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Directory

NEMEON, INC.

P.O. Box 51526 · Phoenix, AZ 85076
Phone: 800-940-6027 · Fax: 480-820-5329
Web Access: www.nemeon.com

President and CEO

Tony Cogliandro

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Members and Preferred Vendors
of the NEMEON Cooperative.*

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The Board Report

Ken Rosenberger

Most of us have credit cards with “rewards”. We like to get “rewards”. Your NEMEON membership also has “rewards”, but without all the small print that comes along with the credit card. We all joined NEMEON for some reward or another but there are many rewards we should take into consideration when we think about all the benefits we receive.

NEMEON gives you...

1. Recognition that you are an important distributor in your market. The vendors now view you as a key player that can out-perform the chains.
2. Ability to communicate with other successful distributors and exchange valuable “Best Practices.” It’s just good business to learn from others you respect.

3. Rewards for your increased support of our preferred vendors. They get rewarded for their support of NEMEON and in turn you get rewarded not just in dollars, but also in support and a growing partnership that will increase over the years.

4. A great staff to help with vendors, etc., as well as support from Co-operative Solutions.

There are many more rewards we see as your Board of Directors look forward to our 2003/2004 fiscal year. The board also hopes to give you an early earned “reward”.

Thanks again for your support. ■

Meeting The Customer Service Challenge

Vicki Wilson, Willow Creek Consultants

I'd like to share with you an experience my husband Steve and I had last fall. We are experienced horse riders, but neither of us had ever ridden a mule. We wanted to see what the difference is between riding a horse and a mule. So we went on a mule trail ride that was planned for a Sunday afternoon, from noon until 2:00p.m. We arrived at the scheduled time and place, but there was no one there. The guide in charge of the ride arrived a half an hour late. The mules weren't ready for the ride, so we helped saddle and harness the mules. Then the guide assigned us our mules, putting me on the biggest 6-foot tall mule, and Steve, who doesn't know the trails, got the mule that insisted on being in the front. We took a lot of wrong turns. Our 2-hour



pleasure ride turned into a four-hour torture ride! Who was responsible for our poor customer service experience, the mule or the jackass in charge?

Some companies, especially start up companies, place a strong degree of emphasis on the initial sale; acquiring the

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President's Letter

2003 Mid-Year Update:

NEMEON continues the course.

Growth in membership. As of this writing we are at 80 members and 188 locations.

- Last year at this time, we had 54 members and 113 locations.
- A growth of 48% in members and 66% growth in locations!

Growth in Size: Based on the preliminary survey data we have received from members, the group as a whole has reached the \$1 Billion mark in sales!

If numbers talk in this business, then our talk is becoming a Roar!

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, Building Value is the primary mission for 2003... Commitment and perseverance with our partners and ourselves is the roadmap and strategy.

Building Value means we have to support our PVs and Shift The Share.™

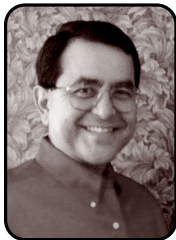
How can we do that?

A couple of examples I used at the member meeting in New Orleans:

- For a \$1MM purchasing Member of roofing, increasing your purchases of laminate shingles to a Preferred Vendor equals:
 - Shifting The Share of 10% @ \$5,000 a T/L => 20 T/L a year or 1.67 T/L a month.
 - Shifting The Share at 15% @ \$5,000 a T/L => 30 T/L a year or 2.5 T/L a month.
- For a \$50,000 per year purchasing Member, increasing your purchases of Cements to a PV equals:
 - Shifting The Share of 10% @ \$750.00 a pallet is about 7 Pallets a year or 0.6 Pallets a month.
 - Shifting The Share at 15% @ \$750.00 a pallet is 10 Pallets a year or about 0.8 Pallets a month.

Once you think in terms of truckloads or pallets, you can see that "Shifting The Share" is not only doable, but easily achieved! All it needs is focus from you and your staff in supporting our PVs whenever you can.

Our Reality is what we make of it... we create the value and all of us (NEMEON and our PVs) will share in the successes.



"Shift the Share!"

