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**A new section has been added to the VAIA website, Members Photo Gallery.**

*Any members that have pictures of interest from their holidays, or anything else can send them in and we will post them on the website for all to enjoy.*



# On The Blink!

## Victorian Appliance Industry Assoc. Newsletter



### PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE Phil Fraser



As the year draws to a close, I thought we should review our achievements and share our vision.

At the start of the year the Victorian Committee discussed the future direction we wanted to take. A lot of discussion about the best way forward resulted in the formation of our own association mid year. Since then a lot of hard work has resulted in a comprehensive communication network including the website, email, Mbox (voice and fax capability) and SMS systems. The result of this is very low cost and instant communication between committee and members. We hope in the near future the web will also be accessed by consumers of our services.

We have a long way to go



to build the website into a facility that we will use every day as a part of running our business and supporting each other with technical help. Service providers and manufacturers will be listed with contact names and details available at the click of the mouse.

We plan to build the most extensive technical library available anywhere in the world for the whitegoods industry. To do this we need your help. Where is the information going to come from? YOU! Between us all we have the information and

technical knowledge required for every product available.

We will be asking manufacturers and importers to help by providing the assistance we need to service their products and to give satisfactory support to their customers. We have great support from spare parts suppliers, some manufacturers and importers. In the very near future we will be listing products and brands and spare parts contacts for each brand. With nearly all products now imported it is becoming increasingly difficult to locate the necessary spare parts. As contacts become known, they will be listed on the website. Email us with your information, or better still ask your contact to let us know all their relevant details.

#### TRAINING

We have established an extensive, dedicated training team to research new products. This information is compiled in course notes, laminated sheets and CD's. If you are unable to get to training, you may be able to buy them. We are always on the lookout for information and common faults, so get in touch.



Courses are run every second month, and repeated in between as required. They fill up very quickly, so you need to register as soon as they

are listed on the events page of our website. Final participants will be secured by pre-payment of the course fees.

We will be conducting regional training in conjunction with manufacturers representatives help in the near future. We have recently had help from ARISIT to conduct training on ARISTON products, for which we are very grateful. We are currently working towards a joint training session with assoc. members and his authorised repairers in the area. Many smaller importers do not have sufficient numbers in each area to conduct training, so hopefully it will be mutually beneficial. If we can help your business, contact us with your ideas.

In closing, I would like to thank the hard working committee, who have all given their time to help get this project underway. The association has a very bright future if we all contribute. We need you all to sign up now, so we can push ahead. Everyday we get asked, "How does this thing work?", "What is the access code?", "Where do I get parts?". We can help you, but we need funds.

To all members, potential members and your families, I would like to wish you a very merry Christmas and a safe festive season. We will be in contact in 2008.





If anybody has copies of the original 'On the Blink' newsletter we would really like to hear from you. Please contact us on [committee@vaia.net.au](mailto:committee@vaia.net.au) or call Colin on 0409018256.



*"Well done Bob and thanks for your years of dedicated service, you are an inspiration to all of us."*



VAIA Members enjoying some stimulating conversation, good food and some industry networking at a recent Members Meeting. Dates for the meetings are in the calendar, don't miss the next one.

## Article from the December 1994 edition of 'On The Blink'

### PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE

With the end of the year rapidly approaching it is a good time to review the state of our industry and to evaluate the progress of our businesses during the last year.

While there are positive signs of recovery in the overall economy many members are still experiencing difficulties.

and we need to look at our individual approach to business and the changes in the industry to identify the specific cause of the problems.

Observers believe that the overall decline in the amount of service work is due to the extended manufacturer's warranties. Others note that there is an increase in the number of operators starting out and offering cheap rates for repairs.

While the overall size of the market may be shrinking members can put strategies into action which will ensure that they gain an increasing share of the available work.

These strategies are outlined in our special report for this month "How to increase customer calls". I would urge members to take the positive approach and use some of these simple techniques to improve their businesses.

### Product Safety Recall

Electrolux, Electrolux Dishlex & Westinghouse Dishwashers

Models affected:

- Electrolux - EX401SB, ESL6163
- Electrolux Dishlex - DX303S, DX303WK
- Westinghouse - SB908WK, SB908SK, SB916WK, SB916SK, SB926WK, SB926SK

Serial number range: 70700000 to 72400000 sold after April 2007.

For more information go to <http://www.recalls.gov.au>



### Dedicated member honoured with Life Membership

Robert (Bob) Greenlees has recently been made a Life Member of the Victorian Appliance Industry Association. This honour was bestowed upon Bob for his work with the Victorian Branch and the industry in general. Unfortunately Bob has been forced to retire from active duties due to ill health. We wish Bob all the best in his retirement and our thanks for your years of dedicated service, you are an inspiration to all of us.

### November Members Business Seminar

At the November Members Meeting Phil Fraser outlined to those present where the VAIA was at presently with the Committee and the development of member services.

Phil also outlined the need

for members to sell the benefits of the Association to potential members as value comes from numbers.

He gave a presentation on the VAIA website and an overview of future plans for the site and its potential use

by members.

These function are of great value to members and guests for industry networking and catching up on trends etc, we look forward to see you at the next meeting.

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**Justify Ruggedness**

Rugged mobile computers are more expensive than commercial-grade products. Over time, however, the rugged devices may actually cost you less money.

