INDUSTRY | MOTIVATION | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | WOMEN

Be a product of the profession

You can be a part of this movement to strengthen the economic clout of our industry by looking first to "our own" for the products and services we use every day. It's not just a boost for the profession; it's a step toward a higher quality of life that you richly deserve.

by **Jan Deuber**

plus AUDIO

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New distributors hear it as soon as they join, seasoned distributors live it every day, and trainers shout it from the rooftops so their organizations get it loud and clear… "*Be a product of the product!*"

But what does this truly mean?

That depends on the company you are with. If you are a distributor for a company that offers health and nutritional products, being a *product of the product* means you start your day with quality supplements and an energy drink. When that morning coffee break rolls around, you skip the coffee and donuts and re-fuel your body with your best selling power bar and make healthy meal choices throughout your day. For these distributors, being a *product of the product* means they understand the importance of good nutrition. They take every opportunity to use their company's products to live a happier and healthier life.

For those of you who represent a skin care line, *being a product of the product* means having healthy glowing skin that defies the passage of time. Every morning you cleanse, tone and moisturize with the best products your company offers. You protect your skin from the sun, mask at least once a week, drink plenty of water and end your day with a nightly ritual of youth enhancing cleansers, creams and lotions.

A representative for a company selling products for the home is a *product of the product* when she transforms her living space into a place of beauty, warmth and comfort using just the right accessories. And this phenomenon doesn't stop at just products; it extends to services as well.

From long distance to legal advice, direct selling companies are on the cutting edge of delivering top quality services to today's consumer.

Being a *product of the product* means having an unshakable belief in what you sell and using and sharing the products every opportunity you get.

It is this philosophy of becoming your own best customer that has made this industry the economic powerhouse that it is today, generating more than $29 billion in sales in 2003 in the United States alone. So the question we pose is "Why stop here?" Why not flex our collective economic muscle, harness the buying power of the more then 13 million direct sellers in the United States alone and begin a new trend of *becoming a product of the profession?*

Be A Product of The Profession

But those with the true heart of a direct seller don't stop at their own product line. Their commitment extends to *being a product of the profession* as well. What does this mean? In today's world, being a product of the profession means we look to "our own" for the products and services we use every day. From the moment we rise through the end of the day, we are faced with opportunities to strengthen the collective buying power of our own industry by purchasing products and services from other direct sellers. Stop for a moment and look around you. The shampoo in your shower, the pots and pans in your cupboards, the vitamins on your counter, the food in your pantry, the cleaning products in your laundry room, the clothes in your closet, and the phone on your desk… literally every product you use is now available through a direct sales company.

Let's take a look at the tremendous impact this could have on our industry. Suppose this new "*buying direct*" trend were to inspire one out of every two direct sellers to spend an average of $100 more per month on products and services purchased through direct selling channels. That

would mean that 6.5 million out of the 13 million direct sellers in the United States would perhaps switch their long distance provider, change their skin care brand, start on a nutritional program, buy this season's fashion and accessories from fellow direct sellers and so on.

> ***This simple act of* buying direct *would infuse more than $600 million dollars into our industry each month, resulting in skyrocketing revenues of an additional 7.2 billion dollars more per year in the United States alone!***

Assuming approximately half of those revenues are paid to distributors through commissions and overrides, this new trend could put more than 3.5 billion dollars into the pockets of direct sellers in the United States in one year. With more than 45 million direct sellers throughout the world, *"buying direct"* could be the tipping point that brings direct selling forward and into the hearts and minds of consumers everywhere.

What needs to be in place for this new phenomenon to take hold?

First and foremost, companies must get rid of old beliefs and policies that discourage their distributors from networking with or buying from other direct sellers. Stop thinking that the simple act of buying products is going to cause your distributors to "jump ship." Instead, have faith in the bond you have with your sales force and focus your efforts on enhancing the support services that will keep them loyal and steadfast in their commitment to you.

Secondly, we must each form the habit of looking first to direct sellers in our community who offer products and services we need. By doing so, we transform a simple monetary transaction into a personal statement of belief in and support of this industry we have grown to love.

True, some more narrow minded direct sellers may share that they do not seek out other direct selling products or services for fear of being recruited by the other distributor. While this may be true in some cases the remedy lies in all direct sellers holding themselves to a more enlightened— a higher standard that celebrates the freedom of choice.

One community in which an individual's choice of product and company is honored and protected is the Direct Selling Women's Alliance. The "Code of Honor" (to which all members have agreed) strictly prohibits cross recruitment among direct sellers. Because members hold themselves to such high standards, there has not been one incident of cross recruitment. Rather, there exists a spirit of support and encouragement - a community that demonstrates the power of an entire team of people operating with integrity and working together toward a shared vision of the future of our profession.

Be a part of this movement to strengthen the economic clout of our industry by looking first to "our own" for the products and services we use every day.

It's not just a boost for the profession; it's a step toward a higher quality of life that you richly deserve.

Jane Deuber is the President and cofounder of the Direct Selling Women's Alliance (DSWA), an internet-based organization that provides education, support and resources to home-based entrepreneurs in more than 12 countries.

Jane's direct selling career began 19 years ago, after earning her Master's Degree in International Business from the Monterey Institute of International Studies in Monterey, Calif. Shortly after graduation, she and her husband founded a direct selling company that offered a line of high quality accessories through a network of independent distributors in twenty two states throughout the US. During her 13 years as Chief Executive Officer, Deuber developed a reputation for running a quality company that reported among the highest retention and sales averages in the direct selling industry.

After selling her company in 1998 Jane established a consulting firm dedicated to helping small to medium sized businesses maximize their market potential.

In 2002, Jane founded the Direct Selling Women's Alliance with two partners, Nicki Keohohou and Grace Lee. Their on-line organization now provides education, resources and support to entrepreneurial women in over 12 countries. Their bet-selling book, ***Build It Big***– 101 Insider Secrets from top direct selling experts, debuted in February 2005, climbed to #1 on Amazon.com in the category of sales and marketing and is now being published in five languages.

Today, the Direct Selling Women's Association is the foremost provider of information, resources, networking and support for direct selling women worldwide. For information, visit their website with our affiliate link, here: DSWA.org

AUDIO

INDUSTRY | MOTIVATION | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | WOMEN

The power of the profession

Rediscover your passion for what it is you do... to instill a pride and excitement for direct selling and your business and see your opportunity in a fresh new light.

with **Jane Deuber and Nicki Keohohou** of the DSWA

approximately one hour downloadable MP3

Enhancing your self-esteem and how it impacts your success... focusing on building relationships, serving others, making a difference in other people's lives and the benefits of having your own home based-business.... This recorded DSWA teleclass is packed with statistics that reveal your business is a part of something much, much bigger. Jane and Nicki talk about the economic impact of direct sales— $30 billion dollars in 2003... the incredible growth rate— worldwide: 40 million people in Direct Sales. That 76+ percent are women. 200 million people will become involved by 2010. The five-times growth rate. That 80 percent of all Americans want a business of their own. And more....

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