



SECURITY Making the Invisible, Visible page 26

HOW VDI Task Force Guides Vending's Future page 34

Automatic MERCHANTISER

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FROM ENTREPRENEUR TO VENDING VETERAN

Through investment in people, technology and commitment to customers, this Arizona vendor has emerged as a market leader. page 42

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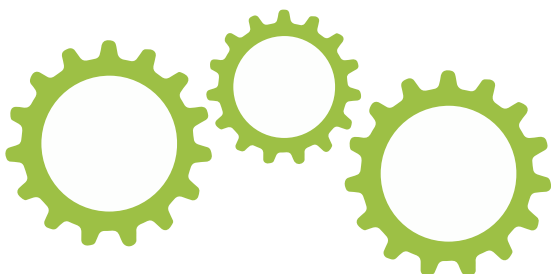




SUCCESS STORY OPERATION PROFILE

42 ▶ From Entrepreneur To Vending Veteran

Through investment in its people, innovation in technology and commitment to its customers, Camelback Vending has emerged as a leader in the Arizona market.



FEATURES

18 ▶ Small Op: Techniques To Compete

Three ways small vending operations can innovate while continuing to vie for a slice of the industry's profit.

22 ▶ LinkedIn Showcase Pages Can Bolster Your Image And Sales!

26 ▶ Making The Invisible, Visible

The benefit of electronic locks is in the insight they provide and the protection they offer.

34 ▶ How The VDI Task Force Is Guiding Vending's Future

The importance of VDI is that it creates easier system integration with open and accepted technology standards.

DEPARTMENTS

8 ▶ Editor's Note

A Journey Of A Thousand Miles

10 ▶ VendingMarketWatch News

14 ▶ OCS Update

Trial And Error

50 ▶ Product Roundup

52 ▶ Classifieds



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Desserts to enjoy right out of the bag!



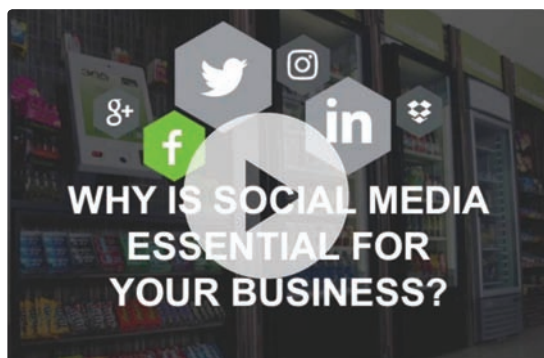
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SPECIAL REPORT



View From The Micro Market Trenches

Several operators growing their micro market segment participated in a roundtable. Here's what they had to say.

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A Journey Of A Thousand Miles

There is never just one goal of a Fly-In, but a steady march towards a better vending future.

In more than 200 meetings during the NAMA Fly-In in Washington, D.C. this July, operators told Senators and Representatives about their businesses, how they were contributing to the local economy and touched on three issues:



WE must continue to advocate for the vending industry.

sustainability, specifically the voluntary actions taken by the industry; nutritious products already in vending machines; and, finally, support of H.R. 527 & S. 1536, a bill that would demand the impact on small business be considered for all new legislation.

I was lucky enough to sit in with delegates outside my state to see how the process went for other states and it was here that I realized the importance of continued advocacy. In response to the last issue about considering the impact on small business, one of the congressman's

aids was less than supportive. He said that the Senate creates agencies, which then are responsible for governing themselves, and therefore the Senator would not be supporting legislation that created a law forcing the agency to consider small business specifically. I was personally a bit downtrodden when we left the office, feeling somehow that we weren't as persuasive as we could have been. However, a veteran operator who has been to Capitol Hill many times said, "That was a good meeting."

He said *good* because the aid had remembered the team from last year and that this was the important aspect of what we were doing in Washington, D.C. "It's about coming year after year, chipping away and making sure Congress is concerned about us and our businesses," said this operator.

The turtle's journey

His comment reminded me of the example Eric Dell, Senior Vice President of Government Affairs at NAMA, used to show how important grassroots advocacy is to an outcome. In 2010, the Food and Drug Administration was required by the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act to publish a rule on calorie disclosure and how it would be accomplished in vending machines so consumers could view the calorie counts prior to making a purchase. It took 4 years for the FDA to publish the final rule (after missing its previous deadlines). This December, 6 years later, implementing the rule will finally be required. Yet, the journey to calorie disclosure on vending machines is still a moving target. On July 11, 2016, the FDA stepped backwards, and gave an extension for implementation in two instances for food/snacks/beverages in vending machines. During the Fly-In, FDA representatives discussed the rule, and these extensions.

Extensions for small candy, text size

According to FDA representatives, only the requirement for a large text size on front-of-pack labeling and the necessary calorie disclosure on gum/mint/roll candy would be given an extension. There will also not be high fines or jail time for failing to display the calorie count before a purchase. The first year, the FDA will be educating operators found to be in violation of the calorie disclosure rule. After that, there will be letters and other processes, but the rule does not give the FDA additional powers to create severe sanctions against operators.

The FDA representatives confirmed that both video screens containing caloric information as well as front-of-pack labeling on products in glass front machines where consumers can view the information before buying would meet the requirement of the final rule. Many industry members feel this is directly related to efforts made through advocacy and the working relationship NAMA has with the FDA. | ◀

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OUR culinary articles focus on relevant trends and how you can infuse those trends into your menu.

today's issues – from practical cost-cutting ideas to leveraging the local trend and engineering more enticing menu language.

- **Real-World Culinary Expertise** – Our team at the Culinary Center understands the difference between sustaining trends and flash-in-the-pan fads, and translates relevant trends into wonderful menu items. Our chefs offer real-world experience, truly understanding the challenges faced by today's operators. They offer recipe development that not only inspires, but answers the specific challenges faced in professional kitchens.
- **Merchandising Solutions & Promotional Tools** – Built to deliver maximum impact, our merchandising tools come in all shapes – from product catalogs, snack and gum racks to our interactive vending and snack rack builder. We have the tools to help operators build their business.
- **Specialized Support for Vending** – Responding to vending needs, Mondelēz Global has brought together every product type – snacks, candy, gum and cough drops – under one umbrella of top-selling brands. Our team of vending enthusiasts is ready to help operators make the most of today's sophisticated micro markets and machines. This translates into maximum convenience for operators, reliable product availability, a satisfied consumer and higher sales and profits.
- **Marketing Services** – Our marketing services team has the expertise and resources to help our customers with their consumer insights, digital/social marketing, and marketing/promotion needs. ■

For more information on Mondelez Foodservice please visit fs-snacks-desserts.com.

Fly-In Participants Meet With 39% Of Congressional Offices



The 2016 NAMA Fly-In drew participants from 41 states and the District of Columbia.

The National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) reported that participants in the 2016 Fly-In in Washington, D.C., met with a record 81 percent of the U.S. Senate and 30 percent of the U.S. House of Representatives, reaching a total of 39 percent of congressional offices overall.

Nearly 275 attendees participated in more than 200 meetings with elected officials and their staffs on Capitol Hill between July 12 and 13, building awareness on key convenience services industry issues and further expanding NAMA's footprint in Washington.

Representatives from the FDA led an educational session on calorie disclosure compliance at the Fly-In where they discussed that the December 1, 2016 compliance date still applies in most circumstances, however, they have extended the compliance date for final calorie declaration requirements for certain food products sold from vending machines to July 26, 2018.

The 2016 Fly-In is NAMA's largest and most comprehensive advocacy effort to date and drew participants from 41 states and the District of Columbia.

Visa To Block U.S. Fraud Chargebacks Under \$25

► In a move that will save the industry significant revenue while minimizing transactional disputes, NAMA announced that effective July 22, Visa will block all U.S. counterfeit fraud chargebacks under \$25.

NAMA CEO Carla Balakgie said in a prepared statement: "Smaller chargebacks had the potential to generate a great deal of work and expense for merchants and acquirers."

Effective October 2016, issuers will also be limited to charging back 10 fraudulent counterfeit charges per account, and will assume liability for all fraudulent transactions on the account thereafter. This reinforces the responsibility issuers already have to detect and act on counterfeit fraud quickly. These blocks will stay in effect until April 2018.

According to Visa, "These two changes together will significantly reduce the number of chargebacks that merchants are seeing...

merchants can expect to see 40 percent fewer counterfeit chargebacks, and a 15 percent reduction in U.S. counterfeit fraud dollars being charged back."

House Approves GMO Labeling Bill

► The U.S. House of Representatives voted 306-117 to pass a federal law that requires food distributors to label products that contain GMOs (genetically modified organisms).

The labeling bill moves forward to President Obama who has indicated that he will sign it, as of press time.

The bill takes the place of a state labeling law that took effect in Vermont on July 1 and also pre-empts future state labeling laws.



Amazon Launches Its Own Branded Coffee

► Online retail giant Amazon is making its way into perishable private-label foods. It began offering whole-bean and ground coffee for sale under its new private label called Happy Belly, The Wall Street Journal reports.

Bags of 12-ounce Happy Belly coffee cost \$9.99 each. The product is being sold online in several varieties.



Hostess Brands Announces Sale Agreement With Gores Holdings, Inc.

► Hostess Brands, LLC, the maker of Hostess® Twinkies®, Ding Dongs® and CupCakes®, announced it has entered into a definitive agreement with Gores Holdings, Inc., a special purpose acquisition company sponsored by an affiliate of The Gores Group, LLC. This transaction will introduce Hostess as a publicly listed company, with an anticipated initial

enterprise value of approximately \$2.3 billion or 10.4x the company's estimated 2016 Adjusted EBITDA of approximately \$220 million.

Funds managed by affiliates of Apollo Global Management, LLC (together with its consolidated subsidiaries, "Apollo") and C. Dean Metropoulos and family, the current majority owners of Hostess, expect to hold an approximately 42 percent combined stake in Gores Holdings upon completion of the transaction. Dean Metropoulos and William Toler will continue to lead the company as executive chairman and chief executive officer, respectively. This transaction better enables Hostess to continue executing on its long-term growth plan by providing greater access to capital to fund future innovation and acquisitions.



