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## **NAFCD Releases New 2008 Distributor Research Study**

Chicago - The **North American Association of Floor Covering Distributors (NAFCD)** in partnership with the research firm of *The Distributor Team* recently completed a comprehensive research study on “*Understanding the Needs of the Floor Covering Distributor.*” The purpose of the study is to assist NAFCD members - manufacturers, distributors and allied members to develop a deeper understanding of the pressure points of distribution so that they are better equipped to serve the needs and wants of the channel.

“Oftentimes, there occurs a lack of understanding between manufacturing and distribution,” said Jack Lindenschmidt, NAFCD’s 2009 NAFCD President “By more completely understanding the needs of their distribution partners, NAFCD manufacturers (new and existing) will be ready to modify their selling behavior, distribution policies and technology offerings to better align with distribution’s ability to implement manufacturers’ objectives in the marketplace.”

A presentation by Jason Bader was conducted during the association’s recent Annual Convention and followed by focus groups of manufacturers and suppliers to gather additional data for this ongoing project and to open lines of communication and enhance relationships between business partners by addressing specific issues that both parties face on a regular basis.

The study, conducted by Bader, Managing Partner of the Distribution Team, showed attendees how to use the data to implement a plan. Bader has over 20 years of experience in the distribution industry and served as President of STAFDA, the Specialty Tools and Fasteners Distributor Association.

The study focused on:

- The good, bad and ugly of manufacturer sales reps
- Best practices for both manufacturers and distributor policies and processes

- What's important in the buying decision for a distributor
- How to strengthen the relationship

What makes a pro sales rep from the distributor perspective will help manufacturing and allied partners know what to expect and what is desired from their reps. The study also revealed what decision criteria is used by a distributor when deciding what new lines or products they are willing to take on, what makes this potential new alliance attractive to a distributor as well as how does an existing manufacturer and its sales representative continue and expand its current relationship with its vendors.

The customized study was unveiled during NAFCD's 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on October 29-31, 2008 at the Renaissance Hotel, Schaumburg (Chicago) IL.

Currently under development is a *Competitive Advantage Kit* that can be used by both manufacturers and distributors in developing a strategic marketing and sales plan for the coming year. "This is just the beginning of our efforts to strengthen our channel of distribution," Lindenschmidt says.

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***NAFCD is a national, not-for-profit trade association serving distributors and suppliers of floor covering materials and related products. Its purpose is to enable wholesale floor covering distributors to be the most efficient, professional and profitable vehicle for bringing their suppliers' product to market resulting in the highest degree of dealer satisfaction.***