

# VALET Program Update

December 2011

Virginia Economic Development Partnership—International Trade

## Upcoming VALET Events

**January 12, 2012**

Orientation  
Graduation Luncheon  
Omni Richmond

**April 18, 2012**

VALET Program Meeting  
Omni Richmond

**July 19, 2012**

Orientation  
Graduation Luncheon  
Omni Richmond

**October 19, 2012**

VALET Program Meeting

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## VALET Program Welcomes New Program Manager, Researcher

The Virginia Leaders in Export Trade (VALET) Program has undergone some significant changes over the past year and a half, beginning in July 2010 with expansion from accepting 15 to accepting 25 companies a year and the subsequent addition of Oscar Ruiz as a VALET Program Co-Manager.

With Leslie Parpart's and Mario Camardella's departures earlier this year, VALET has welcomed two new faces to the team — Program Co-Manager Monica Nichols and Research Manager Caitlin Clark.

Monica Nichols, who has taken over the Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads territories, comes to VEDP with 25 years of experience in various capacities at Reynolds Packaging Group. She worked for Reynolds in product and packaging innovation, project management, quality assurance, and environmental and regulatory affairs.



In her last position as Director of Product Development Technology, Monica helped oversee the production start-up of a new product at an Asian manufacturer and transition numerous international consumer and food service products to a new Asian manufacturer. Monica also led the international consumer recloseable bag refresh program for improved product design.

Monica has also served on the Board of the German School of Richmond and traveled extensively throughout Europe. She has a BS in Mechanical Engineering from Tufts University and an MBA from the University of Richmond.

As the new VALET Research Manager, Caitlin Clark assists VALET companies with their international market research requests. Coming to VEDP from a leading US trade association, Caitlin brings an understanding of the issues facing companies looking to grow their international business.



In her prior position as a Business Advisory Services Manager at the US-China Business Council (USCBC) in Washington, DC, Caitlin advised US companies on trade and investment issues with China, planned and led research projects for client education and use, and managed a portfolio of client sectors, including energy and environmental technologies, financial services, chemicals, and agriculture.

Caitlin holds BAs in Economics and East Asian Languages and Literatures, with a concentration in Chinese, from Washington and Lee University. She also studied at Capital Normal University in Beijing.

Oscar, Monica, and Caitlin are passionate about helping Virginia companies grow international sales and bring new energy and fresh perspectives to the VALET Program.

## Graduation Speakers

The January graduation keynote was delivered by VALET alum Lonnie Lemco of Richmond's World Art Group. Lonnie spoke about the company's use of VALET resources to research target markets and participation in multiple Group Market Visits. Lonnie also said that the VALET Program Partner network was a tremendous asset in growing the company's international sales. While World Art Group has received many accolades for its international business, Lonnie shared that, "There's really no magic to it other than hard work, persistence, and patience".



Director of International Business Development at VSD, LLC and VALET alum Fred Stewart delivered the keynote at July's graduation. Fred in October was also appointed Managing Director of subsidiary VSD Global, responsible for teams in the UAE and Saudi Arabia. Fred spoke on the importance of spending time and building relationships in target markets.



## 2011 VALET Graduates Increase International Sales By 69 Percent

VEDP-International Trade extends congratulations to the 14 great Virginia companies that graduated from the VALET Program in 2011.

### January 2011 Graduates

Aker Wade Power Technologies, LLC of Charlottesville  
A-T Solutions, Inc. of Spotsylvania  
DACS, Inc. of Portsmouth  
MGC Advanced Polymers, Inc. of Chesterfield  
PESCO-BEAM Environmental Solutions, Inc. of Roanoke  
Synergy International Systems, Inc. of Vienna  
Vaughan Furniture Company, Inc. of Galax  
VTLS, Inc. of Blacksburg

### July 2011 Graduates

Cableform, Inc. of Troy  
K2M, Inc. of Leesburg  
Inorganic Ventures of Christiansburg  
Tactical & Survival Specialties, Inc. of Harrisonburg  
Trax LLC of Vienna  
The Uttermost Company of Rocky Mount

These companies viewed their participation in VALET as a jumping off point for committing time, resources, and personnel to accelerating the growth of their international business. On their own and with the help of program partners and other VALET resources they refined their international focus and developed new strategies, instituted new policies and procedures to reduce risk, and made their international business more efficient.



