

Spring 2019



THE AMA TIMES

UNITY • TRUST • ETHICS

AMA PREFERRED VENDORS

Company Name	Contact Person	Phone Number
Aardwolf Pest Control	Mark Durden	205-753-3694
Alabama Crown	Colin Moss	251-610-0376
ATM Link	Minhas Vellani	281-568-4443
Bimbo Bakeries	Trey Burdette	912-271-1883
Bimbo Bakeries	Marta Compos	205-864-7269
BTC Wholesale Distributors	Frank D'Amico III	205-324-2581
BTC Wholesale Distributors	Chris D'Amico	205-999-2044
Buffalo Rock (Pepsi)	Booker Ware	205-335-5141
Cary Oil	Mike Dowling	225-751-3998
Chilly's Ice Cream	Ricky McDuffie	251-721-0601
Clark Gas Company	Jim Brown	205-412-9909
Coco Cola United	Brandon Higgins	205-453-5187
Coco Cola United	Jeff Graham	205-849-4785
Cromwell - Background Check	Herbert Bowsher	205-823-4260
Frito Lay	Joe Shelley	205-432-8233
Golden Flake/UTZ	Michael Coots	256-438-8492
Gordon Food Services	Jennifer DeStefao	205-583-0636
Gulf Distributing Company (7UP)	Lane Harbin	205-251-8010
Gulf Distributing Company (Nesquick)	Paul Gwarjanski	205-306-9628
Gulf Distributing Company (Redbull)	Kevin Thompson	251-583-0636
H.T. Hackney	Victor Moody	256-763-6480
McKinney and Co. Insurance	Ruhi	770-723-9901
Modisoft	Sohail Modi	346-901-1101
Petrey Wholesale	Greg Cooks	205-410-3027
Red Diamond	Ryan Griepenstroh	205-382-3740
S.B.C (Redbull/7UP/Nesquick)	Shawn Franklin	256-591-9046
Sanico	Cara Hunter	205-422-5836
Smart Biz Pay	Mohammed Moinuddin	866-216-8707
United-Johnson Brothers	Michael Gruber	205-281-3402
World Pay	Michael Alberse	770-553-4121

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Members who do not receive a response within 72 hours from approved vendors, those listed above, are encouraged to call the AMA office for assistance.



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P R E S I D E N T ' S L E T T E R

Dear AMA Members,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Alabama Merchants Association, I would like to thank each and every one of you for a very successful 2018! With your commitment and dedication, we have been able to meet all our goals and aspirations. Following in these footsteps, I look forward to a successful 2019.

As we attempt to start this new year, we must consider some new developments within the industry: margins are shrinking on tobacco and cigarettes and new vape laws are being taken into consideration. AMA believes that staying a step-ahead of these industrial developments will help lead to future success.

Vape laws are set to be stricter and sales will be highly regulated which means that we should stay up-to-date on legal and ethical practices concerning the vape industry. We should also be aware of the Alabama Department of Public Health's ad campaign targeting teenagers and vape product consumption.

Similarly, you may have noticed that tobacco and cigarette margins are rapidly shrinking. To address this issue, AMA encourages its members to diversify with the incorporation of food products. On track to become the largest generation of consumers in just a few short years, Generation Z is more health and wellness focused than any buying market. Because of their desire for authenticity and variety, food on-the-go is a necessity for success in convenience stores. By keeping abreast of these trends and adapting to the diverse strategies, you will succeed in raising your profit margins.

In conclusion, I would like to re-iterate that AMA has always supported its members by providing information on latest business trends, market dynamics and teaching sessions. We plan on bringing new programs and more sessions to continue supporting our membership and offer value-added benefits in the coming months.



Advancing
Convenience &
Fuel Retailing

C-Store Shoppers Buying More Fresh Items

Stores are convenient places to pick up premade salads and soups

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — People, especially busy millennials, are keeping fewer foods in their pantry and reaching more often for prepared foods, even when dining at home. Shoppers with higher incomes are making fewer grocery trips, and millennials prefer to grab a ready-to-eat salad after work than go home, prepare a meal and then clean the kitchen. "With all the competition for convenience, including

the internet, what convenience stores provide is they have [what you want] now" said Lenard. "It's not for tomorrow, it's for today." Gas price is still the top reason people choose where to fuel up.

Convenience stores sell about 80% of all gasoline in the United States, according to Nielsen. There was a 13.2% increase in fuel sales in 2018,

which accounts for about 70% of total sales, according to NACS. Because gas prices have stayed below \$3 a gallon for several years, Lenard said, fewer people are picking where to buy gas based on price (59% down from 71% in 2015), and

Consumers are willing to spend more at convenience stores than they would at a grocery because they view them as dissimilar experiences— one long-term and one short-term.



References:

National Association of Convenience Stores. Media Daily. Arlington, April 16, 2019.