Hershey Rejects Bid From Mondelez International

▶ Hershey Co. reportedly rejected a \$23 billion takeover bid by Mondelez International, reports Reuters, that would expand the latter company's U.S. footprint. The move would create the world's largest confectioner. Mondelez International is currently the second-largest confectionary company in the world while Hershey ranks number five, noted Reuters.

According to Euromonitor International the merger would put them in first place at 18 percent of the market.

Starbucks Announces In-Store Price Hike

▶ On July 12, Starbucks made a price adjustment in U.S. company-operated stores. Depending on the market, customers will experience increases of 10 to 20 cents on select sizes of brewed coffee, and 10 to 30 cents on espresso beverages and tea lattes. "We expect the average customer ticket to increase by about 1 percent as a result of these beverage adjustments, however, 65 percent of beverage prices have not changed," the company said in a statement.

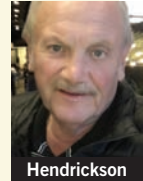
PFG Expands Food Distribution Facility In Tennessee

▶ Performance Food Group Company (PFG) broke ground to expand its Performance Foodservice-Lester food distribution facility in Lebanon, TN. The expansion project will include construction of a 10,000-square foot addition to the current operation at 401 Maddox-Simpson Parkway. The addition will pave the way for a significant increase in cooler capacity for products including fresh meats and produce and provide a new separate storage room for material handling equipment such as fork lifts and pallet jacks. New warehouse racks and pick slots will be added in the dry goods warehouse where the equipment was previously stored. The project is expected to be completed by year-end and will likely result in the hiring of additional commercial truck drivers and warehouse workers.

People in the News

Industry Mourns Loss Of First Class Vending's Mark Hendrickson

Mark Hendrickson of First Class Vending in Los Angeles, CA, succumbed to cancer after a battle against the disease. Hendrickson was known for his attention to detail with all of the routes and drivers he managed, according to Matthew Marsh, founder of First Class Vending. He gave great care to the machines he managed and could always be counted on to have the cleanest and best merchandised machines in the company. Hendrickson had been in the vending industry for nearly 40 years.



Hendrickson

Pat Hagerty Begins Term As NAMA Chair

NAMA announced that Pat Hagerty, CEO of Vistar and Senior Vice President of Performance Food Group (PFG), will begin his one-year term as Chair of the association's Board of Directors July 1. A native of Colorado, Hagerty holds degrees from Colorado State University and the University of Southern California, and serves on the Board of Directors of the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.



Hagerty

MARS DRINKS Names New Regional President And GM Of North America

MARS DRINKS announced a new leader for the North America segment of their global business. Bobby Chacko, previously the company's chief marketing officer, has been appointed to the position of MARS DRINKS regional president and general manager of North America. The move comes as the former North American general manager, David Flochel, prepares to return to his native France at the close of an 18-month assignment.



Chacko

Elyssa Allahyar-Steiner Named ELN Chair

Elyssa Allahyar-Steiner has been named Chair of NAMA's Emerging Leaders Network (ELN). Also taking office is C.J. Recher, who has been named Vice Chair of ELN. Comprised of nearly 100 industry professionals under 40 committed to developing a legacy of leadership, ELN works to add value to the convenience services industry and NAMA priority areas including Advocacy, Education, Research and Events.



Allahyar-Steiner

Accent Food Services Announces Two New Acquisitions

Accent Food Services, a vending, micro market and office coffee service provider in Austin, TX, has acquired two vending companies, one in Western Texas and one in the Eastern area.

Accent Food Services first acquired Custom Food Group, which served the Lubbock, Midland/Odessa, and Abilene area of Texas. The company closed the sale on May 1, 2016 and has retained all the employees and customers.

"We are very excited to integrate the CFG brand into Accent," said President Josh Rosenberg. "The approach to customers, people, and technology is a strong fit. We will continue to deliver the same great service while expanding our footprint into new operating territories."

The company also acquired Bryan, TX-based Twin City Coffee Services. "This acquisition gives Accent a much improved share in our East Texas markets. At the same time, we are excited to extend our service offering to both Convenience Retail & Food Service specific to coffee/equipment services. This expansion of service opens the door for Accent to learn and grow within these segments throughout our company," continued Rosenberg. All employees and customers were retained.



Austin, TX-based Accent Food Services, led by President Josh Rosenberg, has acquired Custom Food Group and Twin City Coffee.



the city's poor. The tax that the city council passed in Philadelphia will go to fund the city's pet projects at the expense of our workers and economy," Grace said. "We are continuing the fight against this unfair, regressive tax in court. Our fight is not over."

Philadelphia recently became the first major city with a soda tax of 1.5 cents-per-ounce on sugary and diet beverages.

vagabond
mobile vending operations.

Vagabond Vending Lands Over \$3M In Series A Funding

► Vagabond Vending announced that it closed more than \$3M across two related financing rounds, the first being led by early stage venture capital firm Middleburg Capital Development (MCD) and the second being led by IrishAngels. Blu Venture Investors and other individual angels participated in both rounds. In addition, Vagabond has engaged with MCD and 1st Source Capital Corporation on a broad ranging financing agreement that enables Vagabond to provide needed capital to operators deploying new technologies.

"For the last five years, Vagabond's goal has been to bring more profit-driving technology into the reach of all vending business owners as simply and affordably as possible. With this round of financing, Vagabond will expand its communications network to provide vending operators with more options and technology that they could otherwise not afford," says founder and CEO Michael Lovett.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEP. 15-17

CAVC/AAMC Annual Meeting
LaQuinta Resort
LaQuinta, CA
Phone: 626-229-0900
www.cavconline.com

SEP. 21-23

TMVA Annual Convention
Hotel Contessa
San Antonio, TX
Phone: 832-358-8080
www.tmva.org

SEP. 25-26

The Canadian Coffee & Tea Show
The International Centre
Toronto, Canada
Phone: 877-687-7321 ext. 1012
www.coffeeteashow.ca

OCT. 13-15

2016 Atlantic Coast Expo
Embassy Suites
Myrtle Beach, SC
Phone: 919-387-1221
www.atlanticcoastexpo.com

OCT. 20-22

World Tea & Coffee Expo
Bombay Exhibition Centre
Mumbai, India
Phone: 91 22 28625131
www.worldteacoffeeexpo.com

NOV. 8-10

2016 CoffeeTea&Water Show
Gaylord Opryland
Nashville, TN
Phone: 312-346-0370
www.coffeeteaandwater.org

Teamsters Resolve To Fight Soda Tax In Philadelphia, Nationwide

► Teamsters from Philadelphia and nationwide resolved at the union's 29th International Convention to join together in opposition to soda taxes. Daniel Grace, Secretary-Treasurer of Teamsters Local 830 in Philadelphia, put forth the motion at the convention to pass a resolution opposing beverage taxes.

"These taxes are harmful to workers, small grocers and

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¹IRI MULO 52 wks ending 7/10/16

Trial and Error

By Adrienne Zimmer, Managing Editor

Some OCS-only operators are dabbling in micro markets and discovering that although it can be an exciting segment, it also comes with many challenges.



When Steve Brehm, president of Minnesota-based Berry Coffee Company, first heard about micro markets, he was intrigued. It was a segment that would allow him to provide a food option to the locations he was already serving with OCS, but without having to get into vending. Brehm decided it was a business venture he wanted to pursue, purchased two micro market kiosks and set up two test markets in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.

Brehm isn't the only OCS-only operator to delve into the world of micro markets. According to *Automatic Merchandiser* magazine circulation, a handful of OCS-only operators in the U.S. claim to operate micro markets and others have expressed that micro markets are an area they are looking to get into in the future. It's not hard to see why; in 2015, the percentage of revenue associated with micro markets rose to 10.2 percent, making it the highest revenue-providing service segment

after vending machines, according to *Automatic Merchandiser's* State of the Vending Industry report.

But micro markets are a lot tougher to pull off from an OCS-only standpoint, Brehm discovered. The new challenge of managing more product, coupled with low margins and fees, led Berry Coffee Co. to pull its test micro markets after just six months.

Adding food into the mix

Coming from an OCS-only background, Brehm was at a disadvantage when it came to purchasing, storing and pushing the massive number of SKUs required for a micro market. He found that he couldn't sell product fast enough with just two micro markets before it went stale — and he wasn't able to order smaller quantities, either. “You have to have a lot of product already in order to keep the shelf life up to par,” Brehm said. For a full-line vending operator, that's not difficult to do, as they are already placing a lot of that product in vending machines, he noted. With just two

micro markets, Berry Coffee didn't have the mass to keep product fresh. “We were throwing away so much product and it was just money down the drain,” he said.

Brehm also noted that jumping into micro markets wasn't as easy as it had seemed.

“If you're going to go into micro markets as an OCS operator, you have to be all-in,” he reflected. Berry Coffee Co. initially invested around \$150,000 in micro markets, in addition to transitioning an employee full-time to the segment. Meanwhile, the company's OCS and foodservice segment was booming. “We were being pulled in many directions and we recognized that micro markets were taking some resources away from the main focus of our business: coffee.”

Pulling resources

Berry Coffee Co. prides itself on serving specialty coffees and teas



“We were being pulled in many directions and we recognized that micro markets were taking some resources away from the main focus of our business: coffee.”

Steve Brehm, President, Berry Coffee Company



OCS only operators may find it a challenge to launch into micro markets.

to the Twin Cities area, with janitorial supplies and pantry services, too, when clients request it. So when the micro market segment began pulling an increasing number of resources away from the company's main focus, Brehm knew that was a problem.

In addition to monetary resources, micro markets took up more space than anticipated in the company's warehouse, which included refrigeration. Time was an issue, too. "There were rules and legal issues surrounding fresh food, so we were spending a lot of time on micro markets that otherwise would have been focused on our OCS business," he said. Unlike other operators, he wasn't seeing a return on investment; sales were high, margins were thin and on top

of it all he was paying a micro market provider fee, which made the segment even less profitable.

"We made the decision to remove the markets because we wanted to get back to our core," he said. The company has done just that. Berry Coffee Co. recently opened an offsite coffee roasting plant, adding a fresh, local option for its customers.

