

PSA News

The Association for Service Professionals

Return on Investment.....Why You Should Attend NASC 2016 in Dallas, TX

By Ralph Wolff- MCap, CSM

Editor's note- This article has appeared in previous issues of PSA News, but it always does a great job of conveying how important it is for those in the appliance service industry to take part in industry initiatives and conventions. With NASC 2016 approaching, it's a great reminder for everyone to sign up and get ready for a great week! The article has been updated to reflect this year's activities.



Today the independent service providers are competing in a complex environment, shaped by the unpredictable forces of globalization, advancing technology, consumer demands and the lack of a skilled service technician pool from which to draw from. Never before has the independent service provider been in the hyper competitive climate that they find themselves in today.

As independent service providers your expertise and available labor hours are being sought after by practically every major U.S. manufacture, big box store, off shore manufacture, TPA and frustrated consumer throughout the United States. And to make the strain on your available recourses even tighter, your ability to maintain profitability is under attack by rising prices for fuel, insurance, wages, artificially inflated parts prices and fragmented technical and management training.

Competitive pressures like customer loyalty and retention, reducing budgets and the increased necessity for higher returns make attending the NASC 2016 convention in Dallas a sound investment. Why, because in just 4 days you will have the opportunity to attend a host of sessions aimed at increasing your technical and management skills. Simply put, you would have to spend many more days in training outside the convention to cover all that you will learn in just four.

Remember, labor is what you sell. Therefore, the amount of labor expended on a job will make that job either profitable or not. Labor hours are a matter of skill and experience. NASC 2016 affords you the chance to stay ahead of the curve and to enhance your skills and experience with sessions in both technical training and management.

NASC 2016 also represents a real opportunity for quality service providers who wish to develop strategic partnerships with manufactures and other service seekers to connect on a face to face level. Service providers will also have the unique opportunity to connect with participating parts distributors and vendors during the conventions trade show.

NASC 2016 offers other unique opportunities to the ones who make the wise choice to attend. Nowhere else in the country and not at any other convention, can one learn how to become a Certified Service Center and then take all the necessary Certification Test in order to become qualified. All cost of Certification is included in your registration fee. Master Certified Appliance Professional (MCAP), Technician Certified Appliance Professional (TCAP), Customer Service Manager (CSM), Customer Service Reprehensive (CSR), is all offered at NASC 2016.

NASC 2016 offers a host of management training classes throughout the convention. Finding Your Cost of Doing Business, Marketing to Modern Customers, Social, Marketing, Negotiating Skills, Disaster Planning, Customer Retention, Employee Handbook, Employee Relations and a host of other classes that will help you run your awesome company smoothly.

Basic Appliance Training is also available at NASC 2016. If you have a new technician and want to jump start his ability to accurately diagnose and complete repairs or if you are a seasoned tech that just wants to brush up on your skills then BAT training should be your goal. BAT is comprehensive three day training on the basics- Basic Electric, Basic Gas, Basic Refrigeration and Basic Trouble Shooting.

Attending NASC 2016 is a wise investment and will result in a high rate of return for you and your business. Make the wise choice by signing up now at www.psaworld.com. There is still room for you.

NASC 2016, September 26-29 at the Marriott Quorum at the Galleria in Addison, TX. We'll see you there!

PSA's Training all Over the Country!

PSA Training is continuing to sweep the country in 2016!

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.

In addition, new training classes for more seasoned technicians will be available this fall- look to this space for sessions that will, be held in your area!

There are more BAT classes confirmed in early 2016- please keep your eye on PSA News and our web site www.psaworld.com, for the complete 2016 BAT and PSA training schedule.

September- NASC 2016 in Dallas, TX- September, 26-29

October- Nashville, TN- Tribles Appliance Parts October 24, 25, 26

November- New Orleans, LA dates TBD

PSANet

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Thoughts from the Executive Director

By Randy Carney, PSA Executive Director

Now, we are really getting into summer... Memorial Day is over and things are heating up. Training is pretty much on the shelf until fall, and the days can often be long and hard. Summer brings a lot of its own rewards, but I think we all have to admit that, in our industry, it's still the busiest time of the year!

