



# PSA News

*The Association for Service Professionals*

## 12 Tips for Making the Most of a Convention

By Ralph Wolff  
Industry Relations, PSA

Taking days out of your office to attend a convention is expensive. If you are going to spend money and sacrifice a valuable chunk of time that could be spent making money, then the conference better be worth your while. The usefulness of a work-related conference is determined by how you approach it. Approach it right and you can pick up new skills, learn about trends in your field and make valuable contacts. Approach it wrong and it can end up being long, boring and useless.



Here are some tips for getting the most out of your conference...

1. Read the agenda before going to the conference and figure out what sessions will best fit your needs. You probably won't be able to attend all the sessions so prioritize the ones you most want or need to attend. If you are attending with a co-worker, consider splitting up some of the sessions so that between the two of you, you can cover more sessions.
2. Read the presenters list and do some research on the presenters for the sessions you are attending. It is always better to know the credentials of the presenter, as it will give you more insight to the material and give you time to formulate questions. If the presenters information is not available, reach out to them prior to the conference.
3. Read the exhibitors list ahead of time and make a list of the people and companies you want to speak with. Otherwise, in a large exhibition hall, you may get overwhelmed and miss getting to the people you wanted to talk to.
4. Ask questions in the sessions you attend. Don't be shy about questioning the presenters about points you would like clarified. You are actually doing the presenters a favor by asking questions, as most presenters dread having "disengaged" audiences. The more interaction in the session the more you and everyone will learn, including the presenter. So ask away!
5. Be approachable. Don't spend all your time outside of conference sessions using your phone or immersed in reading material. Be open and engaged and you will be more likely to meet like-minded people. Most people attending a conference are looking for others to interact with, so don't be afraid to approach people yourself. You don't even need an excuse; you can simply walk up and introduce yourself and ask about the other person. You can also ask whether they have been to any good sessions.
6. Don't make non-work plans for the evenings. You might be tempted to catch up with your friend who lives in that city, but lots of networking will happen in the evening, often spontaneously. You will want to be available for the last minute dinner or attend the hospitality room.
7. Stay away from alcohol. If you enjoy an alcoholic drink, at most, have only one or two. If you find yourself hanging out at the bar or in the hospitality room ask for a seltzer or soft drink.
8. Bring snacks. Conferences often offer only unhealthy, overpriced convenience foods. Find a local market and buy some healthy snacks to keep on hand in case you miss lunch or get hungry during the day.
9. Where comfortable shoes. You're going to do a lot of standing around talking to people and you might even end up standing in some sessions. You will also be doing a lot of walking to get from your room to the conference halls, meals and so forth. There is nothing so distracting as when your feet hurt from uncomfortable shoes.

10. Bring business cards. The exchange of business cards is a time honored tradition at conferences. When exchanging cards be sure to make notes on the back of cards from the people you want to follow up with so you remember who each person is once you're back in the office.
11. When you get back to your office after the conference, take some time to follow up with the people who you met. Email them to let them know you enjoyed meeting them and perhaps reference something you talked about (those notes on the back of their cards will be helpful).
12. Conferences are more than just sessions, they are an assembly of like-minded folks with great intention. How often do you get uninterrupted time to discuss matters of interest with industry peers from around the country? Many great experiences happen during the downtime so don't leave these experiences to chance. Reach out to your contacts beforehand and set up an early breakfast or lunch.

When developing NASC 2015, PSA has sought to create an experience for you with great intention and resource. If you put some time into research prior to the conference and follow the tips listed here, you will most certainly come home with a trunk full of ideas and knowledge that will help you succeed.

It's not too late to sign up: NASC 2015, Orlando, Fla. March 31-April 3, 2015. Go to [www.psaworld.com](http://www.psaworld.com) to register.

