

## Game Changer at POPAI


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practically everyone buys into the value of Facebook and LinkedIn, but few were into Twitter." Liljenwall made it clear that it really "doesn't matter what you, as a retailer, brand marketer or producer think – it's what your customers think!"

One of POPAI's most successful member programs is the Masters Program held annually for the past several years in the Chicago area, most recently at Northwestern University. Each year in July, POPAI brings together industry leaders to provide an in-depth educational program that counts towards the POPAI Marketing at-Retail Certificate (MaRC), a prestigious designation for professionals in the point-of-purchase industry. This two-and-half-day event covers a wide variety of industry topics. Both BrandTech News editors (Liljenwall and Sandgren) have been featured speakers at these annual educational seminars. Nearly two-hundred-fifty industry members have been through the Master's Program since its inception.

"We've created a great number of programs over the years that continue to draw members to our cause," Winter stated. "We bring added value they can't get anywhere else, such as the Marketing at-Retail textbook, now in its third edition."

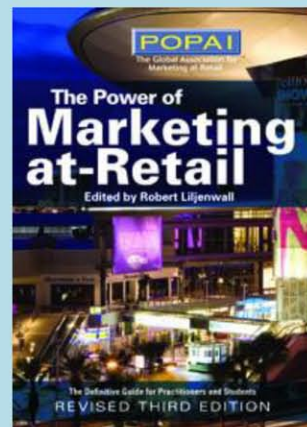
The future of POPAI is bright according to Winter – "we have an energetic, focused Board of Directors who are committed to expanding our reach and penetration. We are well funded, and more importantly, our membership is expanding again." Winter points out that all operations have been consolidated back at their home office in Alexandria, where there is a new sense of purpose and energy.

Having been active in POPAI for more than 12 years, we – as editors of BrandTech News – feel that Richard Winter is, indeed, a game changer – who will take POPAI – the Global Association for Marketing at-Retail to new heights! 

## Low-Tech Business has High Impact

by Robert Liljenwall

You wouldn't give it a second thought. In fact, you don't. You wander around the aisles at Wal-Mart, Sears or Kmart, looking for that new television or DVD recorder you want...and when you find it, you pause. Your eyes focus – not on the electronic gadget you're thinking of buying -- but on the information card below. It gives you all the information you want, and then some. Your eyes move from card to card – each one a bit different, but packed with the necessary information *(cont. page 9)*



POPAI's popular textbook is currently in its third edition



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## Low-Tech Business has High Impact

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that will help you make the right decision. Usually, the sales person doesn't have all the information at their finger tips like it is on the printed card just below 'your choice'. You realize: You're in charge of the decision-making process!

This information system – created and patented by VIDPro, a Canadian company, over 25 years ago, is a very precise, information system that is, yes, low-tech. But as consumers, we take it for granted, because we 'trust' the information and data on the product cards as part of our buying-decision process. The advantages of what appears to be a no-brainer technology, the benefits of this in-store information system are very apparent: inexpensive; easily changed and updated; works easily on many different fixturing systems; practical and clean; and customers love it. The biggest challenge VIDPro has: making sure the system can be easily maintained and serviced without an outside service company .

VIDPro, out of Toronto, has been supplying these information card systems since 1985. Their patented information shelf card system is now in every Wal-Mart in Canada, in addition to Sears, Home Depot, TRU, The Bay, Kmart, Zellers, and Loblaws.

According to VIDPro President, Nicki Albrecht, "...customers want more information, not less, and they want it quick so they can make the right decisions themselves – not by being unduly influenced by a salesperson. We have found in our store surveys, customers really do not like commissioned sales people, so our information card systems give the customers all the information they need."

Working out of their facility in Toronto, VIDPro manufactures and produces all of the signage platforms and information inserts "In many cases, we will provide local service, but for the most part, we train and work with the store staff to keep the systems current and maintained," Nicki said.

"One of the key goals for our system is to up-sell the customer by providing accurate product information. That's the goal of the retailer and the brand marketer as well, but they can't do it without getting the differentiated information in front of the customer with the product right there in front of them," Nicki stated.

With that many years "in the business" they have seen competitors and innovations come and go. And while it doesn't have the electronic whistles and bells, the VIDPro system works....it's effective...and customers love it. You see, low-tech works, too. \*



VIDPro silent salesmen help shoppers "make the right decisions themselves".

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