So get ready for the heat and business! It's what we are in this for, and PSA stands ready to help everyone make the most of it with help via PSA Net, classes and of course, this fall's NASC 2016 in Dallas.



Such an easy opening...

- Yes, your humble Executive Director is not opposed to shameless promotion! NASC 2016 is shaping up to be a great week of training, fellowship and fun! We are looking forward to seeing all of our old friends, and to make many new ones as we hit Dallas, TX for the first time. We have a great venue at the Marriott Quorum at the Galleria in which to hold this year's convention, so we hope that you will all take advantage of the opportunity to be a part of this fall's convention. There is information in this edition of PSA News, and you can also register on psaworld.com. Get signed up and get ready for a great time!
- Speaking of psaworld.com, get ready for some big changes to our website in the next month or so! We are completely revamping psaworld.com and upgrading all features, and adding several new ones. All transactions will be simplified, ordering tools and signing up for classes will be easier, and we are planning to add several new features, including video and even the ability to stream training. Keep your eyes on the website and be ready for a brand new experience!
- There is sad news to report that many of you might already be aware of. Our industry lost one of our real gentlemen a couple weeks ago with the death of Fred Reinhardt. Fred was a Regional Manager at Whirlpool for the past several years, and had been with Maytag many years as a District manager and also a Product Manager supporting dishwashers before that. I had the pleasure of working closely with Fred after the Maytag-Amana integration, and always enjoyed seeing him at various industry events since that time. Fred always had a smile on his face and was one of the most accommodating people that you would want to meet. Our sympathies to his wife, Nadine and his family and many friends.
- For me, this is the second hit I've had this year. Earlier this year, Joe Bureau, who had worked for me as a District Manager at Maytag and had since moved on to support Rinnai tank less water heaters, passed away suddenly. Joe was another great guy that was very popular both with his co-workers and customers, and I know that he is also greatly missed. Please keep the families of these two industry veterans in your prayers.

Are you a great technician?

Prove it to your customers and your peers by becoming a certified Master Technician.

Certification is free if you attend NASC 2016 in Dallas,
September 26 – 29, 2016

PSA Service Library for 2016 is Now Available

The 2016 version of the PSA Service Library is now available. This new version comes to you in the form of a 64GB Flash Drive complete with appliance service information and also with HVAC products included. The 2015 version doubled the capacity and contains even more information than was included on the previous 2015 version. The cost of this valuable tool is \$130 that includes the flash drive, software and data. Since we provide you with the data free of charge, what you are paying \$130 for is the cost of the 64 GB flash drive and the time to compile and develop the program plus the shipping and handling of the library all of which we have to pay for. The data alone is worth thousands of dollars if you were to obtain it individually from the providers. Because of the size of the library it will only be available on the flash drive. Just plug it into the USB port and it runs right off the flash drive.

Another feature again this year is the model number search engine to help speed up locating the correct information for the product you are working on.

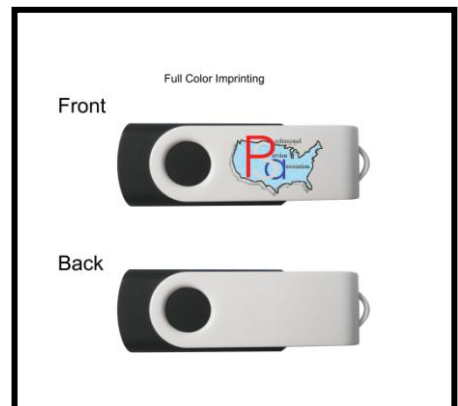
Just think how impressed your customer will be with your professionalism as your technician accesses technical information right in her own kitchen as the repair progresses.

Just think about the time saved in completing the service on each call. Just think what that will do for your productivity and improved profits.

Not only does this library provide many of the popular brands of appliance technical information but for those of you who also do HVAC, the library includes technical information on furnaces, boilers and central air conditioners by make and model numbers.

