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Webinar Instructor: Joe Rey-Barreau

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Send business tips and story ideas to
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Valley Light Gallery Event Draws Builders, Designers to Renovated Showroom

Valley Light Gallery in Scottsdale, Ariz., recently produced a two-day event to debut their extensively renovated showroom to local builders, designers and retail customers.

"We remodeled our showroom from floor to ceiling and wanted to let people know that we are here and ready for business," said Showroom Manager Shirley Regonini. "The first day of our event was geared towards builders, designers, electricians and special retail customers, while the second day was open to the public."

The showroom secured three guest speakers — Jeffrey Dross of Kichler, Brian Creeley, LS, of Bulbrite Industries and Thomas Wright of Lite Force Sales — to give updates on the latest lighting technologies and trends. Manufacturers' representatives mingled with the guests to answer product questions, and the creators of two distinct product lines being added at Valley Light Gallery were on hand to share their creative visions with customers.

While the featured presentations were held inside the showroom, catered food and drink were hosted on an outdoor patio set up with rented tables and chairs, providing a good environment for networking.

To market the event, Valley Light Gallery placed a two-page ad in a widely read local magazine, distributed a press release to the local media, mailed invitations to special customers and made heavy use of e-mail marketing.

"We began with 'save the date' e-mails about two months out and increasingly

filled in the details," explained Regonini. "Our e-mails intensified as we got closer to the date."

The entire staff of Valley Light Gallery was involved in the planning and execution of the event.

"We divided and conquered the various preparation tasks, such as food/drink, displays and marketing," Regonini said. "On the actual day of the event, we placed our staff where we thought they would be strongest. Some directed traffic, some greeted guests at the door, the sales staff mingled throughout to answer questions and others helped serve the food and drink."

For showrooms considering hosting a similar event, Regonini offers these tips:

- ▶ **Be sure to invite those on your existing database as well as potential clients.** You need to thank your established customers and treat them as VIPs.
- ▶ **Create a gift bag for each attendee.** Stuff them with catalogs from featured vendors and giveaways advertising your showroom.
- ▶ **Stress RSVPs.** This helps you plan how much food to order and how many gift bags to assemble, plus it can give your speakers a more detailed idea of their audience.
- ▶ **Hold a raffle for attendees and request their e-mail address on the entry form.** Add the e-mail addresses to your marketing database.
- ▶ **Invite neighboring businesses.** Your event could cause traffic and parking issues that affect them.

Lighting Makeover Entry Forms Coming Soon



Entry forms will be delivered soon to ALA-member showrooms for the \$5,000 Lighting Makeover Sweepstakes aimed at consumers.

The winner will be drawn at the ALA Annual Conference. The showroom where the

winning form was entered will then notify the winner and begin planning the makeover. The ALA BiNational Program will issue a check to the showroom to cover the expenses.

For more information, contact Larry Lauck at 800-605-4448, ext. 227.