



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **Acosta Selects MEI's Retail Management Solution**

**(Jacksonville, FL; March 31, 2003) --**

Acosta Sales and Marketing, a leading full-service sales and marketing agency in North America, has selected MEI, a leader in the development and marketing of complete trade and retail management solutions for CPG companies, to provide Acosta with the most comprehensive retail management system available on the market. The MEI Retail Management solution enhances the collection and transmission of critical store-level data by providing concurrent analysis, a revolutionary feature that is unmatched in the marketplace.

Acosta will use the MEI Retail Management solution throughout the United States and Canada. Initial deployment to more than 4,000 sales associates is currently being phased for use in food, drug, mass merchandise and convenience stores.

The MEI Retail Management solution will enhance Acosta's leadership position by enabling the capture of information on distribution, shelving, merchandising, and pricing, as well as overall objective collection, and then transmitting it to a central system each night.

Account managers, sales managers and field sales associates can access the latest information. As a result, they will have immediate access to all relevant data, enabling them to deal with issues or target activities quickly and effectively.

"Technology has always been a cornerstone of Acosta's success," said Scott McLean, Acosta's Vice President of Information Systems. "After spending nearly a year reviewing all of the software solutions available, we determined the MEI Retail Management solution was the clear-cut leader in terms of technology and functionality. It will provide our sales associates with unparalleled analytical ability and give Acosta a solid platform for years to come."

Fred Schroeder, MEI's Vice President of North American Sales, explained the MEI Merchandising Solution is a key component to Acosta's retail leadership in North America. "The MEI Retail solution will enable the sales associates to execute on retail objectives in a way that was never possible before. A true collaborative approach will ensure the objectives of Acosta's clients as well as their retail partners are fully communicated and understood by the sales associates so they can execute on a single and consistent plan," he added.

A major benefit of the solution is providing readily available analysis to determine how well Acosta's retail force is executing against its objectives and priorities. Compared to similar retail management tools available, the MEI Retail Management solution is by far the most complete solution available on the market today.

Gary Chartrand, Chairman-CEO of Acosta, said, "We're confident that the MEI Retail Management solution will enable us to represent our clients more effectively and provide us with a competitive advantage within the marketplace."

**About MEI**

Founded in 1983, MEI is an international leader in the development and marketing of eSolutions for the Consumer Goods (CG) market. MEI is dedicated to providing powerful, innovative information systems that enable companies to reshape their sales and marketing activities to become more focused, effective, productive and profitable. MEI's eSolutions provide rich functionality to meet the unique needs of CG companies by allowing them to tie the planning with the execution in order to improve the efficiency of trade spending, account management, category management and sales planning and forecasting. MEI has offices in Morristown, NJ; Toronto; Montreal; Paris; and Reading, UK. The company's list of satisfied customers in the United States, Canada, Europe, Asia and Latin America, include Mott's, The Schwan Food Company, Kellogg's, Nestlé and SC Johnson. Additional information can be found at [www.meicpg.com](http://www.meicpg.com).

**Acosta Sales and Marketing Company**

Acosta Sales and Marketing Company is a leading full-service sales and marketing agency in North America, providing outsourced sales, merchandising, marketing, and promotional services to manufacturers in the consumer packaged goods (CPG) industry. Headquartered in Jacksonville, Fla., Acosta has operations throughout the U.S. and Canada. For more information visit [www.acosta.com](http://www.acosta.com).