

2007 PWA

From the eyes of

by Bob McJannett, Perf

When Dick Van Cleve asked me to write about this year's conference, my first instinct was to document everything that happens. You know, the golf outing, the breakfasts and lunches, the meetings, the first time room, etc. However, if you were there, you probably have your own remembrances of the event. If you weren't there and you qualify, well, shame on you, you have missed out on what has become the most important event of the WD and Manufacturer's year.

Instead, I thought I would write about our experiences. Our company has been a long-time supporter of the Conference program. As SEMA has allowed its show to grow past the point where serious business can be done, the Conference program has grown in its importance to those of us who have to face attending both. In fact, to be sure we get to hold as many meetings as possible in the three days the Conference ran, we brought two teams.

Two thirds of our meetings are held with existing vendors, where we share our experiences with their

product line, discuss their plans for the next year and provide insight into our plans for the coming year. Some vendors bring a lot of new product to their meetings, while others come simply to talk about the future. Either type of meeting works. During these "one-on-one" talks, a lot of straight goods get discussed; we find the opportunity to be candid allowing us all to understand each other far better. It is always good to put a face on the person that you are talking to across a continent.

The rest of our meetings are spent either looking for new products to add to our mix or trying to resolve an underperforming category. This year, we spent a lot of time meeting with vendors trying to find a replacement for a current supplier with massive shipping problems. While the jury is out on our success so far, the Conference gave us the opportunity to talk with five potential vendors. Since they are located all over the United States, to have a thirty-minute discussion at their place of business would be far beyond our ability to accomplish in a timely manner, to say nothing of the costs that we would incur.



As always, Sunday evening's SEMA cocktail reception was well attended.



The first time room gave new vendors a chance to show off their wares to all the WDs at the Conference.



Once again the PWA manufacturers decorated the railings with their colorful banners.



Lunch was also well attended with desserts seemingly the highlight of the meals



Shortly after the sun came out, hungry conference attendees filled the breakfast area.

Conference photos: Bob McJannett