

# Footprints

The Newsletter of the Shoe Service Institute of America

Fall 2014 • Volume 3, Issue 3

## 2014 SSIA CONVENTION DRAWS A CROWD

### Valley Forge Hosts Well Attended, Educational Show

The shoe repair industry converged on Valley Forge, PA in July for what was one of the better SSIA shows in recent years. The 110th Annual SSIA Convention attracted more than 500 people from 206 shoe repair shops, 19 wholesaler companies and 36 exhibiting companies. The convention attracted retailers from 25 states and five countries outside of the United States. The show floor was crowded for the entire weekend with people looking for ways to enhance their businesses.

#### Expo Draws a Global Crowd

Exhibitors came from the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Spain and Italy to display their wares. Products on display ranged from machinery, to back room supplies, to retail products designed to add value for customers and profits for shoe repair shops. There were also shoes and point-of-sale systems on display.

#### Seminars Address Repair and Marketing Techniques

When the expo was closed, SSIA's seminars were open. Members shared their knowledge on topics ranging from machinery



Products were on display from around the world on the show floor.



The show floor was packed with products as repairers came from across the country to see what was available to them.

maintenance, to adhesives, to social media to how to effectively organize a shoe repair shop.

#### New Directors Elected

During Saturday's annual business meeting, SSIA President Don Rinaldi recognized former vice president Blase Knabl for his service to the association. Elections were then held for new supplier, wholesaler and repairer board members. Sandra Verbruggen of Fast Feet Shoe Repair was elected to a three-year term as a repairer director. Rick Meyer of Ruby Leather Company was elected to a three-year term as a wholesaler director, and Paul Angelos of Angelus Shoe Polish Company was elected as a supplier director.

#### Thanks to Our Supporters

There are many companies that made this year's convention a success. SSIA would like to thank all of the exhibiting companies. Without their support the event would not have taken place. Thanks also go to the sponsors of the SSIA's Saturday night reception (listed in this issue) for a great social function.

A special thanks goes to the SSIA member Frankford Leather Company who worked hard to turn out customers and make the show a success.

#### Mark Your Calendar

The 111th Annual SSIA Convention will be held July 25-26, 2015 at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville in Jacksonville, Fla. Preliminary details are on the SSIA web site at [www.ssia.info](http://www.ssia.info). Make your plans to attend today and we'll see you next July.

# CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



## Angelos Elected SSIA President



*Incoming SSIA President Paul Angelos (right) recognizes outgoing President Don Rinaldi for his years of service to SSIA.*

Paul Angelos of Angelus Shoe Polish Company was elected president of SSIA at the board of directors meeting during the 110th Annual Convention. Angelos has served multiple terms on SSIA's board and accepted the role of president when Don Rinaldi stepped down as president after the convention. Rinaldi will continue on the board for another year to complete his term as a director.

Supporting Angelos in leading the association are newly-elected Vice President Sandra Verbruggen, Treasurer Bob Berman and Secretary Steve Sachs. Completing the board are directors Jonathan Shaffer, Rick Meyer, Marcelo Coronel and Jim McFarland.

## National Shoe Repair Awareness Week Posters Available

SSIA has created posters for repairers to download to promote National Shoe Repair Awareness Week. You can download high resolution PDF files, take them to Staples, Fedex Office or a similar business and have posters made for your store. Download the files at [www.ssia.info](http://www.ssia.info).



## SILVER CUP

### 2015 Brings Exciting Changes to SSIA's Silver Cup Contest. Start Preparing Now.

SSIA has made some exciting changes to its Silver Cup Contest for 2015. In addition to the Robert DiRinaldo Grand Silver Cup, SSIA will be presenting its first World Cup. Here's how it works.

#### Robert DiRinaldo Grand Silver Cup

Repair shop owners and their employees from the United States and Canada are eligible to participate. Entrants must be members of SSIA. Previous Grand Silver Cup winners can enter to receive gold, silver or bronze awards, but are not eligible to receive the Grand Silver Cup again.

#### SSIA World Cup

Repair shop owners and their employees from around the world are eligible to enter this competition. Previous Grand Silver Cup winners are also encouraged to compete for the World Cup.

#### Entry Requirements

The entry requirements and deadlines for each contest are



available online at [www.ssia.info/silvercup](http://www.ssia.info/silvercup). You will also find sample scoresheets to aid in preparing your entries.

