

# Express Network News



Volume 12, Issue 1 – January 2010



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## *New Year, New Newsletter, New You!*

Welcome to the new Express Network News newsletter, featuring the same ABWA and industry updates you've come to expect, plus some new ideas and additional opportunities to help you get your Express Network Membership's worth!

In 2010, we look forward to including in every issue of Express Network News:

- Express Network Features—Insights into local ABWA Express Networks that are making a difference in their communities by impacting the personal and professional success of members.
- ABWA News and Updates—as a premier member of America's leading professional Association for women, you deserve the inside scoop, right? Keep turning to the Women's instructional Network (WIN)<sup>™</sup> for your regular ABWA fix, but you can expect to see additional information or exciting previews here!
- Networking Tips—because, as Express Network members, you realize the value in building your networking circle and making important connections in your community.
- Market relevant current topics to bolster your professional development and serve as useful conversation during your many networking encounters.

**Here's to 2010 being your best year yet!**



## *Online and In Charge*

Click the links below to connect with ABWA through various social media outlets to promote your Express Network, membership, and your affiliation with an Association touting 60 years of changing women's lives. It's a WIN-WIN!

### **Facebook**

"American Business Women's Association—ABWA"

### **LinkedIn**

"American Business Women's Association—All About ABWA"

### **Twitter**

@ABWAHQ

## Identifying Your Brand

Not just another buzzword, “Personal Branding” offers unlimited opportunities to improve your positioning over other qualified candidates in your job search, attract customers, and develop networking relationships.

We’ve all heard it before, but what exactly is personal branding?

Personal branding is simply focusing your efforts to “package” your identity as a professional so that

the impression employers, customers, networking contacts, and peers get from you is aligned with that of the brilliant, honest, superstar you know you are.

With today’s ever-changing employment conditions, it’s important to invest in your personal brand, regardless of your current job situation. In addition to your resume, networking contacts, and well-fitting suit, your personal brand should be maintained at all times.

To cultivate your own dynamic personal brand, it’s helpful to take a step back and think of yourself as your own business, applying business practices to the management and promotion of Yourself, Inc. Just think – the biggest baddest brands on the market have made it a top priority to ensure consumers everywhere know who they are, what they do, and why they’re the best on the market. So when it comes to Yourself, Inc., don’t you want your top consumers (i.e., employers and prospective customers) to know just how great you are?

Here are a few basic tips to get started identifying and building on the brand of Yourself, Inc., so that you can begin sharing your fabulousness with the world.

1. **What makes Yourself, Inc. really tick?** Hopefully it’s something you already get from your industry, but if it’s not, that’s okay. Spend some time creating a short list of your passions that are fed by your work.
2. **What is Yourself, Inc.’s specialty?** It shouldn’t be hard to write a very short list of your areas of expertise. In today’s online world, there are more than enough options for consumers and employers to choose from, so Janes-of-all-trades will be passed over for an expert. If you don’t feel qualified to tout a “specialty” yet, that’s alright; now is a great time to start working on refining your skills to lead the pack!

3. **If you could write the testimonials for Yourself, Inc.’s promotional materials, what would you say?** Remember that as consumers, our impression of a brand is based not just on the quality of products or services, but on the entire experience. Write down a great one-liner that describes your ideal review – whether it’s a compliment from a customer or kudos from your supervisor. You just wrote the mission statement for Yourself, Inc.!
4. **Take your new mission statement and put it where you can see it,** especially in places where you will be making important business decisions for the future of Yourself, Inc. Let your mission guide your actions, influence your voice when you speak, shine through your email signature, and help you stay positive when faced with challenges.

Congratulations! You’ve just made a very important step in developing your personal brand!

By definition, a company’s brand image is the sum of several very important parts, including:

- Its **quality of goods and services** – in this case, the quantifiable strength of your work and the contribution you make to your team;
- Its **perceived quality** – in this case, a customer or employer’s perception of you (right or wrong) based on your appearance, demeanor, professionalism, and promotion such as your resume, communication skills, and social media sites;
- **Feedback of consumers** – or in this case, your employers and customers who report on their overall experience with you.

Continued on page 3 ...



GEICO and ABWA have teamed up to offer a special discount on car insurance.

### Special member discount

Visit [geico.com](http://geico.com) for your FREE, no-obligation rate quote and be sure to select ABWA when asked for your affiliation. New customers save an average of \$500 when they switch.

To find out how much you could save, visit [geico.com](http://geico.com) or call 1-800-368-2734 today.

