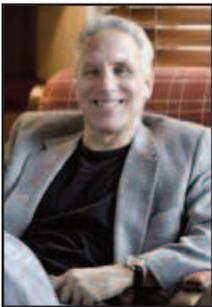


Representing The Wiping Materials, Recycled Clothing, New Textile By Products and Fiber Industries

President's Column



“IT JUST TAKES ONE”

By SMART President Bill Schapiro

The other day, as I was thinking about the next SMART Regional Meeting, I daydreamed that three prospective SMART members approached me at the reception and inquired about membership.

There was a wiper dealer (**WD**); a grader (**G**); and a new by-products dealer (**NBD**).

WD: *This is really a nice dinner reception and all, but \$1650 seems like a lot of money to become a member. What's in it for me?*

ME: First of all, \$1650 to be a member of an association that represents your business as successfully as SMART does is below market for most associations. In return you get SMARTTALK, SMARTLINE, SORT, the Directory and SMARTTRADER among other benefits. Besides... “it just takes one.”

G: *What are these features all about and what does “it just takes one” mean?*

ME: SMARTTRADER and SMARTLINE are our exclusive online trading and information networks that reach approximately 200 companies throughout the world doing the same thing you are doing. And SORT membership, Mr. Grader, makes becoming a SMART member a no-brainer for you. SORT is SMART'S shippers' association that can give you an immediate return on your SMART investment due to its advantageous rates for our U.S. members who export.

NBD: *Ok, we have the internet stuff and SORT...that sounds interesting. I'm not quite convinced. I'd sure like to know more about that “it just takes one” idea you mentioned.*

ME: I'll get to that in a minute. One other really important feature of SMART is that we have our own Government Relations Director – Jessica Franken. There she is over there (I say while waving

to Jessica). She leads a program that represents our members to the media and government officials. We currently have to battle the EPA for equal treatment with the laundries with regard to wiper treatment and disposal. Then there's the publicizing of SMART'S official policy against bans of secondhand clothing wherever they exist around the world. Jessica also helps advance our position in our dispute with U.S. Customs over the definition of “worn clothing.”

We are also fortunate to have as our Executive Director, Peter Mayberry who has more than 20 years of experience leading associations and is government relations director for INDA, another textile association with issues similar to ours. There's Peter over there in spirited debate with Aquil Khandala and Larry Groipen. I wonder what they are talking about? However, again I have to emphasize “it just takes one.”

WD: *This all sounds very interesting. Maybe the question isn't “should I be a member of smart?” but rather “can I afford NOT to be a member?”*

ME: Now you are getting my point. Let me explain what I mean by “it just takes one.” From my participation over the years in SMART'S meetings, conventions and online programs, I have met some wonderful new business partners with whom to trade. Meeting just one new customer or supplier through my membership has meant untold volumes of business and profits for my company, not to mention some lifelong friendships as well. All it takes is one contact and you have made your investment back many times over.

WIPER DEALER, GRADER, and NEW BY PRODUCTS DEALER in unison: *...I think you've convinced us. Where do we sign up?*

ME: Don't waste any time. There is SMART'S dedicated associate Mary Ann Schilling over there by the reception table. She would welcome your applications. Now, if you will excuse me, there are more than 100 people here tonight and I want to go and socialize, because as I have been saying... “it just takes one!”