

**SURVIVING IN DOWN TIMES** *continued from page 4*

data, such as weights and dimensions; and electronic connectivity solutions, such as EDI, then you are flirting with becoming a dinosaur. The powerful impact of the Internet is undeniable and without those business technology capabilities, you'll be excluded from all forms of commerce that are shaping the business world today. The *Field of Dreams* attitude of "build it and they will come," just doesn't cover all the bases any more!

-Jon Wyly  
Vice President, Arrow Speed Warehouse

I feel that the chances of survival in a down market improve when we get aggressive. We just can't stand behind our sales counters or sit at our desks and bemoan the economy. We need to get out there to cruise nights, car shows and other related events and waive our banners. Flyers for in-store promotions, discount coupons and any direct-mail pieces will work wonders for drawing customers to our businesses. Let them know we care. Everything is cyclical and if we can weather the tough times, business will be good again.

-John Julis, J & J Marketing

Get better at getting your message to the millions of vehicle owners who have no idea what you sell. You need to do that by getting better at marketing and public relations. SEMA studied having a "Got Milk" type campaign but decided that our industry could not afford the cost. The same is true with your own business: You cannot afford to pay for everything. Get good; get going. We all leave so much business on the table that it is embarrassing. The "R" word means "R"e-double your efforts and stop sniveling.

-Dave Herrmeyer, Editor, Trucking Times

Hopefully, there will be renewed energy and excitement in the business sector when the new administration takes office. Unfortunately, thanks to the current administration, there is going to be a lot to clean up. As an industry, continue to produce exciting new products that consumers want and try to stay upbeat. Times will be tough, so manage your businesses wisely. Be smart and you'll survive an economic slump.

-Bill Groak, Account Supervisor, PCGCampbell

Having been in this industry for over 40 years, I've lived through a few recessions. This industry has shown itself to be remarkably resilient during economic downturns in the past and I do not see that changing. Economic pressure causes consumers to keep their existing vehicles longer and the lack of a new, different ride causes them to accessorize that old car. The one time that the economy caused a downturn for me was when we had to wait in long lines at the gas station (in the 70s). We always seem to have products that consumer's want, so I'm optimistic about business going forward. If you pay attention to the trends, be aggressive and use common sense, then you will be okay.

-W. A. "Butch" Lahmann, CEO, Walcorp, Inc.

## Hooray for the Professor!

by Dick Wells

### *Hooray for A Michigan State Professor!*

The story begins at Michigan State University with a mechanical engineering professor named Indrek Wichman. Wichman sent an e-mail to the Muslim Student's Association. The e-mail was in response to the students' protest of the Danish cartoons that portrayed the Prophet Muhammad as a terrorist. The group had complained the cartoons were "hate speech."

Enter Professor Wichman. In his e-mail, he said the following: "Dear Muslim Association: As a professor of Mechanical Engineering here at MSU, I intend to protest your protest. I am offended not by cartoons, but by more mundane things like beheadings of civilians, cowardly attacks on public buildings, suicide murders, murders of Catholic priests (the latest in Turkey), burnings of Christian churches, the continued persecution of Coptic Christians in Egypt, the imposition of Sharia law on non-Muslims, the rapes of Scandinavian girls and women (called "whores" in your culture), the murder of film directors in Holland, and the rioting and looting in Paris, France.

This is what offends me, a soft-spoken person and academic, and many, many of my colleagues. I counsel you dissatisfied, aggressive, brutal and uncivilized slave-trading Muslims to be very aware of this as you proceed with your infantile "protests." If you do not like the values of the West---see the First Amendment---you are free to leave. I hope for God's sake that most of you choose that option. Please return to your ancestral homelands and build them up yourselves instead of troubling Americans.

Cordially, I. S. Wichman, Professor of Mechanical Engineering

As you can imagine, the Muslim group at the university didn't like this too well. They're demanding that Wichman be reprimanded and the university impose mandatory diversity training for faculty and mandate a seminar on hate and discrimination for all freshmen. Now the local chapter of CAIR has jumped into the fray. CAIR, the Council on American-Islamic Relations, apparently doesn't believe that the good professor had the right to express his opinion. For its part, the university is standing its ground in support of Professor Wichman, saying the e-mail was private and they don't intend to publicly condemn his remarks.

This political correctness crap is getting old and killing us!

Let's hear it for the good (and I mean good) professor!

*What do you think?*