



MARKETING STAR



Tom Insprucker: Vice President of Marketing Operations for Schneider Electric

[By Anique Gonzalez]

Having worked in the business field for many years, spending substantial time in the marketing arena, Tom Insprucker knows what leads to success in the industry.

“The differences between good and great marketers, at the end of the day, are those who can intuitively sense, understand, and then scientifically process what it is to translate and observe human behavior or to uncover a latent need and turn it into an offer to the marketplace,” he said.

Insprucker, Vice President of Marketing Operations for Schneider Electric and a great marketer in his own right, took his own advice while climbing the corporate ladder. His suggestion? “Take the time to take different jobs on your way up. Take the opportunity to go stretch yourself and get some opportunities in product or get some opportunities in affiliated parts of marketing...It makes you a better businessperson.” That is exactly what he did, and that is what he has become.

Insprucker’s career has been an interesting and expansive journey involving radio and television work, advertising and public relations experience, and stints as a technical engineer, product-line manager, and chief strategist. All of these experiences assisted in creating a sound business and management background which has allowed him to approach the industry with unparalleled insight.

And, as Insprucker’s job has evolved over the years, so too has the industry in which he works. Over the years, “Marketing has had to learn to really broaden out and work with all the corners of the company, all points of the company, and to assess and understand its

role in the total business process as one that extends beyond just demand creation,” he said.

Q. What do you like to do in your free time?

A. First, I spend it with my family; that’s my number-one priority. I have three daughters and a wife. I call them my four aces. I say, “God dealt me four aces right off the top of the deck.” That is my absolute top priority in life. And when I have more time than that, I go play with my guitar.

Q. What CD is in your CD player right now?

A. From the Neil Young Archives Project, I’m listening to *Neil Young and Crazy Horse Live at the Fillmore East* from 1970.

Q. What is your favorite TV show?

A. *Lost*.

Q. What is your favorite book?

A. *Atlas Shrugged* by Ayn Rand.

Q. What was the last magazine you read?

A. *BrandWeek*.

Q. Who is your role model?

A. My grandfather. He was a decent man who I think led a life that gave me my own personal mission—and my personal mission is to leave the planet a better place than I found it. My grandfather was a man who roamed the earth for 92 years, and every human being he touched, everywhere he went, every encounter he had, I think he left those people and those places smiling and happier than they were before they met him.

Insprucker started out with Square D, a subsidiary of Schneider Electric, in 1985. He took various jobs over the years, as mentioned previously, all of which provided invaluable experience that has allowed him to successfully execute his professional responsibilities today. Presently, he manages pricing activities, forecasting activities, e-business, and commercial tools, in addition to handling other duties.

Schneider Electric was founded in 1836 as a mining company in France. Over the years, the company slowly evolved, and its concentration began to shift. It made its most drastic changes 15 to 20 years ago when it decided to focus exclusively on the electrical industry. This decision was a monumental turning point in the company’s trajectory.

Insprucker explained, “Schneider Electric is the only company that employs 100% of all assets directly at the electrical industry. We don’t invest in anything else in our portfolio that does not benefit us from a perspective of performing in the electrical industry, so we have nothing to distract our R&D investments, nothing to distract our sales efforts, nothing to distract our marketing efforts. Everybody in the company across the entire world is focused on one and only one thing, and that is the distribution, management, automation, and control and services around electricity.”

With this laser-like focus, the company is better situated to achieve its ultimate marketing objective.



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"We want the best customer experience, and that's what we're aimed at, and that's what we're targeted for. It's our operating outlook, it's the discussions on our agenda quite often, and it leads a lot of our operational thinking so that we keep the customer-centric view at the center of everything we do," Insprucker said.

While this goal is difficult to achieve, if the company is successful, it will have established a positive relationship with its consumers and created satisfied and loyal customers. Schneider Electric exemplifies the importance of concentrating on what the

company is best at instead of overextending its resources and diluting the brand. The logic goes like this: it is better to be the best in one area than to be mediocre in several areas.

And this is how the company will carry on in the coming years. Schneider Electric will "continue driving in the same direction that we have been. You'll find us wherever energy or electricity is distributed, managed, automated, or controlled," Insprucker stated. He then added lightheartedly, "We're going to stick to our knitting; that's what we're going to do."

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