



**Gregory Pace**  
President  
Ohmite

*With so many ERA members, it's not easy to get to know every rep and manufacturer in the business. "Someone You Should Know" is The Representor department that gives readers the chance to learn about fellow ERA members, including how their time is spent both in and out of the office.*

*Meet Greg Pace, the president of Ohmite, the Chicago area-based, 90-year-old manufacturer of resistive products. He's been active in ERA since joining the firm in 2003.*

*The Representor asked Greg a few questions about his time in the electronics industry and his experiences with ERA. Here's what he had to say.*

### **Tell us a little bit about yourself.**

I am the proud father of two sons — John Henry and Greg Jr. — and proud grandfather of baby Addison, daughter of Greg Jr. and lovely wife Jenny. I've been married to Patsy for more than 38 years, most of them happily, according to Patsy! I've had three careers in one — banking, food manufacturing and components manufacturing. I was educated at the University of Illinois and have an MBA from Northwestern University.

### **What are some things you enjoy outside of the workplace?**

I truly enjoy being with friends and family in off time. While golf is fun, it is terrific to play with my sons who were football players in their younger years and now adore the game. All of a sudden, I have become the third best player in the family and love it. Time with family is the best. I enjoy coffee Saturdays and Sundays with wife Patsy, especially if we can walk over to my son's house and take our granddaughter for a long walk.

### **How long have you been an ERA member and how long in the electronics manufacturing business?**

Ohmite, a "90-year-old startup company," has been an active member of ERA for as long as I can remember. We have had executives present at ERA conferences for a number of years. I have been in the components manufacturing business since 2003. The time flies!

### **How did you become interested in being a manufacturing executive in the electronics industry?**

Honestly? I was GM of another affiliated company, and it burned to the ground! Evidently we were properly insured and all worked out. I was sent to Ohmite as western regional sales manager and mentored by Ohmite's Kirk Schwiebert. Luckily, we had terrific reps, and through their tutoring we were able to grow the business. I was fortunate enough to be named Ohmite's fifth president in its 90 years.

### **What have you found to be most rewarding about being in the manufacturing business and/or the electronics industry?**

Many of my friends and associates have heard me say again and again that this is the most ethical business I have ever been a part of. From commitments of support to purchas-

ing promises, in this business I have found a handshake and a promise to be worth their weight in gold, whether it is the customer, our reps or our authorized distributors making the commitment. I enjoy any size piece of business as we get a front row seat into new designs, some of which are actually making a real difference in our own lifestyles, like "green power," electronic vehicles and grid technology. I love the design wins we get to see!

### **Briefly describe your company.**

The Ohmite working culture is that of an extended family. We keep an eye on one another and try to grow the business properly. It is in our DNA to have an intellectual curiosity for design opportunities no matter what the size of the business. We thrive on doing what we say we will do for the customer. Working closely with our rep and distribution partners is fun and rewarding. Our customers can be in consumer goods, heavy industries, underwater cameras and even golf carts. While the product focus is mainly in resistors and heat sink technology, we excel in offering a complete component solution.

### **What recent innovations, best practices and/or changes has your company made?**

While we are a family-based and close knit company, we also keep only those associates and work partners who are willing to work every day for a common cause. We have undertaken the challenge to become a lean manufacturer after existing 90 years. We think it is never too late! Our best practices focus on the customer with innovative, value-added solutions, supported by our reps and distribution partners. Ohmite has an open door policy and excels in showing off its superior manufacturing facility.

### **What have you learned and/or what contacts have you made through ERA that have had the greatest positive impacts on you and/or your business?**

When I came into the business years ago, I was at least familiar with the rep and distribution models from my previous years in the food industry. I knew that, to learn the business, I needed to be in the field as much as possible and to carry a bag alongside our reps. I believe we have the best rep team in the world, and I am very proud that so many of our relationships span numerous decades. We

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## SOMEONE YOU SHOULD KNOW: Gregory Pace

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learned a lot about the selling cycle through ERA and were fortunate enough to form our own rep council years ago. To this day, the council advises us on best practices (and how to stay out of trouble!).

### Are you active on social media? Do you follow ERA? Have ERA updates via social media been helpful to you?

I am not active on Facebook, but Ohmite has a terrific Facebook page. I do use LinkedIn as it is more of a professional networking site and keeps me close to our industry relationships. I read all of the ERA releases and related industry data.

### What is one interesting fact that people may not know about you?

I may be the last straight-on, non-soccer-style kicker in the Big 10 Conference (graduating in 1977). I was so good, the Illini let me kick off in order to protect the other kicker, who was an All American. ■

## EXECUTIVE COMMENTARY: First 90 days

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continues to grow!

**National Conference:** ERA's 47th Management and Marketing Conference continues to gain momentum. Tom Griffin has assembled a great conference committee and has positioned this event to be our best ever! I have been thoroughly impressed with the passion and professionalism of the members and the end-product that they have assembled. We expect a record turnout, so book your travel and hotel as soon as possible. You do not want to miss this! The fact that our conference is in February has helped me a lot in explaining what we do.

Whew! I am exhausted just reflecting back on my first 90 days, but the exhaustion is abated by the tremendous response from the reps, manufacturers and the industry to the value proposition of ERA. Our members are looking to us to ADVOCATE FOR THEM in these times of change. I realize that ERA members have given the association a sacred trust, and in turn, ERA has a responsibility to provide a tangible, relevant value proposition to all members.

I continue to be amazed at how highly ERA is regarded by all. They want and need us to be strong and to get stronger — one rep and one manufacturer at a time.

Many thanks to all for your support and guidance. Remember: My bags are packed and my phone is always on. ■

## BOOK REVIEW: Cultural intelligence

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- Avoid colloquial expressions and idioms.
- Repeat important points using different words to explain the same thing.
- Avoid long compound sentences.
- Use visual representations.
- Mix presentations with a balance of stories and principles.
- Hand out written summaries.
- Pause more frequently.

I liked this book and found it very useful. I think you will too. ■

Dan Beaulieu is the president and founder of D.B. Management, LLC, a consulting firm specializing in all aspects of sales, marketing and branding with a focus on rep-principal relationships. His latest book is **The PCB 101 Handbook** which can be purchased online by emailing [danbbeaulieu@aol.com](mailto:danbbeaulieu@aol.com). Dan is also the author of "It's Only Common Sense," a weekly sales column appearing at [pcb007.com](http://pcb007.com). Dan can be reached at 207-649-0879.

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