# There is Strength in Numbers

by Jim Campbell, Mcap

One thing I have noticed since I joined PSA in 2007, is that we have a lot of talented members out there. What impressed me most was our breakfast and dinners at the convention, where I got to meet many of you and have a pleasant experience all around. It's always nice to meet the "voice" behind the emails! Speaking of emails, most of you know by now that I pay pretty close attention to our PSANet when help is needed- I don't mind doing this at all, because it is my own way of giving back daily to those who support our industry. In fact, many of the replies I see out there from some other helpful members have inspired me to ask this simple question of you: with so many of you who know the business so well, are you willing to go a step forward and simply join one of our committees? This is how I got to my position with PSA...by becoming interested in training and certification. I saw how well it was going, and wanted to offer my 2 cents worth to improve it for everyone, as did the other volunteers who participated in those committees. After a couple of years volunteering on committees, I was asked to join the board. This is the way we like to work at PSA. Since we are all about supporting the independent servicer, we feel the independent servicer should set the pace. Your input is priceless when it comes to making changes that will benefit the cause.



You may not know it now, but PSA is poised to provide some advanced and varied training in the near future. What I need from you is to simply think about what the service industry needs in the way of training, then present your ideas to one of us, either by email or in person at the convention. We need more of you who want quality training and education to step forward. It does not require any more effort than a monthly or quarterly phone conference. Two hours or your time a month to give a wealth of help to your peers is a sacrifice, but it can help you shape the future of PSA and our industry. If you like being a committee member after trying it, there is opportunity for you to serve on the Board of Directors, which gives you a vote on important issues for PSA members. You will also have the advantage of associating with manufacturer's reps and having access to other privileged information not usually offered. Remember, it is ALL about you and how you can help impact the industry.

Hopefully, you will explore the various committees we have while you're at the convention in March. I will be happy to answer any of your questions then, as will any of our board members, and hopefully you will find that niche that makes you feel good because you are doing something worthwhile besides learning. I look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones this year, so make your plans to attend NASC 2015, and keep in mind that we appreciate each and every one of you for your support and participation.

# Thoughts from the Executive Director

By Randy Carney, PSA Executive Director

Welcome to 2015! We enter a new year with many hopes and some concerns, and prepare for the challenges that a new year will bring. I'm not sorry to see 2014 in the rear view mirror, for many reasons, both personal and professional. January always has that feeling of renewal- we've made it through all the holidays and get ready to get back in the saddle. Here's hoping that you are off to a great start in 2015, and it just keeps getting better!

Now- some musings to hopefully keep you warm (and if you're in New England, to help you dig out)...

- There is a lot of good information in this issue of PSA News about volunteering. Obviously, we emphasize that your talents and insights are valuable to PSA and the industry we all work in, and we would love to have you consider joining us as a committee member. But in addition to this, don't forget to be active in your own communities. There are many civic, youth or religious organizations that could undoubtedly use your help and your neighbors would all be the better for it. You will feel better for the work that you do, and another likely benefit will be that visibility your business will also get from the efforts of you and your employees. Never a bad thing. Share of yourself, and our industry, your community, and the entire world will be a better place!
- The weather this past week has been brutal to our friends out east, though, from the initial reports, it could have been a lot worse. This brings to mind a common complaint that many have with regards to winter weather... what do you do when you are essentially told to shut it down for a day, keep trucks off the roads and employees at home, and it turns out that you could work? Drives you nuts- you have already communicated with customers and rearranged schedules, so it is difficult to start back up and make a day out of it.
- It's a tough question to answer- the safety of you and your employees has to be paramount, so in my opinion, that is always the deciding factor. You are only as good as the information you have to work with, so that's where the weather forecasters come in. The Weather Channel now comes across like a 24/7 cable news channel- naming storms, having breathless reporters standing on street corners interviewing dog walkers and the like, but it needs to be remembered that this is still an inexact science, and they will make mistakes. The best you can do is to stay in contact with your employees and customers, and make the best, and safest, decision that you can.
- Speaking of weather- the weather in Orlando is always pretty darn good! What better way to get out of the doldrums that to get down to central Florida and attend NASC 2015? With 4 full days of learning through technical training and business skills enhancement, it is a great investment for your company. And with the opportunity to meet and greet your peers from across the country, it's also a great time to make new friendships and renew longstanding ones. The Rosen Plaza Hotel is one of the really nice venues that we've had the pleasure of associating with, so we hope that you will take the plunge and join us for NASC 2015! You won't be sorry!
- Finally- pro football comes to an end this week with Super Bowl # whatever. America's unofficial holiday. I'm not a big pro football fan at all, but with all the talk of deflated footballs, choking Packers (OK- I kind of enjoy that), evil Patriots, Seahawks not talking to reporters, and Katy Perry (?) at halftime, it's kind of hard to avoid it. So I will go out on a huge limb and predict..... Seattle 27 New England 21. If I am right, buy me a beer in Orlando.