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tony Cogliandro". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

Tony Cogliandro
President

Free Your Customers

Mark Dancer, Pembroke Consulting

Distributors are caught in a trap. In order to free themselves, distributors will first need to free their customers. A lot of work needs to be done, but for-fee services will play an important role in helping distributors break out.

Every distributor knows the trap. Customers continue to demand high levels of support but are increasingly unwilling to pay for the value added. It gets worse. Products and brands are widely available, so there are plenty of competitive distributors ready to step in if service levels suffer. Finally, new channels have emerged, forcing distributors to fight even harder to minimize customer migration.

Distributors seeking to escape this trap typically follow several strategies, sometimes in combination. Consolidators seek to break out by growing larger, capturing market share and driving for scale efficiencies. Others go the other way, in effect pruning their business by tightening their belts and reducing operating costs. Going further, some attempt to walk away from unprofitable accounts, markets, or product lines. Still others try to have it both ways, giving in to price pressure without relief from support expectations, while at the same time searching for the shrinking number of elusive customers that will pay for excellent support in the form of product price premiums.

While these plans may provide relief, it is temporary because customers aren't offered anything new. In the end, these strategies give customers what they seek lower prices without compromise. Sensing their buying power and rewarded for their efforts, customers will turn the screws again and again, seeking more concessions and squeezing the distributor even tighter. Change is required if distributors are to escape this trap.

To break free, distributors must recognize that customers are also ensnared in long-engrained buying practices. The standard

business model for distributors is to sell products and add value. Support is provided in the price of the products, seemingly free to customers. Business customers face their own relentless competitive pressures and will always aggressively seek to lower their costs. Customers are trapped because the only lever distributors have given them is to demand lower product prices. It's a trap, and distributors had a strong hand in setting it.

Drive Customer Profits

In our project work and research, customers have sent a clear message – they will consider buying for-fee services from distributors if the services reliably and measurably reduce costs and drive profits in the customer's business. Distributors are in an excellent position to capture this opportunity, because they are on the front lines of serving customers. They understand the customer's operations, and distributors have resources and skills that can be used to drive out costs. There are barriers, however, starting with distributors' ongoing battle with declining margins.

Profit pressures cause many distributors to dig in. Traditionally, excellent performance of repetitive activities is viewed as the key success. Standard practices drive operational excellence and in-turn, profits. Customers get consistency, and perhaps improved service levels, but are often limited in their ability to customize the support they receive to their individual requirements. As distributors get squeezed, heightened commitment to operational excellence makes change even more difficult. Management thinking turns inward, and distributors have a hard time redesigning their operations to deliver meaningful, for-fee services.

Cross-subsidization practices can also be a problem. Highly profitable customers cover the distributor's costs of serving

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THE MANE FOCUS

Sales, Profitability and Time¹

Raise your hand if true.

"How many of you think you compete with ABC Supply Company (or ALLIED, or BRADCO, or NORANDEX, Home Depot, Lowes, etc)?" I bet most hands went up.

"What percent of your total sales volume overlaps with ABC's?" A few hands may go up.

"How many of your best (core) customers would consider calling ABC first for the same stuff?" I bet you zero hands went up.

"How many of you spend the most time on the customers who do the least (profitability-wise) for your business?" I bet most hands go up.

If you were like me when I was in the distribution biz, you find yourself spending the most time with the least profitable portion of your business.

Why the heck do we do that?

Okay, switching the thought process, now...

Rank your customers by estimated Profit Before Interest and Taxes (PBIT). In other words, what customers are most profitable to you? Size is unimportant right now.

Why are the top customers of that list so profitable? How big are they in volume? Which one of your salespeople sells them? Why is he/she so successful?

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Welcome New NEMEON Preferred Vendors

ARFCO

ARFCO manufactures a full line of Self-Seal roof flashings. They manufacture 1.25"-1.5", 2", 3", & 4" flashings plus the multi-size flashings of 1.5"-2"-3" and the 3"-4". The flashing bases can be aluminum, galvanized, copper, and thermoplastic. Also, the aluminum and galvanized bases have color options. They are available in brown, black, gray, and terracotta to match most shingles.

