

Paper Packaging Canada Hosts Financial Incentives Seminar

by Jerry Scott Mills

Earlier this year, Paper Packaging Canada held the first of a new series of industry seminars for members of the Corrugated Paperboard Packaging Association. Titled Grants & Rebates: Government Incentives Simplified, a fact-packed session which addressed interlinked topics of tax incentives, rebate incentives and financial grant programs available to Canadian companies.

The sold-out event was designed for those involved in capital investment planning and decision-making for such areas as employee training, plant expansion, productivity improvement and exporting. Management personnel from 15 paperboard packaging companies attended the morning seminar in Brampton, Ontario, north-west of Toronto.



David Andrews introduces CME vice-president Ian Howcroft (left) to Rob Latter

Following an introduction by David Andrews, Executive Director of Paper Packaging Canada, and a welcoming address by Association President Rob Latter, Vice President, Packaging of Kruger Inc., examples of diverse sources of financial support available through grants, funding and tax incentive programs were presented by three guest speakers: Ian Howcroft, Vice President of the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters Association (CME); David Reynolds, President of INAC Services Ltd; and INAC client advisor Peter Scholze, former Vice President of Nestlé, Canada and Russia.

CME Presentation Highlights

Ian Howcroft began with examples of high-level issues being addressed by the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters Association (CME) whose roster of member companies and their supply chains account for 75 percent of Canada's production and 90 percent of exports.

In light of manufacturing sector declines in the former "economic powerhouse province" of Ontario, he described the economy as reaching a "watershed period" with the mildly optimistic Economic Outlook for 2012 "difficult to predict with confidence" due to downside impacts from international sources.

Howcroft presented a comprehensive cross-section of programs that can be accessed by qualified manufacturers and examples of CME services and expertise that can "guide project planners to support programs available through virtually all levels of government." He challenged the audience to debunk the politically proper position that governments "create" jobs, stating, "Ideas and innovations create growth opportunities... and that's what creates jobs."

INAC Presentation Highlights

David Reynolds, President of INAC Services Ltd., told of a growing printing business that had failed because no-one in management was aware of an existing fund that could have buoyed the undercapitalized firm to viability. In the wake of that personal experience, Reynolds resolved to learn all he could about sourcing available grants and funds that support business ventures. As a direct result, INAC Services was created.

Operating in Canada, the US and Europe, INAC works at the grass roots level of research and preparation for funding applications. As described by consultant Peter Scholze, "Our job is to eliminate any possible roadblocks to funding approvals. We do at least 80 percent of the detailed preparation work required before applying for a grant."

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Paper Packaging Canada President Rob Latter, left, with Peter Scholze of INAC Services

Reynolds closed with an often eye-popping list of funding support sources ranging from government programs and university research grants to special interests. "Available funding often exists if you know where to look. And we do," said Reynolds.

Rob Latter described the early morning session as extremely well planned and well received by the appreciative audience of Paper Packaging Canada members and guests. "Condensed, focused and efficient, in an hour and a half a great deal of information was passed along, then we all got back to a full day of working."



Management personnel from 15 paperboard packaging companies attended the Paper Packaging Seminar in Brampton, Ontario.

Asked to comment on the benefits and outlook for further such industry events, Latter said, "It's no secret that converting is a tough business to be in right now. As an industry we're strong but we have to make every effort to ensure that we're cost competitive. Our Association's goal of delivering 'value in knowledge' will enable members to identify emerging opportunities as they arise and then 'seize

the moment' better prepared to deploy their resources."

Tangible Results Emerging

Jeff Haworth, group controller of Kruger Canada's packaging division, described his meeting with INAC consultant Peter Scholze following the January seminar: "We immediately identified three or four funding possibilities that could make sense for a new Kruger project. The seminar showed me what financial sources might be available and the support services that could make my research task quicker and more efficient."

"There are a lot of smart, competent people in the paperboard packaging industry but they just don't have the time to research funding opportunities, let alone handle the application process," said Scholze. "We give them an edge on obtaining grants and government incentives that will match their needs."

Freelance photojournalist Jerry Scott Mills has covered the corrugated industry for more than a decade.
