

E Executive Update

by Bill Yetman,
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Together We Are Better

Associations devote a considerable amount of time and energy to ensuring they are providing members with the necessary value to support their membership investment in the association. In my short time working with the board and staff of CBA, I have been most impressed with their clear focus, and indeed obsession, in seeing that you, their members, receive that value in a real and tangible way.

For many members that value comes in the form of the hundreds and even thousands of dollars you save with benefits, such as credit card fees for example, and for many others it is the strong collective voice you have as part of a


witnessed firsthand the power of “together” in effecting change. For Independents, this collaborative power matters even more.

Together, just recently, RCC and CBA joined forces to lobby the federal government on credit card fees—a campaign that many told us we could not win. Telling a group of independent retailers that something is impossible is never a smart idea. Not only were we able to shine a very bright light on the issues you have with credit card fees, we were also able to hold Senate and House of Commons hearings and then have the Minister to Finance agree to implement a code of conduct which would address our concerns—all in a very short 12-

we have aligned two organizations whose primary reason for existence it to provide you with value. Those of us old enough to remember the TV show *The Brady Bunch* will recall how the storyline brought together two families who at first appeared quite different but over time complemented and supported each other without losing their identity. Well, I see this relationship in a similar vein: two organizations getting together to ensure success and a stable long-term future; both bringing passion and commitment to a relationship that will only make the organizations stronger and, more importantly, their membership more successful.

Personally, I am an avid book reader, and, if we can keep a secret (my current employer need not know), it has always been my dream to own a bookstore—one that not only has the great books but the lovingly-crafted wood shelves, a ladder or two to retrieve the books at the very top and a fireplace for customers to relax around. In that dream, I also have Betsy the cat moving slowly among the books and customers, greeting you as you enter and looking forlorn as you leave ... I know, what a dream! In my very short time working with your amazing board and Carol, Emily and Jodi, your staff, I have been able to live out that dream, even if only through your conversations and passion for what you do. Since our collaboration began, I have had the opportunity to drop-in to many of your stores and look forward to visiting many more in the months to come.

Yes, indeed, “together we are better.”

If you have any questions about the CBA/RCC alliance, or the overall benefit members gain as a result, please feel free to email me at byetman@retailcouncil.org. 

Our new CBA/RCC relationship is significant not because of our new size and the fact we have a larger voice; it is significant because we have aligned two organizations whose primary reason for existence it to provide you with value.

larger group. In my dealings with CBA's board and staff, I am continually reminded—as I am with our own independent retailers—that no matter what you sell, independent retailers know and understand that “together we are better.”

As someone who has a great deal of experience working for cabinet ministers in Newfoundland and Labrador and Ontario, I've

month period. (Those of us who observe the political process in Canada would agree that having any government react, much less respond, to anything in a 12-month period is unheard of.) It was a success because “together we are better.”

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