Look before the leap

Today Brehm partners with vending companies in the area; if his OCS location requests a micro market, Brehm works with local vending operators to bring it in and he continues servicing the OCS aspect. "This has worked really well for us," he said. He isn't ruling out micro markets in the future completely, though. Brehm likes the micro market concept and says he

would consider getting back into it. "But we would have to do a lot more research," he said.

"Micro markets are a great concept, but they aren't for everyone or every operator," he continued, cautioning OCS operators to take a deep look before they make the leap. "Think about your overall business and where you want to take it," he said.

OCS operators should anticipate building size quickly, he continued, in order to make a return on investment and make the product go further. "This means sitting down and making sure you have the resources to build that segment."

"It's more painful [to start in micro markets] if you're not in vending," he said, "but if you do your research and walk *before* running in, micro markets can be a viable segment for OCS operators, I believe." | ◀

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Techniques To Compete

Three ways small vending operations can innovate while continuing to vie for a slice of the industry's profit.

By Adrienne Zimmer, Managing Editor



The challenges of running a vending operation are uniquely different for small business owners than they are for large ones. Oftentimes employees wear multiple hats, relying on one another to fill several roles within the organization. With limited capital, the decision of when and how to use resources to invest and expand is also crucial, as is the return on investment. And top-notch customer service is a must when it's how you compete against larger operators or those who sell on price.

Small operations, which currently make up 50 percent of the vending industry according to recent data from *Automatic Merchandiser* magazine's State of the Vending Industry report, can still effectively compete. It's time to innovate and use creative techniques to bring out the best in your growing business.

Use technology in unique ways

You're never too small to integrate technology was a sentiment shared throughout the Small Operator Roundtable discussion at the NAMA OneShow in Chicago, IL, this past April. Technology, both on the front and backend of an operation, allows the vending company to create efficiencies, cut costs and interact with the customer at the machine (and vice versa).



And one small vending operator is using technology in a distinctive way. Mike Kever, president of Advantage Vending & Coffee Services located in Searcy, AR, operates one full vending route and invested in short codes for his vending machines in order to be up-to-date on machine outages and issues. A short code, according

to Twilio.com, is, “a 5- or 6-digit number that can send and receive SMS (and MMS) to and from mobile phones.” When a customer experiences issues at the machine, they can use their phones and the short code, displayed on the vending machine, to let Advantage Vending know of a problem. Kever receives a text message directly to his phone with the machine number. “We’ve saved so much money with the short codes and we look like a hero when we come and fix it fast,” he said. “Without the short codes we would not have known a machine was having issues until the next time the route driver made a stop and that would have significantly affected our sales.” He did caution that short codes are an investment and take preparation. They are, however, a better option than QR codes, which may be cheaper, but are also trending out, he says. “It’s a simple tool and it works.”

In order to gain traction with customers, it’s also important for small vending operations to be involved in social media technology and have a web presence as well. In a survey taken by *Automatic Merchandiser* earlier this year, nearly half of the respondents said that they do not use social media. Likewise, a survey published last year by Redshift Research found that 60 percent of very small businesses (i.e. made up of one to five people) don’t have websites. That means that those companies not utilizing a web presence are relying on word-of-mouth to promote their company. Although websites cost money, social media accounts do not.

Small operators can use this platform to hold competitions, build brand awareness and generate excitement. At the OneShow roundtable, one operator discussed how he brought a trial single-cup machine to the offices of 10 people who “liked” his company’s Facebook page.



Outsource your weaknesses

In a small vending business, multitasking is inevitable. But at what point does a manager stop and say “Enough is enough, I’m spending way too much time on this”? When you’re growing a business it’s important to know your strengths and your weaknesses, said Chip Potter, NAMA’s Vice President of Information Services, and moderator of the Small Operator Roundtable. Potter recommends pinpointing several strengths and outsourcing the rest. This can include payroll, accounting, marketing and social media.

Without having to put attention on topics that are time-consuming, small operators can focus on other tasks such as sales, customer service and growing the business. Business News Daily recommends that small businesses outsource these technology tasks: Infrastructure as a Service (IaaS), cloud hosting, website design and updates, cybersecurity, business apps (if applicable), and, among other tasks, any project outside the scope of the owner’s expertise.

It’s a commonly used practice for small businesses to hire an outside bookkeeper and an even newer concept for those businesses to outsource their web presence and social media.

Are you a small operator who has used other unique techniques to compete? We’d love hear about them. Send us an email or Tweet at editor@VendingMarketWatch.com or @VendingMagazine.

Outsourcing your company’s web presence is cheaper than hiring an employee to manage it and although there is a risk for a loss of authenticity, the benefits outweigh the costs – and it is possible to create a balance so your company’s voice comes through in blog content and social media posts. One of the only things that can’t be outsourced is great customer service and keeping that service up as you grow.

Cross-train employees

Small businesses thrive on employees who wear multiple hats. Cross-training employees to fill multiple roles is essential for a small business to succeed, especially as it grows. Several attendees in the Small Operation Roundtable session stressed the importance that each employee should know each other’s roles.

Pickers, for example, should be taken on a route with a driver to understand the importance of their job and how it correlates to the overall operation. Likewise, route drivers should all be trained on how to troubleshoot and fix their own machines.

Cross-training employees is an operator’s best defense against indispensable employees. If an employee quits, it will be easier to fill their role if another employee is cross-trained to take on that responsibility until the job is re-filled and can help train the new hire.

The vending industry was founded by entrepreneurs and will continue to attract start-ups and new businesses. It is important to share challenges, as well as unique best practices, so the next generation of vending, micro market and office coffee service operators have a long and prosperous future. | ◀



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Indulgent snacking continues to grow, with 59% of consumers saying that they indulge when they snack.⁴ Capitalize on the trend with these new and exciting products from the brand that's taken pride in offering quality nut products since 1906.

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This new product is ideal for grab-and-go convenience and helps you capitalize on the year-round appeal of iced coffee. Hit the sweet spot with customers and grow your business with the on-trend appeal of Gevalia Iced Coffee with Almond Milk—available in three delicious flavors: Mocha, Vanilla and Caramel.

Contact your Kraft Heinz sales representative today or visit KraftHeinz-Foodservice.com to learn more about bringing powerful Kraft Heinz brands to your micro market, as well as products ideal for vending and office coffee service.

Footnotes:

- 1 NAMA Micro Market Consumer Research, Bachtelle and Associates, April 2015
- 2 Nielsen, scanner data for xAOC, 52 weeks ending 12/26/15
- 3 Ipsos, Brand health tracking report, 2015
- 4 2014 IRI Scan Data (2014 Growth in Snacking)
- 5 NPD Group, June 2012



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LinkedIn Showcase Pages Can Bolster Your Image And Sales!

By John Healy, Contributing Editor



John Healy is CEO of Healy Consulting & Communications Inc., a traditional, digital and social media marketing firm that strives to ensure its clients' relevance while fueling their growth and success. His affiliation with the industry dates back to 2009. Reach him at jhealy@healyco.com or through the LinkedIn group: Vending, OCS & Micro Market Sales & Marketing Executives Network.

In the world of B2B social media marketing, there's a little known tool that's making a big impact for companies that use it correctly. And that's a LinkedIn Showcase page.

LinkedIn officially describes Showcase pages as "...extensions of your Company page, designed for spotlighting a brand, business unit, or initiative. Create a page for aspects of your business with their own messages and audience segments to share with."

So, then, if a business is to have a Showcase page, it must have a Company page first; and, to have a Company page, you must have a LinkedIn Profile. Did you catch that last part? You must have a LinkedIn Profile! (If you don't, a handy tool to get you started can be found at: <http://www.healyco.com/linkedin-analysis>)

We know from industry research and informal interviewing that LinkedIn Profiles are anathema to many vending, OCS and micro market owners and operators. But I've said it before and it bears repeating: Once you hand others your business card, they do two things; they check your website and your LinkedIn Profile. If either are not up to par, they will likely move on.

Therefore, not having a personal profile on LinkedIn puts you at a huge disadvantage, not only for your personal reputation but your

company reputation and marketing efforts as well.

Why Showcase Pages?

Most companies in our industry have become rather complex, offering many and disparate products and services for which they must create multiple marketing campaigns to reach different types of audiences. This can wreak havoc on a solid marketing or sales support program, sometimes struggling to pick the right social media and digital marketing tools for each product and each audience you're targeting.

Showcase pages allow companies with multiple product/service messages to segment them easily and deliver them to the right audiences. You can also use them to highlight key industry trends among very specific audiences.

For instance, you could create a Showcase page on "Healthy Choices" and load it up with content about everything your company offers through vending, OCS and micro markets that lean in the healthy direction. Then you

can promote the "healthy" page to very specific customers — schools, universities, health care institutions, among others — through email marketing, or a blog, or your website.

(Note: Be sure to include some "curated content" on your page about the trend or product, so customers view it as a "thought leadership page" — a place where they can easily learn about a trend and what's hot/what's not — rather than a page filled with blatant product promotion. Showcase pages are also an ideal place for videos about the trend, testimonials from customers, links to "more information," etc. In the end, you want the page to literally showcase your products, services and knowledge.)

Naming your Showcase page can be tricky as well. For instance, if you want to promote Cold Brew Coffee as your company's latest, hottest (pun intended!), cutting-edge offering, you probably can't just name it "Cold Brew Coffee" because someone else may have a page with that same name. So make it clever or personal, like "Bob's Original Cold Brew."

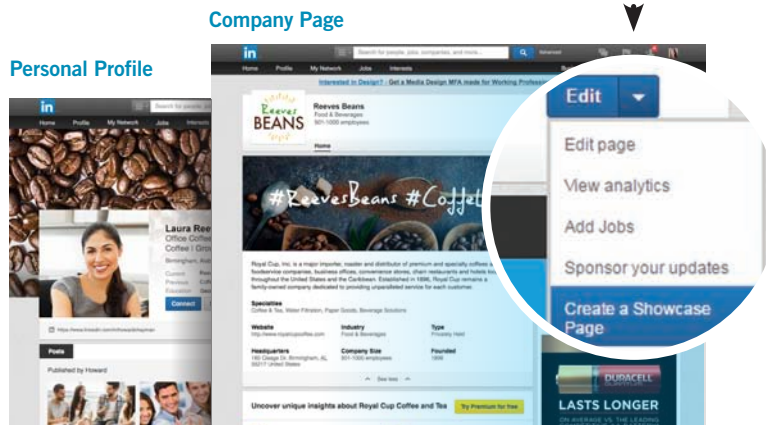
"Once you hand others your business card, they do two things; they check your website and your LinkedIn Profile."

