



December 23, 2009

Upcoming Ohio Valley NARI Events

January 14, 2010: Ohio Valley NARI will be promoting its first Membership Open House of the year hosted by Building Value. Building Value's new location is 4040 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati. There is no cost for this event and the topic of the program will be Green Building. The program will begin at 6:00 p.m. and will wrap up no later than 9:00 p.m. Please visit www.naricincinnati.org or call 1.800.498.NARI and register today!

Special Seminar: February 10, 2010 - 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m: Ohio Valley NARI along with Roth & Associates will be presenting a Sandler Sales Training Program. Highlights: Why salespeople fail... and what to do about it. • How traditional sales practices turn salespeople into unpaid consultants. • How to get to the real decision maker. • How to touch 100% of your desirable opportunities, 100% of the time. • Why everyone looks busy, but sales remain low. • Do your salespeople have what it takes to succeed in today's volatile economy and marketplace? • Is your sales management strategy and structure optimized to produce the results YOU need to succeed? For more information or to register visit www.naricincinnati.org

Ramp-A-Thon Ramps up the Holiday Cheer

By Morgan Zenner

Sean Lintow Sr., owner of SLS Construction, frequents social media sites such as LinkedIn and ContractorTalk.com often so it's no surprise that he stumbled upon a little known charity on ContractorTalk.com and decided to put his talent to work.

"A colleague of mine started a charity known as the Ramp-A-Thon Challenge, which challenges all contractors to get out and build ramps for people in need," Lintow says.

According to Lintow, the original Ramp-A-Thon project was conceived to provide ramps for low-income, disabled individuals in Washington in 1993, and recently spread nationwide thanks to a discussion on ContractorTalk.com. The mention on the Web site increased awareness of the charity, and as a result, remodelers from all across the country were looking to get involved.

"I wasn't looking for a charity at the time because I do other charity work, but it sounded interesting," Lintow says. "I contacted the United Way with the information on the program and asked them to forward any matching requests." It took the United Way nearly eight months to find Lintow the deserving recipient. The Ramp-A-Thon is a nationwide charity but often uses larger charities like the United Way to find and process recipients.

David Gentry, of Vinemont, is a quadriplegic who must eat through a tube and be in an electrical wheelchair for the rest of his life. He is in his early 30s and lives with his mother and father who care for him on a daily basis. Gentry's home had a ramp leading up to the front door, but it wasn't ideal.

"The old ramp was so steep that his feet would scrape the pavement every time he hit the point where the ramp met pavement," Lintow says.

So Lintow gathered old materials he had left over from other projects and headed for Gentry's home. "It took me two days and a total of 12 hours to complete. The first day was spent designing and measuring the new ramp, and the second day was taking down the old ramp and building the new ramp," Lintow says.

"We took a severely deteriorated ramp that was at a 1" to 6" pitch and turned it into a new ramp that was extended out over a foot to decrease the slope and eliminate a ponding issue," Lintow said. The new ramp was at a 1" to 10" pitch.

The small project easily fit into Lintow's weekend schedule and didn't require an extra pair of hands or a donation of materials.

"The non-profit is smaller so it wasn't as big of a project, but it still felt good to spend my time helping someone," Lintow says.

After the ramp was built Lintow wrote about his experience on his company blog, tweeted about it on Twitter and added it to his newsletter.

"I wasn't really looking or expecting to get media coverage, I was more concerned about keeping Ramp-A-Thon alive and maybe even grow it a little bit for next year," he says. Of course if the media was interested, Lintow would be happy to talk.

Lintow plans to participate in Ramp-A-Thon next year and hopes to get involved with an even bigger project. "I would like to partner up with local suppliers and volunteers and do a bigger project," Lintow says.

But for such a small town, Lintow wonders if he will ever get a big project. Lintow is hoping to spread the word as much as he can to reach out to a family that would benefit from one of his ramps.

New OSHA Data Names Employers

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration has begun publishing online employer-specific, incident-by-incident reports involving deaths or catastrophes.

The goal is to improve accountability and transparency about worker accidents, by making far more information public as incidents occur. Previously, only the Mine Safety and Health Administration posted specific worker fatality data on its Web site.

The OSHA reports, released weekly, are now available at

https://www.osha.gov/dep/fatcat/dep_fatcat.html.