Duraflow

www.duraflow.com

Duraflo, a division of Canplas Industries Ltd., manufactures and markets top-of-the-line shutter and siding accessory products. Duraflo siding accessories and shed accessories are designed with professional contractor's input. Duraflo is committed to providing you with easy-to-read installation instructions, top-of-the-line literature, quality assurance and innovative product technology.

EcoStar

www.premiumroofs.com

EcoStar was created with a simple goal; to provide high quality, competitively priced premium steep slope roofing products using rubber & plastics technology. Building on this premise for the past 10 years, EcoStar now leads the industry with rubber steep slope roofing products that exceed all other manufacturers.



Fry Reglet

www.fryreglet.com

Fry Reglet is a leader in quality engineered, fabricated and finished products. Founded in 1949 with the introduction of a line of roof flashing components, the name "Fry Reglet" has become well known in the architectural community and is synonymous with quality materials and exceptional customer service. Today, in addition to roof flashing components, their line has expanded to include metal wall panels, column covers and aluminum reveals and moldings.

Hunter Panels

www.hpanels.com

Hunter Panels was founded in December 1997. They are the first company to enter the Polyiso industry since 1975, and they did so with a particular mission: to distinguish themselves as a proactive entrepreneurial manufacturer and a leader in the marketing of their product line. As a stand-alone manufacturer, they are focused singularly on that purpose. We have brought together a team of industry professionals who know Polyiso inside and out and who care about being technically proficient and customer driven.

ProMaster Metals

ProMaster Metals specialize in aluminum, copper, lead coated copper and steel roof drainage, drip edge, and coil products. They have added 1350+ new products since July 2001. They have manufacturing facilities located in Lancaster, PA, Atlanta, GA, Chicago, IL, Dallas, TX and Sacramento, CA.

Willow Creek Consultants

www.willowcc.com

Willow Creek Consultants provides a hiring consultant service that will reduce personnel turnover and save money.

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF PREFERRED VENDORS:

Air Vent, Inc.
ARFCO
Atlas Roofing Corporation
BMD Corp.
Cargotec
CertainTeed Group
CertainTeed Siding Products Group
Chim Cap
Cleasby Manufacturing Company
Continental Materials Inc.
DMSi
Duraflo
EcoStar
Enterprise Computer Systems, Inc.
Fennell Promotions, Inc.
Fry Reglet Architectural Metals
Geocel Corporation
Georgia-Pacific
Goodyear Tires
Hunter Panels
IKO Sales, Inc.
JL Industries
Karnak Corporation
LOMANCO
MALCO Tools
MiraDRI
NAPCO
National Nail Corp
NYI Building Products
Olympic Fasteners, Inc.
OSI Sealants, Inc
ProMaster Metals
Sievert Industries, Inc.
Specwise
Stafast Roofing Products
TAMKO Roofing Products
Tarco
Variform
Willow Creek Consultants
Wolverine Siding

For more information go to
www.NEMEON.com

Welcome New NEMEON Members

California Shingle & Shake Company (11)
Concord, CA
Contact: Tom Brutsche

Pacific Supply Company (4)
Orange, CA
Contact: Chuck Wentworth

SG Wholesale Roofing Supplies, Inc. (4)
Santa Ana, CA
Contact: Jamie Glazer

Central Siding Supply, Inc. (3)
Clinton, IA
Contact: Gary Keis

Roofing Products & Building Supply Co., Inc. (2)
Jefferson, LA
Contact: Vincent P. Saia

Wake Supply Company, Inc. (3)
Raleigh, NC
Contact: Ron Errato

LA Roofing Materials, Inc.
Los Angeles, CA
Contact: Don Gardner

Welcome New Business Service Partners

Boise

www.boiseoffice.com

Boise Office Solutions, (a division of Boise Cascade), is the premier office supply provider in the country. Boise offers over 25,000 top quality products including office supplies, office furniture, artwork, computer supplies and promotional products. Boise is committed to providing NEMEON members with the best quality, pricing, and service available in the industry.

Branders.com

www.branders.com

Branders.com, the "See Before You Buy" company, has the largest selection of instantly customizable promotional items for the marketing, sales, and

event planning professional. They provide a single source to locate, design, order, and track promotional items online.

