



HeartBeat

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VALENTINE'S EDITION

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PUT ANOTHER SHRIMP ON THE BARBIE!

By Craig Newby - AES General Manager

G'day mates! Do you remember a grill line we carried twelve years back called Sunshine? Hands down, the most successful grill line AES has ever carried in terms of unit sales. The Sunshine Grill had two things going for it:

1. Price - it hit the sweet spot in the grill business; the average consumer could easily afford it.
2. Story - A great story with regards to its engaging design, being from Australia, and the variety of foods that could be cooked on it. It was more than your basic chicken or steaks.

Well, I'm excited to report we've brought the "Aussie" style grill back to all our warehouses which has a great price point and a great story.

It's called Beefeater. Have you heard of them?

The company is over 25 years old and based in Sydney, Australia. They've been to numerous trade shows over the years but haven't settled on distribution out west until now...



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FREE MONEY!

By Lisa Thompson - AES Data Processing Manager

What grabbed your attention? Did I get you with "Free" or with "Money"? The free part is what would get my interest. My daughter calls getting things for free being thrifty. And that's how I look at co-op. Using your co-op is almost like getting an additional 2% off on your purchases for free.



All you have to do is file for it. It's as easy as 1, 2, FREE!

1. When you buy products from AES, 2% of those purchases go into your co-op fund.
2. Place an ad—in the paper, direct mail, radio, TV, newspaper, promotional items, business cards, employee clothing, pens, coffee mugs, etc—and include the logo(s) (and information where applicable) of the product(s) you buy most frequently.

FREE! Fill out the AES co-op claim form, include a copy of the ad or item along with the bill for the ad and send it to me, Lisa Thompson.

You are eligible for a 50% reimbursement of the promotional advertisement, providing you've accrued enough co-op funds.

So why aren't you taking advantage of the co-op money sitting in your account?

If it all seems a little confusing, don't worry, I'm here to help. Call me and I'll check on your co-op balance, explain what each manufacturer requires for their co-op program and send you the necessary claim form. You can reach me at lisat@aes4home.com or at 800-682-9722 ext 3007.

To your success in 2010!



PUT ANOTHER SHRIMP ON THE BARBIE! CONTINUED

Over the past two weeks, I've talked to dealers who used to carry Sunshine Grill. I've been amazed. They couldn't stop talking about how great the Sunshine was. The excitement is still there and they're more than ready to carry a comparable grill.

What makes the Beefeater an even better grill than the Sunshine:

- There are two price point entries of grill heads
- The Beefeater, the burners in the entry level grill head are stainless (not cast iron) and in the upper end, all stainless grill head, the burners are cast stainless with a full lifetime warranty.

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Serious Barbecues



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Price points start at \$549.00 complete with the trolley and a cover. The upper end is \$2,650.00 for a 5-burner with cast stainless burners, a side burner and grill cover.

The Tradition Continues

Continuing the "Aussie" style grill tradition, a griddle comes as standard equipment on every grill. Do you remember cooking onions, red and green peppers and sausages on the Sunshine griddle? When I did in-store Sunshine demos, homeowners clipped up to me and said they smelled the onions cooking the moment they got out of their cars and had to see what was on the grill.

Carts come with either a powder-coated metal or stainless. Does this grill get hot? You better believe it! Three and a half inches from heat to meat. Wok Plate option again? Yes, sir!

That's the good news. Yep, there's a little bit of bad—the Beefeater won't arrive in our warehouses until May 1st. But you can place your order now—your AES inside sales partner has all the details—and will let you know the moment they arrive.

Oh, I almost forgot! The Beefeater has a Pizza Oven option. How many gas grills have a pizza oven?

I assure you, the Beefeater will be an eye catcher on the sales floor and a line that will cause your cash register to ring.





WELCOME TO BILLIGAN'S ISLAND!

By Don Pierce - AES Inside Sales Manager

For most of the I/S team at AES, the tour has been much longer than three hours, or even three years. And we aren't shipwrecked. We want to stay!

Bill Arnold is our Skipper because he's a big, cuddly teddy bear and everyone loves him. (See more on Bill's profile in this edition of *Hearthbeat*.) He's a true All-American boy from Longview, WA, who served in Vietnam and settled in Seattle to raise his kids. He's as hard working as they come, has a great sense of humor, is a terrific grandfather and the kind of man you would want as a neighbor and a friend.



