



The Professional Sales Force

Professional Sales Representative Organization

The organization that makes a difference

What we would like you to know... April 11, 2013

IPRO



David Humphries - CEDIA Board Appointment

IPRO President and CEDIA Director David Humphries has been appointed CEDIA Membership Chairman.

The CEDIA Membership Committee:

- is charged with providing a high level of consistent value to all CEDIA members and to continue expanding and recruiting the industry's finest members specializing in custom installation;
- recommends the criteria for membership in accordance with the bylaws of the association and the code of ethics;
- will provide legislative advocacy to promote public awareness, industry growth, and the betterment of CEDIA member companies.

Humphries says, "I look forward to working with the CEDIA staff liaisons and committee so that CEDIA continues to provide the highest quality value to our member integrators, manufacturers and representatives."

Congratulations, David!

IPRO



Scowcroft and Associates' Awards

Bob Scowcroft, of Scowcroft and Associates (Aurora, Colorado), shared photos of his outstanding team with their 2012 Thiel Rep of the Year, Totem Rep of the Year, and Hegel Rep of the Year awards. **Wow! Great job!**

Left to right: **Brad Paulsen**, Thiel National Sales Manager; **Robert Scowcroft**, Scowcroft & Associates; **Carl Porter**, Scowcroft & Associates; and **Bill Thomas**, Thiel CEO





Left to right: **Nico Bruzzese**, Totem Director of Sales; **Robert Scowcroft**, Scowcroft & Associates; **Carl Porter**, Scowcroft & Associates; **Steve Libin**, Totem National Sales Manager

Left to right: **Anders Ertzeid**, Hegel VP of Sales; **Robert Scowcroft**, Scowcroft & Associates; and **Bent Holter**, Hegel President



IPRO

The "F" Word

This article by Ron DeVoe (IPRO's Assistant Director, Commercial Division) was first published in rAve's March Pro AV newsletter:

The "F" word has become prevalent in more and more conversational circles, and its multiple uses and derivations still leave little doubt as to its meaning. I believe that within our industry we have a better command of the King's English and a better sense of propriety to bespeak that "F" word continually. I would offer an "F" word that is gaining greater usage, while evoking a similar negative reaction. The "F" word is **FORECASTING**.

Forecasting had its roots in meteorology where weathermen raised their finger in the air to predict weather patterns. The accuracy of these predictions has been a source of humor for some time. Now, our industry has fully embraced **Forecasting** as a necessary tool for business success. While I fully understand the need for manufacturers to produce products in the correct amount for timely delivery, the methodology of **Forecasting** has caused more pain than relief.

As an aged veteran of this industry and as an independent manufacturer's representative, I have watched and endured the rise of the "F" word. In the 80's and early 90's, I would meet with my manufacturers to discuss our dealer network with its strengths and possibilities, the market climate and the manufacturer's place relative to product need and competition. From this discussion, cumulative national data and a combination of sticking our fingers in the air, I, the rep, and the manufacturers determined what the national sales goals could and should be and then what percentage my territory should represent.

In recent years, reps began being summoned into dark rooms with one light shining on their face as one or two



sales managers from across the table used a rubber hose to force reps into agreeing to numbers that were satisfactory to the manufacturer. The result of each of these meetings was to establish "the Plan" which soon became addressed as "my Plan." This made for ongoing conversations related to where I was with "my Plan," or how I needed to step up to reach "my Plan." This ordeal is affectionately known as a sales meeting. I am happy that I have retired prior to the introduction of high voltage and water boarding in these meetings.

Opportunity reporting became more prevalent, but woe unto those who utter a possible pending sale that exists somewhere out in the future. While these projects might be a media retrieval system for an unbuilt school, or a projection system for a church that is trying to raise the money, the knowledge that something is coming is too great to ignore. Reps are asked to report constantly on opportunities, and if one is actually reported, then a monthly, weekly or every other nano-second update is required. To help bring these opportunities, manufacturers sometimes use motivational strategies such as threats, direct end-user contact and ransoming children to help direct the opportunity.

So now, we have Forecasting. Unfortunately, my role as rep diminished somewhat as I was required to make the forecasting calls on my dealer network. While I had always felt welcome in dealer's offices and enjoyed a sense of trust, I found that the Forecasting call, resulted in unsecured appointments, unanswered E-mails or voice mails and a welcoming treatment usually saved for a mother-in-law.

The weatherman, with his missed forecast is rarely shot at dawn even though decisions on events, travel, planting, etc., are based on the accuracy of the weather Forecast. The rep is rarely granted such clemency. While many in this industry hate the "F"orecasting word, most hate the smell of "BO" (back order) even more. To avoid costly BO's we have to have Forecasting. It just seems as though there would be an F'ing better way to do it.

I PRO



News from MRERF

2013 is off to a good start!

CPMR at the University of Texas at Austin was our best CPMR event ever! The town itself is fun and not too busy in January, the AT&T Conference Center facility is gorgeous, and all CPMR participants can stay under one roof. The plan is for UT-Austin to be the home of CPMR for decades.

