



LISA HORN *PPB* EDITOR

# A New Chapter

**IN 1994**, I was hired by a Dallas-based distributor to manage the promotional products segment of the business. While I enjoyed the experience of managing a couple company stores and consulting with numerous clients, I was ready in 1998 to focus on the writing aspect of my career.

When I learned the *PPB* feature editor position was available, I thought I would be a perfect fit and, thankfully, Tina Filipski agreed. I knew joining the PPAI staff would be an important stepping stone in my career, but I didn't know where it would lead.

I immediately began working on the quality and content of the magazine's feature stories, a move that paid off three years later when I was offered the editor position. Since then, I have tirelessly worked on improving *PPB* graphically and editorially so it continues to be the leading publication in our industry.

Running a magazine is extremely gratifying, as each month you have a tangible product of your efforts. But, as often happens, I became restless and in need of a new challenge. So, at the end of May, I decided to start the next chapter of my life by making the leap into entrepreneurship and starting my own public relations and media services business for the promotional products industry.

When looking back at my time with *PPB*, I realized there are three important lessons that not only benefited me during my tenure as editor but also continue to serve me as I walk down a new road. I hope they are as helpful to you as they have been to me.

I'm sure you have heard countless times how this is an industry built on relationships—and it's true. When I joined *PPB*, I was fortunate to work with two sales reps—Lauren Fox (now with supplier Fresh Beginnings) and Vicky Tirpack (now with *Promo Marketing* magazine). I remember walking the show floor at The PPAI Expo with them and being amazed at the friendships they had with clients. In addition to discussing business, they talked about their kids, vacations and anything else interesting in their personal lives. They developed sincere

relationships with their clients, and this is a powerful lesson.

In the summer of 1999, I was able to attend PPAI's Power Of Creativity education seminar in Breckenridge, Colorado. Although I didn't know it at the time, this was a pivotal career move for two reasons. First, going through a ropes course, being led in a blind trust walk and participating in team-building exercises were incredible experiences that have resulted in many lifelong friendships with today's industry leaders. Second, instructor David Williamson taught us two things I have used almost every day since: "If it doesn't go wow, it doesn't go" and "Question all the answers."

Questioning all the answers often results in looking at situations in new and larger perspectives. An instructor at a women's business conference I attended recently said that most small businesses that fail do so not because of thinking too big but because of thinking too small. The power of thinking big is not lost on Charlie Johnson and Brandon Mackay, MAS, of supplier Snugz. They have both inspired me to think big, as this is how dreams become reality.

I'd like to thank all those who have supported me throughout the years, including the PPAI staff and board of directors. Being *PPB*'s editor was a great responsibility, one I never took lightly.

I'm not sure what the future holds for me, as it is now a blank page. It's time for me to start a new chapter. But this isn't goodbye. It's just so long. I'll be seeing you around. 