July 2011 Graduating Class

The companies developed corporate export compliance programs, achieved technical certification for products in international markets, translated websites into foreign languages, and rebranded to emphasize product solutions for specific markets.

Through these efforts, as a group, the 2011 VALET graduates increased international sales by 69 percent. The companies also produced some outstanding individual results and are laying the groundwork for continued growth in their international business. Five of the 14 companies increased international sales over 50 percent, and another five of the 14 reported significant manpower additions. Several established offices in international markets, one hired four individuals to focus exclusively on international business development, and one opened a new building in Virginia to expand capacity.

The VALET Program thanks the graduates for including it in their individual and collective successes.

"Participation in VALET has had more of an impact than anyone at Trax International originally thought. The contacts, research support, consulting, and the funds provided had corporate wide implications and impacts."

—John Kenny, VP Corporate Development, Trax International



## VALET Companies Realize International Success

**Avecra's** netFORUM Enterprise organization management software was chosen by Scouts Canada to control the member data and online experience for about 100,000 scouts and volunteers. Scouts Canada is the country's leading youth organization offering programs for boys, girls and youth age 5-26 in cities and towns across Canada.

**VSD, LLC** in January was awarded a \$15 million contract from the Naval Air Warfare Center Training Systems Division in Orlando, FL to provide training systems to the Iraqi navy for the 60-Meter Offshore Support Vessel.

**Opower** in July announced a partnership with the UK's First Utility to provide its home energy management program to the energy company's customers.

**VSE Corp.** was awarded by the US Naval Sea Systems Command a one-year \$277 million contract for maintenance and upkeep on naval vessels bought, sold, or otherwise transferred to foreign military sales customers through the International Fleet Support Program.

**Mediatech, Inc.** in December was acquired by Corning Incorporated. Mediatech is now a subsidiary of Corning and will be integrated into its Life Sciences segment. By providing greater access to Mediatech's culture media and molecular biology reagents, the acquisition supports both companies' commitments to supply customers worldwide with laboratory research tools.

## Five VALET Companies Among Nations Fastest-Growing Private

*Inc.* magazine's 2011 ranking of the nation's fastest-growing private companies included five great VALET companies—24 Hour Company, Bosh Global Services, Customer Value Partners, Innovative Wireless Technologies, and SSB Bart Group. The magazine credits the 500 companies on the list with driving US economic recovery and job growth. Their 2010 total growth rate (the percentage increase of the sum of all the companies' revenues) was 42.6 percent (their median growth rate was 94 percent) and they created 370,592 jobs in the last three years.

Company	Location	Inc. Ranking	Employees	3-Year Growth
24 Hour Company	Falls Church	#4337	18	22%
Bosh Global Services	Newport News	#1556	133	177%
Customer Value Partners	Fairfax	#3789	106	39%
Innovative Wireless Technologies	Forest	#3327	40	56%
SSB Bart Group	McLean	#3033	28	67%

