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As a longtime wholesale distribution executive, I know all of you reading this book are continuously striving to prepare strategic plans to address the future. *OUTLOOK 2009: An Executive's Companion to Facing the Forces of Change*® is a key resource to help you stay on course with your strategic plan and be profitable in the coming year and beyond.

OUTLOOK 2009 is a diverse collection of opinions from 10 of our industry's most notable pundits under the careful editorial direction of Adam J. Fein, Ph.D., Pembroke Consulting president and NAW Institute for Distribution Excellence Fellow. This book is an update on the key issues identified in the industry trends study *Facing the Forces of Change*®: *Lead the Way in the Supply Chain*, which was researched and authored by Dr. Fein and published by the NAW Institute for Distribution Excellence in March 2007.

Each author carefully considers the current business issues raised in the *Facing the Forces of Change* study and provides his or her own assessments and predictions about a particular topic, along with helpful action steps and recommendations for your business.

I strongly recommend that every industry executive who places a high value on strategic planning read both *Facing the Forces of Change* and *OUTLOOK 2009*. Together, these books are valuable tools for

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helping you respond knowledgeably to key industry trends; share foremost information with your management team; and plan for success through keen strategic thinking, analysis, and positive action.

The *Facing the Forces of Change* study drew from a broad set of data, including in-depth interviews with senior distribution executives, manufacturers, and customers. The research also included survey responses from nearly 1,000 distribution executives and approximately 300 manufacturing executives. This *OUTLOOK 2009* complements that study with great tactics for your business today. Use these tools to stay with your plan to innovate, grow, and prosper in 2009 and the years ahead.

Byron Potter

Chairman of the Board, NAW Institute for Distribution Excellence