**GEICO**  
[geico.com](http://geico.com)

Average savings amount based on national GEICO New Policyholder Survey data through February 2008. Discount amount varies in some states. Some discounts, coverages, payment plans and features are not available in all states or companies. In New York a premium reduction is available. GEICO auto insurance is not available in Mass. One group discount applicable per policy. ABWA is compensated for allowing GEICO to offer this auto insurance program to ABWA members. Government Employees Insurance Co. • GEICO General Insurance Co. GEICO Indemnity Co. • GEICO Casualty Co. These companies are subsidiaries of Berkshire Hathaway Inc. GEICO: Washington, DC 20076. GEICO gecko image © 1999-2008 © 2008 GEICO



## What's Happening?

Click these links to see what's new in ABWA!

**ABWA's Homepage has a fresh new look!**

**Don't miss the March 1 deadline for SBMEF Outright Grants**

**Now accepting nominations for ABWA's National Board of Directors! Visit WIN to learn more. Deadline for nominations is March 1.**

**Register Now for Your District Conference to get: ABWA Membership Benefits Innovations Preview; Best Practices Updates; Awesome leadership training and more!**



## Express Book Review

### The Power of Pause:

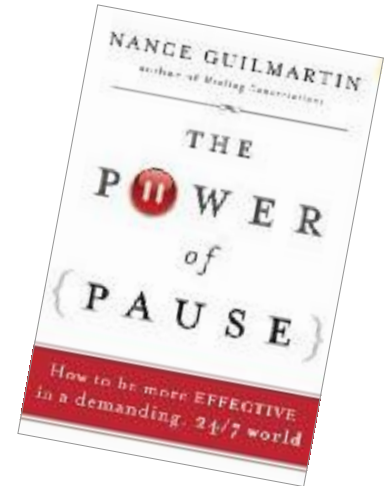
### How to be More Effective in a Demanding, 24/7 World

### By Nance Guilmartin, ABWA District II & IV Keynote Speaker

Nance Guilmartin describes pause as something "as simple as not immediately responding to something someone says, does, or writes. It can be thirty seconds, a minute, an hour, or a day. It can be that one, deep breath. It's any space between and action and your reaction. It's the safety mechanism offering you an opportunity to make a different choice than the one you might make if you speed ahead fueled by what you think you know, see, or hear."

In her book, *The Power of Pause*, ABWA's upcoming District Conference Keynote Speaker identifies fascinating ways our knee-jerk reactions and speedy multi-tasking can result in lost opportunities or even financial costs to our operations.

In a world where every moment counts, this quick and easy read is well-worth your time to learn how to bridge the gap between your communications and productivity and to be "curious not furious" to avoid misunderstandings and other communication breakdowns that can lead to negative outcomes in your personal and professional life.



**See Nance present in person at an ABWA District Conference this spring!**

*Click here to learn more about Nance and other exciting ABWA events happening at The Woodlands, Texas, March 19-20.*

*Click here to learn more about the District Conference featuring Nance in Annapolis, Md., May 14-15.*

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### Connect Your Business With Success in 2010 With The All-New Company Connection Subscription!

Scheduled for an official re-launch in early 2010, the company Connection subscription will offer business owner members of ABWA:

- ⊗ Filtered newsfeeds featuring current market trends and industry updates customized for entrepreneurial interests.
- ⊗ Special WIN Team Board to deliver peer discussions, expert advice, and high-level business tools library.
- ⊗ Promotional opportunities in Women in Business, District Newsletters, and more.
- ⊗ Redesigned online directory to connect your business to ABWA's membership and the web.

Visit [www.abwa.org/companyconnection](http://www.abwa.org/companyconnection) to take advantage of a limited time discount for ABWA members only!



### "Personal Branding"

...continued from page 2

By taking time to analyze your strengths and identify your passions, you're better able to recognize opportunities to let these two important facets of your professional brand shine. By being sure about what you want employers and customers to say about you, you have set a great benchmark to measure your success in your branding efforts.

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# Express Network-ing Tips

We all know there are countless online communities available for spending hours of each day "networking." As busy professionals, what's most important to many women is finding a real purpose for joining in on the craze.

This month's Express Network-ing Tip focuses on how to find purpose in your online networking endeavors. With so many friend requests, instant messages, direct messages, followers, and buddies coming your way, it can feel difficult creating genuine relationships in the World Wide Web. Here are a few tips to help you sort through the white noise and connect with other professionals like you.

1. Take a look at the online community where you're networking. Spend a moment learning about the community from a corporate perspective. Is their mission to connect professionals? Or are they focused on finding your old high school classmates, promoting new musical groups, or sharing videos? All of these have their good points, but if you're looking to build your professional networking circle, be sure you're in the right place.
2. Consider the source of your incoming friend requests, connections, invitations, etc. A visit to this person or company's profile will tell you a lot about their interest in developing a mutually beneficial professional relationship with you. Important people to affiliate with share your interest in quality connections and maintaining a standard for success by building relationships, not just follower and friend counts.
3. Follow the Golden Rule. If you're looking for expert content, advice, and referrals online, be sure you're providing the same quality of output before you look for input. In any community, what you get from the experience is directly proportional to what you put in. Share freely and you'll be glad you did!