# BAT's All Over the Country!

PSA's Basic Appliance Training (BAT) initiative is continuing to sweep the country in 2015!

The BAT program focuses on basic principles and repair functions related to electricity, gas and refrigeration, the core basis of a successful appliance service technician. The BAT training provides a solid foundation for new technicians, along with a strong refresher course for more experienced techs that will make the product specific training offered by manufacturers more understandable and also help to make your technicians more efficient and effective.

There is one BAT class confirmed in early 2015- please keep your eye on the December PSA News and our web site [www.psaworld.com](http://www.psaworld.com), for the complete 2015 BAT and PSA training schedule...

<b>March-</b>	<b>NASC 2015- Orlando, FL March 30-April 2</b>
<b>April-</b>	<b>Fox Appliance Parts- Atlanta, GA (Dates tbd)</b>
<b>May-</b>	<b>Sundberg America- Chicago, IL (dates tbd)</b>
<b>June-</b>	<b>Dey Distributing- Denver, CO (dates tbd)</b>
<b>July-</b>	<b>Pending</b>
<b>August-</b>	<b>Fox Appliance Parts- Miami, FL (dates tbd)</b>
<b>September-</b>	<b>Trible's Appliance Parts- Fairfield, NJ (dates tbd)</b>
<b>October-</b>	<b>Dey Distributing- Minneapolis – St Paul, MN (dates tbd)</b>
<b>November-</b>	<b>Pending</b>
<b>December-</b>	<b>Appliance Parts Depot- Phoenix, AZ (dates tbd)</b>

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# Clean Circuits in an Atom Smasher?

By Tyler Wells Lynch

**January 15, 2015-** Warning: Do not put circuit boards in the dishwasher. I repeat: Do not put circuit boards in the dishwasher. Unless you're a scientist at CERN and working on some of the most important problems in particle physics.

Yes, the above image is a dishwasher filled with circuit boards—circuit boards destined for the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), the biggest particle accelerator in the world. What are a bunch of super smart scientists doing putting electronics in a dishwasher? Why, they're cleaning them of course.

This dishwasher is not your average dishwasher. It's actually a professional cleaning device often used in the pharmaceutical industry, but it works much like a consumer dishwasher. It features a stainless steel pumping system and case, as well as chemically resistant materials.

These kinds of circuit boards are highly sensitive to radiation and ozone in the LHC.

These kinds of circuit boards are highly sensitive to radiation and ozone contamination in the LHC tunnels, so it's important that they are rinsed on a routine basis. Such cleaning can prolong the life of the circuits.

So how exactly do the machines clean them? Sylvain Kaufmann, of the Machine Protection and Electrical Integrity group, explained in a [CERN blog post](#):

"Indeed, ionized water can generate major problems for the electronics, decreasing the reliability of the integrated circuits. It leaves residue on the surface of the boards, which may be detrimental to the reliability of the assembly. The main associated risk is electromigration—the transport of material caused by the gradual movement of the ions in a conductor. Therefore, we use de-ionized water in the rinsing process."

I'm no expert on electromigration, Dr. Kaufmann. I just hope the circuits are dry when you insert them back into that [17-mile-wide atom smasher](#) you've built yourself there in Switzerland.

## Coffee combo: GE launches refrigerator that makes K Cup beverages

A new refrigerator from [GE Appliances](#) can brew your Keurig K-Cups.

The two companies announced the device this morning at Appliance Park in Louisville, where the new appliance was designed and will be produced. The company already makes a line of French door refrigerators with hot water dispensers in Louisville, as well as dishwashers, washers and dryers and water heaters.

"Over the last couple years, GE surveyed Café French door refrigerator consumers who have the hot water feature," [Dan Goldstein](#), refrigeration marketing manager for GE Appliances said in a news release. "They asked us, 'When can we have a refrigerator that dispenses coffee or tea?' In fact, two-thirds said they'd be interested in a single-serve hot beverage dispenser." He added that the research inspired the new product, which GE is calling an industry first.

The refrigerators have a suggested retail price of \$3,330. They will be available in the third quarter of 2015. There's more information about availability [on GE Appliances' website](#).