Heather? She's Mary Ann, of course. She's the girl next door (ask her husband Chad, who has known her since junior high). She was born in Tacoma, WA, and got her degree in accounting before coming to AES almost thirteen years ago. She is a NFI master certified tech in all 3 fuels who enjoys camping with her family, jogging, bike riding, yard work and hanging out with her dad with a cup of coffee in hand.

Our resident redhead, Jessica, has to be Ginger, right? Jessica was born in Seattle, WA, grew up on Whidbey Island (back when her favorite artist was Janet Jackson) until moving to Des Moines at sixteen. She worked at Kinko's doing desktop publishing before joining AES 7 ½ years ago where she's NFI master certified in all fuels. Ginger loves getting immersed in a good book, hanging out with her fiancé, Chris, and most of all spending time with her 3-year old son—yes, that means playing games on the Wii.



Since Mike is so buttoned down and clear headed—you might say a little OCD after seeing his desk—we call him the Professor. He's a native of Bakersfield CA, moved to the Seattle area sixteen years ago, and he and his wife Teri are still young enough to enjoy the myriad (do you like that Professor type word?) of outdoor activities available here in the Northwest. I'm not sure the Professor appreciated country music like Mike does but since he's master NFI certified in all fuels it's proof he can do more than line dance. Mike has been with AES for the past 4 years.



WELCOME TO BILLIGAN'S ISLAND! CONTINUED



Let's see, only one more female slot left, so Candy must be Lovey Howell. Just like Lovey, Candy is a sharp dresser who plays piano, sings and does like a cocktail before dinner. Okay, we made up the cocktail thing. And if you put on the Beatles and the Rolling Stones she might start dancing. She's covered so many bases around AES in the last six years, we can't even start to mention them here. Let's just say she's our MVP.

Paul? He's Thurston Howell the III, of course. Thurston was the only Millionaire on Gilligan's Island and Paul is the only cracker baker at AES. In fact, he's the only cracker baker any of us have ever met. Yep, that's what he did before joining AES three years ago, including the last two with the Inside Sales team. He still enjoys doing some cooking, playing video games and is soon to take the NFI exam.



That leaves only Gilligan, and without question Don is our Gilligan. Both are goofy, clumsy, easily confused and often in some kind of trouble. Don has been married to the same patient woman (Shelly) for almost 25 years (23 of them working in the hearth industry, 12 with AES) with two grown boys. Oddly enough they would love to go on a cruise—hopefully not one that ends in a shipwreck—and they love going to Mariner baseball games, taking ferry rides on Puget sound, reading good books, concerts, cooking on their Green Egg ... hey, life is good when you're Gilligan.

AES is fortunate to have such a solid group of people—with a nice sense of humor about themselves. And we in turn are grateful to work for Kirk and Craig—owners who truly care about their people.

Most importantly we want you to know how much we appreciate your business. It's been a pleasure getting to know all of you during the past thirty-five years and look forward to many more years together. Thank you!

OK, more fun at our expense, The first person to call (1-800-682-9722, dial "0") or email AES (reception@aes4home.com) with the correct answers to both of the following trivia questions will win an iPod. (Just like our customers can win a free iPod in our ongoing Chimney Saver promo).

Question #1 What famous actor played "Jungle Boy" in episode #19? Hint - Later famous for his hot dancing.

Question #2 Many argue episode #72 is the best of all. The castaways stage a musical version of what famous play?



GETTING TO KNOW... BILL ARNOLD!

By Bill Arnold - Customer Service Manager

Bill has been with AES since July of 1990 and somehow keeps getting better at his job and better looking as well!

Favorite Movie? How The West Was Won

Favorite Book? Swift Flows The River (History About The Columbia River Before Any Dams)

What Did You Want To Be When You Were Growing Up? Greyhound Bus Driver

What's The Best Part of Your Job? Having The Opportunity To Help Others & Solving Problems

What's The Worst Part of Your Job? There Is No Worst Part – It's All Good!

Favorite Quotes? "Make My Day!" And "It Is What It Is."

