

# Helping L.I.'s metamorphosis, step by step

By KENNETH R. CERINI

**L**ong Island, once a hotbed of the defense industry, has gone through a metamorphosis. Business on the Island had to be retooled (and staff retrained) as manufacturers gave way to service companies. While manufacturers still exist here, many companies that used to construct goods on Long Island have outsourced the manu-



Bob Gagliardi

**BOYKO: One small step for Island service companies, one giant leap for the LI economy.**

facturing process to other parts of the country or the world. But while manufacturing isn't as prevalent on Long Island, many of the systems and processes that are integral to manufacturing are equally important in other business sectors. "If you think about what goes on in a doctor's office, in a hospital or in any type of health care environment, it's a step-by-step process – the same way as if you're in a factory building widgets," said John Boyko, president of Advancing Productivity, Innovation and Competitive Success.

**What type of certifications does APICS offer?** APICS currently provides value-added training programs for inventory, as well as three main certifications – supply chain certification, inventory control and inventory management. The Supply Chain Certification Program was introduced last year around the concept that every business is part of a supply chain. To understand how to operate within that supply chain it is critical to maintain cost, to be efficient and to deliver on time. Around the world, we already have about 1,500 or so certified supply chain professionals, with the next certification test scheduled for December. In the meantime, we have a prep class going on every Tuesday night at a local manufacturing company. Not only is there a live instructor present, but there is also an online gap analysis, so that each week students have a certain hands-on assignment they can work on to see where they are and what they need to work on. This way, we can address these needs specifically and really tailor the learning process to each individual.

With respect to inventory certifications, the main thing that runs any manufacturer or enterprise is something called an MRP system, or Material Resource Planning. This is a type of software that controls the inventory and has been built on APICS' body of knowledge. Other business sectors are starting to see the benefit of sending staff to receive APICS certification. We have been working recently with Scholastic Publishing. They are putting a bunch of their employees through our Inventory Management Certification Program. If you've read any of the reports issued by the comptroller's office surrounding school districts, many of them have had issues controlling inventory – laptops were missing, books

that they ordered weren't where they were supposed to be. That's where our certification helps to tighten controls.

**How do you go about branching out and redefining yourself after 40 years?** APICS went through a major re-branding and marketing effort about three years ago. We rolled out a new logo, a new name and the new Supply Chain Certification program we talked about. We are also trying to serve such markets as healthcare, retail, even the food industry, and show them this is a body of knowledge they can really benefit from. We have monthly meetings for our members, where we go through various topics that will help them run their business more effectively. For instance, the next meeting on Nov. 7 will address Radio Frequency ID tagging, which is very important today. Inventory has become a much more technology-driven vehicle now than ever before. If you want to deal with the Department of Defense, you have to have RFID capabilities. If you want to deal with a company like Wal-Mart, you have to have RFID capabilities. While companies working with Wal-Mart have traditionally not been our membership base, what they do relies heavily on the step-by-step process of thinking that is a fundamental component of APICS' body of knowledge. It's slowly trickling down.

In the future, we're looking to go in different directions, as well. We currently have a little more than 300 members and the diversity of these members attending our monthly meetings is growing, with anyone from a production planner to a company owner attending. So, the direction we're going in is really expanding from the stigma of being the "inventory control guys" to showing the local companies we offer a lot more than just plain inventory control.

**What do you see as the primary benefits of APICS?** The No. 1 benefit, that I can see, is networking. We really do have this great membership base and, with the way our monthly meetings are structured, we always have a networking hour. Many of our members have found career paths that they never thought of just by going to these meetings and talking to someone. Out-of-work people come to them, as well; we have a person involved in placement, which we never had before, who really adds some value to our membership.

Aside from the focus and individual training, which someone could go somewhere and receive on a weekly or monthly basis, we offer webcasts that members have access to 24/7. It's an effective training tool we offer to our members. We also have a magazine that comes out on a monthly basis – many people don't understand what APICS is until they start seeing our magazine.

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**Founded:** 1967

**Staff:** All volunteer

**Annual Budget:** \$62,400

**Fundraised Budget:** \$ 0

**Program Services:** 90%

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Oct. 29/30, 2008

Where Business Gets Down To Business

Vol. 53 No. 44 • \$1.50

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