Integrated Solutions, July 2007

Written by: **Ed Hess**

In a recent column I noted that Integrated Solutions magazine celebrated its 10th anniversary. In that very first issue, we covered the topic of wireless data collection. Specifically, we wrote about wireless devices that allowed for maximum mobility, but were also rugged enough in design to survive the environments in which they were deployed. I say, 'survive,' but compared to other wireless devices available, the optimum descriptive word would be 'thrive.' At the time, these devices were deployed in manufacturing and warehouse settings and taking advantage of WiFi technology that was fairly new to the market.

At the time, the advantages of these mobile devices were their ruggedness – an ability to stand up to almost anything – and near constant uptime. The devices were more expensive; there was no question about that. But, end users understood the premium they paid was worth it. Ten years later, enterprises have mobile computing options that are generations removed from those a decade back. And, some of those computing options are rugged in design. How much further have these devices progressed in 10 years? Well, you

can find several vendors that will supply you with mobile devices that have integrated WiFi, WWAN (wireless WAN), and Bluetooth connectivity; integrated GPS (global positioning system) technology, data collection capabilities, color screens, and keypad or touchpad input options; and robust mobile operating systems. By the way, you can also drop the devices on concrete repeatedly and use them in the rain. Rugged mobile technology has come a long way in a decade, but end users continue to struggle with the higher cost of these devices over their commercial-grade counterparts. The technology has progressed further than end user opinions.

**TCO RESEARCH SUPPORTS RUGGED INVESTMENT**

Enterprises wrestle over the increased cost of rugged computing devices. Intuitively, they must know that deploying commercial grade laptops in field service applications, for instance, will lead to increased downtime and support issues. And, in fact, it does. The most recent research by VDC (Venture Development Corp.) goes a long way toward alleviating the sticker shock that many enterprises feel as they compare price tags of rugged and non rugged computers. Over a five-year period, VDC's research

finds that despite the disparity in price tags, the TCO (total cost of ownership) of rugged laptops and PDAs is significantly less than commercial-grade units. According to VDC, the annual failure rate for commercial-grade laptops is about 30%, while rugged laptops experience an annual failure rate of just 9%. Additionally, there's a big difference in wireless connectivity between the two types of units, with research finding that wireless transmission failures are three times more frequent in non rugged devices. This leads to downtime and employee frustration.

In the center of this month's issue of Integrated Solutions, you'll find a high-level overview of VDC's research on the TCO of rugged computing platforms. I encourage you to read it and pass it along to anyone at your company faced with the prospect of deploying mobile computers in the field. No one is advocating rugged units for every application. But, it is certainly prudent to conduct a TCO analysis of rugged and non rugged units before making a purchase decision. You might find that the heavier investment you make up front will come back to you many times over.



*Computer Ruggedness & why it counts*



*VAIA Members enjoying a stimulating presentation from Jim Williamson on electronic fridges.*

**November Training Seminars**

November saw another round of training seminars, this month's sessions included: a stimulating presentation from Jim Williamson on the Bosch and Fisher & Paykel electronic fridges. All that attended found them useful, informative and good value for money. Dates, contents and booking forms for future training seminars can be found on the VAIA website.

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## Would You Like A Skilled Serviceperson? Cont'd.

### Australian Apprentices–Aust. Government Incentives Skills for the future–Colin Gutierrez

The Australian Government supports Australian Apprentices and their employers with financial assistance. Eligible Australian Apprentices are able to apply for the following assistance:

#### Support for Mid-career Apprentices

The Australian Government will support mid-career workers (aged 30yrs or more) to upgrade their skills through an apprenticeship in a trade occupation in high demand. The payment will be made to either the employer or the apprentice (depending upon the award arrangements) and will be set at \$150 per week (\$7,800 per annum) in the first year

and \$100 per week (\$5,200 per annum) in the second year.

#### Business Skill Vouchers

Vouchers will be provided of up to \$500 to Australian Apprentices to contribute towards the costs of accredited business skills training. This will assist apprentices to develop the additional business skills needed in the current economic environment.

#### Tools for the Trade

The tools for the trade initiative provides up to \$800 for the purchase of trade tools for eligible apprentices. More information is available on 1800 557 875 or visit <http://www.toolsforyourtrade.com.au>

Commonwealth Trade Learning Scholarship

This programme provides \$1000 to Apprentices in national skills needs industries at the end of the first and second year of the training where the employer is a small or medium sized enterprise or a group training organisation. Your local Australian Apprenticeships Centres can provide more information about your apprentices eligibility for any additional assistance. These centres can be found by calling 13 38 73 or visiting <http://www.australia.gov.au/skillsforthefuture> •



Apprentice Applianceologist



"The Appliance Industry Professionals"

Member and other interested Service Companies survey



### MEMBER SURVEY

For those of you that have provided the Association with an email address you can expect a survey form sent to you shortly, others who wish to participate, of which we hope there are many, the survey will be downloadable from the VAIA website. The purpose of the survey is to get feedback from you on many different items that we can use to help us determine what services our members require, what services you would like to

have, benchmarking for the industry. Items such as:

- What vehicles you drive and how you find them.
- The types of equipment you work on.
- Insurance companies you use.
- Training you have received from Manuf.
- Training you would like to get from the VAIA.
- Your phone service provider.
- Are you interested in

employing apprentices.

- Do you advertise.
- Is your vehicle/s sign written.
- What is your age and the average of your technicians.
- What services you would like to see available from the VAIA.
- How do your customers pay you.

We will collate this information and feed it back as percentages of the total replies, in this way no sensi-

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tive information will be disclosed and certainly no names. All of these items and more will hopefully assist you in planning your business and most certainly help us in providing useful services that you want and will utilise. •