How To Do It...

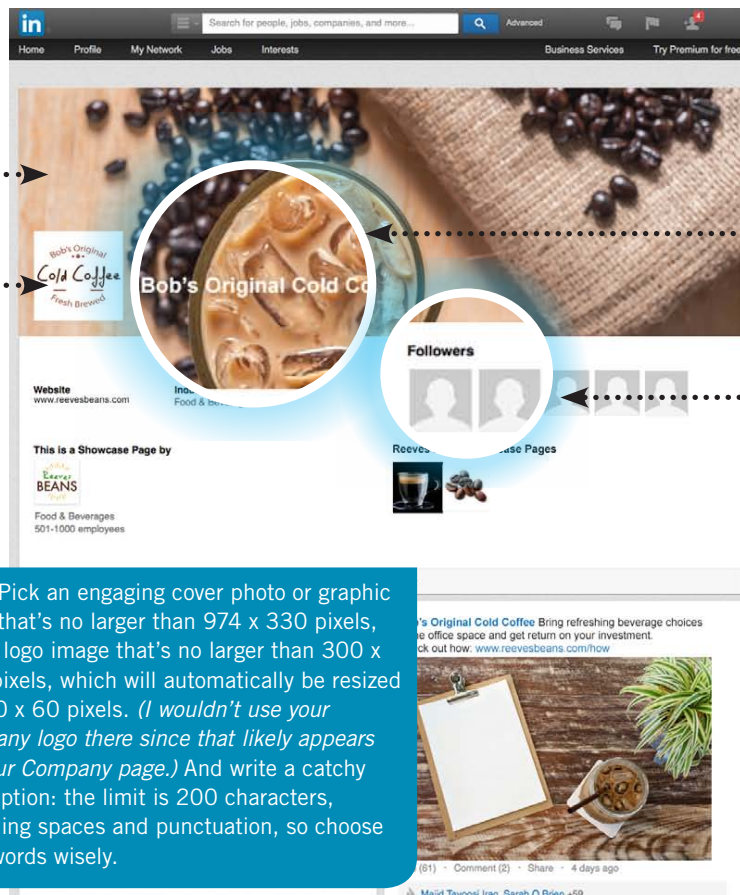
Creating a Showcase page is fairly straightforward, but there are some tips and tricks to keep in mind. It really boils down to five simple steps:

1. Go to your Company page – only an Administrator of your Company page can create a Showcase page, so bear that in mind.

2. In the top right corner of your Company page, you'll see a drop down next to the blue Edit box; click on the box and select "Create a Showcase Page."



Showcase Page



4. Pick an engaging cover photo or graphic that's no larger than 974 x 330 pixels, and a logo image that's no larger than 300 x 300 pixels, which will automatically be resized to 100 x 60 pixels. (I wouldn't use your company logo there since that likely appears on your Company page.) And write a catchy description: the limit is 200 characters, including spaces and punctuation, so choose your words wisely.

Other examples of great Showcase page ideas (but not names) include:

- Adding water service to the break room (Millennials and GenZ employees love water!)
- Going cashless: The benefits of credit/debit readers on your machines
- Picking the right micro market features
- Today's break room: Not what your Granddaddy remembers...
- Make your break room a competitive advantage (The ROI of vending/OCS)

You are limited to 10 Showcase pages, so choose them wisely if you have myriad products and services.

The objective with Showcase pages, like any other social media tool, is engagement. So make choices in creating your company's Showcase pages with your customers, prospects and other partners in mind. And just like you'd pick out the right ring for that special someone, make sure the engagement strategy for your Showcase page is as brilliant as a diamond! | ◀

3. Give the page a name, keeping in mind that it has to be something that's not being used (LinkedIn will send you a message if your name is being used already), and assign an Administrator if it's not yourself, then click "Create Page" in bottom right corner.

5. Finally, build followers by inviting your customers, prospects, industry partners and others to Follow your page (sending them the Showcase page URL will greatly enhance your odds), and start posting content right away. The only way you will get engagement with your Showcase page is to post content there regularly.

Giving Consumers the Power of Choice:

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WHILE 85% of all global transactions are made in cash, 390 billion cashless transactions take place every year, and in 2016 alone, \$620 billion will be processed via mobile—a number that continues to grow. Vending operators need to evolve at the speed of technology in order to stay competitive with traditional retail spaces, and it is critical to adapt to the needs of increasingly tech savvy consumers.

So how do vending operators deliver customers an experience that mirrors retail? Give them options. Vending machine owners wouldn't stock only one type of food, or a single beverage option, so why limit your customer's right to choose at the point of payment? Whether a customer wants to pay with cash, coin, credit, or mobile technology, the vending machine should be equipped to receive it.

Enter Crane Payment Innovations. Processing more than four billion transactions every week, CPI has one of the world's largest installed bases of payment systems, and a portfolio of solutions for every payment possibility.

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Series note acceptor, a unique building block in the portfolio for untended MDB environments.

One of the industry's most modular payment system platforms, CPI continuously expands VN2700 functionality with new bezels, cash-box sizes and recycling capabilities. Even wet, wrinkled and torn bills are no match for the VN's highly-engineered, contact free sensors; with a 1 in 20,000 jam rate, CPI's bill validation technology ensures that every vend is a smooth transaction.

Coin Acceptance

With more than 1.5 million operator installations since its release, the CF7000 5-tube changer is the industry's first true coin manager, empowering operators with intelligent coin management. Unique tracking, analyzing, and diagnostic capabilities give operators the tools and business information they need to better manage their cash flow and increase profits. Built to last with exceptional lifetime performance, the CF7000 provides a low cost of ownership to operators. Smart coin management means that operators can intuitively control coin inventory and optimize payout to maximize sales and minimize costs.

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Businesses and consumers are increasingly connected—not only to each other, but to the technology that brings them together. Your vending operation should be no different. With CPI's cashless solution suite, you can customize a communication and coverage plan that redefines connectivity for your business.

Combine one of CPI's modular bezels with the MEI Advance 5000TM telemeter to craft an end-to-end cashless system that integrates with your vending network. As the technology landscape continues to evolve, CPI evolves in kind, always offering the latest in cashless payment and security. Transform your machine into an interactive experience that replicates the ease of retail and validates data security across the entire transaction.

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Making The Invisible, Visible

By Emily Refermat, Editor

The benefit of electronic locks is in the insight they provide and the protection they offer.

Whether you own a few dozen vending machines or thousands of micro market food coolers, electronic locks should be on your mind. It's the next step in security for both vending machines and coolers,

but it offers more than security. The return on investment of an electronic lock comes in being able to identify behaviors invisible with a mechanical lock or non-locking cooler, at least in part. Plus, electronic locks are get-



“The typical vendor that is working with us is looking for more than physical security and that is in the cost savings and information electronic locks provide.”

Mark Imhof, director engineered security solutions, Medeco Security Locks

ting smarter, with many companies enabling the keys to be programmed with smartphones, and some eliminating keys altogether, opting instead for locks opened by mobile device.

When to switch

Mechanical locks offer security and are an excellent way to prevent many types of vending machine theft and vandalism. However, they don't restrict access in any way, nor record the “who, what and when” of access to the vending machine. There are many instances where this information can be quite valuable in loss prevention, cash accountability and even route efficiency.

“More so than ever before, the evolution is increasingly about data and the analytical tools to grab what you need,” said Mark Imhof director,

engineered security solutions with Medeco Security Locks.

Imhof says an increasing number of operators are using electronic locks to recognize behaviors that could be affecting profitability such as if a vending machine is opened more than once when a driver should be prekitting, and the time a driver has the machine open at a site. It can help vending operators decipher which drivers are using their time efficiently, for example, or which routes might need reworking because the time between vending stops is too long.

“The analysis of the data can be a productivity enhancer,” explained Imhof. He stresses the importance of reporting and being able to customize the data analysis for it to be really effective. Operators should be able

to drill down into the data by electronic lock key, specific timeframe, location or even an individual vending machine. “It can very granular — every access or attempted access,” said Imhof. And once the data has been analyzed, changes need to be implemented to increase efficiency. “The typical vendor that is working with us is looking for more than physical security and that is in the cost savings and information electronic locks provide.”

John Moa, director of sales and marketing, at Cyberlock agrees electronic locks provide data that can be harnessed to produce better efficiency and uncover issues. Moa recalls an example where after installing electronic locks, an owner discovered a route driver whose key was activated at 7am, but whose first

Retail 2.0

USAT's innovation brings a whole new level of engagement to unattended retail

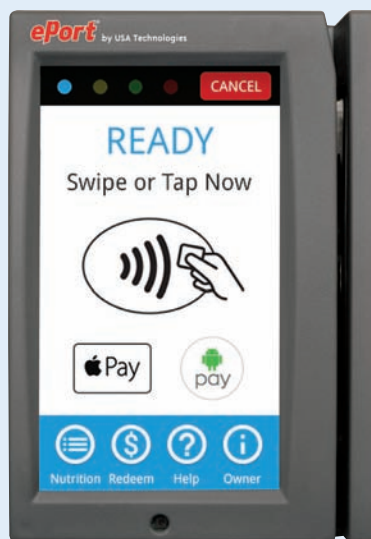
USA TECHNOLOGIES

(USAT) has long been known as the self-serve retail industry's technology pioneer. The first company to bring cashless payments to vending, USAT now processes an average of one million transactions daily. With over 400,000 connections to its ePort Connect™ platform, USAT brings their customers the benefit of deep industry knowledge, proven reliability and forward-thinking technology.

