



Advisory Link Fall 2006 Newsletter

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Advisory Link Reorganization

Advisory Link has some very exciting news. As of August 31, we reorganized the company structure. Taunee Besson, co-founding partner, has decided to return to her primary business, Career Dimensions. She will continue consulting with individual clients to help them with their career paths and development in addition to a number of other job-related projects. I will miss Taunee as part of the Advisory Link team but respect her decision. In the future, we plan to work collaboratively on projects. The new structure allows both of us to pursue our interests in different ways. Advisory Link will continue to work with corporations to help them better market to, recruit, retain and promote women consumers and employees. Additionally, we will keep facilitating our Exec-U-Links, which I'll discuss in more detail in the newsletter. Following a strong fourth quarter, we know that 2007 is going to be a banner year for Advisory Link.



San Antonio Becomes 14th Women's Advisory Board for MassMutual Financial Group

Frank Woodruff, an award-winning General Agent (GA) in the San Antonio-based South Texas Agency, which manages more than a billion dollars of assets, began his career as an educational administrator at Loyola University in Chicago. Frank took over the leadership of the agency in 1998 after being an assistant GA and GA respectively for MassMutual Financial Group affiliated agencies in Dallas and Fort Worth. Being progressive in his thinking, he saw the benefits and results of the WABs, and wanted to be a part of the program.

His new chair, Kim Bowers, an extraordinary woman, is Senior Vice President and General Counsel for Valero Energy, a San Antonio based Fortune 100 corporation. In addition to her impressive corporate responsibilities and outstanding academic background, including a BA in Spanish and International studies, a MA in International Relations and a JD from the University of Texas, School of Law, she is very active in her community. Kim is chair of the Board of the Family Service Association, one of San Antonio's oldest and largest non-profit organizations, and she chairs a United Way Council focused on training children for success.

Exec-U-Links Are Thriving in 2006

The **Women Executive Business Owner Exec-U-Link** is an exceptional group of women business owners and high-level corporate executives who meet three times a year to share expertise, experiences, advice and best practices in a confidential setting. Their agenda topics are varied from growing revenues and profits to having a life. They discuss recruiting and retention issues, marketing solutions, the joys and pains of expansion, cash flow, succession planning, as well as exchanging contacts and vendors information. Their last 2006 meeting is October 5-6.



The **Women's Automotive Dealers Exec-U-Link** was started in 2001 and continued through 2005. Last year we took a hiatus but have reconvened with some new members. Our first two meetings of 2006 were held May 16 - 17 and August 15-16 and they were an overwhelming success. We look forward to our last meeting of the year October 10-11. The collaborative meetings are packed full of good ideas, challenges women dealers face, success stories, best practices, specific marketing strategies and policies and procedures in their respective organizations. The Women's Automotive Dealers Exec-U-Link is the only venue of its kind. It provides unique experiences for women in the industry who own and manage the day-to-day operations of the business. Since they have been in the group, dealers have seen their businesses expand into additional dealerships and franchise brands. They have also been able to avoid costly mistakes by having a place to reflect on issues with other savvy women in a confidential, highly productive environment.



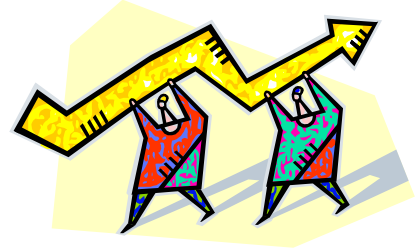
Maureen Sullivan Martin, a 20-plus year veteran in the automotive industry has joined the Advisory Link team as an independent contractor to help introduce successful women dealers to the Exec-U-Link concept and to assist with the facilitation of meetings. In 1997, after a successful career with Ford Motor Company, Martin founded AutoVisionary! Inc., a company that focuses on professional training and consulting services, seminars, keynote speaking and executive coaching—primarily within the automotive industry for retail dealerships, manufacturers and suppliers. Additionally, Martin is Director of Alliance and Dealer Development for MPi, a premier supplier of proprietary diagnostic, repair information and service merchandizing solutions to the automotive industry, and the mother of four-year-old triplets.

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For more information on Women's Automotive Dealers upcoming meeting, click on <http://www.advisorylink-dfw.com/womenautodealers.html>.

Women Mean Profits for Businesses

Doing business with women just makes good business sense. That's why many industries are currently trying to figure out how to reach this diverse, influential, major consumer. Companies must realize in the pursuit of the women's market one size doesn't fit all. Women have varied interests, incomes and needs.



- Women make up 51% of the population but spend more than 80% of the money, including purchases of athletic shoes, home improvement products, new homes, furniture and medical and health care needs.
- American women's purchasing power makes her today's most valuable customer, especially considering they spend more money than the GNP of Japan and England combined. According to Tom Peters, *Economic Opportunity #1 – Women*.
- Sharing the marketing budget with the women's market will deliver more profit to your bottom line than spending the same budget on traditional marketing venues. If you market to 100 percent of the population, your return will be higher than if you market and sell to only 49 percent. If you are skeptical about how this will affect your loyal male purchasers, ask the NFL or NASCAR who is generating the biggest increase in revenue for them.
- Traditional male segments are saturated. Women's markets are virtually untapped. Additionally, women deliver a better return on your marketing dollar through higher customer acquisition and greater customer retention. Women are more loyal customers, provide more referrals and want to help businesses that respect them.
- Effectively targeting women generates higher customer satisfaction. Making your product pink isn't the solution. Finding out what women want and giving it to them increases the companies' bottom lines and the customers satisfaction scores for both women and men.
- By 2010, women are expected to control \$1 trillion, or 60% of the country's wealth, according to research conducted by Business Week and Gallup. Businesses should have a strong strategic marketing plan in place to capture these dollars before the competition does.
- Today, women earn more than half of all bachelor's degrees. It is projected that by 2011 women will outnumber men in undergraduate programs by 10.2 million to 7.4 million. Women also earn 57 percent of master's degrees and 42 percent of doctoral degrees according to Business and Professional Women's Foundation.