Since the late 1930s, the Silver Cup Contest has recognized excellence in shoe repair craftsmanship. SSIA's founders recognized that quality craftsmanship is at the core of success in the shoe repair industry and created this contest as a means to recognize it and promote it.

The 2015 awards will be presented at SSIA's 111th Annual Convention, July 25-26 in Jacksonville, Fla.

#### Entry Deadlines

You must register to enter each contest by January 31, 2015. Entries are due in SSIA's office by March 20, 2015. For details and to register online, visit [www.ssia.info](http://www.ssia.info)

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## Support the Companies that Support You

The following companies are supplier members of SSIA. Their support of this association helps us bring you this newsletter, our conventions and everything else we do. Please support them as they support you.

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## THANK YOU SSIA SPONSORS

SSIA thanks the following companies for sponsoring its 110th Annual Convention. Your support made the show one of our most successful in recent years.

### GOLD SPONSORS



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### PATRON SPONSORS



## SSIA Shirts and Aprons Available

SSIA t-shirts are available in black and pink. SSIA aprons are available in black. Visit [www.ssia.info/apparel](http://www.ssia.info/apparel) to see them.

**FEATURED SHOP**

# NORMAN RANDOLPH SETS A SHINING EXAMPLE

*This month, SSIA profiles Norman Randolph of Randolph Shoe Care located in Hightstown, NJ.*

**Tell us about your background in the shoe repair industry.**

I worked in a fashion house in New York City. Every now and then, I saw a guy with a black box come upstairs and go into the president's office. I asked what he was doing and was told he was shining shoes.

I ran into him later and asked if he did anything else. He said no. He worked in my building Monday through Friday, five or six hours a day, made a lot of money and was his own boss.

A couple years later when I was working in a plumbing supply store, I thought about this guy, wrote down an estimate of what I could do versus what I was making and, right then and there, decided I was going to start shining shoes.

I was very much into fashion and have always been a sharp dresser. I believe fashion starts from the ground up. My shoes are

always polished. When my father went to church on Sundays, that was my job. I had to make sure his and my mother's shoes were shined.

**How did you start and build your business?**

I went to the Princeton Marriott with a proposal to put a shoe shine stand in their lobby. They accepted my proposal and I started my business. As the business grew, I had several customers ask if I could come to their offices. They loved my service, but didn't always have time to come to me. So I operated the stand a few hours a day and, during the middle of the day, I went out and shined shoes on the road.

That grew very quickly. I added employees to keep up with the demand. I had three vehicles in my fleet and landed contracts with several companies.

**How did that lead to shoe repair?**

As I was shining shoes, I found they needed repairs as well. I partnered with a shoemaker to offer the services. I brought in the shoes and he fixed them.

I could see there was a shortage of shoemakers and there would be opportunities for me if I owned a shoe repair business, so I asked this shoemaker if he would be interested in selling his business. Though he seemed interested, it became apparent after a while that he wasn't going to sell, so I



*Norman and Emma Randolph*



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*More colors coming soon!*

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## JOIN SSIA TODAY!

Visit [www.ssia.info/join](http://www.ssia.info/join) to become a member today. You can join online or download an application to return by mail.



Randolph's Shoe Care in Hightstown, New Jersey

decided to open my own repair center.

I had been to an SSIA show in Philadelphia and picked up a business card from Blase Knabl at Shoe Systems Plus. I called Blase on a Saturday and he spent an hour talking to me. He invited me to spend a weekend with him. He showed me his facility and took me to a store owned by someone my age who had been through a similar experience. When I came back Sunday night, I was really enthused about pursuing the shoe repair business.

At the same time, I went to visit Jim McFarland because I needed to learn how to do the repairs. I spent a week with Jim and a weekend at an SSIA show and my eyes really started to open. All I knew about the shoe repair industry was what I had seen from the old shoemaker. His operation was nowhere near what Jim's business was. It was not high volume. It was not clean. It was not organized.

Next I met with Mike Lieberman at Kaufman Shoe Repair Supplies. I explained what I was doing and told him I needed someone with shoe repair experience. It turned out he knew someone who was willing to come to work with me for a year and teach me shoe repair.

### So now your business includes shoe shining and shoe repair?

Yes, I had trucks going out to corporate clients -- law firms, stockbrokers, premium car dealerships, insurance companies, accounting firms, etc. I had four or five guys picking up shoes. I would repair

them and they would bring them back.