"Our goal is to make sure that every consumer that walks by one of our customer's machines can make a purchase with whatever form of payment they have in their pocket, be it cash, debit, credit card, or increasingly, mobile wallets," said Stephen P. Herbert, chairman and CEO of USA Technologies. The approach has advantages, as cashless payments are typically 32 percent higher in average spend, and tend to increase participation in unattended machines by up to 28 percent according to USAT's annual Knowledge Base report.

Mr. Herbert points out that integrating cashless is about more than offering additional methods of payment. "ePort Connect provides a technology infrastructure that enables a myriad of business opportunities – all driving improved results. By connecting machines to USAT's platform, customers have access to a comprehensive portfolio of cashless payment, telemetry and consumer engagement services that ensure they are maximizing returns."

Innovative customer support systems like USAT's Premier Support Services, add value to USAT's relationships by offering access to data



ePort interactive

analytic experts, performance optimization studies, installation services, marketing support and targeted consumer research. Ultimately providing a unique and comprehensive approach to deployment projects.

Robin Rawls, president of Rawls Distributing Company noted, "By amplifying our long-standing partnership with USA Technologies through the Premier Services program, we are ensuring that the deployment occurs in the smartest, fastest way with maximum return. At only 50 percent deployment, cashless usage was already up to 33 percent."

In response to a need many unattended operators had for enhanced consumer communication in the field, USAT launched the Go Cashless™ Marketing Toolkit and MORE™ Loyalty program out-of-the box marketing & consumer loyalty program designed to help roll out cashless technology, then accelerate consumer adoption and drive sales. Both programs come complete with customizable marketing materials and deployment support to ensure success. The results? Five Star Foods, one of the largest Canteen franchisees in the US saw a 106% increase in average annual cashless sales after implementing Go Cashless!

Looking forward, USAT recently announced the launch of the ePort Interactive platform. The feature-rich, interactive capabilities of the platform leverage next-generation retail trends and bring a new universe of engagement, marketing and analytical capabilities such as on-screen nutritional info, advertising, interactive assistance, cross-platform compatibility and seamless integration with all major VMS systems.

"As a first mover, we bring the most robust, agnostic services platform, the most advanced technology and the deepest level of experience and industry knowledge available to help our customers compete in the marketplace. Nobody can do what we do," said Mr. Herbert. ■

For more information contact USAT at 800.633.0340.

ePort Connect provides a technology infrastructure that enables a myriad of business opportunities – all driving improved results.

ePort Connect Helps You to Entice & Engage

ePort Connect, the only cloud-based, cashless payment, interactive media, content delivery and loyalty platform in a PCI Level 1 compliant, VISA C.I.S.P. certified environment.



The ePort G Series is the most popular cashless solution in the unattended industry. ePorts bring superior data protection, consumer engagement, advanced diagnostics and MORE.

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stop was never logged until 10am. In another instance, a route driver was given 50 machines to service, but the locks showed he only reached 48. Management was unaware of these delays before the switch and therefore couldn't address whatever issue was the precipitant.

Eliminates rekeying cost

In addition to data reporting and building efficiencies, another positive aspect of electronic locks is the elimination of mechanical lock rekeying. Imagine a key or set of keys goes lost or missing — any vending machine accessed by that key or key ring is at risk until the operator takes on the time and expense to rekey each vending machine. With an electronic lock, the risk is mitigated. One day, and the key expires, or sooner depending on the system and remote access to the lock. This can be an especially powerful ROI, saving operators quite a bit of money and anxiety over security.

William Denison, CEO of TriTeq, reports an increase in interest concerning electronic locks from large bottlers and universities where keys are changing hands often and frequently copied. "It's especially growing from outside the U.S., where there is a focus and conscious spending of money on security," said Denison. Within the U.S. there has been a big trend towards system interconnectivity, according to Denison. Operators want an electronic lock that can communicate



with a telemeter. It allows a single system to collect all the data about the vending machine, including the lock and lockout data.

Security reigns

Despite this added return on investment available to electronic lock users, the big value in electronic locks still remains security. There is no way to create a duplicate or copy and the reports offer valuable insight

into what is happening to vending machines in the field, such as unsuccessful attempts to open the vending machine and accountability of who opened the machine and for how long.

"Vending operators are still looking for accountability in an electronic lock solution," said Moa. The basics of an electronic lock give operators an audit trail of inventory and cash in and out. It allows them to reduce shrinkage and aids in loss prevention. This is especially important as more operators adopt dynamic scheduling where there is no set route or schedule for a driver. "You can get close to real-time communication about what's happening at the vending machine and control access," said Moa.

Not theft, but safety

In micro markets electronic locks are making their debut in food coolers to ensure safe temperatures for perishable foods in these unattended foodservice locations. "Food safety is the driving forces of sales of our locks on coolers and freezers," said Chris Strong, vice president, sales and marketing, for Minus Forty Technologies. The company services several verticals, but has seen the most lift in sales in the locking 22 cubic foot cooler/freezer, which is almost exclusively used in micro markets. "I can see the locking 22 cubic food cooler/freezer surpassing the unlocked version as our best seller for the first time ever this year," said Strong. Local health departments oversee unattended foodservice and many don't yet have requirements for micro markets; however, notable exceptions include Ohio and California which mandate the locking coolers. Strong believes the requirement to install electronic locking systems for per-

"You can get close to real-time communication about what's happening at the vending machine and control access."

John Moa, director of sales and marketing, Cyberlock

ishable items will quickly spread across the U.S. And it will be a problem for vending operators currently purchasing non-locking coolers that also don't have an NSF food grade certification, yet are using these coolers for more than beverages or shelf stable snacks.

"If I were an operator, I would adopt a locking cooler," said Strong. "It's a guarantee to customers you're offering the best in food safety. Consumers are demanding freshness and a quality guarantee. We don't want to disappoint them and let them develop the same perceptions they already have with food vending machines," he said.

Perception isn't the only worry for operators not investing in a certified locking cooler. Denison with TriTeq, which sells a certified retrofit for coolers to make them lock, cites the insurance battle a large brand name fast-food restaurant is in over its recent foodborne illness issue. "The insurance company asked if the fast-food restaurant did everything in its power to prevent the customers from getting ill," said Denison. If the answer is no, the insurance company doesn't plan to pay the claims and damages of the victims.

"You don't want to give micro markets a bad name, a dark perception, but also don't want to create an incident with customers — and then insurance won't pay because you didn't do everything possible — you didn't opt for the certified locking cooler," warned Denison.

In the future, TriTeq is looking to advance its system to store data in the cloud for customers. "If there is an incident, operators can retrieve the data [about cooler temperature and locking state] at any given time and date," Denison said. And if operators need more convincing, Denison believes the NSF will create a specification exclusively for unmanned locking food grade

“You don’t want to give micro markets a bad name, a dark perception, but also don’t want to create an incident with customers — and then insurance won’t pay because you didn’t do everything possible — you didn’t opt for the certified locking cooler.”

William Denison, CEO of TriTeq

coolers in the next year. The standard will be based on the existing NAMA standards for food vending machines. "I don't believe any equipment will be grandfathered in," added Denison.

The future is mobile

In the coming years electronic locks will get not only smarter, but more mobile friendly. Already new this year, Medeco started offering an electronic lock that doesn't have to come back to the headquarters to be programmed. The MedecoXT BLE (BLE for Bluetooth low energy) allows a driver or service tech to go into an app and program the key virtually, explains Imhof. Security is maintained because the programming of the key still needs to be initiated from someone at the headquarters, but it saves time when unforeseen service is needed.

"On the fly remote programming of keys can be a real cost and time saver," explained Moa with Cyberlock. Cyberlock allows an administrator to send a change in the permission for a specific key. Then a driver pairs his key to the phone to achieve near real-time programming changes and data transfer.

Recently, Cyberlock has also introduced a new elock concept that could in the future apply to vending.

"As an engineering company, we developed and recently launched a keyless solution, the FlashLock. It uses a mobile device as the key and sends an encrypted Morse code to the receiving device," said Moa. In essence it's a keyless electronic lock, eliminating electronic key replacement costs while maintaining security. A new concept that could be a win-win.

For micro markets too, mobile is quickly changing the landscape. "The generation 2 locks add connectivity that shows high temperature, signal issues, and offer data around a lock-out via a mobile app," said Strong.

As operators add more vending machines, vending drivers and micro market coolers, it makes sense to utilize enhanced locking technology to ensure accountability as well as efficiencies. Plus, it can be used as a selling point with customers. It's not just about having the latest and greatest, but about what this technology can offer the operator. Peace of mind and revealing data about their vending machine business could be extremely valuable. | ◀

AdvancePierre Foods for all your Sandwich Needs

Now offering more fresh packaging, premium products and breakfast options.



AT AdvancePierre

Foods, we believe convenience foods should be about more than just convenience. We pride ourselves on making food that tastes fresh and grows your business. The BIG AZ®, Pierre™, Fast Choice and Hot 'n' Ready® brand products are already well-known and loved by consumers.

In January 2015, AdvancePierre acquired the wholesale and manufacturing operations of Landshire, Inc., including its family of brands and products and its state-of-the-art facility in Caseyville, Ill. This



added flexible sandwich assembly lines as well as a bakery for fresh baked sandwich rolls.

A foundation of AdvancePierre's leadership in the sandwich segment is our proprietary bread ingredients. Our unique sandwich buns are baked daily on-site and used in the hand-

assembling of our sandwiches within hours of coming out of the oven. Home-style biscuits are baked up tender and fluffy for use in our breakfast sandwiches. All of our breads are designed to provide a fresh, just made flavor and bite.

The BIG AZ line features extra large sandwiches with great taste at an excellent value for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Three new BIG AZ breakfast sandwiches provide more big value options to start the day.

The Pierre line offers an array of restaurant quality sandwiches, including all beef burgers, spicy breaded chicken and barbecue pork ribs, plus deli-style sandwiches and appetizers. The new Pierre Signatures sandwiches feature clear, hand wrapped packaging for an upscale look that can command a premium price.

The Hot 'n' Ready line offers a full range of classic breakfast and lunch sandwiches, hand-wrapped in butcher-style paper and perfect for micro markets and grab-and-go meals.

The Landshire® line of products includes a variety of traditional sliced meat and salad deli-style wedges, subs, and meat patty sandwiches, including the Landshire Big Daddy™ big value sandwich line, and many with extended refrigerated shelf life.

