



# **AESF FOR THE FUTURE**

*A New Beginning*

Business Plan

# AESF Organizational Overview

The American Electroplaters and Surface Finishers Society (AESF) is a non profit corporation established in 1909. The Society is composed of approximately 2,700 members in 65 branches located domestically and internationally.

# AESF Mission

The primary objectives of the Society as recorded in the By Laws amended June 15, 2005 are:

“To advance the science and technology of surface finishing and to disseminate knowledge thereof, and to develop a cooperative spirit of friendship and mutual assistance among its members.”

AESF for the Future has interpreted this to be:  
Education, Fellowship and Tradition

# Profitability Potential

Until recently the Society has had a history of operating profitably based upon income from membership dues, the sale of education related products and services, and the production of industry trade shows such as Sur-Fin.

# Current Financial Dilemma

However, recent financial statements from AESF, now show average losses of \$40,000 per month.

It is estimated that this will cause insolvency in less than 1 year if the losses continue.

# The AESF is at a crossroad...

Regardless of what the consolidation / merger proponents say, the AESF with its rich history, dedicated members, and tremendous industry assets has all of the resources necessary to reorganize, rebuild & reinvigorate its membership.

# Business Plan Action Points

- Staff Reorganization
- Launch an aggressive marketing plan and public relations campaign designed to encourage past members to return while attracting new members.
- Return the AESF's focus back to our core values of education and fellowship.

# Staff Reorganization

## Executive Director

The AESF Executive Director for the Future will work with the Board of the Future to be a team of equals. This person will be a dynamic, energetic representative of the AESF, who will tirelessly seek to improve membership and member benefits in their day to day activities.

# Staff Reorganization

## Branch Services Manager

Responsibilities will be to assist branches in conducting ongoing professional marketing campaigns to promote events, activities, and member recruitment.

This branch “hand holding” is critical; the position must be exclusively dedicated to working with the branches.

# Staff Reorganization

## Educational Director

The Future AESF Educational Director's main responsibility will be to develop and maintain AESF alliances with the key colleges, universities, and technical schools around the country. The Educational Director will also assist in all aspects of the Societies activities pertaining to educational programs from our new online courses to scholarships.

# Marketing Plan Overview

- Membership Campaign
- Website Revision
- Public Relations Campaign
- Trade Show Exposure
- Print Ad Campaign
- Direct Mail

# Membership Campaign

For the remaining months of 2006 the AESF membership campaign will focus on re-recruiting the thousands of past members many of whom may have been absent because of their discontent over the last 10 years. The goal of this membership campaign is 1,500 new members by August 2007.

Beginning in January 2007 P&SF will kick the campaign into high gear by running a cover story with supporting editorials and articles throughout discussing the new benefits of AESF membership.

# Membership Campaign

Special membership packages and incentives will be created and target marketed specifically to attract college students, captive shops, and allied association membership.

Awards, national recognition, and incentives will be offered to entice loyal volunteers and branches to perform the grass roots campaigning that will be required for a successful membership campaign.

# Website Revision

The AESF will seek out proposals to revise our website before the end of the first quarter of 2007. This revision will include new software called the “branch toolbox” which will provide branch leaders with a powerful online tool that can be used in daily marketing efforts.

The AESF will also facilitate the creation of individual websites for each branch that can also be updated through this toolbox.

# Website Revision

This tool box will allow branch leaders instant access to:

- Contact information for current and past membership
- Contact information for area member prospects
- Contact information area allied associations.
- Contact information for local and national media

Features of this tool box will allow branch leaders, with a few simple clicks and some fill in the blanks, to create professional email and facsimile messages that can be simply sent to any or all of the above contact groups.

# Website Revision

The purpose and function of the individual branch websites will be:

- To build community outreach, to inform, and to and reach a more broad audience.
- To attract prospective new members.
- To conduct online transactions for branch events such as annual golf tournament, registration for regionals, etc.
- To gain advertising revenue for branches.
- To reduce printing and mailing costs.

# Public Relations Campaign

The AESF Executive Director of the Future will create strategic alliances with related and parallel industries that could provide an endless supply of potential new members.

- Colleges, Universities & Tech Schools
- Industrial Painting & Chemical Related Associations
- National, regional, and international trade magazines, journals, newspapers and newsletters.

# Public Relations Campaign

The AESF will create a special National Awareness Committee charged with continuously creating and disseminating public relations programs designed to inform the general public of the need and necessity of metal finishing in everyday life.

# Trade Show Exposure

The AESF of the Future will participate in trade shows of related and parallel industries on both the national and regional levels.

- On the regional level, each Branch will be asked to participate in one college job/career fair each year.
- On the national level, the AESF Staff of the Future will evaluate and participate in both large national and smaller regional, parallel industrial trade shows throughout the year.

# Print Ad Campaign

The AESF of the Future will use it's tremendous industry resources to negotiate premium printed advertising space with Metal Finishing Magazine, PF Magazine, and Powder Coating Magazine to run professionally designed marketing pieces promoting the benefits of AESF Membership.

Most readers of these publications are not members!

# Direct Mail

A well kept AESF database is key to our ability to communicate with our members. It is also key to its ability to market itself to potential new membership.

The AESF database for the Future will be continuously updated and coded with filterable categories that indicate specialties, interests, past activities, etc.

# Direct Mail

Direct mail campaigns can be easily sorted from the database by targeted categories.

Using this database the AESF of the Future will develop small post cards, brochures and flyers that can be cost effectively produced in-house, that the support staff can mail on regular basis to target markets, highlighting benefits that pertain specifically to that member or prospect category.

# Return to our Core Values

**"To advance the science and technology of surface finishing and to disseminate knowledge thereof, and to develop a cooperative spirit of friendship and mutual assistance among its members."**

# Return to our Core Values

Fellowship

Tradition

Education

*"Education is the cornerstone of our Society"*

# Recommended Actions

Actions recommended to convert current monthly losses to a profit.

- Management and administration to be performed by direct employees who run the association as if their jobs depend on it.
- Launch effective marketing and public relations campaign to create membership growth.
- Return to our core values and stop wasting our precious resources on the discussion of consolidation/merger.
- Eliminate Government Relations (GR) as a fixed expense.

# AESF For The Future

A business plan like the one drafted by the AESF for the Future committee will work.

The Society's downward spiral of the last 10-12 years is a not as related to the changes in our industry as you may think. It is our belief that our current dilemma is more the result of a combination of bad management combined with not having a plan in the first place.

# What Next?

- The business plan draft must be edited, finalized, reprinted and redistributed prior to Sur-Fin.
- Our Delegates must put a stop to the Board's waste of time, energy and money that is spent on a daily basis towards their Merger - once and for all.
- Our Delegates must elect a Board that is willing to institute a plan like the one outlined in this presentation.