

BOBBY'S BEAT

Happy Holidays!

We are rounding the bend and heading for the home stretch of the 4th quarter and holiday season.

What a great time of year this is; schedules always seem to get more hectic each year with parties and family commitments.

This is also the time of year that we can take time out to remember how fortunate we are and be thankful. With all of the sensational negative news that bombards us, it can be challenging to realize how lucky we are to be in The United States of America.

Something I am very proud of that is often unspoken, is the amount that we do to work with and donate to the non-profits in our First Edge Solutions respective cities throughout the year. We support many different noble causes that either First Edge employees are enthusiastic about or some of our excellent customers are likewise passionate about. It gives our company and employees a great opportunity to help those less fortunate.

The most exciting one we are involved with during the holiday season is Toys for Tots, operated by the U.S. Marine Corps. Both our Milwaukee and Phoenix plants are collecting toys for the kids to be delivered on Christmas. We are excited to be a part of this because really- the holiday season is about family, friends, and KIDS! The opportunity to help ensure more kids receive gifts on Christmas is a great cause.

So please, if you can, please help out Toys for Tots, during the holiday season, by all means, come to either our Phoenix or Milwaukee plant and drop a toy or 2 in our collections box.

Thank you for being a part of our First Edge Solutions family as a customer, employee, supplier/partner, stakeholder, and/or friend of ours in 2011.

Most importantly, Happy Holidays to you and your loved ones!

Sincerely,



Robert M. Kraft
President & CEO



President and CEO,
Robert (Bobby) Kraft



HOLIDAY SPECIAL

Good Tidings to All!

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First Edge Employees Give Back

'Tis the season to do a little extra

Although there's always a need in our community, the holiday season is a good time for people to recognize the volunteer work done year-round.

One of the principles that First Edge fosters is individuals giving back. First Edge has many great examples of giving back to the community. Since everybody has different talents and passions, each employee's story is a little different.

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For instance, Kristina Santoro-Cataldo spends many hours volunteering at her church. She gives her time to “build a greater community by meeting people of all ages who share the same faith as me.” When asked what inspired this passion, she cited her childhood that was largely spent helping out in her church. Kristina also says it’s a great teambuilding experience for she and her husband to work together outside of the home. The passion of building community carries over to Kristina’s work here at First Edge and shows in the way she interacts with her customers and coworkers.

The Phoenix Office Administrator, Carissa Abril volunteers for a different number of places including St. Mary’s Food Bank, Salvation Army, St. Vincent De Paul, Phoenix Rescue Mission, Toys for Tots and Desert Mission Food bank. “There are many reasons why I volunteer, including helping those less fortunate, feeling a sense of accomplishment. I also appreciate and am thankful for what I have and who I have around me and to give a helping hand because I can” says Carissa.

Chris Hart helps in a different way. Since she has such a busy schedule,

she finds time in between sporting events and family to donate blood. Chris’ comedic take on volunteerism is: “I try to donate blood on a regular basis which is sort-of volunteer-like. I mean I voluntarily let them TAKE my blood...” Chris’ sense of humility aside, the blood that she donates could potentially save (or possibly already has) a life.

One of the First Edge sales reps, Jason Stromberg, gives back using his talents as a mentor and a coach. He is very active in several wrestling clubs and is a volunteer grade school coach for football and baseball. He volunteers to help others excel in a team environment which is a talent that we here at First Edge see him carry over to his professional life as well on a day to day basis.

Our community manager, Anna Mae Tiry has two volunteer opportunities near and dear to her heart. They are being a part of the philanthropy committee for the South Shore YMCA and working as a lifeguard/counselor for middle school aged girls at Grace Bible Camp one week each summer. When asked why she got involved in those specific, she said: “My family grew up at both our local YMCA and at Grace Bible Camp so it was a natural transition to continue to be a part of them once I was in a position to be able to help.” Being a part of the philanthropy committee, she says, is very rewarding because she is able to rally others to use their talents, funding or time to help families in need.

These are just a few stories. Many more of our First Edge peers help others and simply weren’t able to be interviewed for the article. The sense of goodwill is threaded throughout the company and culture here and is something that we all are very proud of.

More About



The mission of the U. S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program is to collect new, unwrapped toys during October, November and December each year, and distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community in which the campaign is conducted.

The objectives of Toys for Tots are to help less fortunate children throughout the United States experience the joy of Christmas; to play an active role in the development of one of our nation’s most valuable resources – our children; to unite all members of local communities in a common cause for three months each year during the annual toy collection and distribution campaign; and to contribute to better communities in the future.

TO LEARN MORE GO TO:
WWW.TOYSFORTOTS.ORG

More About



St. Mary’s Food Bank Alliance, the world’s first food bank, is a non-sectarian, nonprofit organization that alleviates hunger by efficiently gathering and distributing food to sites that serve the hungry. Serving two-thirds of Arizona’s 15 counties, the organization is committed to volunteerism, building community relationships and improving the quality of life for Arizonans in need.