Source: *Inc.*

## VALET Companies In the News

- **Mikro Systems, Inc.** of Charlottesville was recognized by the US Department of Energy for a new licensing agreement with Siemens Energy, Inc. to improve the performance of natural gas-fired turbines through its Tomo-Lithographic Molding technology. Mikro Systems received a Small Business Innovation Research grant from the DOE's Office of Fossil Energy for the application of the technology to gas turbines.
- VALET graduate **Tactical & Survival Specialties, Inc.** of Harrisonburg was awarded a Defense Logistics Agency (DLA) 2011 Business Alliance Award in the category of Outstanding Readiness Support. Recipients must have provided extraordinary customer support, service or products during a crisis situation and have demonstrated overall excellence in superior product quality, on-time delivery, superior customer service, reliability, dependability, consistency and accuracy.
- VALET graduate **VSD, LLC** of Virginia Beach in January was selected by British Airways as a 2010 Face-of-Opportunity winner. The honor is part of the airline's Face-to-Face program, which provides small business owners and entrepreneurs critical tools for building business relationships abroad. VSD was awarded attendance at British Airways' Face-of-Opportunity business conference, as well as business travel anywhere in the world.
- Arlington-based **Opower** in July was profiled on the White House's blog as a leading US company creating and exporting clean energy technology. The post credited the company with "transforming the relationship between consumers and how they use energy in their homes." The company was also named to green innovation research firm Cleantech Group's third annual Global Cleantech 100 and ranked #10 on Forbes' list of America's 20 most promising companies.
- VALET graduate **SteelMaster Buildings, LLC** of Virginia Beach in January was named the inaugural winner of the UPS and *World Trade 100* magazine "Growth through Global Trade Award. Designed to recognize small- and medium-sized businesses in the US, the award recognizes growth of international sales, entrepreneurial spirit and innovative pursuit of international growth opportunities, and future export growth plans.

## TAKEAWAYS

### CE Marking: Preparing your product for the EU market

The letters "CE" are the abbreviation of the French phrase "Conformité Européene," meaning "European Conformity." The CE mark enables free movement of products within the European Economic Area by ensuring that products marketed there conform with the essential requirements of applicable European Commission directives. There is no comprehensive list of products that require a CE mark; companies must refer to specific product directives to determine whether a CE mark is needed.



A product manufacturer self-declares CE approval and assumes all liability associated with a product's conformity to the CE requirements. The CE mark must be supported by a product conformity assessment included in a technical file that backs up a signed declaration of conformity. The documentation must be made available to authorities upon request.

The conformity assessment of a minimal risk product may be carried out by the manufacturer, but greater risk products might need to be assessed by an independent body that acts as a test lab and carries out the steps listed in the directives mentioned above before deciding whether the product has passed.

### VALET Program Hosts CE Mark Webinar

The VALET Program in March hosted a web-based discussion on preparing your product for the EU market with a CE mark. Louis Hodges of TUV Rheinland US was the key presenter and provided an overview of the CE mark process. More than a dozen people in locations around Virginia registered and attended the free webinar.

As part of the discussion portion, Vice President of Research & Development for Lighthouse Instruments, Bobby Anderson, and President of Shibuya Hoppmann Mark Flanagan, shared their experiences in organizing their companies' initiatives to prepare for certification. Both discussed the need for a company to appoint someone to be an in-house expert and guide the process, as well as the need to engage outside resources for training, program development and possibly testing and certification steps. The VALET Program thanks Bobby and Mark for sharing their perspectives with VALET companies listening in.

If a Virginia exporter is considering selling into the European Economic Area (30 countries with a population of more than 500 million), it should review whether CE Marking is necessary for its product.

The VALET Program looks forward to hosting more educational webinars in 2012.

### VEDP-International Trade Continues Support for VA Defense Industry with 2012 Defense Event

Over 50 companies representing Virginia's diverse and important defense corporate base attended VEDP-International Trade's second defense B2B networking event in January 2011. The VEDP hopes to build on that success with a February 2012 defense program highlighting international opportunities for the state's robust defense sector.

The 2011 defense event featured the Minister for Trade and Commerce at the Embassy of India, Vinay Kwatra, speaking on the India-US defense relationship and opportunities for Virginia companies linked to that expansion.

Additionally, David Pekoske, Executive Vice President at A-T Solutions, a VALET graduate and VEDP client, spoke about the opportunities and challenges it's faced in doing business with the US and Indian Coast Guards and offered best practices for other VA companies in the market. Finally, Brent Conner of Troutman Sanders presented on export controls and their pending reforms as they relate to trade with India. The program's networking opportunities resulted in new business leads for some attendees, while others ended up participating in the VEDP-led trade mission to India in the spring.

The VEDP continues to support international growth of the state's defense sector with its third defense event on February 3, 2012, focusing on defense opportunities in "hot" defense markets like Australia and emerging defense markets such as Brazil.



