

Cornerstones Drive Us Forward



So here it is. Time to make our way to our offices and begin scrambling around to try to keep our businesses on track and far away from the headlines that so many others are making. Not only have we tried to step lightly with our finances this past year, but we tended to cut out some of the really good things that our industry has to offer. That hurts everyone in the long run.

I myself have watched as I make the choice to sacrifice one element of my business for another. It is the nature of the game. Travel, advertising/marketing and further education/certification budgets seem to suffer the fastest and greatest in hard times—items that act as cornerstones to our continuing advancements. On page 30, you will find, “If Times are Good ... Promote, If Times are Bad ... Promote Harder,” which addresses the issues of marketing and advertising.

As we plan our budgets and look at what really is going to help our businesses, let's not forget these things. Let us not forget that John Smith had a water problem and did not know what to do until he received a flier or postcard directing him to your business for the solution. Let us not forget the phone call requiring answers regarding contaminants in the area, new and affordable technologies and maximum contaminant levels that your staff was educated enough to answer instead of having to redirect them to your competition. Let us not forget the new product you found at that last trade show that your competition missed and, therefore, could not offer to *your* new customer.

It seems that the water treatment industry has not suffered as badly as so many others such as the travel industry, retail business and, of course, information technology. We have met with some bumps and bruises, but all in all, there is great hope for 2003 and beyond.

As I do each January, I asked industry professionals to tell us their thoughts on the future of the water treatment industry. What can we expect? What changes will we see? What should we watch and follow carefully? Beginning on page 12, take a look at what experts are saying from the point-of-use/point-of-entry market to bottled water.

I hope that as we begin this new year, each of us looks at it with eyes wide open and with fresh new ideas and innovation. Now is not the time to hold back. Now is the time to tell our customers that we are still here and offering the best products they will ever invest in for their families.

Best Wishes to Each of You in the New Year,

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