

the WHOLESALER **75** YEARS



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PERSON OF THE YEAR

The Wholesaler magazine celebrates Bill Weisberg, chairman and CEO of AD, as our Person of the Year. He started his journey with the buying group as its third employee, and his respect for people, companies, culture and inclusion fosters an environment of growth and expansion. Guided by faith and respect, his leadership style has grown the buying group from 45 members to now more than 800 — and all engaged with a purpose. Read how the maverick started on his journey, and how he inspires and leads from the front. Story starts on page 40.

Munch's Supply Raises Over \$9,800 for St. Jude

Employees from Munch's Supply, a leading Midwest-based heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) distributor, participated in the virtual St. Jude's Walk/Run to End Childhood Cancer on Sept. 26.



For the past seven years, Munch's Supply has supported the event. "We're proud to work with our employees and customers, continuing this annual tradition to help the children of St. Jude," said

Keith Kramer, president of Munch's Supply.

Even though 2020's event was virtual, the Munch's Supply team worked together to raise more than \$9,800 — one of their highest fundraising amounts. This put Munch's Supply in eighth place out of 191 teams in the Chicago area. A new aspect of this year's campaign was an online Munch's Supply/

St. Jude Summer Fun Store where employees and customers could purchase special items (such as T-shirts and electronics items) with purchase proceeds going to St. Jude. Other activities included raffles for customers and employees along with traditional participant donations.

The mission of St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is to advance cures, and means of prevention, for pediatric catastrophic diseases through research and treatment. Founded by Danny Thomas, no child is denied treatment based on race, religion or a family's ability to pay.



ESS Aligns with Strategic Rep Agents in Four Key Territories

Easy Sanitary Solutions (ESS), a Dutch brand known for their award-winning drains and bath accessories, strengthens its North American sales presence with the appointment of four agencies in key geographical areas including Northern and Southern California, Texas, Oklahoma Louisiana and the entire state of Florida.

"We are thrilled to have these industry veterans on board," said Eric Phelps, North America general manager for ESS. "Each of these firms are well-known specialists in their respective markets that bring a professional staff of industry veterans with years of proven sales experience. They also represent significant territories with huge growth potential and we believe these new alliances will help propel our sales in North America while better servicing local customers and the A&D community."

The new rep appointments include Repcor, Form Sales, Premier Sales and Marketing, and GS Marketing.

Repor has worked with key influencers including contractors, engineers, architects, builders and designers. The agency remains unique in the Northern California and Northern Nevada markets for providing a substantial footprint servicing the plumbing and related markets. The Sacramento location is central for the entire territory which guarantees one to two days delivery time to almost any point of Northern California and Northern Nevada. And an office in Hayward, which provides an excellent training and meeting facility for bay area customers.

To cover Southern California is Form Sales, a manufacturers' representative sales agency with a focus on the decorative plumbing and hardware industry covering both

retail and project sales as well as assistance with specifications. They have dedicated sales teams in all Southern California counties.



Premier Sales and Marketing is an agency that brings over 60 years of combined experience to the decorative plumbing and hardware markets. The agency represents high-end products for the most distinguished properties serving

the Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana market.

With over 28 years of experience in the high-end plumbing business,

GS Marketing covers the entire state of Florida, representing the finest luxury brands. A true multi-person agency that services Tier 1, 2 and 3 showrooms, GS Marketing also has a fully functional warehouse to

service clients with faster lead times on certain products.

All four agencies are luxury market specialists in their respective territories targeting the architect and design community with reach into the high-end consumer market.

LIXIL Helps to Protect Teachers Through Donation of 20,000 Face Shields

LIXIL Americas, a water technology company known for its kitchen and bath brands American Standard, GROHE and DXV, has announced plans to support teachers across the country with a donation of more than 20,000 face shields.

The initiative is part of the company's Community Day efforts in which LIXIL employees participate in activities to give back to their respective communities. This year, employees across North America will be provided with face shields to assemble and donate to local teachers.

"As teachers emerge as the unsung heroes of the pandemic, overcoming the challenges of educating during a global crisis, schools are facing the same PPE shortages our hospitals have struggled through," said Trey Northrup, leader, LIXIL Americas. "LIXIL employ-

ees are keeping our educators, school staff and children safe by donating face shields."

Since the start of the pandemic, LIXIL has supported those on the front lines by donating more than 70,000 face shields. The effort began in March, when LIXIL repurposed its 3D printers to produce face shields to donate to communities battling COVID-19. The company partnered with the Jersey City Rapid Maker Response Group to expand the effort with the help of employees who assembled and distributed the PPE within their respective communities.

As part of Community Day, LIXIL will also be collecting food and sanitary/hygiene items to donate to local food banks. Supporting the health and safety of the communities in which its employees live and work is the highest priority for LIXIL.



HARDI Seeks Greater Insight into Commercial Refrigeration

Heating, Air-conditioning & Refrigeration Distributors International (HARDI) has launched a research

project to gain greater insight into the forces affecting the commercial refrigeration channel.

Compared to other product channels, HARDI has found a limited

amount of existing research on the commercial refrigeration channel, and aims to support members involved in the manufacturing and distribution of commercial refrigeration products by addressing the following items:

- The factors driving end-user purchases and buying patterns.
- The ways in which contractors market their products to end-users, and the factors determining who contractors select as their primary supplier(s).
- The relationship between distributors and contractors, specifically

as it relates to the services distributors offer contractors and the ways distributors support their contractor customers.

The ways in which suppliers evaluate the development of new products, and how they market both new and existing products to potential customers.

With the support of HARDI's refrigeration council, the project will be led by HARDI's market intelligence team, Tim Fisher, Brian Loftus, and Joe Hartge, in conjunction with an outside market research firm for all pri-

mary research efforts. Research will include surveys, interviews, and focus groups of manufacturers, distributors, contractors, and end-users.

HARDI expects to see the completion of this project in mid 2021, with a series of webinars that will be held alongside a final report.

HARDI will incur a number of financial costs as part of the project. If you are interested in contributing to the success of this research project, contact Brandin Bursa at bbursa@hardinet.org or 614-674-5779 to get involved.