I also picked up major dry cleaners as customers. You can't do this without educating them about the service, so there is plenty of communication. That can be a challenge. It takes time. That's when you hire someone. If your strength is working with customers, hire someone to fix the shoes. If it's as a craftsman, hire someone to communicate with the customers.

### How did your business continue to evolve?

I visited Jim McFarland again and had the opportunity to work his counter. That got me excited about retail.

I wanted to be a full service shoe care company, to have a storefront where I could provide my customers shoe repair, shoe shining and shoe care products while still offering the pick up and delivery services we had been doing for years.

I thought I would go into a shopping center, but an opportunity came up for me to buy a building with four commercial spaces. I moved my shoe repair operation into one of those spaces and lease the other three.

### How would you encourage others to grow their businesses?

Start by going to SSIA shows and making connections in the industry. The teachings I have gotten from Blase Knabl, Jim McFarland, Mike Lieberman, Dana Huval, Randy Lipson and Robert DiRinaldo, to name a few, have been invaluable.

## SSIA LOOKING FOR GREEN SOLUTION

The SSIA board is looking at companies for eco-friendly, canvas, reusable bags for you to both sell and give to customers. Details in the next issue of Footprints.

# NETWORKING PAYS FOR CALIFORNIA SHOP

by Steven Thomas, Woodcrest Shoe Repair, Riverside, CA

I want to tell you about something that I stumbled onto last February, Business Network International (BNI). I have used BNI to bump my shop up to the next level.

I am 54-years-old and have been in the shoe repair industry since 1975. I have seen this industry go through some drastic changes. We have fallen out of favor with the general public regarding the question of whether going to the shoe repair a place to spend productive time and money. After all, time is money to most people. And we have witnessed a complete generation come of age without ever going into a shoe repair shop.

BNI has increased awareness in my community thus increasing my profits. As I mentioned, I started with BNI early this year and have increased my bottom line quite satisfactory since.

If everyone involved in the shoe repair industry, including wholesalers, redirected one and a half hours a week networking their business in a very powerful manner directly to other businesses in their communities, we would all enjoy a more robust industry. For example, take the carpet cleaning guy. Before I started with the BNI system, the carpet cleaning guy knew me but I was never on the top of his mind as he went through his daily routine. Now that I see him every week at my BNI group meeting, he knows me much better and we have become good friends. Therefore, he is always ready to give my card to someone if the subject of shoes pops up.

You know with all the people that you run into every day, you are able to also refer business to other businesses. By committing to BNI's weekly meetings, I demonstrated my loyalty and commitment to a group just as I am committed to the success of my business. With that small amount of time invested, I have driven home something that our industry is severely lacking — the shoe repair industry is alive, we want business and we are ready for it.

I'm here to tell you BNI works. You can check out BNI at no cost. Just Google BNI, look for a chapter and go to the next two meetings for free. Be sure to bring lots of business cards.

In my group we have many types of businesses — attorneys, a bookkeeper, insurance salesmen, a mortgage broker, realtors, contractors, solar-power guys etc. My group even has a motivational speaker. These people are considered my power team. They are looking out for my success as I am theirs. In my community, I am putting shoe repair back on the forefront of many people's minds as a viable business. I can only hope that everyone in this trade makes a small difference. It will ultimately help all of us.

Shoe repairmen are usually not the social networking type, so I encourage you to step outside of that box, network your business and reap the benefits. There are millions of shoes waiting to be repaired.



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19 PURPLE	2 WHITE	54 ORANGE	47 GOLD	39 GREEN
57 GREY	62 RED			

## Questions and Answers About BNI

**Q. Why do they meet every week why not just quarterly?**

A. Because this is the way we show other members we are serious about wanting referrals and learning everything about their business so you can trust that they will be a good referral for you to give. It's about building trust.

**Q. How many business people are going to be there?**

A. Some chapters have as many as 50 members and some just a few. Choose one that best fits your business.

**Q. Will I need to stand up and speak to others?**

A. Yes you will be given a minute every week to tell others about your business.

**Q. How should I dress?**

A. Nice casual will do.

**Q. Do they have food at the meetings?**

A. It depends on the chapter if they do you will be expected to pay for your breakfast or lunch.

**Q. How long do the meetings last?**

A. Most groups 1.5 hours.

**Q. Why would the attorney want to take his time to tell others about the shoe repair guy?**

A. To him you are not just a shoe repair

guy, you will get to know him and trust him as a friend and he will help your business as you will his when the opportunity arises.

