



*The premiere education and technology expo uniquely focused on diemaking, converting, foil stamping, embossing, and bindery...*

## **Getting Your Boss to Say “YES”**

Given the current economy and reduced financial support for travel and professional development, not to mention staff reductions and hiring freezes, how can you obtain support to attend the Odyssey Expo? The key is to understand the benefits of attending the conference and, ultimately, that you can't afford not to attend! You also have to consider what this means from your employer's perspective.

## **Why You Can't Afford to Stay Home**

**Education:** The 20+ different educational sessions planned over the three-day period will return you to your workplace energized and armed with new money-saving and innovative techniques and strategies to benefit your company and customers. Odyssey is THE premier educational and networking event for converters. The schedule of programming is designed to maximize your time. The sessions are presented by industry experts and colleagues who provide current information on how to improve profits, increase sales, decrease production costs, and the challenges and solutions that are impacting our industry. Multiple programs running concurrently allow you the flexibility to tailor an education experience that meets the specific needs of your market. The Odyssey is the one event targeted specifically to diecutting, diemaking, foil stamping/embossing, folding carton, corrugated and general/specialty markets such as foam, gaskets, abrasives, composites, leather, film lamination, specialty UV coating, Cast and Cure,<sup>TM</sup> laser cutting, and more. In addition, as part of your full or program registration package, you'll receive access to all program handouts.

**Technology Hall:** Meet face-to-face with vendors and preview new products and services in the Technology Hall, saving you time - and money. Over 100 vendors will display their products and services.

**Techshops<sup>TM</sup>:** Many trade shows and conferences feature traditional classroom educational programs, but only the Odyssey holds on-press Techshops which show solutions in real time on working equipment.

**Networking:** Every other year you have the opportunity to network, share ideas and insights and connect with fellow converters, industry and association leaders and suppliers. From new technologies to business strategies, this is the place to gain insight from the very people who understand the exact issues you face each day.

## **Map a Plan to Get Support**

1. Plan early! In addition to early bird registration discounts, planning early will enable you to obtain lower airline fares and ensure availability in conference hotels offering significant Odyssey discounts over standard room rates. An early request shows that you are a careful planner.

2. Formalize your request in writing (see Attendance Justification Sample Memo). Support your request with specific reasons you should attend. Specifically identify what benefits your company will obtain by your attendance at the conference. What sessions meet objectives and learning opportunities that are of critical importance to your institution? Prepare a list of exhibitors that you want to meet with to discuss their products and why.

3. Prepare a budget for the cost of attending and be willing to show your commitment by absorbing a portion of the cost personally if needed. Use frequent flyer miles or hotel points to offset the cost of attending. Would you be willing to share a hotel room with a colleague? Consider using vacation time for some of the days out of the office. Remember that you are making a commitment to your own education as well as your company.

4. Involve your staff or co-workers. Share your conference materials and ask them for input on which education sessions would benefit them. Agree to share the session handouts with them after the event.

5. Share your conference materials with your employer. Ask for input on which sessions and vendor information they feel would benefit the company the most.

6. Identify those individuals who will handle your responsibilities while you are out of the office. Remind your employer that current technology allows you to be easily accessible during your time away from the office.

### **No Time for Rest When You Return**

Maintain an action list of ideas you want to implement or develop further when you return.

Summarize this list and provide an executive report for your employer. By doing so, you demonstrate the value in attending and plant the seeds for attendance at future Odysseys.

Share ideas and vendor information with colleagues and staff.

### **The Power of One New Idea**

Emphasize the most important thing that you learned as a result of attending. Share this idea with your colleagues and co-workers. Show how the power of just one new idea (a change in procedure, policy, learning about a new product or service) made the investment of attending the Odyssey worth it!