Goodyear

www.goodyear.com

Goodyear is the number one tire maker in North America. Starting with the simple process of manufacturing a tire and refining it exponentially, they have repeatedly found themselves on the cutting edge of tire technology. If you want to be number one in tires, you think, eat and sleep tires, 365 days a year. As a result of this dedication, Goodyear continues to roll out the tires America wants.

Service Challenge

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client. These companies have the ability to generate revenue on a one-time basis but lack the ability, understanding, knowledge, or culture to develop long-term, life-long relationships. These organizations don't typically survive or prosper over long periods of time solely with the ability to make the initial sale. However, other companies, the Fortune 1000, the Fortune 500, the Fortune 100 and the businesses you deal with on a daily basis, the businesses that have survived, all share at least one thing, their enormous regard and respect for their customer base and their valued employees.

It has been demonstrated through the years that your clients and customers go where they are wanted. Don't we want them? We spend hundreds and thousands - even millions - of dollars regularly trying to secure new clients and bring in new business. Well, I can assure you that they will stay where they are appreciated. That means that ALL your employees are responsible for displaying world-class customer service. In other words, everybody in your organization is truly a customer service representative.

As business owners, you can develop policies, procedures and training programs, and have all the best intentions to be a world-class customer service organization; but with all those good intentions, the execution, the implementation, is all literally in your employees' hands. They are the ones you entrust with this responsibility.

Do you ever wonder how people like the trail guide in my story get hired into customer service jobs in the first place? In most cases, they were hired by someone who believed they would be good at customer service. That's because antiquated hiring practices put employers at a disadvantage. They lack the tools that can effectively,

LION'S BYTES

Microsoft and La-Z-Boy have collaborated on the couch potato/internet junkie's dream. The La-Z-Boy Explorer, the world's first "e-cliner", comes equipped with a built in WebTV receiver, infrared keyboard, and drink

holder. The Explorer is designed to let you kick back, relax and connect to the Internet. Of course the positioning of the chair combined with the keyboard tray delivers good ergonomics.

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Free Your Customers

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customers that are not as profitable, but all customers are required to cover the distributor's cost structure and to support the distributor's bottom line profits. The same is often true for products and brands carried by the distributor. If distributors are to offer fee-based services, distributors will need to customize their offerings according to the customer's needs. Customers want to unbundle distributor capabilities, cherry-picking the help they need and paying only for the support they receive. Cross-subsidization profit models stand in the way of progress.

Bottom line, while the higher margins and new revenue opportunities of fee-based services hold out a kind of economic salvation for distributors, they will not be common until distributors take a large leap. Distributors must challenge today's profit models and place a high priority on finding ways to reduce costs through the customer's operations. If distributors can, in fact, design services that will directly improve the customer's profitability, they will free customers to change their buying behavior to include purchasing for-fee services from distributors.

Guarantee Your Results

Finding ways to improve the customer's profitability is only the first step towards freeing customers. Customers will consider services that can lower costs and drive profits, but they will also demand guarantees.

Services remove the smoke and mirrors that cloud distributor promises of excellent support. Today, distributors offer high levels of availability and delivery, but often the only money-back guarantee put forward is the manufacturer's product warranty. Everything else is marketing – "buy from me because I'm more consistent and reliable than my cross-town rival!" If the customer is not satisfied, the only real recourse is to switch suppliers.

Services fill this vacuum. Consider gain sharing, a simple service model. In the



To break free, distributors must recognize that customers are also ensnared in long-engrained buying practices.

welding industry, suppliers offer to analyze the customer's welding operations, guaranteeing cost savings. Distributors are paid from the savings they generate. Customers don't pay a dime if the service, productivity consulting delivered through a welding practice audit, doesn't deliver results.

There is a lesson in gain sharing for all fee-for-service strategies. Services create a new contract: distributors will deliver real results that are measurable in the customer's business. And if results aren't delivered, the customer doesn't pay.

Setting Customers Free

Setting customers free will require a shift in how distributors manage and defend their profitability. It will also require guarantees that bottom line gains will be significant, measurable, and actually delivered. Combined, these two realities focus distributors in the right direction, but they are not enough to design a successful fee-for-services strategy. To move forward, distributors must:

1. Get the facts – Explore how you might drive customer costs down and line up your

skills and resources as for-fee services. But don't stop with anecdotal stories. Quantify your costs to deliver the service and measure the gains you can deliver.

