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SOUTHWEST *express*

2008 SRC President's Message

When the board met in the beginning of January to talk about 2008, I was amazed at some of the meeting suggestions that came to people's minds: blogging, starting up a call center, reporting, virtual coupons, recalls, Latino consumers, allergies....just to name a few. What's really surprising is how our industry has changed so much in the last couple of years. Our role within our organizations has changed drastically, the consumers have more of a voice than ever and we are still trying to do more with less.....and we can't forget that our attitude has to be positive. WHEW. It's not easy.

Yet, it's still one of the most exciting places to be. We capture the diverse voice of the consumers for our companies and have survived tons of questions about sourcing products, recalls and safety.

I've been a member of SOCAP for 10 years now and feel honored to be the 2008 President of the Southwest Regional Chapter. In this ever changing world of consumer affairs, we look to hear your voice about programs that we will be bringing you and how we can meet your business needs.

We are looking forward to educational programs, networking and a joint meeting with our



neighboring SOCAP chapter in Northern California...how fun would that be!

Being involved with SOCAP has provided me insight into the consumer affairs industry, given me tools to use on a everyday basis and everlasting friendships that have lasted through time, distance and career changes. I hope you allow SOCAP to do the same for you.

I look forward to seeing you at our next event.

Best of Health!!

Pat

Pat Harrison is Manager of Consumer Relations for Kashi Company in La Jolla, CA. She currently lives in San Diego and loves being with her kids and hanging out in her garden.

Join us

Wednesday

March 26th

as we

welcome

Brian Grubb

who will

share

Legendary

Service at the

Ritz-Carlton.

Location:



Good Food, Good Life

800 N. Brand Blvd.

Glendale, CA 91203

11:00 AM - 2:30 PM

RSVP pharrison@kashi.com

Rita Wood Receives Chapter Star Award

Rita was honored at the national conference in Palm Springs for her ongoing commitment to the SRC. Not only did she serve on the Chapter Board of Directors as Past President, offering leadership and advice, she also served as the Awards Committee Chair and continues to demonstrate the same level of enthusiasm with her current position this year as Treasurer.

Congratulations Rita!

SOCAP STAR is awarded to an individual in the local chapter who has made an outstanding contribution to his/her local chapter.



Rita Wood pictured with Matt D'Uva, Brian Giannini, and Tom Asher

2008 Southwest Regional's Board of Directors

President – Pat Harrison

pharrison@kashi.com

Past President – Brian Giannini

bgiannini@stericycle.com

VP Programs/ – J.T. Rapport

Locations jtrapport@verizon.net

VP Membership – Cathy Johnson

cathy.johnson@us.nestle.com

Treasurer – Rita Wood

rwood@networkdirectinc.com

Secretary – Marchell Housden

marchellh@wilke-thornton.com

Director – Carlos Suarez

carlos_suarez@na.dole.com

Director – Karen Simmons

karen.simmons@yokohamatire.com

Director – Patrick Ryan

pryan@networkdirectinc.com

Web Site Manager – Denis Day

dday@loganinteractive.com

Education is one of SOCAP's core values...

Last November, Nathan Ortega was invited to share a typical workday at Yokohama Tire's Consumer Affairs Department with the CSUN consumer affairs students. Normal call-center workings are quite familiar to many of the SOCAP members already, but this opportunity was available to reach out to young minds. Information about receiving inbound calls, responding to written customer correspondences, and examples of specific customer situations were discussed.

Nathan's examples and interesting stories captivated the students yielding many questions and feedback. "It was a pleasure presenting, especially to an audience that had such a deep interest in consumer affairs." After the presentation concluded, he stayed after to answer any remaining questions that students had—many of which were for business cards and to see if Yokohama was hiring.

Nathan Ortega received the 2008 Chapter Service Star of the Year Award.

Valued Consumer Affairs Departments Reduce Risk

by Brian Giannini

The value that a company places on its Consumer Affairs department is a good indicator of the potential risk a company is exposed to. Consumer Affairs or Customer Service departments are a company's first line of defense and can significantly reduce a company's risk by identifying potential crisis situations in their earliest stages. Typically, companies that have a robust Consumer Affairs department with an excellent Customer Relationship Management (CRM) software package are less likely to be taken by surprise when a recall is eminent.

