

Membership Has

You've probably seen the American Express commercials over the past few years. The catch phrase of this ongoing series has been "Membership Has Its Benefits." The commercials have continually promoted the idea that the company is offering more than just a credit card, and that "member-

ship" in American Express has many more advantages than the others offer.

The series of 30-second commercials pointing out these benefits must be working. American Express market share continues to grow, and one of its competitors has resorted to a series of commercials that show American Ex-

press in a rather negative light.

Like owning an American Express card, membership in the Western English Trade Association (WETA) also has its benefits. There are organizations in existence today, such as Rotary, Kiwanis, or even your local or national Chamber of Commerce, that you or your business can join. There are even those that offer memberships where dues are merely a contribution. A WETA membership, however, can provide benefits that far outweigh the expense of belonging to the organization.

Many retailers, manufacturers and associates volunteer their time and experience to WETA, and in working with the association's staff members, make sure that dues are not just token contributions. Instead, they see to it that membership dues represent an investment and an entitlement to resources that can assist retailers in improving their businesses.

Many current members of WETA have plentiful reasons that are sound in their logic for being part of this trade association. With very rare exceptions, these individuals and companies are successful in their own right. Yet, they continue to give a tremendous amount of time, energy and support for their fellow members by serving in the various volunteer positions within the organization.

Taking a cue from David Letterman, and with the input of a group of association members and leaders, here is a list of reasons, in no particular order, why your business should not only become a member of WETA, but also an active participant.

- Education. Each year, WETA sponsors the Leadership Forum at the All Industry Conference. Sessions with noted authors and consultants and facilitated roundtable discussions of industry-specific topics highlight this three-day event. The next conference will be held in Austin, Texas in May of 2006.

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