

Representing The Wiping Materials, Recycled Clothing, New Textile By Products and Fiber Industries

In My Opinion



Setting the Record Straight

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A few weeks ago, a broker/exporter was visiting my office and I did my inevitable pitch for SMART and received this reply:

“Can I be frank with you, Bill?” he asked. (Of course, I thought. I hope you are always frank with me!) “For me,” he went on to say, “SMART is a closed little group and what’s more, it’s a wiper organization.”

Let me briefly address both of these claims!

First: “SMART is a wiper organization.”

After controlling my frustration with my broker/exporter friend, I left the room and copied for him the September 2007 article I wrote in this space entitled: “Breath mint or candy mint.” In that piece, I painstakingly pointed out how well SMART represents both the wiper and grading chapters of our industry. Part of this success is a conscious attempt to do so, I wrote. The other reason is that these two segments of our industry overlap in their interests and causes.

My column went on to demonstrate how our board is well balanced between wiper and grader dealers; and how SMART addresses with equal energy the various issues which affect both interests.

Now to the second misconception: last November in Houston at our regional meeting, the “this is a closed association” canard came up and, I must say, this one was met with such swift action, that it may have laid this nasty rumor to rest for good!

Sunny Khatra of GGS Wiping Products and I were driving to lunch with Aquil Khandwala of American Rags when Sunny said; “Bill, I love SMART. I look forward to SMARTTalk and I think it is so important that we have a trade association that represents our interests. I wish I could be involved but I have no idea how to do that. It all seems so elusive.”

I cut Sunny off at that point and explained that his passion and his energy for SMART were precisely what we are looking for, and that involvement is not elusive at all. In fact, anyone with ability and energy need only express a willingness to engage oneself to a board member and his or her involvement can be immediate and effective.

In fact, only a few months since our talk in Houston, a board position opened and Sunny Khatra (much to his amazement!) is now a very active and very engaged member of the SMART board. Several board members have remarked at how pleased they are to have such a new, good young mind working on behalf of our industry.

The point of my two stories is this: SMART is a great organization that accomplishes important goals for all of us. It is an open organization and if there are any more “Sunnys” out there who want to be involved, your involvement is no further than your nearest cell phone. The more energy and participation we get from our membership, the more all of us in this always fascinating and dynamic industry will prosper.