Contracts are already in place for 2014 and 2015, so your next chance for [CPMR](#) is **Jan. 6-10, 2014. Ready to enroll? [Click here.](#)**

Because MRERF wants the rep/manufacturer relationship to be the best it can be, we also offer the [Manufacturer's Best Practices](#) for working with reps. April 17-18 in Atlanta; October 3-4 in Chicago; and January 7-8 in Austin. [Click here to enroll in MBP](#) .

Sales is why reps are in business, so MRERF offers the [Certified Sales Professional \(CSP\)](#) program. In January, a CSP graduate said that in the five years since earning the CSP, the sales commissions in his territory have quadrupled!

The 2013 CSP schedule is:

[April 30-May 3, 2013 - Philadelphia, PA](#) (only 10 seats left)

[Sept. 10-13, 2013 - Chicago, IL](#)

[May 14-17, 2013 - Minneapolis, MN](#)

[Oct. 22-25, 2013 - Dallas, TX](#)

Nov. 4-7, 2013 - Guadalajara MEXICO*

[* see website for details](#)

[Click here for the link to enroll in CSP](#) .



Each [MRERF](#) program is backed by a money-back guarantee. You will find value and ideas for business, or

MRERF will refund your tuition!

We will again be participating in the IPRO conference and are looking forward to seeing you in Ft. Lauderdale. Questions? Comments? Opportunities?

Karen L. Jefferson, CPMR, CSP [303.463.1801](tel:303.463.1801) w [303.359.3488](tel:303.359.3488) c

www.MRERF.org

Professional Development for Reps, Distributors and Manufacturers
CPMR - Certified Professional Manufacturers Representatives
CSP - Certified Sales Professional

IPRO



Housing Scam

IPRO has learned that there is an agency which has been contacting EXPO 2013 enrollees saying that a deposit is due for room reservations. This is a scam!

Do NOT give any information or payment to this agency, but instead call CEDIA EXPO Housing at (877) 307-0325.

The official agency is Meeting Services, Unlimited, representing CEDIA EXPO Housing, and there is no

required deposit.

IPRO

Are You Losing Business?

Ray Wright, Executive Director of IPRO, shares his perspective on our association:

We, as individuals, take pride in “being a professional,” and we work very hard at making sure that is true. We enjoy our successes, value our customers and manufacturers, and if we have a setback we just write-it-off.



So much of running our own business is about just that...the business. It is difficult, ongoing, and not very intuitive. We see only random opportunities for input and solutions – those things that help make our business more valued, stronger, and more profitable. At a sales meeting we choose to sit beside “that guy” who is obviously successful and has great ideas, and occasionally he shares a really good one!

Every mature industry has resource groups (the “professional associations”), and leaders are always encouraging us to join. Why should we join? What’s in it for us? Many decide to stay out of these groups, and the reasons are quite consistent:

- It’s time out of the territory.
- I would have to pay dues.
- I have friends I talk to about business.
- It costs money to attend associations' meetings.
- It scares me to share what I know.
- I'm not sure I'll get my money's worth.

In our industry we have professional groups, such as MANA, InfoComm, CEDIA, ERA, MRERF, and IPRO. *IPRO is the one association focused on the world of business that is residential and commercial audio-video.* All seek

to respond to the above issues, but many of the issues that IPRO addresses have intangible benefits.

There is one major and tangible benefit to being part of a professional association: you can gain money.

Gaining money comes in two forms: 1) Increasing commission dollars through greater sales, and 2) reducing/eliminating costs that fail to create and support sales.

I have succeeded because of supporting and joining professional groups. The growth of my career as technician, salesperson, retailer, manufacturer and representative all came from joining and participating in groups that brought together like-minded individuals. There are hundreds of stories of the educational and networking benefits provided by those memberships which directly produced increased income. There are also stories that allowed me to avoid expensive mistakes, one of which could have closed my firm.

I have learned best business practices, negotiating skills, cost control, marketing, technology, software changes, and leadership skills. I have had access to all of the members in the group (a huge benefit) talking about everything from tax issues to product issues. They have led me to new sales opportunities. I attend panels and discussions with industry leaders. And, given that the industry is changing so fast, it is important to know where to go for information.

Marketing research has been available through the group that a small business such as mine will never be able to afford. The group has become a great "reality check" and a moderately safe place to ask dumb questions. Real time information is constantly available, and information becomes money. Sharing with peers has actually inspired me to a higher performance. It is an education that cannot be bought but which can determine your success.

If you are active in our industry and associations like IPRO, then you know the value that is available. If you are not, then you are losing business and accepting less.

IPRO Staff

Name	Title	Office Phone	Cell Phone
Ray Wright	Executive Director	800-420-4268	248-514-4418
Susan Zaboji	Newsletter Editor	571-375-2153	
Ron DeVoe	Associate Director, Commercial Division	817-924-9860	
David Humphries	President	973-472-4720	

IPRO Communications

[IPRO
Manufacturers](#)

[Executive Board
Affiliated Associations](#)

[Board of Directors
Potential Member](#)

[IPRO Members Only
IPRO MANUFACTURERS GROUP](#)

Sent on behalf of
Ray Wright
IPRO
34157 W. 9 Mile Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48335
800-420-4268

[Newsletter feedback or to unsubscribe](#)



support@virtual-representative.com

