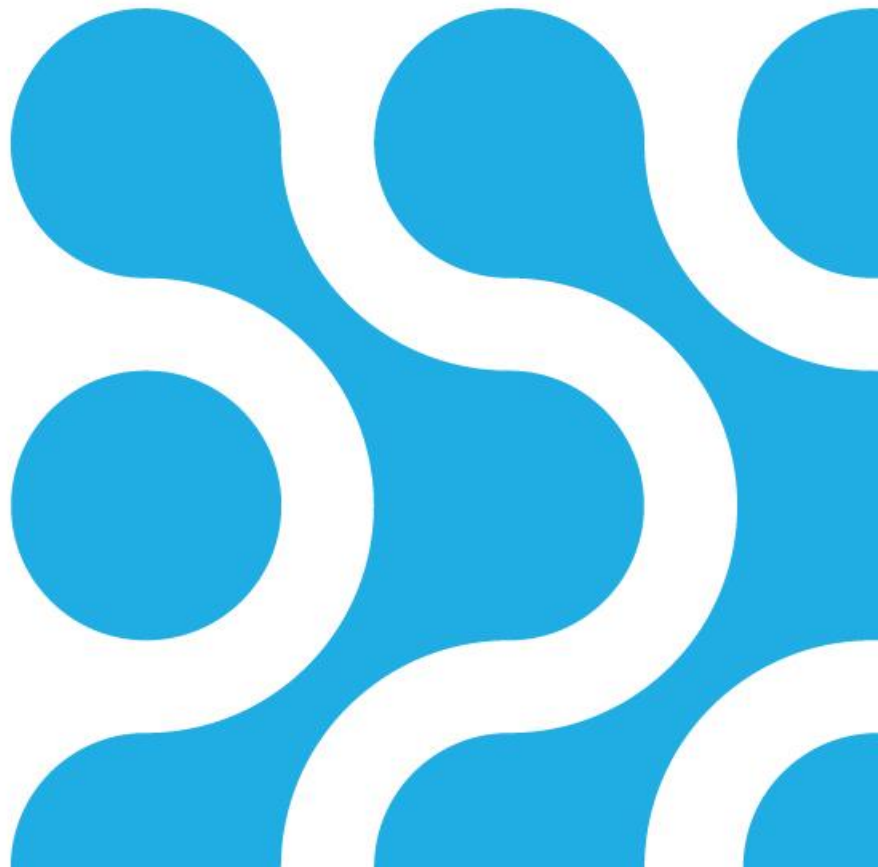


Model Distribution Training Best Practices: Executive Summary

Independent Manufacturers Rep Council



Electronic Components Industry Association



ECIA Independent Manufacturers Rep Council Initiative

The ECIA Independent Manufacturers Rep Council conducted extensive surveys of North American based distributors to identify the BEST PRACTICES used by manufacturers and their local representatives in the training of distributor personnel.

Over 1,000 individuals were surveyed over a 5-month period.

From that work, we are pleased to present this Executive Summary. The research is also available in a separate document.



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Based on the survey feedback, it is our recommendation that manufacturers and their local representatives and salespeople use this information as new distribution training programs are developed.

It is incumbent upon all of us to respect our most valuable asset, TIME, as we put together training programs.

The following pages represent the summary of the data in a concise form. The supporting survey data can be accessed in a separate document.