The best in class departments are able to quickly identify quality complaint trends and escalate more severe complaints to management for further investigation and response.

This enables the companies to get all of the facts as fast as possible to see if this is an isolated incident or a larger issue. Typically, proactive

companies are gathering and testing samples of specific production codes that have met or exceeded their complaint threshold for a particular quality issue to gather as much information regarding the situation as possible.

The gathering of information may include picking up the complaint sample from the consumer or store, purchasing products with the same production code to see if anything happened after their product was opened or if something happened during the manufacturing process, or testing retained samples, if available, as well. Getting the sample from the consumer as fast as possible reduces the chance of the consumer going to the media or to an attorney which can have a negative impact on your brand. Without these samples the manufacturer does not have the information as to the complexity of the issue.

They may lose control quickly and may need to do a recall without all of the facts.

Consumer complaints are a gift, an early warning sign. How a company documents this information, reports this information and escalates this information can make the difference in whether a company stays in business or not. When assessing a company's risk of a recall, you look at the quality of their GMP's, SOP's and HACCP programs. The quality of the company's Consumer Affairs department should also be a critical measure of a company's risk.

In our current environment of e-mail, blogs and cell phones, information spreads faster globally than most companies are able to react. A robust Consumer Affairs department can significantly reduce the risk to a company's brand by controlling the information and responding quickly to consumers concerns.

SRC Survey Results

We would like to share the results from the membership survey conducted earlier this year.

1. Did you attend a local event in 2007?

Yes 52.0%

No 48.0%

2. What programs would you like to see in 2008?

Consumer Generated Media – 52.2%

Technology – 34.8%

Recalls – 39.1%

Workshop for managers – 30.4% and staff

Small Call Center Clinic – 30.4%

Customer Service and – 21.7% the Latino Consumer

Sourcing and Allergen – 17.4% Concerns

3. For educational programs, you prefer:

Half-day workshops – 53.8%

4. For networking events, you prefer:

Attending national – 51.9% conferences

5. Where, geographically, is an ideal meeting location?

Los Angeles/So. Cal – 38%

Orange County/Irvine – 15%

Anywhere – 12%

Phoenix – 12%

San Diego – 8%

Other – 15%

WANTED!!!

NEWSLETTER VOLUNTEERS

If you have a newsletter article or idea, please submit directly to carlos_suarez@na.dole.com.

Annual Holiday Social and Toy Drive

by Cindy Okubo, Nestlé USA

The Proud Bird Restaurant warmly welcomed SRC members and guests for our end of the year holiday social. If you are not familiar with the Proud Bird, it is located adjacent to the Los Angeles International Airport. The Proud Bird is well-known for its incredible outdoor display of aircraft, WWII fighters, and jets.

During a delicious sit down luncheon, we were entertained by The Goode Time Carolers. With their melodic voices and traditional holiday attire, this quartet truly added a special touch to the festivities.

This year our generous members donated a truckload of toys for the Spark of Love Toy Drive sponsored by the Los Angeles Fire Department. SRC has been participating in this event for the past several years. We had the pleasure of a few firefighters joining us for lunch. They expressed their appreciation and sincere thanks for our continuous support.

At the business portion of our meeting, the 2007 SRC board members were acknowledged for their services and dedication. It was also the time to introduce and induct the 2008 board members into office.

A highlight of the event was the unveiling of our Chapter Service Star of the Year Award. The award was specifically designed to recognize outstanding customer service representatives. The first winner of this award went to Nathan Ortega from Yokohama Tire who was nominated by his manager, Karen Simmons, for his outstanding customer care contributions.

Our special guest speaker, Beth Thomas-Kim, 2008 SOCAP International Chairperson provided us with a sneak preview of what's to come next year with her message... We Will Be Great in 2008! It truly is going to be a "GREAT" and exciting year, and we encourage everyone to get involved at the local and national level.

The afternoon ended with a very fun scavenger hunt, with participants rummaging through their purses and pockets to earn raffle tickets for exciting and great prizes that were generously donated by several of our SOCAP companies. And if you didn't win, everyone left with an over-flowing goodie bag and a full tummy.

