



# ACCESS<sup>2</sup> SUPERACHIVER KATIE WILLIAMS

ERA PROTECTS AND GROWS MARKETING'S BEST SELLERS.



**Electronic Retailing Association**  
*Leaders in Direct-to-Consumer Commerce*

As most direct-to-consumer marketing professionals will tell you, networking is everything to them; it's the relationships that keep the wheels turning in their business. That's why ERA takes "access" to the next power by also providing members with added exposure to the right people and the opportunity to grow their business.

The leaders of Ideal Living, Peter Spiegel and Katie Williams, know all too well the benefits of Access, especially when it comes to establishing partnerships with fellow ERA members. With over 25 years of combined multichannel marketing experience, Spiegel and Williams are responsible for over \$3 billion in sales worldwide. Their company, Ideal Living develops innovative consumer brands, specializing in the categories of health, wellness and home environment.

ERA spoke directly with Williams, President of Ideal Living Management, to find out what being an ERA member has meant to her company and how having access to the right member companies has enabled Ideal Living to prevail despite a tough fiscal period.

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SUPERACHIEVERS

ACCESS<sup>2</sup>

Katie Williams, IDEAL LIVING

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## THE CHALLENGE

Williams notes that Ideal Living's consumer response weakened in the summer of 2008, and then plunged further in the fall of 2008 as Lehman Brothers went under and the economy fell apart.

She explains, "2008 and 2009 weren't much fun. As with most companies, we had a decline in sales pretty much across the board, in retail, as well as our direct channels. The recession presented many challenges, but the silver lining is that it made us stronger than ever by helping us focus on our best practices and core strengths. We got back to the basics by fine-tuning our marketing efforts to increase lifetime customer value."

Williams also emphasizes that relationships and partnerships are key to their success. "Relationships with our partners in the industry have always been important to me and even more so, during the recession. We continue to maintain these partnerships and have built on new relationships that offer opportunities to complement our core business," she says.

"While we develop many products in-house, at least 20% of our revenue stems from products we've developed with partners, most of whom we have found through ERA."

## THE OBJECTIVES

How do Williams and her company achieve their marketing goals these days? "Every single ERA event is a great opportunity to strengthen relationships."

Over the years, Williams' involvement with ERA has enriched her company, and has allowed her to continue to create both domestic and international joint ventures through networking opportunities. Whether it's an international company that needs a partner in the U.S. or domestic partners looking to jointly develop a product, Williams says, ERA is a big part of assisting Ideal Living in making those types of connections.

## THE RESULT

The company enthusiastically participates in ERA events, especially The Great Ideas Summit, the ERA D2C Convention and ERA Europe's Electronic HomeShopping Conference. Ideal Living is able to concentrate on expanding its main business by teaming with new and existing ERA association members.

Williams says, "While we develop many products in-house, at least 20% of our revenue stems from products we've developed with partners, most of whom we have found through ERA."

She notes that things have really turned around for her company in the past couple of years. "We had tough years in 2008 and 2009, but as a result we became even more focused and we're doing great now," Williams says. And thanks to ERA, Ideal Living continues to access more prospective partners.

