

# September 2012 Newsletter

Volume II Issue VII

September 2012

## Special Points of Interest:

- Save the Date! - Saturday, September 15 = Heat & Plumb the Country
- We are still seeking Techs, Trucks, and Donations for Heat & Plumb the Country
- Bring a Prospective New Member to our next Membership Meeting!

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## Give a Few Hours & Make a Difference at our annual Heat & Plumb the Country

### What is Heat & Plumb the Country?

Heat & Plumb the Country ~ Cuyahoga County provides free heating maintenance services and water audits and plumbing repairs to elderly/disabled, low-income homeowners in the Greater Cleveland area to insure proper operation and save lives.

Volunteers provide a ray of sunlight, a smile and a helping hand to people who need it the most.

Volunteer's service and repair unvented room heaters and central furnaces, boilers, water

lines, faucets, commodes, gas line checks.

Volunteers install smoke detectors and/or carbon monoxide detectors or replace batteries in existing detectors.

### How Can I Participate?

ACCA and PHCC Cuyahoga County needs service techs, helpers, dispatchers, owners, managers, friends and family to help. Technicians must be from ACCA or PHCC member companies.

Contractors are needed to volunteer the use of their trucks (for their own employee to use).

Technicians are needed to run a couple of service calls (most are finished within four hours), diagnose the problem and if a minor problem, fix it. If it requires a major system component replacement, document it and give the information to the Cuyahoga County headquarters.

Non-technical help is needed to ride with technicians, talk with the homeowners while the technician is making the needed repairs and helping in other ways as determined on the call.

Dispatchers, parts runners and other administrative help is also needed.

## THANK YOU SPONSORS



## Know What You're Selling

What are you really selling? Before you answer, let's talk about what you're *not* selling. You're not selling air conditioning and heating.

Can you imagine coming across a customer in a Southern state who asks, "Why would I need air conditioning?" Can you imagine any customer in a Northern state asking, "Why would I need a heating unit in my home?"

Do you think just because you're selling a "necessity," your job should be easy? Do you think since air conditioning and heating needs are here to stay, your business is

too? The simple answer is: only if you know what you're selling.

Since HVAC units have become a requirement for nearly every building, the consumer does not just demand a unit. They demand and buy:

1. Trustworthy service from a reliable dealer (46% cite as their primary purchasing reason)
2. Features that translate into benefits to them (23%)
3. Excellent quality, brand-name

products (15%)

4. Price (11%)

5. Other (5%)

You should be encouraged reading that list – especially notice how "price" was #4 on the list. Yes, it's the little number that all weak salespeople claim is the reason "all my customers are buying from so-and-so..."

The point is, maybe "so-and-so" explains his products better, sounds more credible, gives better guarantees AND has a price that translates into higher value.

### Continued from above...

Worse than this is that "so-and-so" is seeing the same prospects you are, and unless some things change, he'll beat you every time with any customer who has even half a brain.

If you don't believe me (or my half a brain), then I'd be willing to bet your company is in for some rocky times. If you *do* believe this, then you must do one or more of the

following:

Change your marketing to target more customers who are less price-resistant.

Increase your *product benefits* to increase your competitive advantage.

Learn how to clearly communicate your superiority in value-oriented terms to the customer.

Do all three and you win – and win big. No competition can withstand this "triple threat" except for the weak-kneed response to lower prices. Believe me, customers do want to save money, but they don't want cheap. Sell them value – not cheapness – and they'll buy.