January 2011 Defense Event

If you are interested in receiving an invitation to this event, please contact Scott Kennedy, VEDP Events Manager, at (804) 545-5754.

A survey taken prior to the spring VALET program meeting showed that 59 percent of the companies attending were tracking international traffic to their websites or using search engine optimization techniques to enhance the likelihood of clients finding them.

Only 38 percent of the attendees indicated that they had translated marketing materials or portions of their website into another language.

## 2011 SPRING Program Meeting

Over 55 people representing 30 VALET companies and 6 guest presenters convened in Richmond for the spring VALET Program meeting. The theme of the meeting was **Marketing and Translation For Your International Business.**

Program Partners Michael Blanchard of Siddall, Inc. and Laszlo Horvath of ActiveMedia spoke to the group on maximizing the potential of your website through creative development and employing search engine optimization technology to ensure your company is found on the web. Ralph Bosen of TNB Services spoke on the importance of localizing website and materials in the language of their target markets.



Spring VALET Program Meeting

Attendees also broke out into two social media sessions: one led by Dean Browell and Jeff Thompson of the Feedback Agency titled *Is Social Media Right for my Business?* (i.e., Social Media 101) and another led by Sonali Shetty of Hodges Digital Strategies titled *Making the Most of your Social Media Investment* (i.e., Social Media 201). The use of social media by the participating companies covered a wide spectrum. One participant shared his view of Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn as free and useful marketing tools that allowed them to reach out to clients with product updates and company news. Another explained the uses of social media to extend the reach of traditional print trade magazines and to display product information. The sessions allowed for the sharing of ideas and strategies that is a hallmark of the VALET program meetings.

Tony Pearman of Roanoke's Access, Inc. rounded out the spring meeting with an informative lunch keynote titled *The Dirty Secrets of Working with an Advertising Agency.*

## 2011 FALL Program Meeting

46 people from 31 VALET companies and five Program Partners turned out for the fall VALET Program meeting in Norfolk focused on managing risks in international business.

A session on getting paid and keeping your money included presentations from Program Partners in the field of finance. Marsha Sompayrac of SunTrust spoke on financing export sales and getting paid, Tom Corbett of Marsh USA spoke on accounts receivable insurance, and Ryan Losi of Piascik & Associates spoke on tax strategies for small businesses. Another session included presentations from Tom McVey of Williams Mullen on regulatory compliance and Matthew McDavid of Marsh USA on cyber security and privacy liability.



Fall VALET Program Meeting

The group heard from Reynolds Consumer Products' David Watson during the lunch keynote on protecting a brand. David discussed some of Reynolds' strategies and best practices for protecting trademarks in international markets.

Visit the VALET members-only site to view presentations from the 2011 program meetings (Username: valet; Password: participant):

[www.exportvirginia.org/valet/valet\\_program\\_meetings.html](http://www.exportvirginia.org/valet/valet_program_meetings.html)



David Watson of Reynolds Consumer Products delivers fall program's lunch keynote

**Since joining [VALET], 24 Hour Company has visited South Africa once and Australia twice—once on a group market visit in March 2011 and returned in July 2011 due to the direct success of the first visit to support a new client.**

## **VALET Research Resources at your Fingertips!**

**Export compliance**  
**Due diligence**  
**Taxes and tariffs**  
**Shipping**  
**Identifying partners**  
**Market overviews**  
**Top markets**  
**Product classification**  
**Regulations**  
**Tradeshows**  
**Federal initiatives**  
**Industry & trade associations**  
**Documentation requirements**  
**Product certifications**  
**Travel-related resources**

**Also visit the Research Resources section of the VALET Participants' Only website ([www.exportvirginia.org/valet/valet\\_research\\_resources.html](http://www.exportvirginia.org/valet/valet_research_resources.html)). It is simple to access: the log-in is "valet" and the password is "participant." Bookmark it, refer to it often, and forward it to others within your organization.**

## **VALET Company Spotlight**

24 Hour Company provides visual communications solutions, assisting companies in winning business through formal or informal proposals and presentations around the world since 1992. 24 Hour Company joined the VALET Program in 2010 after graduating from the AIM (Accessing International Markets) Program also coordinated through the VEDP-International Trade. Under AIM, 24 Hour Company opened its first international office—a wholly owned subsidiary, 24 Hour Company UK LTD. Through VALET, the company hoped to expand not only its burgeoning UK presence, but also develop other English-speaking markets such as Australia and South Africa.



