



by Casey C. Chroust

Chroust is senior vice president of retail operations for the Retail Industry Leaders Association. RILA's members include retailers, product manufacturers, and service suppliers who together account for more than \$1.5 trillion in annual sales with more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities, and distribution centers domestically and abroad. Chroust can be reached at 703-600-2014 or casey.chroust@retail-leaders.org.



## RILA-NRF Merger

### Right Move at the Right Time

The retail industry has seen a great many changes over the last year, and while change is anything but easy, it is a necessary and constant part of how we do business. It is in these shifting times that as an industry we have the opportunity to evolve and emerge stronger, wiser, and in a better position to defy future obstacles and achieve success. And therefore the April announcement that the Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) and the National Retail Federation (NRF) will merge comes not only at a historic and exciting time in the retail industry, but boasts the promise of great things to come.

Two of the industry's leading voices join forces to create one influential and united powerhouse, we are excited about the opportunity that this merger presents for our membership and for the industry as a whole and look to the future with great anticipation.

With one voice we will be retail's lead advocate in Washington and the industry's premier forum for pursuing operational excellence and educational programming. A single organization creates strategic value for members by allowing the merged association to address the challenges and opportunities consistently, efficiently, and effectively.

Completion of the merger is expected to take place in August of this year and will require that both RILA and NRF submit to a thorough due diligence process. Upon completion of due diligence, the membership of both associations must approve the move according to their bylaws.

During this transition period, our priority remains service to our members and advocacy for our industry. We intend to stay focused on our mission and continue to deliver quality service to our members. As evidence of this commitment, RILA's 2009

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**"In the middle  
of every difficulty  
lies opportunity."**

– Albert Einstein

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Loss Prevention, Auditing, and Safety Conference held at the beginning of May was our best LPAS conference ever. Despite economic circumstances, the event exceeded expectations and drew increased attendance over last year. The programming and dialogue was first-rate, and we thank all who attended and made this such a valuable event.

Moving forward we will continue to raise the bar as we expand upon our offerings to the loss prevention community and build on the great momentum we have cultivated over the last year. In addition to the combination of two separate loss prevention conferences next year, the loss prevention community can expect an even greater impact in the industry and our continual commitment to lend support and thought leadership.

We are excited about what lies ahead and the opportunity to work with the talented professionals throughout the loss prevention community to build upon previous success to strengthen the position of our industry and deliver results for our members.

*EDITOR'S NOTE: To read more about the merger, see the Publisher's Letter on page 8.*

#### Correction

In our March-April column, we mistakenly referred to one of our partner organizations as the "National Association against Shoplifting Prevention." Obviously, the correct name is National Association *for* Shoplifting Prevention. We apologize for the error. ■

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