2. Question your judgement – Avoid "inside thinking." Too many distributor service strategies start with a "I can do it, so I can sell it" mentality. Test your ideas with customers. Look to other industries for examples. Remember that you are designing a new product, and by most studies, the vast majority of new products fail. Do your homework.

3. Add new competencies – Chance are, if you are performing potential for-fee service activities today, you are giving them away for free. Getting customers to pay for something that has been free is a very difficult, often impossible, challenge.

4. Build on your history with customers– Customers will want a guarantee, but you will still have the greatest success with customers that you have served with creativity over time. Start your investigations and offerings with these customers before taking them to others.

5. Don't forget your suppliers– In many cases, it will not be possible to maximize customer value unless distributors and suppliers pool their resources and knowledge. Distributors are closer to the customer's operations, but manufacturers know the true capabilities of their products. Moreover, there are redundancies that can be reduced only if distributors and manufacturers agree to work together in new ways. Inventory and onsite sales and product support are two examples. ■

© 2002 Pembroke Consulting, Inc. Mark Dancer is Vice President of Philadelphia-based Pembroke Consulting, a management consulting firm specializing in strategy, channels and business marketing. He can be reached at mdancer@PembrokeConsulting.com. This article is based upon Facing the Forces of Change: OUTLOOK 2003 available at www.nawpubs.org

Retirement Distribution Rule Update

Because the IRS thinks you may live a little longer than previously expected, you may be able to defer taxes on some of your retirement savings a little longer.

But...failure to take the correct required minimum distribution (RMD) from your retirement accounts (401(K), 403(b), and the traditional IRA) may result in one of the stiffest penalties the tax code has to offer: 50 percent of the amount you should have withdrawn.

Understanding the new regulations may help you plan for the future or better manage an inheritance.

Retirement plans that offer an up-front tax deduction for contributions typically

required individuals to begin taking money out of their account after age 70.5 because the IRS wants retirees to pay taxes on any earnings before they die.

The new law allows retirees to use more current life expectancy tables, which allow them to stretch their payouts over longer time periods. The rules also allow married couples with large age disparities or those with young beneficiaries to take even smaller distributions based on combined life expectancies.

Keeping up with IRS regulations can be a full time job. To take full advantage of the new distribution rules, it's critical to understand how they apply to your situation. ■

Service Challenge

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consistently and reliably measure the two factors that are most important for great customer service: skills or knowledge, and behavior or personality.

The Customer Service Survey is a low-cost, Internet based tool that can be used for hiring or employee-development. The Customer Service Survey measures the critical information necessary for delivering world-class customer service. It measures skills, customer service knowledge and behavior. Extensive research has been conducted over 25 years to determine the nine behavioral traits that produce excellent customer service. The candidate or employee's results are measured against an established benchmark required for top performance.

A franchise owner in Coeur d'Alene started using the Customer Service Survey for hiring servers and reduced his employee turnover to 0% within six months. In his letter to us he wrote, "You have helped me insure that we hire the right person the first time because we identify candidates who have excellent customer service knowledge and personality. It has been my experience that these tools have dramatically improved the proficiency of my staff on a daily basis".

Willow Creek Consultants specializes in employee retention and development. We work with companies to improve their internal customer service. Good customer service to us means that employees are treating each other like "they want to be treated". And we believe that when employees are giving good customer service to each other, they will in turn, give good customer service to their external customers too. ■

Steve and Vicki Wilson, owners of Willow Creek Consultants, live in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho and can be reached at (208) 676-0798 or Steve@willowcc.com or Vicki@willowcc.com.



LION'S BYTES

Making the most of your web address

Ok, you have an Internet address, now what? For some, the prospect of changing all of their communication materials to reflect their new web address may seem overwhelming. It's not. With a little planning, you can start reaping the benefits of your new domain name. Here are a few ways to get the maximum advantages from your new domain name.

Name is Important

Get your names at the beginning of the project. Make sure the name you choose is what is best for your company. Consider buying your official name and a few abbreviated names. If there are variations people might use when they think of your company give them the flexibility to use them. Keep it short and simple.

