

Distribution America and PRO Group, Inc. Return to In-Person Events with the 2022 Executive Planning Conference

Ponte Vedra Beach, FL (11/23/2021) – After the first ever virtual event last year, Distribution America and PRO Group, Inc. were thrilled to host the 2022 Executive Planning Conference (EPC) in-person at the Sawgrass Marriott Golf Resort & Spa on November 16-18, 2021. The luxury setting allowed attendees to enjoy a golf tournament, receptions and their one-on-one meetings in an atmosphere that encouraged networking and the formation of business relationships.

The event kicked off with member meetings and a golf tournament at the Dye's Valley Course. A *Golfweek* top ranked course, Dye's Valley has been home to numerous tournaments including the recent Korn Ferry Challenge in 2020. The tournament featured a Hole-In-One contest sponsored by the North American Hardware and Paint Association (NHPA) and allowed all participants the opportunity to network while enjoying an exceptional golf venue.

"The EPC is a can't miss event!" said Nick Veenendaal, Sales Manager with Homewerks Worldwide. "It provides the opportunity to turn colleague and customer relationships into life-long friendships and is the perfect environment for professional growth."

Wednesday morning opened with the Prayer Breakfast organized by Wallace Hardware. Afterward, attendees participated in the scheduled, one-on-one meetings over the course of two days that brought together decision makers for both distributor and manufacturer partners. Those meetings allowed the discussion of product launches, promotions, program details and new business opportunities for the coming year. It also allowed attendees to address the unique challenges that have persisted over the course of the pandemic.

According to Dave Christmas, President and CEO of Distribution America, "It is so great to be back together again for an in-person event. During these three days, thousands of individual meetings took place in conjunction with social and recreational gatherings as we make plans and work through issues to strengthen our partnerships and continue the explosive growth pattern we have seen for the past few years."

Alex Hodge, CEO at Horizon Distribution, also noted how beneficial the conference format was for his business. "The EPC once again exceeded our expectations in terms of networking, business meetings and overall return on investment."

On Wednesday evening, attendees were treated to a Welcome Back Celebration sponsored by the National Hardware Show. The evening featured comfort food, cocktails, and conversation in a beautiful setting at the Sawgrass.

"Everyone was so excited to return to an in-person EPC!" said Steve Synnott, President and CEO at PRO Group, Inc. "The social and networking opportunities cannot be replicated virtually and the enthusiasm from key distributor and manufacturer executives reaffirmed the importance of building and maintaining relationships."

To round out the event, all vendor attendees were provided with the opportunity to build digital showcases that allowed them to upload product information, conference specials and even product demonstration videos. New vendor attendees were able to display product in a New Item Display area

that was open to viewing from distributor attendees. This area provided new vendors with the opportunity to generate brand and product awareness among a large distributor audience.

“The Executive Planning Conference is always a great opportunity for our company to share goals and insights with our vendor partners while simultaneously learning more about their businesses,” said Jonathan Mize, CEO and President at Blish-Mize Co. “It was important that we were back face-to-face again in a format that makes it easy for our vendor partners to meet with over 27 distributors in one place to discuss the concerns all of us are facing during these challenging times.”

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