The Like Mom's™ line features a full-view product package that has a fresh, locally-made look while providing long shelf. Product variety covers proven favorites, from basic deli wedges to cheeseburgers and sub sandwiches.

The newest additions to the AdvancePierre hand-held product selection are the Better Bakery™ Pretzel Melts. These hand-crafted stuffed sandwiches feature savory meat and cheese fillings wrapped in a soft pretzel dough for an upscale, artisan appeal hot from the microwave.

In addition to sandwiches, AdvancePierre makes a broad range of fully-cooked meats for convenience foodservice. ■

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Fresh Wrap Package

3 NEW Varieties!

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Pierre Signatures® sandwiches feature
crystal-clear, flexible hand-wrapped packaging
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fresh-made appeal show through.


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Foods

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How The VDI Task Force Is Guiding Vending's Future

By Michael Kasavana, Ph.D., NCE5

The importance of VDI is that it creates easier system integration with open and accepted technology standards.



In spring 2009, a NAMA Technology Leadership Committee under the direction of the NAMA Board of Directors, formed a specialized technology task force charged with developing a set of industry standards that guide data sharing among competing technology systems. This task force became known as the Vending Data Interchange (VDI) Task Force and it determined that any standards it published had to ensure vending operators of three things: reliability, continuity and longevity.

Reliability relating to how each participating technology provider would be able to receive identical machine-level data files. Continuity in terms of data retrieval and distribution throughout a vending and/or micro market operator's network. Longevity with respect to providing assurances that interfaces between installed

applications from diverse suppliers would be supported going forward.

Long-time VDI Chair Chris Lilly, vice president of IT for Compass Group explains it thus, "The purpose of the VDI Task Force is to create standards that make it easier for operators to adopt new technologies by helping to address some of the challenges related to system integration."

Beyond the acronym, the VDI Task Force was created to shape the future of vending technology by ensuring that an operator can put into use diverse vending technology solutions and still take advantage of the operational data in existing applications regardless of the manufacturer or supplier.

VDI focus

The VDI Task Force's initial formation put forth this objective:

"Vending operators desire technology capable of reliably passing information from one application service provider to another so that multiple application service providers can contribute to a single networked solution." This statement captures the essence of NAMA VDI standards. The purpose of NAMA VDI standards is to establish transparent, non-proprietary interfaces that enable transportation of data among the main components of vending and/or micro market system (e.g. telemetry devices, cashless



"The purpose of the VDI Task Force is to create standards that make it easier for operators to adopt new technologies."

Chris Lilly, VDI Chair, vice president of IT for Compass Group

payments, inventory management, warehouse operations, back office system software). From a technical perspective, the non-proprietary nature of VDI standards renders each an open standard. The essence of VDI standards is to enable data movement through a messaging technique that ensures data integrity, regardless of whether it was pulled or pushed to one or more server(s). In other words, these standards render vending technology capable of linking together diverse software solutions, from different vending technology providers and/or micro market suppliers, into unified applications. It is hoped that this synergy may well represent a tipping point in the accelerated adoption of technologies as industry operators have alternatives to single supplier-dependence.

VDI standards rely on messaging standards to satisfy data interchange needs and are not concerned with the entity transmitting or receiving such messages. For example, a messaging standard governing the transmission of machine-level DEX data may originate from the vending machine, an advanced telemetry device, or the

I. S2S DEX Standard

This standard is designed to enable the movement of machine-level data to multiple servers through a process referred to as web-services. A web-service allows the transmission of a received DEX message from one server or application system to another server or application system. The problem statement for this standard reads as follows: The ability to have information pass from one vending management system (VMS) provider to another so that multiple telemetry providers can contribute to a single solution. Most telemetry systems rely on a combination of parsing, compression and encryption to secure data and optimize bandwidth. In simpler terms, data exported from a vending machine can be sent to a primary server as a whole message and subsequently that message can be relayed, in whole, to successive servers in a network. Given that NAMA and the European Vending Association (EVA) worked jointly to pioneer the development and acceptance of EVA/DTS (DEX) and MDB standards, the S2S DEX standard is a logical extension. This standard enables an operator to use different telemetry and VMS within the enterprise and still be able to aggregate data among different servers (i.e. move vending machine data from one system to another). On May 1, 2010, this VDI standard was officially posted as VDI S2S DEX 1.0.

NAMA VDI mandates that the message format conform to the technical specifications of the standard, regardless of the entity creating the message. The functionality of this standard is somewhat analogous to an email communication being distributed to multiple recipients. In this case, the contents of the email message are essentially wrapped in a VDI carrier equivalent to an email envelope that enables distribution among a number of file servers (email recipients) regardless of supplier or manufacturer. Once a vending operator's VMS uploads the data it can be used in a variety of applications (e.g. pre-kitting, cashless settlement, dynamic scheduling).



VDI Standards

The following two industry standards are officially labeled as VDI-Compliant having successfully passed vetting and early adoption testing by the NAMA VDI Task Force:

**VDI S2S DEX –
Server-to-Server DEX Standard**
Version 1.1 (2011)
Coordinator: Anton Rakushkin,
Crane Merchandising System
anton@streamware.com

**VDI VMS-MMS –
Vending-to-Micro-Market
Integration Standard Version 1.0**
(2016)
Coordinator: Anton Rakushkin,
Crane Merchandising Systems
anton@streamware.com

Source: <http://www.namanow.org/technology/vdi-standards>

file server of another company. VDI standards mandate that the message format conform to the technical specifications of the standard, regardless

of the entity creating the message. Additionally, the VDI Task Force seeks to develop standards that are reasonable and cost effective; support

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More than ever, we are looking towards the future to bring our clients not only innovative products, but complete business solutions that will help them bring value to their organization and carve a choice position in the industry.

Cafection being North America's largest bean to cup manufacturer means that we know what you want.



You want a machine that delivers, cup after cup. A reliable machine that helps sell more coffee. One that creates some of the best margins in the industry, and more. We know this and with our direct sales force throughout North America, we are there to help you close accounts and in-house training.

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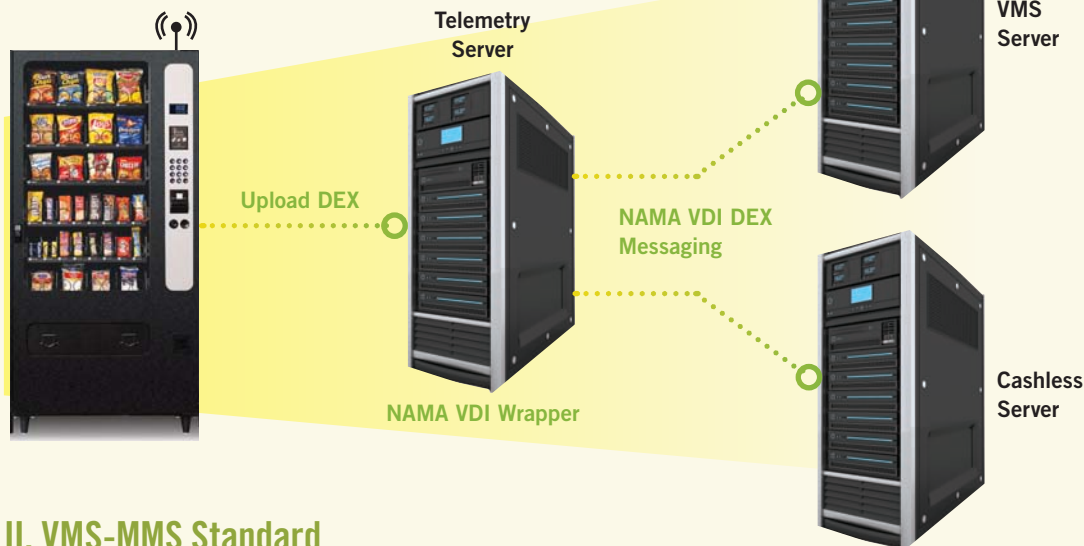


anniversary



NAMA VDI Wrapper | VDI S2S DEX Standard

Packs data for multi-server messaging



II. VMS-MMS Standard

The VDI VMS-MMS data integration standard relies on two essential components: **1. Vending Management System (VMS)** — the route accounting system typically used to support the vending business (and OCS business) and **2. Micro Market System (MMS)** — the platform system being the kiosk and associated services that allow consumers to purchase items from the market using a self-checkout process. Given the difficulty of managing data in multiple systems and keeping the data in sync, the NAMA VDI VMS-MMS standard delineates each sys-

tem's role in creating, maintaining and managing specific data sets. This shared responsibility platform enables an efficient combination of interrelated functionality. This standard, for example, allows for the synchronization of sales, kiosk activity, prepaid account funding, inventory, pricing, product catalogs, cash collections and master data between an installed VMS solution and MMS solution. As a result of this integration, operators are able to implement and manage a combined vending and micro-market business.

transportability; are forward looking; and are readily adoptable by technology suppliers.

A challenging endeavor

The composition of the VDI Task Force was initially, and remains, highly unusual in that it brought most of the industry's major vending technology providers to a common space and asked that they work together to produce open standards for data sharing among competing technology suppliers. Over the past six years, the task force has published two well-vetted and well-tested industry standards. These standards contain technical speci-

fications that: a) bundle vending machine-level data for easy distribution throughout a vending operator's technology network, and/or b) aggregate vending and micro market data within a unified network. A key characteristic of each VDI standard is that it is implementable without vending operator intervention.

In order to effectively assemble a large group of competing technology suppliers, all task force members are required to sign a VDI Participant Agreement (PA) that enables the free exchange of ideas without consideration of attribution or ownership. The form must be signed by the individual participant as well as

a corporate officer of the firm they represent. The PA document helped shape VDI meetings by defining key components required for industry standards. For example, member contributions are explained in the PA as "any tangible or intangible information (including literary drafts, literary final versions, pictorial works, graphical works, notes, memoranda, work sheets, charts, data, formulas, designs, drawings, programs, documents, specifications, processes, and flowcharts) created specifically for or provided to the task force for its use in developing and publishing a standard." Such transparency allowed VDI meetings to operate as an open,



free-flowing exchange of ideas without consideration of source.