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Remodeling

Thank you in advance for your business!!!!

Why Are So Many C-store Chains Installing Electric Vehicle Chargers?

By Tammy Mastroberte, Convenience Store News - 06/07/2018

NATIONAL REPORT — It's widely agreed upon that it will be several years before electric vehicles (EVs) impact the U.S. fueling market. Projections show electric vehicles will represent only 5 percent of new car sales by 2025.

So then, why are so many leading convenience store chains, including Sheetz Inc., Maverik Inc., QuickChek Corp. and Alimentation Couche-Tard Inc., installing EV chargers now?

The answer boils down to incentives — financial incentives, in particular.

- Many organizations, from car companies to energy companies, are incentivizing convenience and fuel retailers to install electric vehicle charging stations as part of their facilities.

The biggest is Volkswagen, which has to invest \$2 billion in electric vehicle infrastructure in the United States as part of a court settlement with the California Air Resources Board and the Environmental Protection Agency for its "DieselGate" scandal.

Volkswagen has created a subsidiary called "Electrify America," and opened its first fast-charging stations in the Washington, D.C., area in July 2017. It then began plans for a national rollout, with the first phase including 50 new and upgraded 50kW dual-standard fast chargers at retail locations in 10 major metro markets across the country, including Boston, Chicago, Denver, Houston, Miami, New York, Philadelphia, Portland, Ore., Seattle and Washington, D.C.

OnCue Express, based in Stillwater, Okla., and operating 75 locations, partnered with Oklahoma Gas and Electric to install Level 3 electric charging stations at two of its interstate locations in Oklahoma. However, the chain is open to installing more if incentives are involved.

(Continued)

“There are talks about adding more sites and with the Volkswagen settlement, there will be dollars assigned to EV charging and infrastructure,” Scott Minton, director of business development for OnCue told *Convenience Store News*. “I don’t think we will add more without some type of incentive because there is not enough usage yet to justify putting more in at our cost.”

John Eichberger, executive director of the Fuels Institute, a nonprofit organization dedicated to evaluating issues affecting the vehicles and fuels markets, said convenience store operators need to check what the EV penetration is in their market to know if it’s worth the investment, or if there is an ability to partner with someone to install them for free.

Stores in Palo Alto, Calif., where Tesla Motors is headquartered, would find more of a benefit in doing a conversion now, compared to those in Indianapolis or Kansas City, according to Eichberger.



“Nationwide, on average, I don’t see an [EV] impact on gasoline sales until 2030, but some will feel it sooner,” he said. “In the early stages, charging at a city market is not going to happen often, but if a store is on an interstate, there will be more customers because most will charge at home and then need access to charging while they drive longer distances.”

The Fuels Institute is currently working on research to be released this year that anticipates the penetration of EVs in five markets, including San Francisco and Atlanta, to see what consumer behavior will look like and what infrastructure will be needed.

“Conversion is going to take time, so c-stores have time to make adjustments and capitalize on the partnerships to reduce the cost,” Eichberger said.



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During these changing times, BTC is changing and planning for the future to better serve you....our customer! The new expansion is allowing us to add over 1,100 items and will help us prepare for the increasing prevalence of on-the-go eating and snacking as a replacement for meals. This is having a positive effect on both the salty snacks and alternative snacks categories, leading convenience store operators to be optimistic for the future.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Since 1927, BTC has operated as a family-owned wholesaler in Alabama. We take pride in committing to each of our customer's individual needs.

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Benefits for You, Your Employees and Your Business

By Shafiq Jadavji

Employee benefits are a popular topic today. This is because in today's job market, more employees are beginning to place value on employer-provided benefits. Salary is no longer the only determining factor when an applicant accepts or declines a job offer. Employees are increasingly interested in what else the employer has to offer, such as life, health, disability, and retirement benefits.

As a business owner, you're probably interested in benefits, too. Chances are you'd like to provide benefits for yourself and your employees – and benefit your business. Employer sponsored benefit plans provide many advantages for all involved.

Advantages for the Employee

Employer benefit plans provide employees with coverage they may not have purchased on an individual basis. These benefits are usually provided at little or no cost to the employee. In addition, some benefits are also available for the employee's spouse and children.

Any employee costs associated with the benefit plan are usually collected through convenient payroll deduction plans. Payroll deduction allows employees to pay monthly, rather than annual premiums, and saves them the cost and hassle of writing checks.

Advantages for the Business Owner

Benefit plans also provide many business advantages. They help attract and keep valuable employees. In today's competitive job marketplace, a good benefit plan can make the difference between hiring or losing qualified job applicants.

Benefit plans also boost employee morale and provide a sense of security. Employees appreciate the benefits you're providing. They know they're covered in case of a medical emergency – or if they become disabled.

Benefit plans may provide a current tax deduction for the business. Or there may be a tax deduction available when the benefits are paid out. Some plans include future cost recovery provisions.

