

Dubow has partnered with Burnside to launch a new free freight program, designed to give distributors easier access to trend-forward apparel and Dubow's extensive decoration capabilities.

Through the new program, orders placed with Burnside will ship directly from the Burnside warehouse to Dubow every Tuesday and Friday. The partnership creates a streamlined opportunity for distributors to source and decorate apparel.

"Bringing an apparel brand and an apparel decorator together creates valuable opportunities and streamlined processes for distributors," said Scott Jensen, General Manager of Dubow. "We're excited to partner with Burnside and make it easier for our customers to access fresh apparel styles and expanded decoration capabilities."

Program highlights include:

- Free freight to Dubow on Burnside orders
- Shipments from Burnside to Dubow every Tuesday and Friday
- Access to Burnside's trend-forward apparel
- Numerous decoration capabilities through Dubow

The program is available now. Distributors can send orders to orders@sierrapacificapparel.com.

NC Custom, a top-20 ASI supplier and one of the industry's leading diversified manufacturers, and **Laura Ouellette Agencies**, a leading independent sales agency serving the promotional products industry in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), today jointly announced a new partnership. The GTA market had previously been managed in-house by Danielle Dawson, NC Custom's Vice-President of Sales, Canada; under the new agreement, Laura Ouellette Agencies will now represent NC Custom's full portfolio of brands to distributors throughout the territory.

The partnership gives GTA-based distributors direct, local access to NC Custom's more than 3,000 products spanning confectionery and chocolate, mints, hard goods, health and beauty, wellness, and soft goods, backed by two world class manufacturing facilities and industry-leading printing, packaging, and decorating capabilities.

"I've personally managed the GTA market for NC Custom, and it has been a privilege to watch it grow. I can't think of anyone I'd rather hand it over to than Laura Ouellette Agencies," said Danielle Dawson, Vice-President of Sales, Canada, NC Custom. "Laura's deep relationships with distributors, her strong work ethic, and her creative approach to selling make her a wonderful fit for our brands and for the GTA market."

"My team and I couldn't be more excited to bring NC Custom's outstanding product range and manufacturing capabilities to our clients across the GTA," said Laura Ouellette, Owner of Laura Ouellette Agencies. "This partnership rounds out our portfolio beautifully, and we can't wait to share this wide menu of high-quality products and brands with distributors throughout the GTA."

ASB raised \$11,000 for the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre (SLCC) during the 2026 ASB Summit in Whistler, Canada. The Squamish and Lil'wat Nations have coexisted as neighbors for generations and built the SLCC to share their cultural knowledge and inspire greater understanding. ASB was honored to support the Centre and grateful for the opportunity to visit during the 2026 ASB Summit event. These efforts and donations were made possible by the generosity of Summit attendees and the entire ASB family.

In the weeks leading up to the event, attendees and supporters had the opportunity to purchase \$25 decals. Each personalized decal featured the donor's name and was displayed throughout the Summit event space.

Donors also received a commemorative T-shirt as a thank-you for their contribution. Unique to this year's Summit, the T-shirt artwork was designed by an Indigenous artist from the Squamish Nation.

The closing social was held at the SLCC, giving Summit attendees the opportunity to experience a processional led by four members of the Squamish and Lil'wat Nations, followed by tours of the Centre and the presentation of the \$11,000 check.

"Thank you so much for the generosity in support of our Indigenous Youth Ambassador Program," shared Redman, Cultural Ambassador. "This immersive experience teaches the foundation of business, providing a safe space for students to gain confidence, skills, and work experience. This donation will go directly toward our program and the students it supports."

This charitable tradition has become a meaningful part of ASB's Summit event. ASB remains committed to ensuring each gathering not only fosters professional growth and connection but also creates a lasting and meaningful impact on the host community.

Bankers Advertising Company (ASI 131650) recently celebrated an extraordinary milestone as **Bill Bywater marked 65 years** with the company and the promotional products industry.

Bywater joined Bankers Advertising in 1961 and has spent the past six and a half decades helping shape the company, building lasting customer and industry relationships, and sharing his experience and leadership with generations of employees and sales professionals.

The milestone is especially meaningful as Bankers Advertising celebrates its 130th anniversary in 2026. Bywater has been with the company for exactly half of its history.

Employees, friends and family gathered at the company's Iowa City headquarters on August 21 for a special luncheon and recognition honoring Bywater's 65 years and counting of dedication, leadership and commitment.