This new product innovation has been a major push for GE Appliances of late. But this is the first new product announcement we've seen since news broke last fall that the General Electric (NYSE: GE) division is going to be [purchased by competitor Electrolux AB](#) for \$3.3 billion. That transaction is being reviewed by regulators now.

With the new refrigerator, GE is cashing in on a trend. The news release cites a 2014 National Coffee Association coffee drinking trends survey, in which 29 percent of respondents who drank coffee said they used a single-cup brewer. That's up nearly 50 percent from the previous year.

# Ode to a Great Volunteer

By Don Pierson- President- Certified Service Center

Recently we lost a key friend and associate who was heavily involved in our overall effort to improve the RF Service Industry for the companies, the personnel, and of course the customers. For many years he gave his time without any financial rewards driven by his desire to improve both his industry's overall level of professionalism and everyone's ability to meet the ongoing technical and logistical challenges that exist in a rapidly changing industry. Dave Robison was truly an industry champion who will be missed by all. Dave definitely reminds us all of the many individuals that we know who give their time and efforts daily without fanfare for the betterment of many.

At The Consortium for Certified Service Centers we are fortunate to have individuals like Dave who give their time and energies to our program on a daily basis. They review applications, they serve on our Board of Directors, they join us on our monthly conference calls, and they serve to assist us on special projects. Many of these individuals also serve other member organizations like the Professional Service Association, the United Servicers Association, the Electronic Technicians Association, the Consumer Electronics Association, and Industry Manufacturers. There are many business owners, employees, and educators who also give their time on a daily basis to update and develop certifications for all types of technical and management positions in several Electronics Service Industries.

What makes these busy people volunteer their own time and expertise to help further these efforts that directly or indirectly benefit all? I think they simply care a great deal about the improvements that they can help drive in the industries that they represent. We all benefit from their time and energies and can offer them the ultimate compliment by taking time ourselves to pitch in and help in these efforts at either the national or local level. We all know who these individuals are so please take the time to call them and see how you can contribute to help make industry improvements that will benefit yourself and also serve to help keep your service industry strong. The best ideas come from those who are in the trenches every day and that's YOU. Ideas that help your business and your personnel will most likely help others that are doing the same type of work. In fact in the service industry, common recommendations made in one industry do cross over and have a positive impact in many other related industries.

In closing I want to simply state what Dave always said to the people who volunteered their time, effort, and support to their industry. "Thanks for all you do!"



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## Technician Evaluation

### *Here's a Great Hiring Tool!*

When preparing to hire new appliance technicians for your business, it's important to make use of all the tools that are available to you in order to make the best choice.

The PSA Technician Evaluation program evaluates the skill level of your prospective employee by testing them in 8 key categories- Customer Relations, Core Knowledge, Cleaning Products, Convenience Products, Cooling Products, Gas Cooking, Electric Cooking, and Microwave Cooking. The material will help you gauge the fundamental knowledge level of your candidate, while also identifying areas where additional time may need to be spent in training.

This is also a great tool to use in order to test your existing technician workforce in identifying areas where training or mentoring may be required.

The PSA Technician Evaluation program can be ordered through the PSA website at [psaworld.com/member\\_tools](http://psaworld.com/member_tools). The cost is \$39.95.



## How Facebook Profiles Can Help Boost Your Company's Online Presence

By Mark Maupin- Right Now Marketing Group LLC

Everyone knows that we live in a very web-centric time, with more and more of our socialization occurring on sites like Twitter & Facebook. However, not everyone understands just how valuable a Facebook profile is to building a company's online socialization and reputation. There are inherent benefits for a business having a profile on Facebook: the firm can have direct and immediate communications with clients and prospective clients, the company can build a following on Facebook (especially if interesting content is added on a regular basis) and finally, the profile page gives high-ranking links back to the firm's main website.

That last benefit is very important for the company, as the page authority of the Facebook profile makes it much easier for the business to move to page one of Google when someone conducts a search relating to the primary keywords. The way that this is done is to simply add links to the website such as YouTube videos, press releases, etc. within the Facebook posts and status updates. Also, because this is a free portal; one can build several targeted profiles that are built around specific niche phrases. For example: *appliance repair this city* or *appliance repair that city*. When someone in one these cities does a search for appliance repair, more than likely they will use that niche phrase to find local service providers and the website of the firm can be situated for them to be found naturally with the power of Facebook behind the site's links. In effect, one can latch the company onto the tail of a giant on the internet and benefit from the symbiotic relationship.

