



by Rhett Asher

Asher is vice president of The Loss Prevention Foundation, the recently formed not-for-profit organization charged with managing the Loss Prevention Certification program. Asher was formerly vice president of retail operations and loss prevention for the Retail Industry Leaders Association. He can be reached at 240-252-3258 or rhett.asher@losspreventionfoundation.org.



Industry Education at Your Fingertips

If you are new to this industry, where do you go for knowledge and education? If you have been around for a few years, where do you go to learn more about your profession? If you have been given new responsibilities or transferring to another segment of your department, where do you go to learn about that new role quickly? And, if you are the head of your department, where do you go for fine-tuning, benchmarking, or continued education?

Do you rely on your company, your boss, your coworkers, your peers, and the Internet to teach you or help keep you up-to-date?

Now let me ask you this. Have you ever thought about all of the knowledge you have right now? How about whether or not having all or some of that knowledge sooner in your career might have enabled you to make different decisions, led you down a different path, or even allowed you to see things more clearly? Now, I am not speaking of regrets, I am talking about abilities...because, as they say, knowledge is power.

What, When, Where

How many of you have attended a national LP conference, such as the FMI, ICSC, NFSSC, NRA, NRF, or RILA? These annual events are places where the best of the best are able to present information to hundreds of their industry peers. A place where all of the new products and technologies are on display for all to see demonstrated. It is a place where hours of great networking and benchmarking opportunities happen.

These types of annual events are where many of us get our first taste of what others are doing. This is also where many of you find out that some of the very things that you do every day are [choose one] antiquated, somewhat current, or, if you are lucky, cutting edge.

As great as these events can be, hundreds of loss prevention professionals will never get to attend any of them due to time restraints, longevity, conflicting schedules, hierarchy, or cost. Those of you who do attend, do not control the program topics or the level at which that session may be focused. You also do not control the location of the event or what time of year it takes place, and more importantly, you cannot control the ability to change that time if there is a conflict. And lastly, you don't get to tailor the event to the point in your career where you need to know more about [you fill in the blank].

Now, what if you could learn *what* you wanted to, *when* you wanted to, and *where* you wanted to and still have the ability to change any of those dynamics at the last moment? Would better, more efficient access to more knowledge and resources be valuable to you?

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Webcast Library

Many of you have told us that it would be, and so with regular feedback and suggestions from you and your industry peers, The Loss Prevention Foundation has developed the newest addition to our membership offering—our on-line webcast library. These archived web-casts have been and will continue to be developed and presented by various retailers, vendors, and a variety of other organizations on a wide range of industry topics as they relate to retail loss prevention, both in the stores and the supply chain.

Our goal is to provide multi-leveled content to industry professionals early and often throughout their careers in the hopes that they gain the knowledge they need to add more value to their organizations sooner in the career cycle. It is also a wonderful opportunity for more tenured loss prevention professionals to pass down information and knowledge that might benefit others earlier in their careers. In addition, this is a great way for supporting vendors, suppliers, consultants, and other partnering organizations to get their industry expertise (in an educational not a sales pitch way) to the future decision makers in our industry.

Our industry has many mentors that teach vertically and horizontally within their own organizations, but that only helps the people who are lucky enough to be exposed to one of those individuals. If you are never exposed to those people, you may not benefit from their knowledge, wisdom, and guidance. This industry, with its many daily challenges, just does not offer enough effective opportunities for these mentors to share enough of that knowledge, wisdom, and expertise beyond the vertical and horizontal. And the aforementioned conferences do not always reach far enough into an organization to allow for the type of consistent sharing that benefits the masses.

The Loss Prevention Foundation, with the support and input of so many of these mentors and leaders, will continue to expand our educational resources, effective avenues for benchmarking and information sharing and comprehensive tools for initiating your own career development. Industry education at your fingertips, that is available to everyone, regardless of what company you work for, where you are located, or what stage of your career path you happen to be on.

Please visit www.losspreventionfoundation.org and let us know if you would like to develop a webcast, submit a whitepaper, or offer other feedback and suggestions.

Certification Scholarships

The Foundation's Scholarship Committee has announced the first distribution of scholarships as part of the scholarship program. The objectives of the program are to recognize academic excellence, increase awareness of the loss prevention industry, and help attract quality students into the profession. Each scholarship includes complete access to the Loss Prevention Qualified (LPQ) courseware for the recipient.

The LPQ scholarships were awarded to the following students:

- William Radlinger, Eastern Kentucky University
- John Lanier, North Carolina Central University
- Grant Patient, Northern Michigan University
- Alexia Cazort, University of Florida
- Amanda Cummings, University of Florida
- Jerry Guido, University of North Carolina Charlotte
- Ashton Bowie, University of Houston Downtown

Effective January 1, the Foundation will be accepting scholarship applications from students for 2008. The deadline for submitting applications is February 28, 2008. For more details, visit the Scholarship link at www.losspreventionfoundation.org. ■

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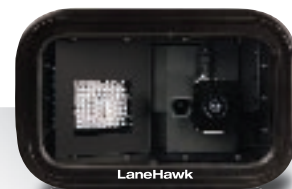
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