Bywater's contributions extend well beyond Bankers Advertising. Throughout his career, he has been actively involved in the promotional products industry, serving on the PPAI Board of Directors and numerous PPAI committees. He is a PPAI Lifetime Member, a member of the PPAI Fellows Program, and was inducted into the PPAI Hall of Fame in 2004.

A fourth-generation member of the Bywater family, Bill has also played an important role in carrying forward the family-owned company's legacy. Today, Bankers Advertising is led by the fifth generation of the family and remains one of the promotional products industry's longest-running distributorships.

"Bill's 65 years represent an incredible commitment not only to our company, but to the promotional products industry," said David Bywater, President of Bankers Advertising. "His knowledge, relationships and dedication have had a lasting impact on our company and so many people throughout the industry. We are incredibly proud to celebrate this milestone with him."

As Bankers Advertising celebrates 130 years in business, Bill Bywater's 65-year milestone serves as a fitting reflection of the relationships, commitment and continuity that have defined the company throughout its history.

In an industry often defined by competition, two food gifting companies are proving that collaboration can be just as powerful.

Maple Ridge Farms and North Mallow have joined forces to create a first-of-its-kind food gifting experience at the Upper Midwest Association of Promotional Professionals (UMAPP) Summer Golf Tournament, transforming a golf hole into what may be the sweetest stop on the course.

The experience culminates at North Mallow's hole, where golfers will enjoy handcrafted s'mores featuring North Mallow marshmallows and Maple Ridge Farms - Sweeter Cards' Dark Chocolate Sea Salt Caramel chocolate from Maple Ridge Farms.

The collaboration represents more than a creative golf sponsorship. It celebrates a shared belief that growing the food gifting category benefits everyone.

"The food gifting industry is strongest when we lift one another up," said Jodie Schillinger, EVP of Maple Ridge Farms. "North Mallow and Maple Ridge Farms may offer different products, but we're united by a common mission: helping companies create meaningful connections through food. Rather than competing for attention, we saw an opportunity to collaborate, have fun, and demonstrate what's possible when food gifting brands work together. This activation isn't just about s'mores. It's about elevating the entire category."

For years, Maple Ridge Farms and North Mallow have enjoyed a unique relationship built on mutual respect and a shared appreciation for innovation in business gifting. While both companies serve the corporate gifting space, they have consistently championed one another's success and advocated for the continued growth of food gifting throughout the promotional products industry.

"When Jodie brought this idea to us, the answer was an easy yes," said Mike Nelson, Founder of North Mallow. "The best partnerships happen when companies share values and genuinely want to see each other succeed. Combining North Mallow's gourmet marshmallows with Sweeter Cards chocolate creates an experience that people won't forget, and that's exactly what great gifting should do."

The UMAPP activation is being spearheaded by Mike Nelson of North Mallow and Jamie Johnson and Traci Simonis of Maple Ridge Farms, whose industry experience and passion for promotional products helped transform a traditional golf sponsorship into an interactive brand experience.

Innovative, one of the Midwest's leading independent workplace solutions providers and part of the Facilisgroup, has welcomed promotional product industry veteran **Nick Augustine as a Branded Solutions Category Specialist**. In this role, Nick will partner with Innovative's sales team and clients to expand branded merchandise opportunities across existing customer relationships. This addition reflects Innovative's continued investment in expanding its Branded Solutions capabilities throughout the Upper Midwest.

Nick brings a background rooted in both the supplier side of the promotional products industry and distributor business operations. Having built strong partnerships throughout the industry, he brings a collaborative approach to category strategy, vendor relationships, and client solutions. That experience informs his ability to develop the frameworks that drive promotional product growth while delivering impactful brand messaging for end-user clients.

"What excites me most is helping clients discover the full value of partnering with Innovative," said Nick. "Branded merchandise isn't a separate conversation; it's another way we help organizations strengthen their brands. When clients can source through one trusted partner, the experience is simpler, more strategic, and ultimately more valuable."

Through Innovative's participation in the Facilisgroup network, Nick will leverage preferred supplier relationships, marketing programs, and industry-leading technology platforms to bring best-in-class branded solutions to clients across Innovative's Upper Midwest footprint. Nick can be reached at nick.augustine@innovativeos.com or 612-895-7952.