The Task Force, therefore, provides a safe harbor for the sharing of technical information without retribution. As a result, each task force member grants NAMA a non-exclusive, perpetual, world-wide, royalty free, license to develop and publish industry technology standards. The PA ensures that no task force activity grants a NAMA member, an individual, or another party the right to use a contribution to the committee for any purpose other than to practice the standard.

Published Standards

The two published VDI Task Force Standards are 1) Server to Server (S2S) DEX and 2) Vending to Micro Market (VMS-MMS) standard. VDI compliant standards can be found online at the vending.org website under the technology tab.

VDI Benefits

NAMA VDI standards afford several direct benefits to operators, especially those embarking on technology decisions. When purchasing vending technology from a company adhering to the NAMA VDI standards, the buyer is assured investment in industry technology is compatible with VDI compliant industry suppliers. VDI standards are open standards.

Summary

There are primarily two types of machine-level data that can be monitored in the vending industry: transactional data and operational data. Transactional data includes facts related to purchase activation, product selection, pricing, sales and payments while operational data involves error messages, conditional alerts and functionality reporting. Simply stated, vending operators seek technology applications capable of reliably passing these data from one application or

VDI VMS-MMS Standard

DATA	FLOW
SALES Market sales and payment tenders. Data will be by sales ticket and will represent the "basket" purchased and the payment methods used to purchase. Tenders (payment methods) may be a combination of cash, credit, stored value, discounts, coupons. Frequency: As they occur/near real-time	VMS ← MMS
KIOSK Kiosks deployed in the field. Includes model and configuration data. This data represents the kiosk asset list that is managed by the MMS vendor. The VMS can use this list to reconcile its list of kiosks related to the vendor. Frequency: As they occur	VMS ← MMS
PRODUCT CATALOG Product catalog for each market that is to be used to facilitate consumer self-checkout. Data includes: market, product, barcode, price, tax, bottle fees. Frequency: As they occur	VMS → MMS
MARKET Master data describing the market as defined in the VMS. May include client/account information and address of market. Frequency: As they occur	VMS → MMS

system to another, thereby enabling multiple applications to contribute to a comprehensive, networked solution. It is for this reason that there has been an emerging interest in developing technology standards that enable data sharing among disparate component parts. Creating a platform for such integration has been the work of the NAMA Vending Data Interchange (VDI) Task Force.

The goal of NAMA VDI standards is to ensure that a vending operator can confidently implement multiple, diverse vending technology solutions and utilize the operational data in existing application software (regardless of supplier).

NAMA VDI specifications are designed to be extensible, uniform and stable as well as manufacturer and device agnostic. In other words, NAMA VDI standards are open technology standards.

NAMA VDI S2S DEX relies on messaging standards to satisfy data

interchange needs and is not concerned with the entity transmitting or receiving such messages.

The NAMA VMS-MMS standard delineates each system's role in creating, maintaining and managing specific data sets. NAMA VDI ensures that operators can feel confident in technology investment, choice of suppliers and be assured that hardware and software will work together now and in the future. There has never been a better time to invest in VMS and/or MMS technology. | ◀



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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CASHLESS IS a global trend driven by consumers, banking and mobile operators. The convenience of cashless is being embraced by consumers as there are multiple payment options available, whether it be credit/debit cards, pre-paid cards, loyalty cards, mobile applications, QR codes, SMS texts, etc. For travelers and tourists, it's especially enticing as there's no need to be concerned with multiple currencies. Businesses embrace cashless transactions as it's much easier for their day-to-day operations, as well as being more secure. For vending operators, the cashless trend allows additional revenue opportunities and ensures that they never need miss a sale.

Nayax addresses this trend as a leading cashless, telemetry, management & BI solutions provider for the vending machine industry. Established in 2005, Nayax has over 100,000 devices installed worldwide, operating in more than 45 countries.

Nayax offers a comprehensive array of cashless payment solutions including debit and credit cards, mobile telephones, SMS, prepaid cards and NFC payment options. Point-of-sale options include swipe, contact or contactless card payment methods. As a complete package accepting virtually all forms of payment, Nayax cashless solutions eliminate sales barriers while encouraging impulse purchases due to convenience and ease of use.

Operators incorporating Nayax's cashless expertise receive a complete package with no need to deal with banks, credit fees, telecom payments and more. With Nayax there are no surprises at the end of the month. Nayax works with leading global payment processors in order to provide the best cashless services at a highly competitive rates.

Nayax is an EMV compatible solution provider and PCI-DSS level 1 and 2 Service Provider, with the

highest level of security standards certification which is reviewed annually to ensure strict compliance. Nayax hardware is FCC approved and is certified by ISO – 9001 2008. Nayax offers local support and ensures that all our customers receive a very high level of service in their local territory.

The platform includes proprietary hardware and software, SIM cards or modems and credit card clearing – ready to run now with virtually all vending machines, designed in house to fit the needs of the industry. The Nayax management & BI suite allows for online machine management, real time status reports and customized SMS /E-mail alerts for different machine events such as vendouts, low/high temperature and more. The Nayax BI system allows for customizable smart analysis, reports and statistics.

Operators can interface with a Vending Management System (VMS) of their choice. Additionally, Nayax's advanced analytical tools provide actionable insights including the ability to forecast inventory issues based on historical data and compare products and costs while seeing growth in sales by location.

Nayax recognizes the importance of consumer engagement, especially for a business that relies on unattended devices for income. As such, we are continually developing additional innovations to create loyalty between consumers and machine operators. The Monyx wallet app, powered by Nayax, enables operators to strengthen customer relationships by skin customization, easily set-up payments via loyalty cards, as well as other methods of payment. ■

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From Entrepreneur *To* Vending Veteran

By Adrienne Zimmer, Managing Editor

Through investment in its people, innovation in technology and commitment to its customers, Camelback Vending has emerged as a leader in the Arizona market.

When Arizona duo Mike and Jodi Glimpse started their Phoenix-based vending business back in 2005, Jodi remembers other vending operators asking her *why* — *why vending?* “We were bright-eyed, new to the industry and full of energy to get our business off the ground and running,” said Jodi.

The pair had come into vending from a sales background, but had jumped head-first into the industry, placing soda and snack machines, taking on ice cream vending routes and diving into school locations that more experienced vending operators turned down. They said ‘yes’ a lot and ran their organization under the motto ‘Stay Hungry, Stay Foolish.’

But like many entrepreneurs, the couple experienced periods of triumph and difficulty in the early years. When the Great Recession hit three years into business, Camelback lost customers and on top of that it was already facing the challenges of a new business, with heavy debt and too much payroll for the business it had at the time.

The company chose to look at its strengths, however, rather than rumi-

nate on the negatives. The Glimpses focused on continuous innovation, made strategic investments in their employees, and concentrated on growing smarter. Today, the company operates in the black and has gone

from a start-up vending operation to a leader in the Arizona market.

And what about the motto the company lived by early on? Just like Camelback, the motto changed, too. “Rather than live by ‘Stay Hungry,

“Now we feel like a success story.”

Jodi Glimpse, President, Camelback Vending



The Glimpses credit their staff with much of the organization's success.

Stay Foolish,’ we are focused on ‘Stay Hungry, Stay Smart,” said Jodi. “We think about how we want to grow as a company and we are more strategic with our decisions. Now, we *feel* like a success story.”

Intangible investments

Some investments in vending are concrete. Others, however, are less palpable. In 2013, the Glimpses looked closely at the overall company and noticed that there were places where improvement could be made. “We were trying to do too much with too little,” Jodi said. Rather than let customer service or the company suffer, they decided to create a new full time position to help the company progress the way the Glimpses wanted. “We saw this as an investment in life and in service,” she said. Although it took several months to find the right can-



Operations Manager Jeff Cox is credited with bringing a fresh approach to detail.

didate for the position, Jodi brought on Jeff Cox as operations manager for Camelback Vending in 2013.

“It was an investment that changed everything,” she continued. Cox brought in a fresh approach to detail and put in processes to make

the company more efficient. Every route driver is audited each month to make sure his or her route is being run as effectively as possible. To ensure that no detail is missed, Cox tries to travel on a route with drivers monthly, which emphasizes account-

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a rapidly growing self-checkout technology company with offices in Metro Detroit, Santa Clara and Provo, offers the best-in-class point-of-sale platform for use in the workplace. Its proprietary, 365 MicroMarket is a turnkey, unmanned market that allows

customers to increase sales, improve the user experience and increase profits while decreasing operating costs.

In addition to MicroMarkets, 365 is innovating the vending space with Air-Vend, a peripheral device that attaches to vending machines. This accessory accepts cashless payments, as well as displays nutritional values and advertisements right at the point of sale.

365's MicroMarket software enables customers to implement sales incentives using layered promotions, protect their markets from theft with the cancel report feature, and manage their inventories. To supplement their technology, 365's world-class support team is comprised of highly trained, expert technicians that

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ensure 99.99% uptime and a live agent to speak with on the first call.

The 365 team takes a leading role in innovating industry solutions, including participating in advocacy initiatives with the U.S. Congress and working with NAMA to create the VDI standards.

Including two NAMA Innovation awards, 365 has received various accolades for their innovation and growth. They were also recently named to the Inc. 5000 list of Fastest Growing Private Companies in the U.S.

365 Retail Markets has been pioneering innovation in the food service, hospitality, and vending industries since 2008, and continues to revolutionize the market with superior technology and ultimate flexibility in customization and branding. ■

www.365retailmarkets.com



Route driver longevity

When it comes to hiring route drivers, Camelback looks for candidates who can show they have dedication. If the candidate has had multiple jobs in the last twelve months, they probably won't be a good fit, says Jodi. All field staff are always in uniform and carry Arizona Department of Public Safety-issued fingerprint cards when they service accounts. "We want to find people that are a good match for the culture we have created."