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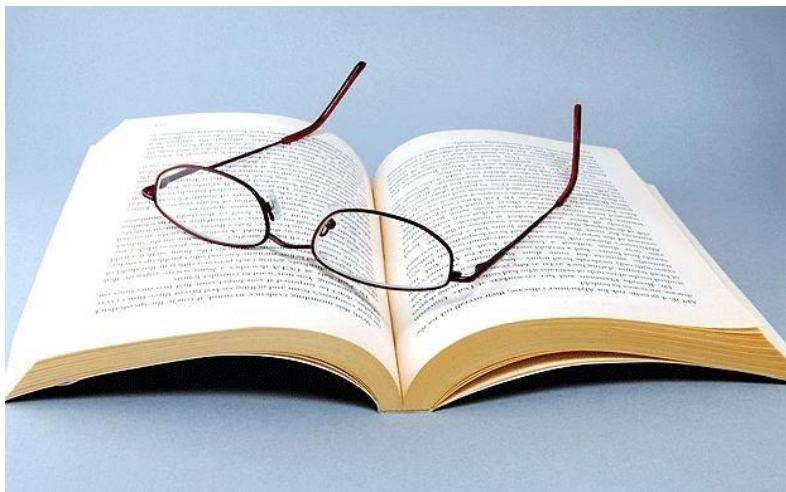
Thank you to the Council Member Participants

- Alan Ahern – Crowley Associates
- Dean Akiyama – AKI GIBB
- Doug Canterbury – Luscombe Engineering
- Mark Conley - O'Donnell Associates North
- Cameron English – English Technical Sales
- Tom Griffin – Catalyst Unity Sales
- Adam Grigor – Tech Trek
- Scott Jones – AEM Group
- Robert Logan – Kruvand Associates
- Mike Longano – Millennium Alliance
- Robert Murillo – Spectrum Marketing Assoc.
- Mike Swenson – Mel Foster Company

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Standardized Training Manual

By an overwhelming majority of distributor respondents, a “Standardized Training Manual” is highly desirable. The suggested Best Practices within this document can serve as the base line for establishing your own Training Manual. Templates are included in this Executive Summary.



- Pre-Training Preparation
- Training Module
- Discussion/Review of Target List between distributor account reps and manufacturer reps
- Post Training Action Items and Minutes

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Customized Training Modules

Most respondents feel that specific training should be created for:

- Inside Sales
- Outside Sales
- FAE's
- New Hire's



Inside Sales Training



- A general overview of the product line with a discussion around key markets and applications
- Questions to ask customers when on a phone call (when given the opportunity by the customer to introduce product lines)
- An overview of competition with strengths and weaknesses of all
- Design Registrations
- Inventory held by the distributor
- Who to call at the factory and/or local office for help

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Outside Sales Training

- Applications/Applications/Applications
- Buddy calls and best practices. Local support network.
- Registerable product
- Technical Aspects without getting too deep
- Available sales tools (sample kits, product bulletins, website)



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F&E Training



- Ideally, this too should be separate from Inside/Outside Sales Training
- More in-depth technical dive
- Important features of product to promote
- Keen understanding of Markets and Applications
- Product Roadmap sharing
- Design and Sample kit availability
- Technical support help (local and factory)

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F&E Training

The recommendation is that separate and basic training be conducted for all new distributor hires (field sales and field application engineers).

Topics to include in this basic training are:

- Industry basics
- Products and service overview (with sample kits)
- Target markets and applications
- Links to on-line training

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Online Training

Use as an adjunct of in-person training.



- Web sessions that can be recorded
- Multiple locations simultaneously
- Cost effective
- Larger number of participants can be reached
- Can be done at any time
- Learnings can be verified
- Offer multiple time slots
- Proceed at your own pace

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Effective Trainings

Key Markets

Focus on products for the key markets in each territory. Customize the training module to the unique nature of each territory and each distributor but using the “building blocks” of the standardized module.

- Be clear and concise
- On-line training as an adjunct of in-person training.
- Training modules are an excellent method for ongoing training and allow individuals to train on their schedule not yours.

Effective Trainings

Time and Length of Training

- Monday morning training is preferred by most, with lunch training being second most preferred and taking place on a quarterly basis.
- Forty-Five (45) minutes was considered ideal length of time inclusive of all aspects of the suggested training as detailed herein.
- Up to 20 minutes of time should be dedicated to account identification and sharing between account reps.
- Potential to offer training to multiple distributors in a territory at a neutral site.
- Highly suggested for quick introduction of EXCITING new product that fits in that local market.