Use Your Name in E-mail Addresses

You've purchased your name now use it. Select a primary name for staff e-mail

addresses, for example, bbennett@nemeon.com. With e-mail becoming a dominant form of business communications, you'll reinforce your company identity every time someone sends an e-mail.

Update Print Materials

You need to make sure your domain name is reflected on all your print materials, including stationary, business cards, marketing materials, order forms, and newsletters. You don't need to destroy your current stock, just wait until the supply gets low. When each item is reprinted incorporate your new address into the material. Make a checklist of all items that need to be updated. Ask all employees if they know of anything that isn't on your list. Update as you go. Soon everything will be changed and you won't see a huge increase in cost.

VENDOR COMMITTEE

Earl Ward
Roof Depot, Inc.
1860 E. 28th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55407
612-728-5227
earl@roofdepot.com

Rick McLaughlin
Wholesale Roofing Supply
104 E. Trinity Blvd.
Grand Prairie, TX 75050
972-263-8190
rickcmcl@msn.com

Jack Bone
Bone Roofing Supply
1950 N. Narragansett Avenue
Chicago, IL 60639
773-237-9740
brsjack@boneroofingsupply.com

Ross Riddle
South Coast Shingle Co.
2220 E. South Street
Long Beach, CA 90805
562-634-7100
sales@southcoastshingle.com

*Please contact the Vendor
Committee to voice your opinions
on perspective Preferred Vendors.*

New NEMEON Website

Over the last few months the NEMEON website has undergone a drastic transformation. Not only is there a new look there are more features. The new site is easier to navigate with quick links and more options on the navigation bar. One new option you will find is the "Member Area".

Every NEMEON member has a login and password which gives you access to the "Member Area". Once you've logged in, there is economic data, construction spending information, industry news, business services, an online store, surveys, member polls, and a discussion group. The new discussion group is a very valuable tool and a great addition to your membership. If you have any questions your fellow members might be able to assist you with this is the place to post them. Once you have posted your question you have the option of receiving

an email when anyone responds to your question. To really keep up to date with what is being discussed you can choose to get an email when certain subjects of interest are posted or every time anything is posted.

Now you are saying, "well, I don't have email!"... yes you do! Through the new website all NEMEON members now have access to a personal web based email account. Once you have logged in to the "Member Area" you are logged in to your email. Anywhere you can access the Internet you can access your email.

Some of the other new options you will find in the "What's New" section are an online calendar, a guest book, and a photo album. If you are a preferred vendor and need your password to get into the member list or if you have any questions on the new website please contact Bo Bennett at 800-940-6027 ex. 29. ■

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Most importantly, are they a part of your "best-core" customer list who would call you first for product? If not, why not?

The simple lesson in this exercise is this:

Your time is a limited amount . . . you'll never have more than 24 hours in a day. You have customers that are more profitable than others. You have customers that are less profitable than others. Time and effort should be spent

on those most profitable customers and your major goal is to think . . .and proactively . . . help them grow their business. How can you help your profitable customer/ partners grow? Do that and you both win. ■

1 Basic idea taken from the writings of Bruce Merrifield commentaries.

(www.merrifield.com)

NEMEON FUTURE TIMELINE

Mark Your Calendars

The Remodelers' Show

Conference: Oct. 22 - Oct. 25, 2003
Exhibits: Oct. 23 - Oct. 25, 2003
Baltimore Convention Center
Baltimore, MD

The International Builders' Show (NAHB)

January 19-22, 2004
Las Vegas Convention Center
Las Vegas, Nev.

NRCA

February 22-25, 2004
San Diego, CA

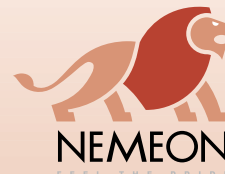
MRCA

October 22-25, 2003
Cincinnati, OH

February 20-24 2004

NEMEON Annual Meeting
San Diego, CA

LOOKING FORWARD



If you would like to submit a timely news item for publication, contact: Teri Ditsch at 800-940-6027 or e-mail at tditsch@co-opbuilders.com.