



# THE AGENDA

September 2008



**President's Column**  
**My Private Vote**

*Greetings,  
With the Presidential election near at hand we are confronted with an age-old planning issue... the extent to which we can anticipate those changes that are likely to occur as a new administration enters the scene.*

While no-one should allow their desire for a particular outcome to slant their planning perspective, being certain to recognize that there is an instability suggests that we should plan within a spread of likely conditions and, to the extent possible determine those critical conditions most likely to impact our judgment regardless of the administration selected.

For those who say there are no such

**Planning**  
**THE BEST WAY THERE**

**How to Focus on Customers, old AND NEW in terms of: Their needs / The realities of the Marketplace**

In the face of economic uncertainty, financial decisions are likely to be more closely scrutinized than when times are good. From middle-class families to corporate America, when the availability of funds shrinks, spending is more closely watched.

In the current reality of the marketplace, companies are then left with an age-old dilemma: how to better meet the needs of customers without escalating cost to the company?

**Planning While Threatened**

Planning while threatened has a tougher edge than planning during times of prosperity. It is important to be prepared to plan for natural growth, while grounding your response to current reality, even when reality is stagnation or a diminishing customer base.

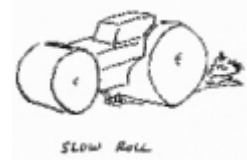
Being prepared to respond to the current needs of those you have targeted as your customers is likely to mean a significant difference in numbers for you.

**What Should our Message Be?**

All too many business development teams will start by asking, "what do we have to sell?" followed by "now what should our message be?"

While on the surface this sounds quite reasonable, the better set of questions might be: "What does the market need and want?" followed by, "what must we develop / construct / adjust / offer to meet those needs?"

To make these two questions work well, it is important to start even further back down the line by asking, "who and what currently comprises the market?" followed by, "how might their need look at the end of a designated period of time?"



**BizSpeak:**  
**Slow Roll**

**Definition:**  
A far more effective way of stone-walling; appearing to cooperate, but oh so slowly

**Related Terms:**  
Dance,  
Sleep Walk

**How it Sounds:**  
"That Project Manager is going to SLOW ROLL US TO DEATH."

Each time we ask for projections he gives us partial numbers, and then asks six more questions."

*Watch for more BizSpeak definitions in future editions of The Agenda*

**For More BizSpeak, check out the Book.**

**Click here.**

elements, I would suggest that while the election presents a real uncertainty, there is virtually never a time when the future is so certain as to make the choice of outcomes self-deciding.

The end conclusion... to hesitate in planning is to be dragged along behind circumstance, and as a result moving the result to those who would like to tell us what we must do. In fact the act of wrestling with the major options is not so far off from what should be done under any circumstance.

The message of the day... this is in fact a great time to step back and consider the future. Good luck and may the best team win!

*Marc Paul Chinoy*



Richard Earle

### **Regis Associate speaks at National Animal Interest Alliance Convention**

Regis Group Senior Associate **Richard Earle** recently addressed the Annual

Ultimately, armed with a solid sense of the Marketplace we can then ask "what must we have ready to meet those needs?" which in turn should be followed by "how can we both offer and deliver the resulting goods and services?"

#### **Risky Assumptions**

The universal impulse to cut the corner (or "cut to the chase" if you are inclined to be charitable) is a bad one. Too many risky assumptions are involved.

Keep in mind these underlying principles as you begin to plan

1. **Know exactly who, what and where you are,**
2. **Be clear about where you want to go and how you wish to look once you get there,**
3. **Work out the most effective means to take you from here to there,**
4. **Be certain that the team you assemble is prepared to go the distance and not simply take the shortest means to a thinned-down result.**

*Plan well and good luck.*

#### **Next Month: "Building on the Best of the Worst"**



Sharon Smith

#### **Focus on the Future Guest Predictions**

*Guest Predictions is a regular Agenda feature in which we interview leaders in a number of professions for their opinion on questions that effect us all.*

*Sharon Smith is the President and CEO of Health Care Excel, Inc., a nonprofit corporation in Indianapolis. For over thirty years, it has evaluated health care processes and quality, clinical appropriateness, patient perspectives of care, and outcomes. It is primarily a government contractor to the federal Medicare and state Medicaid health care programs. It also provides services to health plans and other clients in the private sector. Please visit [www.hce.org](http://www.hce.org) for more information.*

**Q: What changes in your professional environment in the past 3-5 years have you found to be the most beneficial?**

**A:** Government health care programs have expanded coverage to include more people and more diverse populations, have become more focused on preventive and chronic care, and have embraced value-driven purchasing concepts. These program changes have a strong influence on our quality improvement and cost

Convention of NAIA in Windsor, CT. Speaking on the Art of Cause Marketing and Cause Branding, Earle generated a lively discussion among the 100 Attendees.

### Animal Benefits

With a membership of dog and cat enthusiasts, breeders, trainers, animal shelter operators and ardent pet owners, NAIA asserts an agenda that benefits animals and the human animal bond, instead of working to grant "rights" to animals like PETA and similar "animal rights" organizations.

Earle and **Marc Chinoy** will facilitate a Strategy and Branding planning session for NAIA in October.

More information about NAIA can be found on their website: [www.NAIA.org](http://www.NAIA.org)

Photo by Britain Hill  
[www.britainhill.com](http://www.britainhill.com)

containment work.

**Q: What changes have been the most troubling to you?**

**A:** We continue to grapple with what to do about the under-insured and the uninsured. Access to care and the cost of care are major issues that remain unresolved for many Americans.

**Q: How will globalization (e.g. the emergence of new global powers, such as China and India) affect your professional area in the near term?**

**A:** Many significant innovations in health care have occurred in the United States because of what first happened or was known elsewhere. The shift of jobs overseas has led to more Americans being under-insured or not insured.

**Q: What significant challenges might be anticipated in your professional area in the next few years?**

**A:** The movement toward purchasing value for the health care dollar--pay for reporting, pay for performance, pay for improvement--these are just a few of the concepts whereby purchasers (public and private) are demanding evidence of value.

*Next Month's Guest Columnist: Michael Schwebler, COO of Midwest Ultrasound, Inc.*

## Marc Chinoy Works with International Non-Profit to Focus on the Future

**INMED Partnership for Children**, based out of Ashburn, VA has engaged The Regis Group to assess the organization's current circumstance and to facilitate the development of a 3 year strategic plan.

The non-profit, with bases in California, Texas, South Africa, and Brazil works with communities in support of the development of healthy, educated children.



INMED Kids

### Lifelong Learning

Since 1986, **INMED** has worked in more than 100 countries to give children the healthiest possible start in life, to build a strong foundation for children's lifelong learning, to inspire communities to invest in their children's futures, and to create new opportunities for children to maximize their potential and achieve lifelong success.

The Assessment and planning is being conducted by **Marc Chinoy** and is based on input from a range of BoD members, as well as key leadership staff, including the chairman of the BoD, and various program directors.

For more information about **INMED** please visit  
[www.inmed.org](http://www.inmed.org)

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