



DESIGNING STRATEGIES®

Business Strategies for the Design Industry

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MCG needs your help! Over the past several years, Maurer Consulting Group has developed a number of programs focused on the business of interior design. These have been presented at local and national venues, some sponsored or hosted by you to draw designers to your showrooms, or just to acquaint them with you and your company. This year we've been working on a section of our own strategic plan calling for developing programs aimed at you, the industry that supports interior designers.

Programs added to our curriculum this year were: *'The Changing Marketplace: Communicating with and Selling to the Generations'*, *'Recruiting and Managing an Age-Diverse Workforce'*, and *'Target Market: Interior Design Practitioners'*. These programs have been well received, but we want to add more programs of value to you, the broader interior design community.

I've asked industry members where they find business education programs for themselves; to help them grow and improve their business skills. I usually get a blank stare as they try to recall the last time they found a program focused on their needs. MDG wants to change that situation. So, tell us what programs would be valuable for you and your staff.

Send ideas for topics you need and we will develop them into seminars. Additionally, tell us where you would like these programs offered: your facility, local design events, national shows, etc. We'll do our best to find our way into those venues convenient for you and your staff to attend. Send ideas to: tmaurer@maurerconsultinggroup.com

Maurer On The Move

September 24th

Target Market: Interior Design Practitioners
NJASID Design Summit – Lambertville, NJ

September 25th

The Changing Marketplace: Communicating and Selling to the Generations
NJASID Design Summit – Lambertville, NJ

October 18th

Designing for the Generations
Baltimore-Washington NKBA
Pook Hill Marriott Hotel – Bethesda, MD

If you have questions about an event or topic, contact Terri at: tmaurer@maurerconsultinggroup.com

Something To Think About...

"Innovation is the specific instrument of entrepreneurship...the act that endows resources with a new capacity to create wealth."

Peter Drucker (1909-2005)
Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 1985

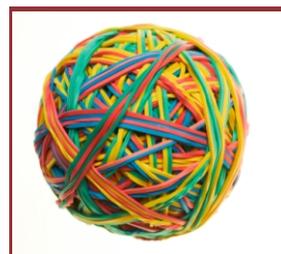
Just when you think you know everything there is to know about rubber bands! I recently returned from speaking at the S.P. Richards' Advanced Business Conference in Nashville. Attendees were owners of smaller office product and furniture dealerships. What an event! Energy levels were high and excitement abounded the entire four days. I walked the exhibit floor to learn about the audience I would be addressing. There were not only office furnishings on display, but every type of pen, paper, pencil, art supply, adhesive, paper clip and rubber band imaginable.



As I walked the aisles, my eye was caught by a booth for the Alliance Rubber Company. As there is an Alliance, Ohio not far from my home, and I routinely visit any Ohio company's booth, I stopped by to say 'Hi!' As the crowd at their booth parted, I was totally surprised by the variety of brightly colored rubber bands on display, and the range of sizes and shapes that product took on.

Visualize

After introducing myself and opening myself up to "The Sales Pitch" from a wonderfully enthusiastic company representative, I learned the company had, in fact, begun in Alliance, Ohio but is now located in Arkansas. Further, I learned the most fascinating things about their product line. I always assumed that 'a rubber band is a rubber band', they come in two or three sizes and they are tan. Boy was I wrong!



Did you know there are anti-microbial rubber bands? Perfect for hospitals, doctor's offices and anywhere people want to stop germ spread. How about latex-free rubber bands for people allergic to latex? They've even developed a line of rubber bands color coded by size and width. When you reach into your drawer for a certain sized rubber band; you are saved having to sort through a tangled pile of tan rubber bands to find just the right one. They have rubber bands large enough to use around pallets loaded for shipping, and customized rubber wrist bands for special events. Not to be stopped at colors and sizes, they make a heavy-duty band from material used for automobile tires. Who would have imagined there are so many innovative ways to make such a basic, but necessary item? Or, how many different ways a simple product like rubber bands can be used?

Analyze

How about your product line? What hot new innovations have you been thinking about, or working on? It's pretty plain to see that innovations don't have to require high levels of technology. Is there some unique new material you might use for your product that will enable you to move into new market segments? Can you 'color code' or otherwise categorize your product to add convenience and save time for end users? At your next brainstorming or planning session, don't just think about big, costly, complex ways to expand your product line or improve your products or services. Give some time and thought to what minor changes might provide you entry into lucrative new markets, or new ways to use your products.

Strategize



Terri participated in this year's NeoCon where she presented two of her most popular programs, *"Managing An Age Diverse Workforce"* and *"The Changing Marketplace: Selling To The Generations,"* to standing room only crowds.

If you're interested in bringing one or both of these programs to your region or company, please contact Maurer Consulting Group at 330.666.0802 or tmaurer@maurerconsultinggroup.com.

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