## Breakfast with Building Inspectors

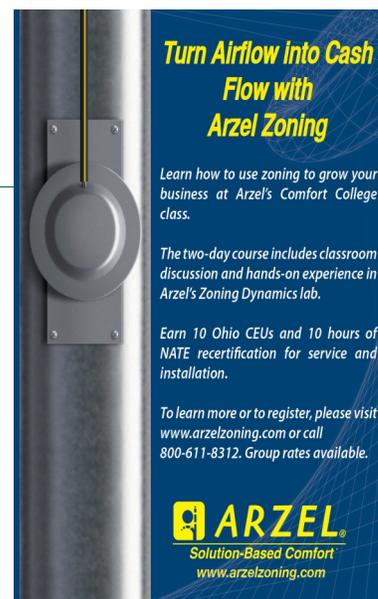
The ACCA Cleveland Chapter and the ACCA Akron/Canton Chapter will meet on **Thursday, September 13, 2012 for breakfast at 7:45 a.m. at the DoubleTree in Fairlawn.** There will be a panel of Building Inspectors to give updates and changes in their municipality

and to inform attendees of any code changes.

### Event Information:

DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel  
Akron/Fairlawn  
3150 W Market  
Fairlawn, OH 44333

(I-77 South to Route 18 at Ghent across from Summit Mall)



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## How to Create Customers Out of Thin Air

By Adams Hudson

**Quiz Time:** Who do you think is more important to your business: a) someone who is your customer, or b) someone who is *not* your customer? Give up? Here's a hint: the answer is "a." (I'm not big on subtle hints.)

Certainly, you couldn't exist without customers. Strangely, however, a lot of contractors seem to be trying their best to *lose* their customers. How?

By not contacting them. By forgetting about them. By letting them wander the Yellow Pages searching for another contractor when it's time for their next service call. Contact isn't some kind of big marketing mystery. It's

easy things, like follow-up phone calls after repair or service calls, thank you letters, holiday cards and customer newsletters.

The newsletter is, of course, where you have the most print space and the best opportunity to build your relationship with customers. You can use a traditional four-page format to send helpful, home care information – at no obligation to the recipients. With a quality design and useful content, it forges a far better image than plain "advertising," thus strengthening the relationship between you and your customers. Plus, it gets your name into their homes two to four times a year. That's a huge point.

For those who do it right, customer retention newsletters are among the most cost-efficient marketing methods around. Think of it. A good customer retention newsletter can cost less than \$3 a year per customer (including postage) for four issues! Not a bad return on investment, especially since it involves returning customers.

When creating your newsletter mailing list, you should include every customer who has written you a check in the last 48 months. That's a paltry expense when you consider all you've just read.

### Continued from above...

Build a fence around your customers with a solid customer retention campaign. Invest in a good, regular customer newsletter that keeps your name and your services in customers' minds all year long. In time, your customers become switchable." You'll get more referrals, greater loyalty and more sales.

*Courtesy of Adams Hudson, ACCA's National Marketing Partner. You can request his free marketing ezine and free marketing reports by emailing [FreeACCAtuff@hudsonink.com](mailto:FreeACCAtuff@hudsonink.com).*

### **MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**2013 ACCA/PHCC Ohio  
Convention & Expo**

**"Stay Ahead of the Pack"  
March 6-8, 2013,**

**Cincinnati/Mason**



## Summer President Message

Hello Friends,

Well, Summer is over and the first hints of Fall are finally in the air. It's hard to believe that we're already into the final stretch of the year's third quarter, but it's even harder to believe that it's still not time to slow down.

Yes, you read that correctly. You can't control the weather, but you can't let it control you either. So if you're expecting a seasonal slowdown, there's plenty you can do now to lessen its effects.

And, of course, we're here to help you in whatever way we can.

Whether it's with business tools, or educational programs, marketing, or even technical expertise, you get it all with your ACCA membership.

*Brian Stack*  
ACCA Greater Cleveland  
2012 President

## Cut Stress, Build Profit

It's no secret that stress in the workplace cuts productivity, job satisfaction and, at the end of the day, profits. That's why it's important for those in management positions to reduce stress wherever possible. Cutting stress even a little can make huge differences. Try these easy tips from the Institute for Work and Health:

The number one cause of stress in the workplace is a lack of control over an employee's own work. When you give

someone a job, let them do it. By trusting them to make decisions and do good work, you're actually helping yourself.

Give employees a clear picture of what you expect from them. Guessing games only lead to frustration. Make sure priorities are clear and they understand the fundamentals of their job.