Brands included are ADC, Amana, American, A O Smith, Apollo, Asko, Blodgett, Bosch, Crosley, Dacor, DCS, Electrolux, Fisher/Paykel, GE, Girbau, Haier, Hatco, Ice-O-Matic, Kenmore, LG, Manitowoc, Maytag, Miele, Oasis, Rheem/Ruud, Rinnai, Samsung, Scotsman, Sharp, Speed Queen, Sub Zero/Wolf, U Line, Viking/Wolf Plus HVAC brands like American Standard, Carrier, GE, Goodman, Lennox, LG, McDonald Miller, Peerless, Trinity, Weil McLain, York and many others as well.

View of both sides of the Flash Drive



PSA Members Only

\$130

The library also includes training materials and service bulletins in both appliances and in HVAC to bring you up to date on the latest technology in order to give you an edge on your competition to perform at a level your customer will be impressed with and refer you to their neighbors.

So, if you have been dragging your feet about joining PSA, this is a benefit worth many times over the cost of your membership. PSA is always working for you to make you more professional, efficient, knowledgeable and profitable.

Don't delay another minute, sign up today and take advantage of this fantastic offer. You can join PSA on-line at www.psaworld.com.

Don't be left behind ...Join PSA Today!!!

The Customer Checklist

By Don Pierson- President- Certified Service Center

Sometimes, we should all take a look at service from the customer viewpoint. What is their quality checklist? When does the evaluation process start and how does the customer actually gauge your performance or company image at each step? We can make our own checklist, because our critical factors may all differ somewhat, but for me, as one of those loyal but demanding customers, here is what I would use...

Overall company image/making the choice:

- Clean, well-kept facility and/or service vehicle
- Company signage on facility and vehicles
- Professionally dressed employees
- Community involvement/image
- Professional advertising
- High ratings or certifications of personnel
- Manufacturer recommendations
- Personal past experience
- Word of mouth from others
- Friendly, accommodating personnel- both on the phone and in person

Ease of doing business:

- Prompt answering of the phone
- Prompt call-backs if necessary
- Ease in understanding the customer's needs
- Receive written and detailed service quotations
- Answer all customer questions
- Work to schedule an agreeable time to perform the work
- Give an accurate and reasonable arrival window (and make it)
- Treat the customer's home with extreme care
- Be very courteous at all times
- Explain the work that was done
- Get the repair done in one trip if at all possible; otherwise, explain fully the need for a return call
- Present a detailed invoice for payment
- Explain the charges
- Explain any warranty coverage that might apply
- Indicate where to call if any future concerns
- If a return visit is necessary when does the timing look like
- Thank them for their business

Sales follow-up

- Receive follow up contact on the quality of work done, and thank them for their business
- Handle any post service concerns quickly. Personal follow up call by management
- Internal feedback on the quality of service provided

It's important for all of us as business owners to take a periodic look at how we manage our customers and take the temperature to determine what changes and adjustments we might want to consider. Looking at our processes from the customer's perspective will help you stay focused and successful.

Brand Loyalty- Where does it begin and end?

By Jim Campbell MCap

Most people consider themselves pretty good at picking appliances based on their own knowledge, plus research that they do before they buy. Most manufacturers rely on past reputation to promote future sales, while others constantly come up with new designs that have never withstood the test of time. I will cite the example of Maytag, one of the most reliable and trusted brands among consumers for many years. As a factory technician, I was representing this company in the service field for many years, and proudly at that. It was always comical to hear customers say, "I thought you guys never worked!", and this was a testament to the inherent quality of the product at the time. Same can be said for Whirlpool....they made all (or most) of the Sears & Roebuck's Kenmore laundry and refrigeration products for many decades. This propelled the Kenmore brand to nearly the same perceived quality as Maytag. For this reason, people continue to shop at Sears with the same expectations.