The table provides links to weekly summaries of fatalities and catastrophes resulting in the hospitalization of three or more workers. (Individual incidents with employer names are available under "Incident Summaries.") Employers must report these incidents to OSHA within eight hours.

The summaries include only preliminary information, as reported to OSHA area offices or to states that operate OSHA-approved state plans.

However, OSHA investigates all work-related fatalities and catastrophes. Once an OSHA investigation is complete, OSHA will link the data on the report page to the inspection case file, also on the OSHA public website.

"Employers with reported fatalities will have an incentive to take steps to improve safety and prevent future accidents. In addition, responsible employers will be able to use the database to identify dangerous conditions and take precautions," OSHA said in a statement.

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The OSHA initiative is part of a new broad array of efforts by the U.S. Labor Department to improve the public's accessibility to its agencies and ensure the department can function more effectively.

Other Labor Department agencies are making additional information available to the public. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is contributing a vast array of new information to <http://www.data.gov>.

Meanwhile, the Employment and Training Administration has launched a Web-based competition at <http://www.dol.gov/challenge>. It enlists entrepreneurs and technology firms, workforce professionals and the public to help identify the best online tools to enable job seekers to quickly and easily connect with jobs.

A New Bathroom Concept, Ready for Prime Time

By: Leah Thayer

Matt Plaskoff has invested 10 years and \$4 million into One Week Bath, and after nearly 1,000 fast-turnaround bathroom remodels in Los Angeles since 2004, he's ready to roll it out across the country. One Week Bath Kansas City, a joint partnership with Jake Schloegel of Schloegel Design Remodel, will have its grand opening and the concept's national debut on November 1.

One Week Bath [your city here] is an extension of a business model that Plaskoff and his team have tweaked, perfected, and primed for its national roll-out. It's not a franchise operation; he clarifies, but a business partnership that leverages the model's operational

strengths and buying power, and his business partners' local reputation and sales and installation skills.

Market Synergy

Remodelers might recognize Plaskoff as founder and owner of Plaskoff Construction, a 21-year-old high-end Los Angeles remodeling company that is well respected within the industry (he won REMODELING's Big50 award in 1998) as well as by national TV audiences (the company has made several appearances on ABC's Extreme Home Makeover: Home Edition). Plaskoff Construction is alive and well, but business has slowed since its \$10-million-a-year peak, and "we're being more selective about the projects we take," he says.

One Week Bath focuses on a very different market than his full-service company – middle-market bathrooms, and nothing but bathrooms. Plaskoff hatched the concept in 1999 and began operating it in 2004, with the help of investors including Schloegel. In the time since, One Week Bath has been systematized into an operational machine set up to train (in sales, packaging, production, more) and certify partner companies, as well as leverage bulk-buying capabilities to save on products from sinks to marketing.

"What I'm trying to do nationally is bring three things to the table for a local remodeler," Plaskoff says:

- 1) Experience. After five years and nearly 1,000 bathrooms, "we have kind of a knowledge database, so the remodeler doesn't have to make the same mistakes we spent \$4 million to figure out," he says.
- 2) The One Week Bath name. "It's a good hook, with credibility. You become a national brand," even while preserving your existing brand, if you like, he says. Among other things, the projects have time and price guarantees.
- 3) Centralized marketing, operations, and buying power. The call center, administrative, purchasing, and other centers are at One Week Bath's headquarters. Partner companies are essentially "sales, local warehousing, and production units," Plaskoff says.

How much does it cost? The initial commitment is in the low-six figures, Plaskoff says, adding that there might be financing opportunities under certain circumstances, for small companies lacking the capital.

How big could it get? "I don't want to put a limit on it," Plaskoff says, adding that he will be very selective to maintain the brand's reputation and quality.

Which leads us to Kansas City and Jake Schloegel (Big50 2001), whose very high-end design/build firm has cultivated a different clientele for 29 years than the One Week Bath brand is likely to serve?

Why One Week Bath, after all these years?

"I know Matt Plaskoff, and if there is anyone that can successfully launch an idea like this, it is Matt," Schloegel says. Calling One Week Bath unique "in the way it is sold and produced," he expects One Week Bath to comprise at least 33% of his company's overall business.

Ohio Valley NARI
136 South Keowee Street
Dayton, Ohio 45402
800.498.NARI
Fax 937.222.5794
www.naricincinnati.org
info@naricincinnati.org