TO LEARN MORE GO TO:
WWW.FIRSTFOODBANK.ORG

Top 5 Reasons Why Print Is Not Dead

5. Print is moldable

It gives you the ability to demonstrate to your audience a variety of things about who you are as a company. Are you unique? Go with an odd size piece printed on a special stock. Are you professional? Go with something printed on a high-end nice stock. Really, no matter what type of company you are, you can demonstrate that with print. I'm not knocking websites, but you are really limited to the type of monitor and settings of that monitor on what your website looks like.

4. Print is current and evolving

QR and different digital scanning codes and short URLs have become all the rage. These items are a perfect fit for your printed marketing and advertising materials. No matter the trend, print always seems to find a way to evolve and remain current.

3. Print is "green"

Don't believe us? Check out The Print Council's report and you will be amazed at how truly "green" printing is. A few of the report's findings include:

- In 2008, more than 57 percent of paper consumed in the U.S. was recovered for recycling, more than any material.
- The paper industry is aiming to reach 60 percent recycling by 2012. Every additional percentage point means that a million tons of paper are recovered.

- Less than 10 percent of U.S. power comes from renewable sources, but in the pulp and paper industry, that figure is greater than 60 percent.
- Printers are frequent buyers of renewable-energy certificates. These certificates, which represent power generated by wind, hydro, solar or biomass, support growth of renewable energy producers.
- The average person's paper use for a year (440 pounds) is produced by 500 kilowatt-hours of electricity, the amount used to power one computer continuously for five months.

2. Print is inspiring

Unlike digital media, print has a way to move and transform the way we look and perceive things. There is a reason why people are willing to pay big money for prints of their favorite artwork. While your company's brochure might not ever make it into The Louvre, if done right you can make it into the minds of your audience.

1. Print is credible

The internet is a great place for the sharing and exchange of information, but how many times have you bookmarked a page for later use and then gone back to find the page has been removed or the content has changed. Unless you are willing to reprint your companies marketing and advertising collaterals on a whim, print forces your company to

provide the very best information to your audience for an extended period of time, thus giving your audience a sense that you/your company is credible.

Congratulations to Mary Beth Folger of Simplex!



Mary Beth won our contest by bringing her FE Agency tshirt to the most interesting place, Cheers (yeah, that Cheers) Bar in Boston, MA. Thank you, Mary Beth, we're glad that in Cheers Bar, everyone knows FE Agency's Name.

The Beauty of Blue Bird

First Edge Solutions is proud to supply Blue Bird Corporation with all of their Operator and Service Manuals. First Edge also worked with Blue Bird to digitize every one of their manuals to have a DVD version of them.

The beauty of the partnership that was set up between Blue Bird and First Edge Solutions, is that everything is designed to be 'just in time.' This reduces the obsolescence of the manuals. For every minor technology and feature change on a Blue Bird bus, the manuals need to be changed to reflect that. Rather than have thousands of dollars' worth of manuals needing to be tossed with every change, every manual is printed on demand to ensure that only the latest information is being produced. There is just a 1- to 2-day turn time from the moment Blue Bird places an order on their online ordering system, to the time that the manuals are shipped to the bus manufacturer.

Currently, First Edge Solutions and Blue Bird are working on developing training videos which can be accessed online directly from the manuals via Quick Response Codes.



About Blue Bird Corp. Behind the Project

Blue Bird Corporation is one of the largest manufacturers of school buses in North America and the most recognized brand in the world. Founded in 1927, Blue Bird has grown to approximately 1,800 employees building some 25 to 40 buses per day. Built on the traditions of reliability, innovation, customer service, and dependable quality, for 80 years Blue Bird Corporation has continued to set industry standards with its innovative design and manufacturing capabilities. Blue Bird has an extensive network of dealers and service-parts facilities throughout all of North America.

Blue Bird's pioneering spirit and advances in technology have helped create top-of-the-line school buses that are flagships for the school bus industry. Blue Bird offers a complete line of school buses with seating capacities from 12 to 84 passengers.

TO LEARN MORE GO TO:
WWW.BLUEBIRD.COM

First Glass – Social Networking Event

On September 9, 2011, First Edge threw its first-ever, semi-annual, on-site networking event. We called the gala "First Glass." Because...well, why not?

The event was very well received. We had approximately 60 people attend in Milwaukee and 40 in Phoenix.

The best part about the event was that we got to know our community on a more personal level. To accomplish this, we called on one of the companies in our New Media Group, Meet-Meme, to facilitate the networking done at the event. Meet-Meme unveiled their new "bingo" networking game as a catalyst to get the attendees talking about anything under the sun except work.

We believe that business is going back to being relationship based, not strictly bottom-line focused. People are more likely to do business with people they know and trust. What better way to get a lot of different people to start meshing with one another and reaching out of their comfort zones than to play a classic game with them?



Look for the next First Glass networking event coming up this Spring.