Qualified vs. Nonqualified Benefits

Choose between two categories of benefit plans – qualified and nonqualified.

Qualified Benefits – Regulated by the Internal Revenue Service and Department of Labor, qualified benefits must be approved and comply with nondiscrimination, funding and reporting re-

quirements. Your business receives a current tax deduction for premiums paid, within limits. Plan participants are not taxed on life and health plan premiums and benefits, within limits, and are usually allowed to defer taxation on retirement plan contributions until withdrawn.

Nonqualified Benefits – Nonqualified benefit plans are more flexible because they aren't regulated as strictly as qualified plans. Unlike qualified benefit plans, you, the employer, can pick and choose which employees you want to cover in the plan. That's why nonqualified plans are sometimes called "executive benefits." Executive benefit plans can provide either a current tax deduction or future cost recovery features.

Which Plan Is Right For My Business?

Many businesses find that a combination of the two work best – a broad plan covering all employees and a supplemental plan covering only "key" people. Each business and business owner is unique. You should decide which benefits you want to provide, evaluate your current benefit plan and then adjust your plan to fit your needs.

The best plan is a plan that meets your objectives
for your employees, your business and you.



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Vendor's Spotlight

CHILLYS, LLC



Chillys greatly appreciates the loyalty of the Alabama Merchants Association Board and all participating AMA members sharing our Ice Cream programs for approximately 14 years to date.

AMA remains in our top ten retailers year after year, selling national brands that include:
Ben & Jerrys.. Magnum.. Klondike.. Popsicle..
Breyers.. Good Humor..

In 2019, Chillys projects AMA to exceed over \$550,000.00 in annual sales. An amount which increases each and every year since our start together!

Chillys encourages all AMA members to review your YTD purchases for every quarter of 2019—and together, let's make sure that each of you qualifies for and receives your performance incentive!

Summertime is just around the corner—and so are big sales for Ice Cream! This season, we are promoting our sales through the AMA Media Program and we can't wait to see the results.

We look forward to many additional positive years serving the AMA organization and membership.

Thank you for allowing our partnership!



Ricky McDuffie
Business Development Manager
Chillys LLC

Steve Seward
President/Owner
Chillys LLC





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R-E-S-P-E-C-T

I'm not trying to imitate Aretha Franklin here (I can't sing like her or even hum), I'm talking about treating your staff with RESPECT! I was in a store recently and the owner walked in and started chewing out the CSR, as she was waiting on a customer. Talk about rude and embarrassing for the customer and employee, no class!

One of my Amoco reps early in my career gave me some tips I have used often and passed them on to small business owners I have worked with.

1. Everyone wants to be appreciated for what they do, EVERYONE! That includes your managers and CSR's. We never outgrow that need! Although it may seem easy to do, as business owners we often forget about it.
2. Your managers need to be encouraged to compliment the staff and encourage them to keep doing a good job.
3. The reason I believe most managers fail to complement their staff, as often as they should, is they simply run out of time and they don't see the importance of giving compliments. They tend to 'put out fires' first, and before you know, your day is over. Since nobody reminds you to 'show appreciation', it gets put aside.
4. If you operate multiple locations and your on-site manager(s) are responsible for the day-to-day activities, they must deal with the bad news (discipline, correcting errors and customer complaints, etc.). They must also be ready to pass out compliments and pats on the back. You should also take the time to pass out compliments and thank the employees for doing their jobs.



Thomas W. Terrono
T&S Management Services, LLC

Remember, compliment an employee in front of others, reprimand an employee in private.

Maybe you should have a couple of \$25 gift cards, in your pocket to local restaurants, movie theaters, or pizza places for your staff when you spot them doing something good. Believe me, that \$25 investment will pay big dividends for your customers, your business, and you!

5. Always try to compliment your staff in a timely fashion.
6. Keep a list of employee birthdays (anniversary dates employed by you) and reward them with a gift card on their special day.

I personally have written numerous times about hiring the right people to represent your business to your customers. I firmly believe as owners, it's important for us to keep the good ones and not let them get away. Remember, 2/3's of our staff leaves because of 'Push Factors'. As we discussed in our *Recruiting, Hiring, and Training* sessions; Pull Factors are outside

influences that tend to take people away from their jobs. Push Factors are internal problems that cause your employees to leave.

A phrase I use often in our seminars, "*How would you like to be working for you?*" That was another tip my Amoco rep instilled on me when I was a young entrepreneur. He said, "If you are always belittling your staff, they won't like it, they won't like you, and they won't stay". Always treat your staff the way *you* would like to be treated.

Don't be a victim of the 5 Dangerous Words

'Maybe I'll Do It Tomorrow'

Do it today! Because tomorrow could be too late!

TRY NEW *Coca-Cola*
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VANILLA**





**Gas Station
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