

## **Al Maag**

*Principal Marketing & Communications Consultant, MaagComm+*

After a unique career spanning four decades, Al Maag retired in 2013 as Chief Communications Officer for Avnet, Inc., a Fortune 500 company and one of the world's largest technology distributors. Prior to joining Avnet in 1998, he ran his own public relations and communications consultancy, served as director of Advertising and Communications for Molex, a manufacturer in the technology industry, and worked as director of Strategic Planning at Cahners Publishing (later named UBM). He is currently the Principal of MaagCommplus, which focuses on supporting non-profits. As Executive-Director of the Business Marketing Association (BMA), Al is well known at enhancing employee engagement, morale, and culture of a group or company. Al is active in charity involvement by running the Maag Toy Foundation and establishing the Chicago 16 –Inch Softball Hall of Fame. Al also acts as Chief Marketing Officer for the Veteran Tickets Foundation and holds a position on the Board of Directors for the MVP Foundation and is steward of the Taliesin West for the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation in Scottsdale, Arizona.

Even as a kid, growing up on the North Side of Chicago, I saw where I was going. It was in the schoolyard where I developed leadership and marketing skills and used my creative abilities to keep my buddies entertained and manage a successful Chicago 16-inch softball team — and get the press to write about it. I was the art director of *Windy City Softball* magazine. In retrospect, I could have chosen no other profession later in life.

Throughout my career I learned from and was inspired by talented colleagues, vendors and staff members who aided my advancement as I became proficient in PR, advertising, communications, video production, trade show exhibit design, brand management, investor relations marketing, community relations, employee engagement and meeting and event planning.

I was so lucky to be asked to join the national board of the Business Marketing Association...after years of being involved, they were kind enough to ask me to be chairman for one year. After not screwing that assignment up and after learning of retirement the powers that be inserted me in as Executive Director. God save the BMA.

### **And lastly:**

Having been with a magazine publisher, two manufacturing firms and the world's largest technology distributor, I gained unique perspectives. Additionally, I am an artist; I like history and am as comfortable on the softball field as I am in the C-suite.

So, those are my credentials. However, my approach to marketing challenges is, I believe, unusual. For example, Avnet was about to mark a milestone — 50 years on the New York Stock Exchange. I always say anyone can write a press release or place an ad in a financial publication; why don't we ring The Closing Bell then invite all the employees of the Exchange to join us for cake. Not just any cake. This one was designed by Buddy Valastro, better known as The Cake Boss on TV. It was a massive recreation of Avnet shipping boxes and some of the electronic components the company distributed. Wow, did we ever create a lot of buzz!

Here's another example: I noted that companies were moving manufacturing into China in the early 2000's. Taking advantage of that trend in the marketplace we planned an event at the Phoenix Art Museum, where, not coincidentally, they were exhibiting Chinese artifacts. We scheduled expert speakers

to talk about doing business in China. Local business people and marketers were invited to attend, along with members of the press, who were duly impressed and wrote about it.

And finally, I am a long-suffering Chicago Cubs fan.

## **MaagComm+ to Bring Unconventional Approach to Communications Challenges**

*Will Assist Companies in Increasing Employee Engagement, Sales and Profits*

**PHOENIX, August 21, 2013** – Marketing industry veteran [Al Maag](#) has launched [MaagComm+](#), a new communications consultancy. Maag recently retired from his position as chief communications officer of global technology distributor [Avnet, Inc.](#), and he will now work with select clients to develop unconventional solutions for marketing communications challenges. Maag’s expertise lies in developing creative approaches around thought leadership and adding personality into a company. He previously spearheaded the branding, public relations, internal and external communications, and community relations activities for *Fortune* 500 business-to-business (B2B) technology companies Avnet and [Molex](#) over the course of four decades. Maag was also the chairman of the Business Marketing Association (BMA) from 2011-2012.

“I’m retiring from Avnet with a great sense of pride and accomplishment,” said Maag. “It was a priceless experience working with the C-suite and overseeing the growth of Avnet’s brand and culture. I will now work with organizations that need that extra spark of creativity to help them reach their target audiences, create greater brand engagement and increase revenue. It starts with engaged employees and strategic efforts in the community with customers, not just digital and social media tactics.”

The consultancy will draw upon the expertise of Maag’s marketing communications network, creating a virtual think tank of creative firms and individuals who can be tapped to develop and implement communications solutions for MaagComm+ clients. Initial resources include the fast-growing marketing firm [Spark Design](#), where Maag will be a consultant-in-residence; Jan Miller, a multi-faceted writer who has been working with Maag for almost 30 years; global public relations firm [Brodeur Partners](#); and Zack Maag, a freelance audio visual producer.

“We are honored that Al has selected Spark as his home base,” said Vince Adam, president of Spark in Tempe, Ariz. “I can think of no one else who will add more energy to our team. Our relationship with Al will enhance and expand Spark’s capabilities, allowing us to impact our clients’ C-suite teams more effectively.”

Initial engagements include:

- Assuming a new role as executive director of the BMA
- Overseeing a special project for the Phoenix International Raceway
- Leading the creation of the Chicago 16-Inch Softball Hall of Fame museum in Forest Park, Ill.
- Launching a web portal for charities with digital media firm New Angle Media
- Publishing a book this fall with Miller titled, “Social Media IS NOT Sociable.”

“Al’s impact on Avnet’s brand and overall business has been immense,” said Vallee, retired CEO of Avnet. “From creative initiatives such as Avnet’s history museum and 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and AvnetOnDemand.com, to his commitment to enhancing Avnet’s reputation in the communities it serves, Al has always taken on first-time challenges with vigor to improve internal and external brand engagement. Any organization that works with him will benefit from his unique vision and ‘why not?’ approach to marketing communications challenges.”

An important component of MaagComm+ will be giving back to the community. In 2009, he was named Volunteer Executive of the Year by the *Phoenix Business Journal*. The Maag family formed and actively manages the 23-year-old Maag Toy Foundation, a 501(C)(3) charitable organization that collects new toys for needy children. His current local board support includes the Miracle League of Arizona, the Phoenix Regional Sports Commission and the MVP Foundation that supports a camp for children.

MaagComm+ on Twitter: [@almaag2](https://twitter.com/almaag2)

MaagComm+ on LinkedIn: <http://www.linkedin.com/pub/al-maag/1/a82/811>

### **About MaagComm+**

MaagComm+ is a communications consultancy formed by Al Maag, former chief communications officer of Avnet, Inc. For more information, visit <http://www.maagcommplus.com>

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