

Distributor Perspective

A Review and Preview of NAFCD's Pillars of Core Values

By Jack Lindenschmidt

My column earlier this year mentioned to you the 2009 North American Association of Floor Covering Distributors' (NAFCD) four pillars: Trends, Education, Leadership, and Networking. We've been busy! Addressing all four pillars, NAFCD introduced an unprecedented Educational Incentive Program, which provided financial assistance for all members to attend our recently concluded annual conference.

Trends: NAFCD held its first webinar event on July 29th, entitled, "LEED 101: What is LEED and Why You Need to Know," presented by Shawmark. More than 40 members participated who learned informative facts about LEED, both from the traditional commercial perspective as well as newer residential implications.

Education: Our annual meeting focused on economic trends and how those impact the decisions each member must make for 2010 and beyond.

Leadership: NAFCD's Conference afforded the leaders of our distributor and manufacturer members the opportunity to participate in round table discussions with their peers, exchanging practical ideas and solutions to today's problems.

Networking: In addition to an expanded round-table forum at the annual conference, numerous opportunities to network with peers existed on the NAFCD Distributor Marketplace exhibit floor and throughout the event.

The NAFCD Education Committee continues to seek and add programs that maximize tight educational dollars in these times, such as the aforementioned LEED webinar. Lots of training information without lots of travel expense! Arming our members with knowledge to better understand our current business climate and cope with changes drives our educational efforts.

In a time when virtually all associations in every industry are suffering, NAFCD remains strong and vibrant. Many thanks to the NAFCD Membership Committee for its outreach efforts that have resulted in NAFCD maintaining our overall membership numbers. Existing members continue to find value in programs and events fulfilling our four pillars. And new members continue to join! Manufacturers and distributors alike derive great value from our Marketplace exposition that is held in conjunction with our annual meeting.

Next Fall, NAFCD will combine conference plans with the North American Building Materials Distribution Association (NBMDA), meeting together in Colorado Springs at a shared conference. Parts of the overall conference will share speaker and networking venues, while other segments will be association specific. The overall benefit to members: Affordable, cost-effective 'bang for the buck,' that couples great speakers with cross-industry interaction, yet retains industry-specific core topics.

I issue to you my heartfelt encouragement not just to continue your NAFCD membership, but to become involved in the continued success of your association's initiatives, programs and plans. 2010 can be a great time to foster solid relationships with your fellow association members. Consider adding your intellect to our consortium – participate in our phone conference membership or education committee interaction, or

consider becoming a director on the Board. We all benefit when each of us contributes to our collective knowledge. Independently, we make our best attempt to guide our companies with the knowledge we have; together we draw upon our collective knowledge, greatly improving our ability to realize a thriving success through the coming years.

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