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Pitfalls to Avoid

- Org Chart Discussions
- Pictures/Videos of Company Sites
- Legal Contracts
- Reading directly off the PowerPoint slides
- Too many slides

Distributors value the advantages of working with reps when it comes to training:

- Training on multiple product lines can be accomplished during the same session
- Familiarity with the local rep who has been in the same position for a long time

Key Distributor Considerations When Offering Training Opportunities to Manufacturers

- Size of product line in sales dollars
- Potential opportunity of product line in local market/customer demand for product
- Effectiveness of previous training
- Alignment of product line to corporate initiatives
- Local relationships and trust
- Number of distributors in channel



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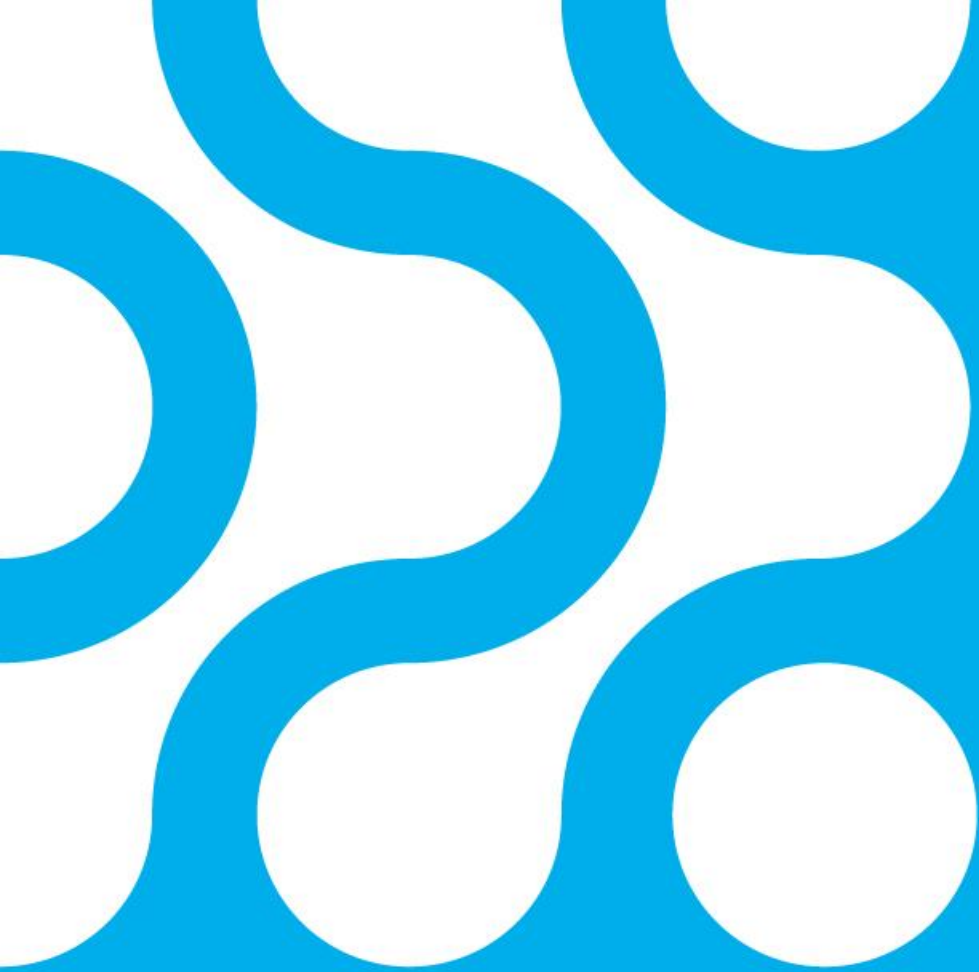
Continuous Updates

- This Model Distribution Training Best Practice is designed to be continuously updated
- It is designed to benefit all companies and is open to all
- ECIA would greatly appreciate any comments or best practices that you wish to share. Submit to dconyers@ecianow.org.

Thank you in advance for supporting this ongoing initiative.

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