/Broom Vacs
- ☐ Water-based Vacs
- ☐ Steam Cleaners
- ☐ Janitorial Products
- ☐ Stain Removers
- ☐ Vacuum Parts/Accessories
- ☐ Backpack Vacs
- ☐ Upright Vacuums
- ☐ Canister Vacuums
- ☐ Air Fresheners
- ☐ Air Purifiers
- ☐ Polishers & Buffers
- ☐ Other: _____

SEWING\QUILTING

- ☐ Sewing Machines
- ☐ Knitting Products
- ☐ Quilting Machines
- ☐ Longarm Machines
- ☐ Embroidery Machines
- ☐ Sewing Parts/Accessories
- ☐ Notions
- ☐ Fabrics-Fashion/Quilting
- ☐ Sergers
- ☐ Other: _____

Membership Dues:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------|-----------------|
| Independent Dealer | \$130 | 1 store |
| Independent Dealer | \$150 | Multiple stores |
| International Dealer Member | \$150 | |
| Associate Member | \$625 | |
| Miscellaneous Memberships | \$150 | |

- Do you attend VDTA•SDTA conventions?
- Do you have a repair department?
- Do you teach sewing or quilting lessons in your store?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |

Payment Information

All payments must be made in U.S. funds

☐ Check ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa Amount: \$ _____

Cardholder Name (Print): _____

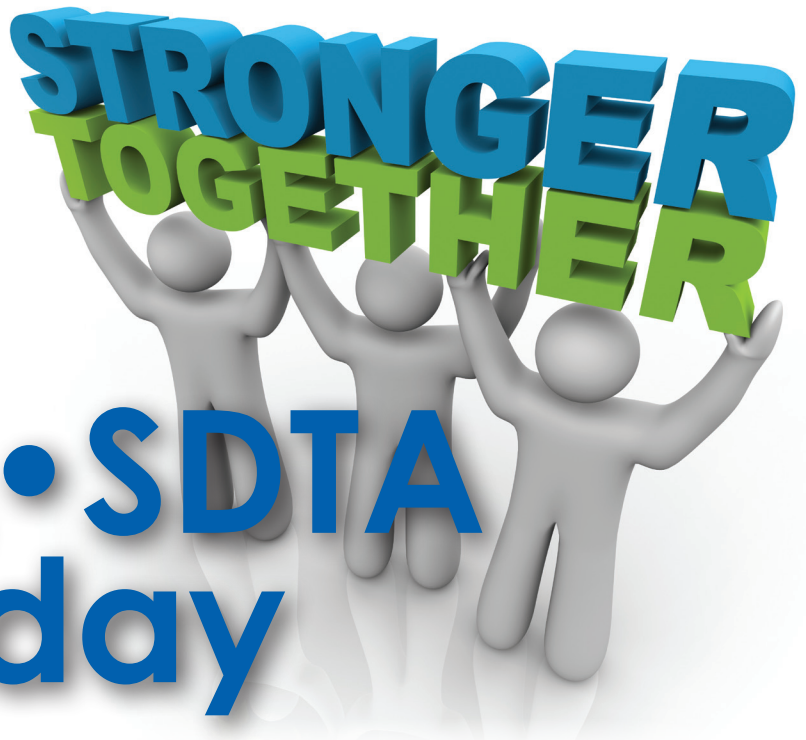
Card #: _____ (CCV# _____) Exp Date: _____

Card Registered Address (If different than above): _____

Signature: _____

- Is this a one time membership payment? ☐ Autopay (next membership payment due in 12 months)
☐ This a one time payment, thank you.

Join VDTA • SDTA Today



As a new member you'll receive:

- Monthly trade magazines with industry news, tips, and **new ideas**
SQE Professional™ and *Floorcare & Central Vac Professional™*
- **Reduced registration to the VDTA • SDTA International Trade Show**
- Promotional programs that bring customers through your doors
Sewing Month and *Spring Cleaning Month*
- Complimentary marketing postcards – 100 pieces of your choice
- VDTA/Bernie Epstein College Scholarship
Two annual recipients; up to \$10,000 each
- Opportunity to become *Dealer of the Year*
- Dealer locator on VDTA.com – make it easy for customers to find your store
- Tutorials from VDTA staff on social media and communication technology
- Unity – you are stronger together as an industry
- **NEW** — Check out the new **Association insurance plans** through
AHP — Association Health Programs.

**Stand out in your community as a professional when you are
a member of an international trade association.**

Join today! Apply online at **www.vdta.com**, call us at **800-367-5651**,
or fill out membership application and fax to 515-282-4483
or mail to: **VDTA • SDTA, 2724 2nd Ave, Des Moines, IA 50313.**

With your success comes our success!

On the Map:

What's in Charlotte?

**VDTA•SDTA 2018
Trade Show & Convention
is in Charlotte, NC**

Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden

Known as the “Garden for all Seasons,” Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden offers visitors and locals beautiful blooms with a dose of true Southern tranquility. Located 20 miles from the heart of downtown Charlotte in Belmont, NC (population 10,000), the Garden invites a leisurely afternoon or brief escape. The Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden occupies 380 acres near Lake Wylie, thanks to the generosity of philanthropist Daniel J. Stowe.

Stowe, a former textile executive whose family owned and operated what became the R. L. Stowe Mills for more than a century, donated nearly \$30 million in land and funds for the creation of the botanical garden in Belmont. The city itself has deep roots with the textile giants and “yarn kings” of North Carolina, as the city’s seal remains a yarn bobbin and their maxim, “The City of Diverse Textiles.” Today, Belmont’s textile business faces regression, though the Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden commemorates the town’s history and success.

While Stowe made his donation in 1991, the Garden’s board of directors approved a masterplan for the garden’s future which spans 50 years. The Garden first opened in 1999 with the *Visitor’s Pavilion*, *Formal Display Gardens*, and *Perennial Gardens*. In 2003, the *White Garden* area was established, and in 2008, the *Orchid Conservatory*. Currently, visitors can stroll through 19 different garden areas each with their own water art, architecture, and flora.

You might choose to wander the *Willow Maze* with its sweeping branches and ethereal vines, then continue on to the *Orchid Conservatory*, Carolina’s only glass house that boasts 8,000 square feet of ever-changing orchid and tropical plant exhibits. The *Scroll Garden* offers a “study in shapes and textures” and attracts pollinators all year around



Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden Mission

“To create an inspiring, unforgettable garden experience that instills a love of nature and its beauty.”

to ensure the gardens stay a thriving ecosystem. And don’t forget the *Cottage Garden*, presenting an array of heirloom plants popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when the Stowe family first established their mills. And still, there are dozens more boroughs to see!

Future developments of the Garden include the *Woodland Cascade*, *Rose Pavilion*, and *Education Center*. The Garden is fully handicap accessible, but does not have wheelchairs available onsite. Benches are located throughout the Garden.

During the 2018 VDTA International Trade Show and Convention, March 24-26, the Garden will be open 9 AM to 5 PM daily. Regular daytime admission ticket sales and entry end at 4 PM, as gates are locked at 5:30 PM. Cost of admission is \$12.95 Adult, \$11.95 Senior.

For more information, visit www.dsbg.org.

Remember When...

20 Years Ago...



15 Years Ago...





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To make projects
even more amazing,
find him on the web.

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brother
at your side