It takes a lot to invest in a new employee; therefore, Camelback works hard to make sure they put the right person in the right position. "We tried fitting a square peg in a round hole in the past and it ended up not working out. We know it takes a lot of time to find the right person and even more commitment to invest and develop them." That's also, Jodi believes, why they have such success with route driver longevity.

ability as well, says Jodi. "It makes Camelback's service better, too," she noted. Each quarter, Cox additionally travels to each client to meet with them face to face to maintain a personal relationship. The investment

has allowed Jodi to focus on growing the business from a managerial perspective, which has been a larger benefit than anticipated.

The investment in employees isn't a new concept to Camelback Vend-

ing, though. In fact, Jodi emphasizes that Camelback Vending employees are the biggest asset the company has and the thing that sets them apart from the competition. "We are nothing without the people that are on the road every day," she said. "I've been in the position where you wake up and say, 'It's all-good except...'" and today I know with 100 percent certainty that I don't have those employee concerns. I don't worry over employees because I have a fantastic group of route drivers and staff." Camelback prides itself on having long-term route drivers, ranging from 1 to 11 years with the company.

Online improvements

In the company's focus to improve its bottom-line through an investment in its employees, Camelback also



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looked at its online presence and in 2012 decided to rebrand. “We developed a web presence and hired out a company to handle our SEO (search engine optimization). We also created a mobile-friendly website,” said Jodi.

The company has put a lot of energy and effort into keeping the website fresh and up to date. In addition, they have tried to utilize social media as much as time allows. “It was great to hand over our web presence to capable hands. It’s cheaper than adding an additional staff person and it gives us the opportunity to focus on growing our business,” Jodi noted.

Growth in B&I accounts

In the beginning, Jodi admits that the company used to jump on any account, but today, they have learned to say ‘no’ to locations that don’t fit their long term goals. “We



Two years ago Camelback Vending transitioned into a full service warehouse.

look at whether or not it’s the right kind of account for us and we do turn locations down.” In fact, two years ago the company restructured its routes and pulled 100 assets out of the field. The result is that it now has seven routes that aren’t just strong, but *thriving*.



Aaron Siqueiros works on a Hello Goodness machine installing Cantaloupe Systems.

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Thieman Tailgates, A History

More than 40 years of quality products

THE START of the THIEMAN liftgate line originated in the early 1960’s. At that time, it was known as Watson which had a product line consisting mainly of conventional style liftgates. In June of 1968, Todco purchased Watson and immediately began to broaden its liftgate line. In the early

1980’s Todco had chosen to sub-contract many of its liftgate components to a company called THIEMAN STAMPING. In August of 1987, THIEMAN acquired the liftgate line which today is known as THIEMAN TAILGATES, INC.

Today, THIEMAN TAILGATES produces its entire line of liftgates in Celina, Ohio. The manufacturing plant has expanded twice within the last 20 years. THIEMAN TAILGATES also has warehousing facilities in nine (9) different locations throughout the United States. THIEMAN TAILGATES are sold through a distributor network of over 650 dealers throughout the world.

THIEMAN TAILGATES has been recognized for producing a top quality



An aerial view of the THIEMAN plant

liftgate for the truck equipment market. THIEMAN has one of the most complete liftgate lines in the industry. Railgates, Stowaways, Sideloaders, Conventionals, and Pickup models ranging from 1000 lbs. to 6600 lbs. make up the THIEMAN product line. One important factor that continues to make THIEMAN a successful company is its ability to produce customized liftgates in a timely fashion. Equally important, THIEMAN is proud of its reputation for the very best customer service – a reputation that continues to make THIEMAN TAILGATES #1 in the liftgate industry.



Although Camelback Vending originally grew as a result of ice cream vending and school vending accounts, Jodi says that today the company is focused and succeeding on growing its B&I accounts. “We wanted to develop a year-round strategy with a move towards B&I accounts and from that we’ve improved the business.” Camelback’s B&I business has doubled in the past 24 months.

Still, school vending makes up a portion of Camelback Vending locations, so when the USDA Smart Snacks in Schools rule went into effect in 2014, it hurt the business initially. The first year they had a 30 percent drop in sales in all schools. “There’s no other way to describe it other than it was a shock,” said Jodi. “We were selling candy bars and pastries and then we weren’t.”

Operation Profile: Camelback Vending

Location: Phoenix, AZ

No. of Employees: 15

No. of Routes: 7

Technology provider: Cantaloupe Systems

The good news for Camelback was that sales started to turn around at the end of the first year and began to rebound the second year. “It will take a full four years for sales to rebound completely because the “junk food kids” will graduate and the younger kids coming up will be used to healthier options in vending,” said Jodi, who is amazed at the best-sellers in

schools. “I never thought I would see water as the top-seller in a vending machine, let alone a school vending machine, but it is now!” Water takes up about 50 percent of the drink machines in typical schools, says Jodi. “It’s usually the first thing to sell out.” The no. 1 selling snack item in school vending is CHEETOS® OvenBaked FLAMIN’ HOT® by Frito-Lay.

Innovation in new equipment

The Glimpses knew early on that they wanted to invest in the best equipment and technology for their business and their customers. For the last 12 years they have been dedicated customers of Cantaloupe Systems’ SEED technology that provides them with real-time, in-depth information about each vending machine in the field. When they first began using the system, Camelback was able to



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reduce truck and salary costs by 37 percent. “It is so easy to track cash and inventory and create sales reports,” said Jodi. “And it alerts us when machines are having issues, which gives us the ability to respond quickly and shows the customer that we are prompt and that we care.”

Camelback Vending also began investing in cashless 5 years ago. Today, between 40 and 50 percent of its machines have cashless capabilities. “I wouldn’t dream of putting a new machine out without cashless,” said Jodi. On a day-to-day basis, 20 percent of sales are cashless. The company will continue to rollout cashless as they place new machines.

And Camelback only purchases new vending machines. “They have fewer maintenance issues and it allows us to give our customers the best vending option possible,” said Jodi. Camelback pays cash for all of its machines, a fact that makes her proud. “It’s part of our business strategy to grow smart, because at the end of the day, we owe no one and that gives us the freedom to grow where we want and how we want.” And she wants to keep the company in the black. “I would rather be the size that we are and have no debt than to be larger and have debt,” she said. “We are in a really good place.”

Over the next few months, she is looking forward to rolling out PepsiCo’s new Hello Goodness machines. “We are really excited about the opportunity to place these new machines and the variety that they can bring.”

New opportunities

There’s a lot about the industry that has those working at Camelback excited for the future. In particular, Jodi points to micro markets. “There is an energy in the industry today that wasn’t there a few years ago,” she said. “I think micro markets



Jodi and Mike Glimpse, pictured with their three children, believe in a balance between work and family.

Striving for work/life balance

Having an operations manager and such a strong staff has greatly improved the quality of life for the Glimpses. As parents of three children, Mike and Jodi strive to find a good work/life balance. “Whether that’s my husband coaching our son’s youth football team or supporting our daughter in club and high school basketball — we never missed a game all season last year — a work/life balance is important to us,” said Jodi.

have brought a fresh perspective and have given people a new mentality.”

She also doesn’t want to downplay the rise in the health and nutrition trend. “Watching consumer trends is massively important to us,” she said. “Health and nutrition trends are where the industry is going because it’s what consumers are eating.”

Camelback is open to offering healthy options in vending machines if the location requests them. Sometimes locations will request healthy items so Camelback suggests they start with a few and see how they sell. “If we see it’s a trend, then we will add more items.”

When they look at the industry as a whole, Camelback Vending is

optimistic about continuing to build their business, but Jodi emphasizes that she couldn’t do it without her staff. “We are fortunate to have a great group of employees,” she said. “I’m excited about watching them develop and being able to grow the opportunities for them to do so.”

Looking back to 2005 when Camelback Vending began, Jodi notes that the company made mistakes but has come a long way by putting its energy into its people, technology, innovation and its commitment to its customers. “We focused on doing things the right way and in doing so we learned that challenges will either crush you or help you blossom. They did the latter for us,” said Glimpse. ◀

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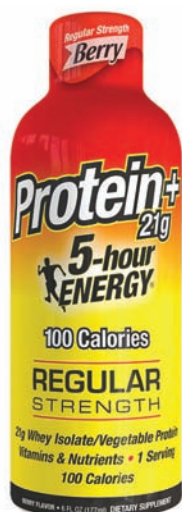
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PRODUCT ROUNDUP



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LIVING ESSENTIALS

Living Essentials, LLC introduces the new 5-hour ENERGY® Protein shot. Each shot has 21 grams of protein and other ingredients to help you feel energized. Available in four flavors — Berry, Peach Mango, Grape Extra Strength, and Berry Extra Strength, each six-ounce bottle contains 100 calories and less than one gram of sugar.

VendingMarketWatch.com/12223391



Pierre Signatures Barbecue Pork Rib

ADVANCEPIERRE FOODS

AdvancePierre™ Foods (APF) has extended its premium Pierre Signatures line with the Barbecue Pork Rib restaurant-style sandwich. The sandwiches start with AdvancePierre's acclaimed microwavable hearth-baked roll for bakery-fresh flavor and are hand-wrapped in a clear package, conveying a fresh, upscale look and appeal. They have a 14-day refrigerated shelf life and are packed 12 to a case.

VendingMarketWatch.com/12223383

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Real fruit and spiced nuts joined with silky smooth DOVE® Chocolate to create an explosion of flavors and textures. Debuting in three tantalizing flavor combinations — Strawberry & Cocoa Almond, Blueberry & Vanilla Cashew and Raspberry & Honey Roasted Almond — new DOVE® Chocolate Fruit & Nut provides consumers with a satisfying, delicious snack option.

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VendingMarketWatch.com/12217634

MUSCLE MILK® Brand Coffee House Protein Shakes

CYTOSPORT, INC.

CytoSport, Inc. launched its new MUSCLE MILK® Coffee House ready to drink product line, combining high quality protein and caffeine into three delicious coffee-inspired flavors: Vanilla Latte, Cafe Latte and Mocha Latte. The shakes are available in 11 oz Tetra four-packs and contain 20 grams of high quality protein, 120 mg of caffeine and are gluten and sugar free. With enough caffeine equal to a cup of coffee, they are a portable solution to get a boost of energy and daily protein.

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PRODUCT ROUNDUP



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KRAFT HEINZ

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VendingMarketWatch.com/12223428

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KRAFT HEINZ

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