**Q. How can I be sure that it will work for me?**

A. You cannot be 100 percent sure. All I can tell you is it's working for me. I go to every meeting on time and the other members can see I am committed. Therefore they refer me to their coworkers and friends.

**Q. Is there a charge to join?**

A. Yes you will need to fill out an application and go through a screening process to make sure you are a good fit for that group. There will not be two conflicting businesses in one group. If a group already has a shoe repair business, just find another one. We have several chapters in our city.

**Q. How would this work for a wholesaler?**

A. It creates an awareness of shoe repair that we all need in this industry. You could when asked, "Where would I get my shoes repaired?" refer the business forward to the shoe repair shop that would most likely be able to service that referral. In return, you would get more loyalty from the shop owner or owners.

The bigger picture is the awareness you have generated about the industry. Also, you could assign a staff person to represent your businesses. It is the movement forward that will generate more business for everyone in this trade.

**Q. Would I be able to network my business at other chapters?**

A. Yes. As a BNI member you can go to other chapter meetings to network your business.

The image features the SoleTech logo at the top, which consists of the word "SoleTech" in a bold, black, sans-serif font with a red swoosh underneath. Below the logo are three images of shoe soles: a large black sole with a tread pattern on the left, and two smaller, greyish soles on the right. In the center, the text "Investing in shoe repair for over 40 years..." is written in a black, serif font. Below this text is a single black shoe sole with the SoleTech logo on it. At the bottom of the image is a collection of TARRAGO leather care products, including bottles of color dye, conditioner, and protector, arranged on a dark surface. The text "the leather care" is written in a red, cursive font in the top left corner of the product display.

## OPEN HOUSE?

Wholesalers who want to announce open houses in future newsletters should send announcements to [webmster@ssia.info](mailto:webmster@ssia.info).

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# MARK YOUR CALENDAR



**111th Annual SSIA Convention**  
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Details at [www.ssia.info](http://www.ssia.info)



# **National Shoe Repair Awareness Week**

**October 9-15, 2014**



# Shoe Repair: It's More Than You Think



# SHOE REPAIR AWARENESS PRESS RELEASE

SSIA has created the following press release to help you promote National Shoe Repair Awareness Week. Simply visit [www.ssia.info](http://www.ssia.info), copy and paste the following text into an e-mail, fill in your shop's name where the red type is and send it off to your local media. Feel free to insert additional information about your business if you like.

## National Shoe Repair Awareness Week is October 9 - 15

Did you know shoe repair is alive and well in your community? Many believe the old-fashioned cobbler has gone by the wayside, but that is not the case. Though they are fewer in numbers, shoe repairers are still saving soles, and October 9-15 is National Shoe Repair Awareness Week.

Created by a congressional proclamation in 1994, National Shoe Repair Awareness Week is intended to educate consumers about the economic, environmental and physical benefits of shoe repair, as well as the breadth of services offered by shoe repair shops.

"Shoe repair may be one of America's best kept secrets. It saves consumers money by restoring their shoes to like-new condition for a fraction of the cost of new shoes. It keeps tens of millions of shoes out of landfills each year and can help relieve a variety of physical discomforts," says Paul Angelos, president of the Shoe Service Institute of America. "These values are not limited to dress shoes. Shoe repair shops can also add value to casual or comfort-soled footwear, all kinds of boots and athletic footwear."

SSIA encourages consumers invest in quality footwear and visit their local shoe repair shop to maximize that investment. Here are five tips to help you get started.

Start a home care program. Your home shoe care regimen should consist of the following four steps: 1) Clean your shoes with a leather cleaner. 2) Condition the leather to restore oils that are lost through wear. 3) Polish your shoes to restore the color and shine and to seal out dirt. 4) Weatherproof your shoes to

protect them from water and oil.

You should run through this shoe care regimen each month. Your local shoe repair shop stocks all of the products you need and can recommend specific brands that best suit your needs.

Store your shoes in cedar shoe trees. You have 125,000 sweat glands in your feet -- all of them pouring moisture into your shoes. That is why it makes sense to rotate your shoes and, on their days off, put cedar shoe trees in them. Rotating your shoes allows the moisture in your shoes to dry and cedar shoe trees aid in that process. Cedar's unique wicking action absorbs moisture, acid and salt, thereby reducing cracking and deterioration of leather. Cedar shoe trees also add comfort by smoothing out linings and insoles, and enhance appearance by maintaining the shape of shoes.