*24 Hour Company's Colleen Jolly poses with other VEDP-International Trade Clients during 2011 Group Market Visit to Australia*

Since joining the program, 24 Hour Company has visited South Africa once and Australia twice—on a group market visit in March 2011 and in July 2011 due to the direct success of the first visit. One of the US Principals and Managing Director of the UK subsidiary, Colleen Jolly, wrote a successful blog for Virginia Business Magazine about her experiences on the group market visit and learning about a new culture.

During its time in VALET, 24 Hour Company, doubled its international revenue and expanded into the Australian market. The company also increased its presence in the UK and is scheduled to exhibit at Farnborough Air Show with the VEDP in the summer of 2012. 24 Hour Company has been invited to speak at the Association of Proposal Management Professionals' ([www.apmp.org](http://www.apmp.org)) UK conference for five years in a row and has sponsored the association's German-speaking chapter's annual conference for the past two years. Colleen Jolly in October 2010 also spoke at the association's first South African conference in Johannesburg.

Overall, 24 Hour Company grew more than 20 percent in 2010 from not only the strength of its international market penetration, but also from increased credibility in supporting multinational corporations bidding on US Federal procurements such as the UK-based BAE Systems and QinetiQ as well as the India-based, Wipro.

Looking forward to 2012, 24 Hour Company will continue to support and expand its physical presence in the UK while developing partner arrangements in Australia and the Pacific Rim. The Company is also excited to be a new Program Partner for VALET and believes that its unique experience as a successful service-based company in several countries can assist other service companies growing their international business.



*Colleen presenting to group in South Africa*

To learn more about 24 Hour Company, visit: [www.24hrco.com](http://www.24hrco.com)

## New Companies' VALET Goals

At each VALET orientation, new companies discuss international goals. Here's what some of the 2011 companies hope to achieve...



"Increase sales by 20% due to exports, hire additional people to handle the new business."

Create a new full time position dedicated to international sales development."

"Establish in-country reps in our target markets leading to credible leads and sales."

"Achieve 20% of new product development and production extension driven through international opportunities"

"Most of our sales to date have been opportunistic – responding to inquiries that come to us. In two years, we wish to have completed four strategic international market entries where we plotted a course based on our priorities."

"Currently, international sales is all FMS. By the end of 2 years, we want to use the resources to increase direct sales by at least 50%."

## 28 Companies Join VALET in 2011

The VALET Program in 2011 welcomed 27 new companies from across the state— 14 in the January class and 13 in the July class.

The 2011 incoming classes are comprised of 16 manufacturing and 11 service sector companies. The growing representation of service sector companies in the VALET Program reflects a nation and statewide trend of services companies becoming more strategic in their pursuit of international sales.



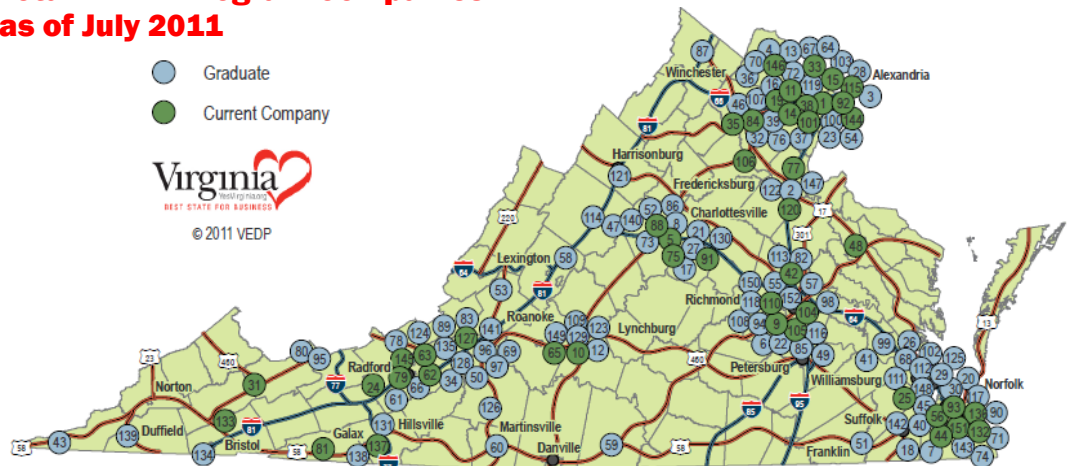
July 2011 VALET Class (incoming)