Keeping up with change is difficult, if not impossible. Technology has created a fast, sometimes scary pace, with new gadgets and tools adding new dimensions to our lives. Fifteen or 20 years ago, who would have predicted cell phones that double as cameras, TV screens and arcadia games? But more than technology has changed our world. Gen X and Gen Y have different work ethics and family outlooks. Our national landscape isn't as safe as it once was. Change is everywhere, including the marketplace. Women today are more powerful, wealthier, better educated and more demanding of goods and services than ever before. To be profitable in the 21st century you must adapt to change and use it to help your business grow rather than fighting or denying its existence.

What Have We Been Up To Lately?

I was honored to be a panelist discussing “Women on Boards—Why It Matters” at the Business and Professional Women’s National Conference in July. It was a privilege to share the podium with Lynn Flint Shaw, owner of Lynn Flint Shaw and Associates and a DART board member, and Dr. Constantine Konstans, Executive Director of the Institute for Excellence in Corporate Governance (IECG) at University of Texas at Dallas (UTD). Cary Broussard did an exceptional job as moderator.



Advisory Link is a co-sponsor for the IECG’s Compliance and Beyond, 4th Annual National Conference at UT Dallas. The all-day conference starts with a keynote by Myron Ullman, II, Chairman and CEO, J.C. Penney Company, Inc. Ullman is followed by a presentation by Melendy Lovett, Senior VP, Texas Instruments and President, Texas Instruments, Education & Production Division. For more information on the conference, go to <http://som.utdallas.edu/iecg>.

This is just the tip of the iceberg for Advisory Link. You won’t want to miss our Winter newsletter. We will talk about even more exciting things going on

Check Out Our Website



Go to www.AdvisoryLink-dfw.com and you will find I have been busy writing articles for www.MarketingProfs.com, and *Dealer Magazine* (also online at www.dealer-magazine.com)

The Bottom-Line Case for Marketing to Women (Part 1 and 2), which first appeared on MarketingProfs.com, was translated and printed in the Thailand publication *In Marketing* June 16-31. The article will also appear in the November/December issue of *Marketing Matters* in Australia. My latest piece, *Innovative Ways to Attract Female Customers*, has also been picked up by numerous organizations and publications.

While you are on our website, check out the *Marketing to Women* or *Employing Women* brief quizzes on the home page, as well as the *Facts about Women* section. Some things may surprise you.



KUDOS

In each newsletter I want to congratulate a few people for their outstanding achievements or special recognitions they have received. If you have been honored, published or have another item of interest, please let me know so I can share it with others.



Florine Mark, President and CEO of The WW (Weight Watchers) Group, Inc., and chair of the Detroit Women's Advisory Board, has been busy speaking to a variety of audiences. She spoke to more than 800 medical professionals at the "Action on Obesity Summit" in June at the Mayo Clinic in Minnesota; addressed 350 small to midsize business owners on tips on how to run a successful family owned/operated company; and spoke at the International Lion of Judah Conference in Washington D.C. More than 1400 women attended the Washington meeting at which time Mark discussed ways businesswomen can handle all of their personal and corporate demands, while demonstrating philanthropic leadership.

Women's Leadership Exchange (WLE) co-founders **Leslie Grossman** and **Andrea March** were the recipients of the Advocate Award by *The New York Enterprise Report*, one of the leading small business magazines in the Northeast. The award was presented to Leslie and Andrea at the [Small Business Awards Gala](#) on September 20th at The Copacabana, New York City. WLE provides one-day conferences for women business owners to develop strategic alliances and partnerships, hear from other successful women business owners and focus on themselves and their companies. The remaining conference for 2006 is November 6th in New York. For more information go to www.women'sleadershipexchange.com.

Tim Flanagan, General Agent of Hinrichs Flanagan Financial (www.hinrichsflanagan.com), a Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual) in Charlotte, recently received the 2006 Community Service Award (CSA) from MassMutual accompanied by a \$10,000 grant for Habitat for Humanity, Charlotte. For 22 years, the associates of Hinrichs Flanagan Financial have been actively involved with Habitat for Humanity of Charlotte, which provides affordable quality housing in which residents have ownership and extensive personal investment.

Candace O'Keefe Mathis, following her leadership during the construction, opening and initial start-up as Executive Director of the Women's Museum, took over the helm of Leadership America. With the two organizations now merged, exciting new responsibilities and programs are on the horizon, including the creation of Leadership International, which plans to hold its first class in 2007. For more details, check out <http://www.leadershipamerica.com>

Virginia (Ginny) Whitehill received the Texas Trailblazer Award in August. Given by The Family Place in Dallas, the award honors a local woman who despite obstacles has achieved significant success and opened the doors of opportunity for other women.

Kyra McGrath, the founding chair for the First Financial Group's Women's Advisory Board, recently stepped down to assume the leadership role of the very prestigious Executive Women's Forum in Philadelphia. She was replaced by **Gaytana (Gaye) Pino**, CEO and President of Paper and Ribbon Supply Co., Inc.