These are just a few tips to help you start making the most out of your valuable time spent online. What tips do you have to share?

*Log in to the Women's Instructional Network (WIN)™ and share your online networking insights by commenting on the National Team Board post today!*

## Inside Scoop: Houston Area Professional Express Network

This ABWA Best Practices Level II Award Winning Team was asked on their WIN Team Board: "As members of an ABWA Best Practices Award winning team, what are your professional new year's resolutions and how do you look forward to HAPEN helping you achieve them?" Catch a glimpse of what's happening inside HAPEN!

[Kerry McEniry](#) 5 days ago

"In January, HAPEN's program will focus on helping our members develop effective elevator speeches to help everyone be prepared for whatever opportunities present themselves in 2010. I hope that the program (and the opportunity to practice on my fellow members) will help me make more effective, lasting first impressions. "

[Karen Grubbs](#) 4 days ago

"In today's tough economic climate, I really need to hone my skills in asking for referrals. HAPEN is known for its mentoring and I will take advantage of this benefit by seeking help from successful members of our network. "

[Beth Caplan](#) 3 days ago

"In 2010, I'm looking to grow my strategic consulting business and striving for success as incoming President of the Federation of Houston Professional Women (FHPW), an organization in which HAPEN is an active member with a tradition of leadership. The ability to reach into the extraordinary network of HAPEN's membership for advice, coaching, volunteers, wisdom and support is invaluable as I make plans to accomplish varied and ambitious goals in 2010.

One truth I have learned as both HAPEN member and past officer is that our membership rises to challenges and opportunities. That is why I'm proud that such outstanding HAPEN members as Sheri Parrack, Myrleen Knott, Carol Shepherd, Connie Smith, Susan Silverman, Dyane Magliolo, Vicky Reynolds, Pam Ahlers and others are serving with me on the FHPW and FHPW Educational Foundation boards to help us reach new heights of achievement. "

[Pamela Ahlers](#) 2 days ago

"This is my first year in HAPEN although I have been active with professional organizations over the last 25 years. I love the closeness of the small group and as one of my professional goals is to always keep learning, I am looking forward to our January meeting where we will learn how to "introduce ourselves effectively". What could be better? "

*What's happening inside your Express Network? ABWA wants to share it with your fellow members! Be on the look-out for a chance to sound off on your Team's accomplishments, goals, and tips for creating a great ABWA experience!*

# Upcoming Events



District II • March 19-20 • The Woodlands, Tex.  
The Woodlands Waterway Marriott



District VI • April 9-10 • Reno, Nev.  
The Grand Sierra Resort



District III • April 16-17 • Itasca, Ill.  
The Westin Chicago Northwest



District V • April 30-May 1 • Indianapolis, Ind.  
Hyatt Regency Indianapolis



District IV • May 14-15 • Annapolis, Md.  
Sheraton Annapolis Hotel



District I • May 21-22 • Naples, Fla.  
Naples Beach Hotel and Golf Club

## Our Mission

The mission of the American Business Women's Association is to bring together businesswomen of diverse occupations and to provide opportunities for them to help themselves and others grow personally and professionally through leadership, education, networking support, and national recognition.

## Proud Code of Conduct

Ethical dilemmas occur as a result of values in conflict. It is important that the values of the American Business Women's Association are communicated to all members, and so Express Network and Chapter leaders are asked not only to communicate but also to embrace, support, reinforce and uphold

ABWA's Proud Code of Conduct was developed as a means of guiding all members in making ethical decisions. The broad statements of the code of conduct that are listed below are not expected to cover all conduct for all situations. This is why the Proud Code of Conduct was created as a living and fluid code.

1. All members will serve as goodwill ambassadors for the American Business Women's Association.
2. Members will not allow their personal beliefs and convictions to interfere with the representation of ABWA's mission.
3. Members will always treat their member colleagues, guests, vendors and sponsors with honesty, respect, fairness, integrity, responsibility, kindness, and in good faith.
4. Members will maintain compliance with ABWA National, Chapter and Express Network Bylaws.
5. Members will not use their personal power to advance their personal interests.
6. Members will strive for excellence in their professions by maintaining and enhancing their own business knowledge and skills, and by encouraging the professional development of other members.

*Click on the images to the left to see more information on the exciting District Conference coming to a town near you this spring. Register now to save you place for amazing leadership training, new ABWA membership benefits previews, and Best Practices updates!*



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