

## AWMA Opens 2012 Summit & Business Exchange (ABX)

The 2012 AWMA Summit opened at the Ritz-Carlton, Amelia Island, FL Monday, September 10, with a Welcome Reception sponsored by Altria Group Distribution Company, in an evening setting overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Today, distributors and suppliers ready for informative educational sessions, award presentations, networking opportunities, and the AWMA Business Exchange (ABX), this afternoon, Wednesday and Thursday.



The Summit and ABX are designed to help distributors improve profits, address key issues and get business done with key trading partners who are on hand for private, face-to-face meetings. This year's Summit program this morning will focus on key business issues, including a political update from a top Washington journalist, a look at opportunities and challenges in foodservice, an analysis of developments in the c-store marketplace, and a keynote presentation by a noted business author. The ABX will feature more than two full days of face-to-face buyer-seller meetings where distributors and suppliers will make concrete plans for doing business together over the next year. "We have 30 meetings scheduled over the next two days," commented Frank Davoli, Richmond-Masters Distributors, Inc., South Bend, IN. "But that's what it's all about. We will get a ton of business done at the ABX."

The Summit opened for business Monday morning with a round of AWMA committee meetings, followed by a meeting of the Board of Directors. A welcome reception brought attendees together Monday evening, the first of several opportunities for making connections, comparing notes, and discussing common concerns.

"The ABX year," said Gummer have as an innovative fact that Coca market." program, get the industry, not only nationally, but globally, and how that impacts upon or local economy,"



& Summit will be a pivotal meeting this AWMA Chairman Chad Gummer, Wholesale, Inc., Heath, OH. "We now companies here that are offering products alternative to tobacco, as well as new, items for foodservice and beverage. The Cola is here says a lot about our speed to Regarding the Summit educational Gummer said, "It's always important to insights of what is going on in our

### Tuesday's Program

Today's session will open a political update by Reid Wilson, editor-in-chief, *National Journal's The Hotline*. Wilson will provide an insider's look into the current political environment in this heated and extremely important presidential election year. Then, the program will shift to a discussion of the opportunities and challenges provided by foodservice, led by *Convenience Distribution* contributing editor Bob Gatty. A panel of five distribution company executives will outline steps their companies are taking to invest in and leverage opportunities provided by foodservice.

That session will be followed by a discussion, "*What's Happening in the C-Store Marketplace*," led by Viv Penninti, president, InfoRhythm, Inc., with panels David Bishop, managing partner, Balvor, LLC and Steven Montgomery, president, b2b Solutions. They will discuss

what's driving convenience store sales and what the numbers mean for distribution businesses.

The keynote presentation will be by Scott McKain, renowned business author, who will help attendees understand how to create more compelling connections with customers and how to stand up and move up, despite the economy.



At the AWMA Summit Lunch, the AWMA Dean Award will be presented to Charlie Casper, My Dad, Inc., dba Hardec's, and the AWMA Hall of Fame Award will be presented to David Dresser, Core-Mark International, Inc. The awards will be presented by the AWMA Past Chairman's Advisory Council.

Then, ABX meetings will begin at 1:30 p.m. and continue through 5:50 p.m. The Tuesday Summit & ABX Reception, sponsored by R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company, American Snuff Company and Santa Fe Natural Tobacco Company, will follow at 6 p.m.

### **Silent Auction Benefits Government Relations Program**

All day Monday and again on Tuesday, Summit & ABX attendees can bid on fabulous prizes contributed by distributors and suppliers. Winners will be posted Tuesday evening.

AWMA wishes to thank members for their support of this crucial funding initiative for AWMA's government relations program, which represents distributors' interests at the national and state levels of government.

To see pictures of the Summit, visit flickr at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/awmaphotos>

### **Follow the Summit & ABX on Twitter**



Throughout the conference, AWMA staffers will be Tweeting, providing up to the minute reports on developments at the Summit & ABX.

You can follow us at @awmainfo. Don't miss out!