Protect your soles. Ask your local shoe repair shop about protective soles. This very thin rubber sole is applied over the sole of the shoe to make it longer wearing. The rubber is so thin it doesn't change the feel or the appearance of the shoe. It comes in many colors to match the bottom of the shoe or, if you prefer, to make a fashion statement. Protective soles also make shoes more slip resistant. This is great for safety, but you may not want to put them on your dancing shoes.



**Shoe Repair:  
It's More  
Than You Think**



Practice preventative maintenance. Repair your shoes before wear turns into damage. Ladies, don't wait for the rubber tips to fall off of your high heels. Replace them before they get to that point to avoid more significant damage to your heels. The same goes for flats and men's shoes. Replace the heel before it wears into the heel base or sole of the shoe.

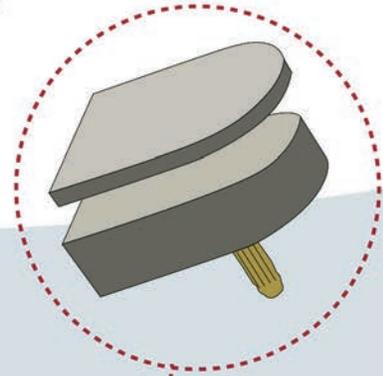
Buy quality shoes. In an average day, a man will take about 8,000 steps. If he weighs 170 pounds, the daily force that accumulates on his feet is 1,000 tons. It makes sense to spend a few extra dollars for shoes that will give you the support you need. Shoes made with better quality materials are better for your feet. They are longer lasting and, with the proper care and maintenance, can last for years.

Take a look in your closet and see how you can benefit from shoe repair.

## WANT TO CONTRIBUTE?

Send articles or suggestions to Sandra Verbruggen ([sandra@ssia.info](mailto:sandra@ssia.info)) or Mitch Lebovic ([webmaster@ssia.info](mailto:webmaster@ssia.info)).

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# A QUICK GUIDE TO MAKING GOOGLE ANALYTICS WORK FOR YOU

It seems everyone is raving about Google Analytics. But what exactly is it, and how can you use it to grow your business?

In simple terms, Analytics is a free web service provided by Google. Simply add some code to your website and it will track and store all kinds of very useful information about how people find and use your website.

## Why is it so helpful to small business?

In the days before the internet, small businesses wishing to entice potential customers into their stores had to rely heavily on traditional advertising, word of mouth, and impressive front window displays to lure in passersby.

Some of these methods were effective. However, it was virtually impossible to measure just how effective—or ineffective.

For instance:

- Did a particular customer decide to come in because they had been planning it to all day?

- Was it a last second decision after seeing something in the store window display?
- Or maybe they saw a newspaper ad, received a recommendation from a friend, were in last week browsing around but didn't buy anything, or something else?
- And when they came into the store, where did they look and how long did they stay?

More often than not, we had to make assumptions and they weren't very accurate. Most of the time, we just hoped the money we used to attract customers was being well spent.

## The new storefront

As a business owner in the 21st century the most likely first impression point that potential customers will interact with your brand is not your storefront (if you actually have one), or a newspaper ad, but your business website.

Think of it as your virtual shop-window and Google Analytics as an all-seeing camera that keeps track of everyone arriving at, wandering around, and leaving your store.

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## What can you learn with Google Analytics?

- How visitors found your website.
- If they are first-time visitors, or returning traffic.
- How visitors moved through the site, meaning did they stay a while and read? Did they click on different pages?
- How they accessed the website in the first place. Were they on a mobile phone? Or were they doing some online shopping at their work desk when the boss wasn't looking?
- The success (or failure) of key conversion points on your site: i.e., the pages on your website such as newsletter sign up or contact form where potential customers can convert to a lead by entering their details.

This is just a small portion of the metrics that Google Analytics allows you to track and interpret across your domain. And you can export the reports to PDF files to print or share with your staff.

## The real benefits to your business

Before Google Analytics you would need to employ an expensive market research firm to carry out surveys on why a customer taken certain action. Now, you can access even more information anytime you like right at your desk for free.

## Advertise in *Footprints*

SSIA's newsletter, *Footprints*, is an excellent opportunity to reach every shoe repair shop in the country (or at least every shop SSIA is aware of) with your advertising message. Advertising in *Footprints* is limited to SSIA members. The only non-member ads that may be accepted are those for non-shoe repair supplies or products or services.

