

Industry News

Forte to deliver keynote at WithIt conference

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Women in the Home Industries (WithIt) will feature performance consultant and author Jay Forte as its keynote speaker for its annual professional conference.

The event, set for Aug. 11-13 at the Embassy Suites Charlotte-Concord, just north of Charlotte, N.C., will have the theme, “Women Doing Business: Thought Leaders, Creative Innovators and Influencers.”

Forte, a former financial executive and educator, has more than 20 years experience teaching adults work performance skills. He will address evolutionary changes in busi-

ness and industry that affect the workplace and job performance with his presentation “Right Brain, Right Time.”

“Today, an engage-and-inspire approach is required, one more core to fundamental feminine thinking,” said Forte. “This focus on right-brain thinking — connection, communication, consensus and community — is the key to activating and engaging today’s employees.”

Other speakers on the two-day agenda include:

► Broyhill President Jeff Cook, who will offer creative



Forte

solutions to businesses in flux.

► Beth Sweetman, senior vice president of human resources for Furniture Brands International, on “The Art of Negotiating.”

► Leslie Carothers, principal, The Kaleidoscope Partnership, and Julia Rosien, social media manager for bedding specialist Natura World, on social media strat-

egy and benefits.

► Leslie Haskin, a former insurance industry executive who survived the 9-11 attack on the Twin Towers, with an inspiring story of survival and what comes next.

Introduced at last year’s event and back by popular demand, according to WithIt, are Round Table Discussions featuring more industry experts acting as group discussion moderators.

“For the lowest conference rates available, the WithIt Professional Conference is an investment in future success that companies can’t actually afford to miss,” said Liz O’Brien, 2009 WithIt president. “Each attendee will have exposure to the highest caliber of content, ideas and action plans which they can return to their office with.”

Registration is open to all at www.withit.org.

WithIt offers mentoring program

GREENSBORO, N.C. — Women in the Home Industries (WithIt) is introducing what it calls a Curbside Mentoring Program to its annual professional conference, allowing attendees to register for individual meetings with 10 industry leaders.

Each leader will offer guidance and advice specific to their experience and expertise.

The 2009 conference is set for Aug. 11-13 at the Embassy Suites, Charlotte-Concord, just north of Charlotte, N.C. Each 45-minute session will cost \$50.

“The cost is a great value,” said Liz O’Brien, 2009 WithIt president. “Thanks to our volunteer corps of leaders, all proceeds go towards the organization’s initiatives which support and help to develop female professionals who will be future influencers.”

Curbside Mentoring leaders

and their subjects include:

► Jana Platina-Phipps, Home Couture Collective: “Life/Work Balance: Define Your Priorities and Set Your Boundaries.”

► Jerry Cohen, Cohen, Tauber, Spievack & Wagner P.C.: “Ask an Attorney: Answers on Business Laws and How They Affect You.”

► Sara Lyke, WithIt: “Resume Review: Bring Your Resume for a Professional Polishing!”

► Mary Eitel, MKE Communications: “You Are the Brand: Establishing Your Personal Brand.”

► Leslie Carothers, The Kaleidoscope Partnership: “A Hands-On Approach to Social Networking — Getting Started without Wasting Time or Money.”

► Connie Post, The Connie Post Co.: “Be Paid What You’re Worth — Establish Your Value and Get It!”

► Stephanie Lowder, Rare Bird Creative: “Writing to Further Your Career Path: Your 3-Minute Intro, Your Professional Bio and Your Elevator Speech.”

► Libby Langdon, Libby Interiors Inc.: “Establishing a Connection — The Impression You Project Through Words, Visual Cues and Body Language.”

► Carol Gregg, Red Egg: “Start Your Engines — Practical Advice on Your Business Start-Up Idea.”

► Catherine Smoak, Jigsaw Solutions: “What Should I Charge Them? Creative Ideas on Structuring Client Fees in a Down Economy.”

Curbside mentoring is available on a first sign-up basis, along with conference registration, at www.withit.org. Meetings will take place privately at an assigned time and individuals will be notified prior to the event.

Series of seminars set for Las Vegas Market

LAS VEGAS — Former Southwest Airlines CEO Howard Putnam will headline a Business Survival Series of seminars to take place during the Las Vegas Market, Sept. 14-17.

Now an author and consultant, he’ll speak during a “Power Lunch with Howard Putnam” on Tuesday, Sept. 15, according to World Market Center officials.

“Today’s businesses need to decide whether their model differentiates them from the competition and whether they are followers or trendsetters. We decided at Southwest to change the way the game is played,” said Putnam, who will offer practical and simple steps to meet business goals.

The event will take place at noon in World Market Center space C-469 and will include a box lunch. A suggested \$10 donation at the door will go to City of Hope, the medical research and treatment center devoted to the prevention and cure of cancer and other life-threatening diseases.

Other seminars in the series will take place in the World Forum in Building B, 16th floor, and are free to market attendees. Speakers include:

► Bill Child, chairman of Salt Lake City-based R.C. Willey Home Furnishings, who will appear with Jeff Benedict, who wrote a book about how the retailer grew from a single store to a company that today is owned by Warren Buffett’s Berkshire Hathaway and is valued at more than \$1 billion. They will speak at 4 p.m. Monday, Sept. 14, followed by a wine and cheese reception and book signing.

► Andrew Edlfesen of the U.S. Department of Commerce, who will speak on assistance available through the U.S. Commercial Service to companies wishing to export. Tuesday, Sept. 15, at 8 a.m.

► Gregory Vargo, president of New York-based Vargo Design Licensing, who will outline licensing strategies and the various business models used in the industry. Wednesday, Sept. 16, at 10 a.m.

► Leslie Carothers of The Kaleidoscope Partnership, a social networking and marketing consultant, who will speak on measuring the return on investment in social media. Her co-presenter is Kathy Ireland of Kathy Ireland Worldwide. Thursday, Sept. 17, at 10 a.m.

Attendees can register for market and reserve discounted hotel rooms online at www.lasvegasmarket.com.

AOS/AICO update office Web site

PICO RIVERA, Calif. — Office furnishings supplier AOS/AICO Office Systems, a division of residential furniture source AICO, has launched a redesigned Web portal with new features and added information.

Among the new features on the portal at www.aosaico.com are:

► A complete breakdown of every modular component that is used in each piece of office furniture.

► Instant access for deal-

ers to high-resolution images of the collections they floor, creating a simple and effective way to find images for advertising.

► An online Space Planner. Consumers can use the feature to customize their offices with AOS products they have placed on their wish lists, letting them see what the offices will look like. In addition, dealers can use the tool to pre-plan the AOS section of their showrooms, without having to move any furniture.

“We here at AOS have always worked to create the most innovative and fully functional products and wanted to make sure that our Web site was as user-friendly as our collections,” said Joe Mathieu, AOS national sales manager. “This new site will immediately answer a lot of questions we find people have about our products, thus making the buying process quick and easy for anyone using the site.”