Virginia's services exports in 2009, the most recent year for which data is available, reached \$11.2 billion, or 47 percent of the state's total exports. Virginia's services exports grew 7.4 percent per year (in nominal terms) from 2001 to 2009 compared with 1.4 percent for all other exports.

Region	January Class	July Class
Northern Virginia	Alpha Industries, Inc. Cooper Instruments & Systems MTCSC Inc. Waterborne Environmental, Inc.	ASSETT, Inc. Avecetra, Inc. Communications-Applied Technology Opower QMT Associates, Inc.
Hampton Roads	DRS C3 & Aviation Company Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas + Company	Paramount Industrial Cos., Inc. Turner Strategic Technologies
Central Virginia	Alliance Engineering, Inc. FDP Virginia, Inc. Mikro Systems, Inc. Northland Forest Products, Inc.	Lighthouse Instruments, LLC Schneider Laboratories Inc. Softchalk, LLC
Southwest Virginia	Alliance Industrial Corp Innovative Wireless Technology, Inc. Mar-Bal, Inc. Vaughan Bassett Furniture Co.	Bondcote Ceramic Technology McAllister Mills, Inc.

## Total VALET Program Companies as of July 2011

- Graduate
- Current Company



## Where will you find your next sale?

### VEDP Group Market Visits and Trade Shows

Over 850 Virginia companies have participated in group market visits and trade shows with the VEDP since 1999.



What are you waiting for?

Consider joining the VEDP on one of its 2012 trade missions.

India	February 20-24	(Registration deadline December 23, 2011)
Saudi Arabia	March 10-13	(Registration deadline January 13)
China	April 16-20	(Registration deadline February 17)
South Africa	May 7-11	(Registration deadline March 9)
Brazil	May 21-25	(Registration deadline March 23)
Farnborough International Airshow	July 9-15	(Full)

Register online at [www.exportvirginia.org/market\\_visits.html](http://www.exportvirginia.org/market_visits.html)

#### VALET ALUMNI - Don't Forget, You Have Access to VEDP's Global Network!

Forty-five international consultants in export trade at your service! The Global Network is a comprehensive group of pre-screened in-country consultants who work with the VEDP - International Trade on behalf of Virginia companies. These consultants deliver top-notch market research specific to your industry and your target market. They develop market entry strategies and identify potential partners. They conduct due diligence and arrange "match-making" appointments with potential distributors and customers. Additional custom research is available. The possibilities are limitless. Best of all, VEDP will cover the cost of most of their services for qualifying companies, for one project per fiscal year (July 1 - June 30).

To get started on a research project, or for more information, contact your local Trade Manager.

<u>Americas</u>	<u>Asia Pacific</u>	<u>Europe - Eastern</u>	<u>Europe - Western</u>	<u>Middle East &amp; Africa</u>
Argentina	Australia	Bulgaria	Belgium	Israel
Brazil	China	Czech Republic	Denmark	Jordan
Chile	India	Estonia	Finland	Qatar
Canada	Japan	Hungary	France	Saudi Arabia
Mexico	Malaysia	Latvia	Germany	UAE
	New Zealand	Lithuania	Ireland	South Africa
	Singapore	Poland	Italy	
	Thailand	Romania	the Netherlands	
	Vietnam	Russia	Norway	
		Slovakia	Spain	
		Turkey	Sweden	
		Ukraine		

#### Contact the VALET Program team!

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