All in all, the turnout was fabulous with more than 60 attendees. It is truly the most popular meeting to attend, perhaps due to the holiday festivities and relaxed setting where you can meet so many wonderful SOCAP friends.



7th Heaven Apple Bake

Bake Time – 45 min | Yields – 16 servings

Ingredients:

Topping

- 1 ½ cups chopped pecans
- 1 cup KASHI® 7 Whole Grain Honey Puffs
- 2 packets KASHI® Heart to Heart® Golden Brown Maple Instant Oatmeal (or other brand)
- ¼ cup whole wheat flour
- ¼ cup evaporated cane juice
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ½ cup butter, melted



Fruit Filling

- 5 ½ cups chopped apples
- 2 tablespoons whole wheat flour
- ½ cup evaporated cane juice

Directions: In a large bowl combine Apples and 2 tablespoons of flour, tossing to coat. Add ½ cup evaporated cane juice, mix and place in a 2 quart casserole dish. In a separate bowl, combine pecans, cereal, oatmeal, flour, evaporated cane juice and cinnamon. Add melted butter and stir well. Spoon topping over fruit mixture. Garnish with pecan halves. Bake uncovered at 350°F for 45 minutes. Serve warm.

Baker Beach Salad

Bake Time – 15 min | Yields – 2 servings

Ingredients:

- 3 cups fresh DOLE® Spinach
- 1 DOLE Banana, sliced
- 1/2 cup raspberries or 1 orange, peeled, sliced
- 1/2 cup sliced DOLE Radishes or cucumber
- 1/2 cup slivered DOLE Carrots
- 6 ounces barbecued or smoked deli chicken, sliced
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese, optional
- 1/4 cup fat free or reduced calorie Italian salad dressing



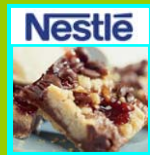
Directions: ARRANGE spinach on 2 salad plates. ARRANGE banana, raspberries, radishes, carrots and chicken over spinach. SPRINKLE Parmesan cheese over each serving, if desired. POUR dressing over salad.

Chocolatey Raspberry Crumb Bars

Preparation - 15 min | Cooking - 45 min | Cooling Time - 20 min cooling | Yields - 36 bars

Ingredients:

- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter or margarine, softened
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup packed light brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups (12 oz package) NESTLÉ® TOLL HOUSE® Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels, divided
- 1 can (14 oz) NESTLÉ® CARNATION® Sweetened Condensed Milk
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts (optional)
- 1/3 cup seedless raspberry jam



Directions: PREHEAT oven to 350° F. Grease 13 x 9-inch baking pan. BEAT butter in large mixer bowl until creamy. Beat in flour, sugar and salt until crumbly. With floured fingers, press 1 ¾ cups crumb mixture onto bottom of prepared baking pan; reserve remaining mixture. BAKE for 10 to 12 minutes or until edges are golden brown. MICROWAVE 1 cup morsels and sweetened condensed milk in medium, uncovered, microwave-safe bowl on HIGH (100%) power for 1 minute; STIR. Morsels may retain some of their original shape. If necessary, microwave at additional 10- to 15-second intervals, stirring just until morsels are melted. Spread over hot crust. STIR nuts into reserved crumb mixture; sprinkle over chocolate filling. Drop teaspoonfuls of raspberry jam over crumb mixture. Sprinkle with remaining morsels. BAKE for 25 to 30 minutes or until center is set. Cool completely in pan on wire rack.

SAVE THE DATE

March 26, 2008

Legendary Service at the Ritz Carlton



Featuring Brian Grubb, Corporate Director

Sponsored by:



800 N. Brand Blvd. Glendale, CA 91203

April 3, 2008

Rock Your World at Levi Strauss

AGENDA FOR IDEAS TO ROCK YOUR WORLD

Levi Strauss Headquarters, San Francisco

April 27 – 30, 2008

2008 SOCAP Symposium

GLOBALIZATION, DATA & REPORTING, and CONSUMER TRENDS

The Westin Boston Waterfront Hotel

May 2008

Creative Solutions: Turning Lemons into Lemonade



*Linnea Johnson,
Director of
Consumer Services*

**For full event details,
check out our
redesigned website...**

<http://socapsrcchapter.org/>