

VENDOR'S NIGHT

So here we all are, trying to run a business, dealing with the employees, the vendors and, oh yeah, the clients, on a day-in day-out basis. When we finally get a minute to come up for a breath do you ever have this feeling that I often get; that it's just you on this side and there's a whole lot of them over on that side?

I have a theory about why organizations work for their members that may be different from the conventional wisdom. If you ask all the people in an organization why they are members most of them will answer some variation of, "It's for networking, for making contacts, business alliances, getting customers." When I bought my business I was coached to join organizations for all of the above reasons and I did and it was a good pragmatic move. I got leads and allies and customers and was able to establish an ongoing enterprise. I was also active in every organization I joined; on a committee or a board or something that put me in direct contact with other members. I watched folks come and go or stay and I developed my theory, which is very scientific at the level of a gut feeling. I would put it like this: The members that make or break an organization, who are active and willing to commit their resources to it and who sustain it over time, are not just motivated by pragmatism. They are often really motivated by the "You're not alone out there." factor.

They come because in that room they find the people who are on their side and, while they are there at least, all of those "them over on that side" don't seem so big or tough. These members find their comfort level or comfort zone or whatever you call it, but for a while the load just feels a little lighter. An organization might call it camaraderie, or fellowship, or even family, and every successful organization has a high level of "it". I believe NARIGC has "It" in spades. So that's my theory and that's why I'm inviting you to come and enjoy yourself at Vendors' Night next month. Every organization has members (usually the majority) who did join for purely pragmatic reasons. They have their ads in the publications and our logo on their trucks and they are fine with that. That's great. There's nothing wrong with that and, in fact, lots right with it when they choose to belong to NARI, but they don't read the leader and my invitation isn't to them. It's to you.

Whether you come to every event or have been meaning to come to your first event every time you check out the Leader, you are the members who my theory applies to. You can come to see great new products in your industry. You can come to support our vendors who'd love to get to know you. But I'm inviting you to come have a drink(s), play a game(s), see old friends, meet new friends, shoot the (s) and leave "them" out of it. You're not alone out there. Come and see.