

From the President's Desk

Dear NIBA Member,

This past year has seen extraordinary changes in the business climate— continued buyouts, mergers and acquisitions, terrorist attacks, recession, and diminished sales and profits. We are all working harder and longer to just stay even. It may be that change is inevitable, but that suffering is optional.

One of the biggest changes within our association is NIBAS name change. The membership voted last year to adopt a name to more closely represent our global connections. Our new name, NIBA-The Belting Association, recognizes that we are not just North America; our industry and Association are truly worldwide.

New NIBA committee members were welcomed to Tampa, Florida this January with an orientation program to help them get into the swing of NIBA management. Everyone was enthusiastic and worked very hard.

All of our committees have taken to task the 2001 strategic planning conference action plan. The plan includes reclassifying all NIBA members, expansion of technical seminars, not only to train employees in belt basics but also to develop advanced belt training, and to establish a *Train the Trainer* concept which will offer member companies the opportunity to educate key employees as instructors.

NIBA also established a permanent web site committee. This committee will inform and educate members about e-commerce—what it is and what it can be. They also intend to help NIBA members develop their own web site if needed.

To provide additional member value, the strategic plan also suggests we inform our members about services available through our MRA association, and explore

alliances with other associations such as CEMA and IDA.

The Education Committee is exploring ways to increase scholarships, potentially to include NIBA member employees. (See related story on page 5.)

For this year's Convention in Nashville, the Program Committee has chosen the theme "Positioned for Success." The convention will be filled with practical information we can all use in our businesses during these challenging times.

My hope is we will all have the opportunity to work within NIBA to:

- ✓ educate the membership on belting standards
- ✓ learn how to focus on belt value and performance, not just belt price
- ✓ use technical seminars and video programs to increase belt knowledge in our employees.

I believe we all agree that the combined corporate knowledge and skill of our employees is the biggest asset of our businesses. If we can continue to train managers and employees with NIBA's assistance, not only is our Association more valuable, but our companies will also be more valuable.



Ronald L. Roalsen
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