Favorite Hobby? Golfing & Wood Working (When I'm Not Working)

Funniest AES Story? Telling Art Ratcliffe about classic cars I've owned over the years for 300 miles after a training session in Spokane while driving back to AES – for about 5-1/2 hours – in the big AES truck.

Favorite Food? Porcupine Meatballs & Stuffed Green Peppers

Favorite Place In The World? Home. Like Dorothy Says; "There's No Place Like Home" & Italy - That Is So Deep In World History (Hawaii's not bad either)



NEW PRODUCT! DIZZY PIG!

We're excited to announce a new AES product for barbeque season: Dizzy Pig.

The first thing you'll notice when you open a jar of Dizzy Pig rub is the fresh aroma. They buy their herbs and spices in small quantities which means Dizzy Pig is fresh when they bottle it. And they use all natural ingredients and no additives.

Plus they offer unique recipes which mean a unique flavor. Not the same rub with slightly different twists, but flavors like Dizzy Dust, CowLick, Tsunami Spin, Pineapple Head just to name a few. The names themselves will make your customers want to try them!



They're all totally different concoctions so customers can find their favorites for each meal.

Give it a shot, order some Dizzy Pig from your AES inside salesperson, and let us know if you agree.

Dizzy Pig will be available in 8 oz. bottles, watch for pricing soon!



SMALL STEPS FOR SUCCESS!

By Kathy Mavor - AES Credit/Accounting Manager (425) 251-9190 x3016

2010 is not only a new year, it's a new DECADE! A chance to start fresh and focus on a few things that can make working with your consumers and vendors flow smoothly:

1. For example, paying your AES invoices by the due date will allow you to take advantage of our FREE freight program and therefore increase your margin.
2. Make a commitment to get organized. With all the hats the typical dealer has to wear, excellent record keeping can often be pushed to the back burner. But keeping track of your receivables and payables will save you time—in the short run and in the long run.
3. Stay motivated and upbeat when speaking with the consumers on the sales floor. Don't let the challenging economic times influence your emotions in a way that impacts customers. Attitudes are contagious. Make sure yours is worth catching.
4. Always take a 50% deposit from your customer, which will cover most of your cost of the product as well as increase your cash flow. Be sure to collect payment in full when the installation is complete. If the home owner will not be there on the install date, have them pay for all product prior to the install. Then all you will need to collect at a later time is for the installation fee.
5. Last—but certainly not the least—COMMUNICATION! Always communicate with your suppliers, whether it's the sales department or the credit department. If you're changing a purchase order, let them know. If your payment is going to be a few days late, let them know. Silence makes people jump to conclusions. Usually the wrong ones.

Small things, but they add up to success.

GIVING BACK!

Craig (Newby) always says, "People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."

That's one of the reasons AES tries to give back to the community and the world. Here are a few examples of how we do that:

- Our Troops: Every year AES sponsors a Troop Drive where AES staff, along with Kirk & Craig collect and buy necessities and treats for our Troops. We usually all gather one evening in November, order a pizza and package up these items so they'll get to our Troops in time for the holidays. We collect a multitude of items which always includes toys and treats for children the Troops meet. AES ships over 100 boxes every year. It's a small way to help make their life a bit better.
- Haiti: We chose to donate to World Vision, an organization with nearly 800 staff already in place in Haiti. We believe this puts them in a strong position to bring immediate relief to the devastation in the country.
- Special Olympics: Every year AES contributes to the Special Olympics and Kirk (Newby) has even been known to take his family down and volunteer during the games.

Are there ways you give back to your community and the world? We'd love to hear about it and share it in our next Hearthbeat.



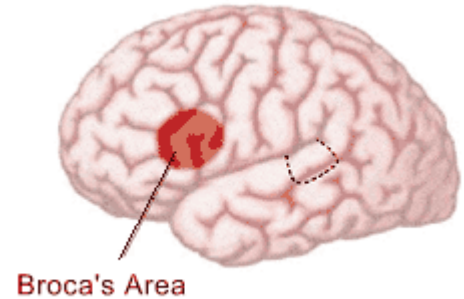
Marketing 101: You Must Shock BROCA

By Jim Rubart - AES Director of Marketing

In the early 90s, when I sold radio for a living I answered the office phone one morning with, “Dominos Pizza!” This was before caller ID, so I had no idea if it was a friend or a client. It was the latter. At first I was mortified. But my client took my slightly insane greeting and ran with it. “I’d like a large pepperoni pizza please, extra cheese, we need it by 12:30.” We laughed and then talked business. After I hung up, I called Dominos, put in her “order,” and had it delivered to her office.