Appreciation is just as important for a job well done as a pay-

check is at the end of the week. A few encouraging words from above go a long way toward higher performance and satisfaction – on both sides.

Share the success, don't own it. You didn't meet sales goals by yourself or complete every job on your own, so when records are reached or good things happen for your business, give credit where credit is due: to your team.

## Save the Date — Heat & Plumb the Country!

Heat & Plumb the  
Country

Saturday,  
September 15

*We are in need of:*

*Techs, Trucks, and  
Donations  
(either product or  
financial)*



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### Rule Breaking 101

*"You can contact your customers too much."*

**TRUE:** No one likes to be bothered on a regular basis, especially when you're always trying to sell something. That's why your Customer Retention program is so important. When you say thanks without asking for anything in return, you pave the way for your sales mail to be a success.

## ACCA Benefit—Market Hardware

Through their exclusive program with ACCA, Market Hardware provides custom websites at a low price (with a deep negotiated discount for ACCA members). In addition, the experts at Market Hardware assist contractors with such vital new marketing tools as search engine optimization, pay-per-click campaigns on sites like Google or Yahoo! and local search listings.

## ACCA Ohio Update

### New BWC Premium Payment Discounts

The Bureau of Workers' Compensation has added two premium discounts that a private employer may take advantage of beginning with the premium that is due to the BWC in August of 2012. Public employers can begin to take advantage of the discounts beginning with their July 1, 2013, payroll reports.

The 'Go-Green Discount' will allow employers to receive a 1% Premium Discount (up to \$1,000 every six months) if they agree to receive

and pay their payroll report electronically, in full, on the BWC website [ohiobwc.com](http://ohiobwc.com).

The 'Lapse-Free Discount' will provide an employer with an additional 1% Premium Discount (up to \$1,000 every six months) if they have had no lapses in coverage during the past 60 months.



**COMING SOON!**



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### ACCA Benefit of the Month – Speedway Fuel Program

The Speedway Fuel Program is a benefit that any ACCA member can use and one that can save substantial money. To date, participating ACCA members have saved over \$40,000!

ACCA members can save up to 5 cents per gallon of gas. This is based on the total usage by ACCA members (50,000+), so if you only have 1 or 2 trucks, your discount is based on the monthly consumption of all our members

### ACCA's Weekly Safety Lessons

Let ACCA help you develop and implement a quality safety program for your company and your employees. ACCA's Safety Lessons provide pertinent information and topics for your safety meetings. Members will soon be able to access, browse and download ACCA's Online Toolbox to support your safety program.

## Coming Events

**September 15 –  
Heat & Plumb the Country**

**September 13 - ACCA Membership Meeting \* Note—New Location for September and November at the Doubletree Hotel, Fairlawn**

**October 18th Dinner Meeting—  
Speaker TBA**

**November 8—ACCA Membership Breakfast Meeting in Fairlawn—TBA**

**December 13—Managing Workers' Compensation Claims—Breakfast Meeting in Independence**

**ComfortU - Online Learning from ACCA = [www.acca.org/comfortu](http://www.acca.org/comfortu)**

 <b>Robertson Heating Supply Co.</b> <a href="http://www.RHS1.com">www.RHS1.com</a>	<b>Service That Satisfies</b>  <b>Valley View</b> 216-328-2979
	<b>Sheffield Village</b> 440-934-5525

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We're on the Web!  
[www.acca-cleve.net](http://www.acca-cleve.net)

**ACCA Greater Cleveland Board of Directors**

**2012 Officers:**

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**Vice President** – Mike Aerni 216-676-9045  
**Sec/Treasurer** – Kris Guzik 216-676-9045

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**Associate Membership Co-Chair**  
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**ACCA Ohio Board Trustees**

representing Greater Cleveland ACCA:  
Kris Guzik, Energy Management Specialists  
Keith Raymond, Raymond Heating & Plumbing

Chapter Manager: **Michael Mennett**

# Thank You to our Associate Members

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