Bill Mahre
ADG Promotional Products (S11)
President
White Bear Lake, MN

Number of years in industry: 11-15 years

PPAI Involvement: Product Responsibility Advisory Group (PRAG)

Other Industry Activities: UMAPP

Non-Industry Business, Professional and Nonprofit Community Organizations: Past president of board of trustees for Merrick Inc. (provide employment opportunities for people with disabilities); Recognized by organization as one of the top volunteers in its first 50 years of existence. Board of directors with Minneapolis Convention and Visitors Association; Brown Institute Business Leadership and Advisory Board; Youth coach and board member in White Bear Lake community for football, basketball, baseball and fast-pitch softball; St. Odilia Fall Festival Committee (led fundraising auction and events)

Non-Industry (other markets) Experience: Procter & Gamble; Minnesota Twins Baseball Business Operations; HealthEast Care System, Minnesota Diversified Industries

Other Business Experience: Assisted with multiple startups and turnaround ventures; marketing, general management and sales leadership roles throughout career.

Personal Information/Hobbies: Married 39 years to my junior high sweetheart with two married adult children and three granddaughters (with two more on the way!); Golf, basketball, fishing, boating.

Education Background: St. Thomas University, BA in marketing; magna cum laude graduate; Four year letter winner in varsity football and team captain.

Question To The Candidates

Q: PPAI is the trusted leader delivering essential knowledge, resources and community to ensure the success of our members and the industry. As the industry’s largest nonprofit trade association, PPAI’s membership continues to grow and diversify. The current membership of over 15,500 companies represents businesses of all sizes, specialties, product categories, structures and go-to-market strategies.

How should PPAI best use its limited resources to fulfill its overall mission of protecting and growing the industry while simultaneously ensuring the success of a diverse and sometimes disparate constituency?

A: PPAI’s role is not to ensure success for every member—the marketplace will decide that outcome. Today, our industry’s business model has us spending an inordinate amount of time and resources selling internally to each other, when ultimately all activities should be focused on providing high-quality products at a fair price in the most efficient manner to prospective end buyers/customers. Strategically, PPAI’s focus should be on:

1. Maintaining a consistent, cost-effective supply chain that ensures safe, compliant products.
2. Recruiting and training distributors and suppliers for success (specific pre-determined criteria) which allows for maintaining industry membership and access to PPAI’s valuable data systems.
3. Leading the education of community and business decision makers on how promotional products enhance marketing and communication activities to reach their recognition and branding goals.