Did the fact I got a huge amount of advertising dollars from her later that week have anything to do with my moment of insanity? Of course. Why? I surprised the Broca’s area of her brain.

In 1861, French surgeon Paul Broca discovered the area of the brain responsible for speech production, specifically assigning syntax of words while listening and comprehending structural complexity. Broca’s area sits just behind the pre-frontal cortex, the area of the brain where we choose to take action. It’s where we process the pros and cons of a decision and ultimately choose path A or B. But before any sensory input—what we see, hear, read—can get to the pre-frontal cortex, it has to pass through Broca’s area. Broca is the nine-hundred pound bouncer of the brain.



What Broca hates: Boredom. What Broca loves: Surprises.

When we greet customers with, “How can I help you today?” “How are you doing this afternoon?” “What are you looking for today?” we are not shocking BROCA. When your advertising look and sounds the same as everyone else’s, when it’s full of clichés we are not shocking Broca. When we say things the same way everyone else says them we are boring people. We end up sounding like Charlie Brown’s parents. “Wah, wah, wah, wah, wah.” It. Does. Not. Get. Through.

When you’ve heard a joke fifteen times and a friend starts telling it again, it’s Broca’s area of your brain that screams, “Enough!” It’s Broca’s area of the brain that says I’ve seen that ad or Web site a thousand times before, and I’m bored out of my mind. It’s Broca’s area that is thrilled when a movie or book twists our brain into a pretzel at the end. Remember *The Sixth Sense*? Or *The Usual Suspects*? Broca loved those movies! Surprise Broca and you’ll make an impression that can last for months, sometimes years. With our Web sites, phone calls, business cards, thank you notes, sales presentations, one-sheets, conversations, in everything we do we must surprise Broca.

These days we live in an age of information overload on steroids. There are a zillion blogs, Web sites, Facebook posts, tweets, articles to read, let alone the ads clamoring for our limited time. How in the world do we stand out? How do we get noticed as hearth dealers? How can we get ourselves to the pre-frontal cortex? Surprise Broca.

One final thought: Surprising Broca is risky. Will you crash and burn with some people? Yes, absolutely. I used to do magic tricks as part of my sales presentation when I sold radio, and still use them often when speaking professionally. Some people love it, some don’t. But as I tell anyone trying to sell anything, love me, hate me, just don’t ignore me.



STAY IN TOUCH!

Do we have your e-mail address?

This is the quickest and most efficient way for us to get you updates for:

- Your catalog
- New pricing
- Promotions
- New product info



Call your Inside Sales Partner to make sure they have your correct e-mail address so you're never out of the loop!

QUOTES TO LIVE BY...

"It was a high counsel that I once heard given to a young person, 'Always do what you are afraid to do.'"

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, therefore, is not an act but a habit."
Aristotle

"If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader."

John Quincy Adams

AES LOCATIONS

PAYMENT REMITTANCE

**Associated Energy Systems
P.O. Box 60196
Renton, WA 98058-3196**

BUSINESS CORRESPONDENCE

Associated Energy Systems
8621 South 180th Street
Kent, WA 98032-1027
local phone 425-251-3901
local fax 425-251-6230

AES WAREHOUSE LOCATIONS

SEATTLE, WA
8621 South 180th
Kent, WA 98032
Phone: 800-682-9722
Fax: 800-682-8611
Will Call Pick-up: 8a-5p M-F

DENVER, CO
5077 Kingston St.
Denver, CO 80239
Phone: 303-937-9014
Will Call Pick-up:
8a-5p M-F, Closed 12p-1p

WEST SACRAMENTO, CA
3121 Evergreen Ave., #200
W. Sacramento, CA 95691
Phone: 916-372-7070
Will Call Pick-up: 8a-5p M-F

CONTACT AES - Find this info on the web at <http://www.aes4home.com/contact.html>

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