As if these benefits were not enough already, there's still more. Aside from the links to the company's main site and other internet properties, the Facebook profile also allows for the publication of videos, photos, press releases and directory links right on the profile page itself. This provides a high authority home for various updates, news and events; building an internet reputation and presence for the company that goes well beyond main website. Another point that should not be missed is that a company's Facebook page allows for the addition of a business phone number and domain name in the header of the profile.

A final note: social media portals are now beginning to go full throttle with internal search engines. This means that more people will start to conduct their searches in the same place that they spend a significant amount of their online time – Facebook. This means that a company with a properly optimized profile page will have a leg up on searches within the network itself. As the saying goes, "the best time to plant a tree is today," someone is preparing their company for prime search-ability – is it you?

Video training tape at <http://www.rightnowmarketing.org> or you can call Mark Maupin of Right Now Marketing Group for any questions or additional info (248) 939-6232, or email him at [Maupin.Mark@gmail.com](mailto:Maupin.Mark@gmail.com).

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# If You are Not a Member of PSA

## This is what you are missing out on...

- **PSANet** - is free with your membership. This is an email network that keeps you up to date and informed on everything in the appliance industry as it happens. You also get help on tough dog repairs or business management problems. It allows you to communicate with hundreds of servicers just like yourself from all over the country.
- **PSA News** – Is free with your membership. It is published digitally on a monthly basis and is mailed in print each quarter to your business. Industry news, New Products, Product recalls, Articles dealing with everyday problems of service management are the staples of this publication to keep you up to date on what is happening in the industry.
- **PSA Service Library** - is only available to members of PSA and contains technical information on both standard and premium brand appliances plus HVAC. It comes on a 32GB Flash Drive that you carry with your laptop and you have all the tech info you need to complete the call in one stop. Includes disassembly, wiring diagrams and F codes.
- **PSA Certified Appliance Professional** - Technician Certification is the way you prove your skills based on industry-approved skill standards. Become a Certified Master Technician and wear the insignia of the best technicians in the industry with pride. Consumers treat you differently when they know a National Trade Association has certified you.
- **PSA Certified Service Manager** - Learn how to manage your business profitably and efficiently. Learn how to determine your Cost of Doing Business and how to market your company for growth. Learn how to deal with consumers and employees to make your company run smoothly. Learn all of the skills necessary to make your service operation a world-class company.
- **PSA Practice Exam** - This disk allows you to test your technical skills to see if you are qualified enough to take the exam for certification. The disk can be used over and over for more than one technician. If you would like to get all of your techs certified, this is how you start. It will tell you where they need improvement to pass the test.
- **PSA Cost of Doing Business Software** - Take the mystery out calculating your cost of doing business. This software does all of the calculations for you automatically after you input your expenses. It will also calculate your productivity and show you how labor costs, productivity and expenses that are under control will make your company a winner.
- **PSA Flat Rate Pricing** - Improve your company cash flow and be fair to your customers. By using the PSA Flat Rate Pricing guide, you do not subject your customers to higher prices for a tech who is not as productive as one of your best techs. The price guide shows national pricing for both standard and premium brands, Easy to use and to change the rates as you choose as well as make many copies.
- **PSA Understanding People** - This is a personality profile program that teaches you to understand who you are with your positive and negative characteristics. Once you understand how to use this tool, you can learn to evaluate other personalities and work positively with consumers and employees. Learning how to motivate people to increase productivity is a worthwhile project.
- **PSA Employee Handbook** - This is a complete employee handbook to with all of the conditions for employment clearly spelled out in clear concise language. You won't ever again hear "You never told me that!" It includes vacation times, holidays, company vehicle policy, harassment and everything else you need it comes in WORD format and can be modified to fit you needs.
- **PSA Technician Evaluation** - This is a program that will test the skill level of appliance technicians. It will tell you how much they know and where they are weak and need help. Using it for new hires is a great tool and in about 30 minutes of testing you know exactly where you stand with their ability to perform as a field technician. Everybody talks a good game but, this program proves it.



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