What changed at the turn of the century, as we all know now, was the outsourcing of manufacturing to other countries, causing a massive redesign of many products which were perfectly fine to begin with. Government intervention from agencies such as the D.O.E. and E.P.A. drastically changed the way products had to be designed to comply with their standards. Manufacturers scrambled to retool and also compete with outside companies who were vying for a share of our white goods market. The end result after several years of imported products made less durably than ever has created mistrust among consumers now. When their new (3 year old) washer has a major failure, consumers begin to not only question their choice of brand, but worse, they often opt to replace a product that could have been spared the landfill by having more reasonable repair costs. And we're not talking service costs here...we are talking about the unreasonable cost of replacement parts which, in the past, have always been reasonable enough to justify a repair in most cases. Boy, did that change!

So, the dilemma facing the manufacturers is twofold here...they continue to pursue a fiduciary gain from more sales rather than retain brand loyalty thru reliable, low maintenance products and they make it difficult for those who support them in the field to do a fair job at a fair price. Servicemen are business people, too, and this trend has not gone unnoticed. Many servicemen are resorting to buying their own parts from places not under the direct control of manufacturers. After all, free enterprise is the American way, not a dictatorial way where we have only one option. It is the desire of the service world to see this trend reversed, not just to maintain a good business volume, but to make consumers glad that they bought a particular brand. I can tell you from experience, most customers get a bad taste in their mouth when a product they thought was trustworthy in the past turns out to have several repairs in less than 10 years. They become resolved to buy another brand instead, hoping to get their money's worth. Servicemen are in essence the ambassadors for the manufacturer in a sense. They have to deal with the frustration seen by consumers from the high cost of repairs,

Does the manufacturing world see this as simply the "way it is", or is it going to take some serious thought as to how to stay afloat in the coming years? With so many brands diluting the market, having one or two stand out as superior is always a good thing. But, superiority comes with a bigger price tag now. Sure, there are those who can afford upscale appliances, but speaking from a 9 to 5 wage earner's perspective, the ones we can afford don't come with the same quality. I wonder what it will take to create change in the current way of thinking in the manufacturing industry? The service industry is certainly keeping busy, but this is not the kind of job security we were hoping for. Higher costs for customers also mean higher costs for us. But, we do what we do for the common good, and will continue to do so regardless of the obstacles. I do appreciate the efforts of certain manufacturers who are supportive of the independent servicemen out here, and hope the trend of good servicemen support continues to spread as companies start to feel comfortable in their own skin.

I, for one, would dearly love to see brands return that people can brag about after years of service, not replace after seven. I think that most consumers would agree. Parts suppliers are also feeling the brunt of this trend, and many are having a hard time meeting their financial goals due to the cost of parts and shipping. This is how brand loyalty begins and ends.

Sears is losing its last hope for staying in business

By Haley Peterson- Business Insider

Sears is imploding.

Sales are continuing to fall and the company's one hope for survival — its home appliances business — is now in decline.

"This was one of the main areas contributing to the decline — in spite of the fact that across retail as a whole this category grew strongly over the first part of this year," Neil Saunders, CEO of retail consulting firm Conlumino, said in a note on Thursday.

"That Sears is unable to make gains in categories which are growing, and in which it has a more established presence, highlights its main issue: it has fallen out of favor with American shoppers who continue to abandon the chain at a fairly alarming rate."

The department store chain reported Thursday that its profit improved slightly in the most recent quarter due to trimmed expenses, but sales declined 8.3%. [Kmart](#) same-store sales dropped 5%, and Sears domestic same-store sales fell 7.1%.

The company said it's now exploring the possible sale of three of its iconic appliance brands including Kenmore, Craftsman, and Diehard.

The Kenmore, Craftsman and Diehard brands "are beloved by the American consumer, and we believe that we can realize significant growth by further expanding the presence of these brands outside of Sears and Kmart," the company said.

The move could yield some additional revenue for the company, which appeared to please investors. Sears' shares rose more than 4% on Thursday.

But the sale of these iconic brands is an alarming sign for the viability of Sears' retail business.

"It is something of a tacit admission that Sears doesn't really see much potential to grow these assets within its own retail businesses," Saunders wrote. "This could represent the beginning of the end for Sears as it starts to sell off its 'family assets' in a bid to ensure that it remains solvent over the medium term."

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. The cost is \$59.95.

Call 1-888-777-8851 or www.psaworld.com and click on Member Tools

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