Contact SSIA headquarters for rates and specifications at [webmaster@ssia.info](mailto:webmaster@ssia.info) or 410-569-3425.

## SSIA Classifieds

You may not be aware that SSIA has a classified advertising section on its web site. Shoe repairers seeking to sell their business or equipment, or seeking employees can advertise there. The cost is \$25 for three months.

Beginning with the next issue of *Footprints*, classified ads will also be published in this newsletter and distributed to SSIA's full mailing list at no extra charge.

For more information, visit [www.ssia.info/classifieds](http://www.ssia.info/classifieds).

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# COMMON CAUSES OF NEEDLE BREAKAGE (CURVED NEEDLE)

by Steve Mueller, Gateway Shoe Machine

Needle breakage in the curved needle stitcher is frustrating. Breaking needles while sewing a shoe or boot causes operators to lose valuable time and the cost of needles reduces your profits.

Breaking needles can be corrected by the operator with a few changes in operation and following these guidelines.

The first probable cause of needle breakage is using a worn or sprung awl. Most

likely when a needle breaks, the awl is not changed and continues to wear. Change the awl to see if this corrects your problem.

Next, make sure your channel knife is not set too low or is worn dull. Setting the channel knife too low or using a dull channel knife retards the awl forcing the needle to make its own hole or push to the right or the left of the hole made by the awl. The latter will certainly cause

needle breakage. Always start with a new channel knife when troubleshooting this problem. I have found that unless you feel very sure you are sharpening the channel knife correctly, you are much better off replacing it.

Next, be sure that you are using one size larger awl than needle. Example, if you are using a 22-50 needle you should be using a 23-45 awl. Note: Check at this time that you are using the right size needle guide for your size needle. The most common needle used in shoe and boot repair is size 22-50. In that case, you should be using a size #2 needle guide (24-7A). Your manual will inform you which needle guide to use for each size of needle available.

If it has been a while since you changed the needle guide, this is the time. Note, whether or not you decide to change the needle guide, the following check should be made. Remove the needle guide by removing screw (24-307). With this needle guide removed there should be two dowel pins (24-507) which hold the needle guide in its correct position. If one or both of these dowel pins are broken this may very well be your problem.

Next, refer to your owner's manual to be sure you are not setting the needle too low. When the needle is in its correct position the looper (29-5) should wrap thread slightly above the hook of the needle when the needle is in its very lowest position. Also, when the needle is in its correct position, it should not touch the tip of the lifter (29-10) when riding over it. Also make sure the needle is not hitting any part during its stroke. If it is, eliminate this problem by changing the part if it looks worn or adjusting the part or the needle to a different position.

**(continued on page 15)**



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# GATEWAY SHOE MACHINE OFFERS LANDIS MACHINES

Landis has been the standard of the shoe repair industry since the early 1900s. Gateway Shoe Machine Inc. is now offering the complete line of new Landis equipment to shoe repair shops and orthopedic labs. The new Landis Line fits most budgets and made in North America. The new Landis line of finishers, presses, fume busters, and bench machines has evolved to compete in today's ever changing market.

Gateway Shoe Machine Inc. offers shoe and bootmakers the world renowned Besser McKay. The Besser's 18-1/2" slender horn allows users to sew boots as well as shoes. It is important when purchasing a McKay to be sure it can accommodate boots as well as shoes.

The Besser McKay was originally brought into the United States by Sutton Shoe Machine Co. These machines are still in operation today. They are tried and true. All genuine parts are available. In fact, the Besser McKay became so world renowned, that almost every shoe machine company in the world adopted it as their McKay to sell including Sutton, Auto-Soler, Hardo and Gotz. Also, the Besser is easy to thread and is operator friendly.

Gateway Shoe Machine Inc. also offers the world famous Claes Patch Machine. Patch work is becoming a larger percentage of a shop's income. A Claes machine gets the job done. Once you

use the German made Claes you will wonder why you didn't buy one years ago. The Claes is easy to operate. Most Gateway customers who bought a Claes as much as 20 years ago are still waiting for it to miss its first stitch. Gateway Shoe Machine Inc. is happy to provide names Claes owners for your reference. I'm sure they will all say, "buy one!"

## Petronio to Introduce New Products

Petronio Shoe Products is set to introduce several new products this Fall. A clear regular All-Purpose Cement will be available soon, for bonding that will not show a glue line. Petronio will also introduce a new adhesive for PUR, as well as a new Petronio Primer that will enable Master and Petronio's All-Purpose Cement to bond most any material. Look for these new items at your wholesaler soon!



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# 10 FREE SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TOOLS TO INCREASE YOUR BUSINESS

So you've set up a Facebook fan-page, a LinkedIn page, a Google+ page or a Twitter handle for your business. Now how do you find the time to manage it? And how do you really know if it's working or not?

Here are 10 excellent (and free) tools you can use to save the time and energy you spend communicating on social net-

works, as well as monitor and track your social popularity:

**Bufferapp:** Posting on Facebook and Twitter regularly increases your social influence and reach—but it's not always easy for time-poor business owners. Bufferapp allows you to write up to 10 free updates that can be scheduled to post at a later

date/time of your choosing. So if you put aside an hour at the start of your day/week organising updates, you can just let the buffer do all the hard work later on. Hint: Check out the analytics tab for a quick snapshot of which tweets are getting the most engagement.

**Crowdbooster:** This intelligent dashboard for Twitter allows you to monitor how effective your tweets are. It also goes one step further by providing an action plan through their targeted recommendations section. Hint: Take note of the highlighted influential tweeters you should interact with as well as the times and days where your tweets will garner the most feedback and re-tweets.

**Social Mention:** Keep track of what people are saying about you while getting on with more important business. Simply save your business name, product names, and other important keywords in Social Mention, then wait for free daily email alerts every time they're used on social media networks. Hint: Keep track of what people are saying about your competitors, too!

**Hootsuite:** A digital marketer's favorite, Hootsuite is a one-stop shop where you can monitor selected keywords, manage multiple social media profiles across all networks, schedule your messages, and more. Hint: Create multiple targeted lists to communicate with specific audiences (e.g., potential, existing and returning customers).

**Google Analytics:** With the introduction of the +1 button, Google has become far more interested tracking social metrics. Last year they updated their free analytics software so that you can now create custom URLs to monitor the performance of Facebook wall posts, Twitter tweets, QR Code scans, etc. Hint: You can also track how visitors found your site and if they came directly from a link you posted on social media.

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**Feedcompare:** This is an essential tool if you like to blog. Sign up and find out who's reading your blog, as well as how many new readers you get each day. Hint: Compare your RSS feed subscriber amount against the numbers your competitors blog is receiving.

**Storify:** Go one step further with your social media campaigns and create compelling story-boards using the mentions you received via social media. Storify collects the best photos, video, tweets, and more to publish into one coherent narrative that you can then use to show case your brand. Hint: If you use WordPress you can connect Storify to post directly to your blog.

**EdgerankChecker:** Your "edgerank" is the algorithm that Facebook uses to determine if the update you posted on your fan page will show up in your followers news feeds or not. EdgerankChecker allows you to check your rank for free at a glance. Hint: Sign up for \$15 a month to receive recommendations on when, what, and how to post to your page.

**Topsy:** Twitter's very own keyword search tool, you can use this real-time search aggregator to find content published on Twitter and the web and then sort by relevance or date. Hint: Use the analytics section for comparison searches on keywords. For example, type in your brand name vs. your competitor to find out who is being searched for more across a time period.

**Klout:** This tool measures your overall online influence and provides a daily score using data procured from the social networks you connect to it. By understanding how much (or how little) you influence others, you can leverage and improve on this score to understand your online audience better. Hint: Check out the perks section for special bonus offers.

## NEEDLE BREAKAGE

Continued from page 12

Important: Use of water before stitching. I suggest wetting both leather and manmade materials. Wetting leather will help make a more uniform and nicer looking channel on the sole. I also suggest raising the channel knife when sewing manmade materials. It is much easier for the machine to feed on manmade materials when the channel knife is raised and the material is wet. Also, do not soak the sole in water before sewing. This will soften the leather too much retarding the feed. A spritz with a spray bottle is all it takes.

Last, but probably most important is how the operator holds the shoe as he or she stitches. Just guide the work, let the machine do the feeding. If you notice your needle breakage is most always at a certain place on the shoe or boot, such as the toe, you may be crowding the toe, relax. Also, hold the shoe level, otherwise the needle will not follow the awl.

I hope this article has been beneficial. If you are still having problems after trouble shooting your machine using the above information, it may be time to call a technician to service your machine.

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