

Interview Questions – Eagle Promotions 8/6/2012

Eagle Promotions, a local minority owned business, was started in Las Vegas and has grown into one of the most prominent promotional items and services companies in the state and beyond. With strong ties to the local community, Eagle Promotions offers products and services to meet any promotional item need a business or public agency may have.

UNLV Purchasing recently sat down with Eagle Promotions co-owner Sean Ono to discuss his company's history, Eagle's current status, and his desire to work with UNLV on business opportunities in the future.

(Q1) Tell me about Eagle Promotions. How did you get started? Years in business? Local/MBE? Staff levels? What products and/or services do you provide?

Sean Ono, partner at Eagle Promotions, was working for his father, a local business owner, and attending classes at UNLV at night. Sean began his own promotional products business in 1995. Through hard work the opportunity to expand his business was realized in 2001 when he merged his operations with Mario Stadlander, Eagle Promotions co-owner. Sean has been in the industry 17 years and Eagle Promotions has been servicing the Las Vegas corporate and public sector for all 17 years.

Currently, Eagle Promotions has 150 employees. In 2003, Eagle expanded into retail products and now offers customers both corporate and retail promotional products and services.

Eagle Promotions currently services clients such as Disney, Universal, UFC, The Hard Rock, and MGM resorts. A full listing of their clients can be found on their company website (<http://www.theeagledesigngroup.com/>)

(Q2) How did you become familiar with business opportunities with UNLV?

Through his relationship with Nevada System of Higher Education Regent Cedric Crear, Sean has been aware of business opportunities at the institution level within NSHE. Eagle Promotions has done work with UNLV in the past and has made some contacts with key departments on campus. Eagle Promotions has also recently obtained registration for the UNLV logo.

(Q3) To better help the UNLV campus departments understand what Eagle Promotions offers, can you give a few reasons why they should consider doing business with Eagle Promotions? What sets Eagle Promotions apart?

As Sean phrased it, Eagle Promotions is a “one stop shop” for all promotional products. Recently, Eagle diversified into retail enabling it to leverage design and style expertise into the promotional products business. Eagle’s retail promotional products business offers corporate promotional products, online stores, uniform programs, merchandising, and full retail clothing production.

(4) Does Eagle Promotions accept online ordering payable with a UNLV PCard? Are purchase orders accepted?

PCards are accepted and Eagle does accept UNLV issued purchase orders as well.

(5) What is Eagle Promotions’ commitment to quality and best prices?

Eagle Promotions has as its clients *The Beatles* and *Elvis Presley* trademarks as well as other key corporate clients. The level of service and quality demanded by these clients has, as Sean stated, “raised the bar” in terms of Eagle’s commitment to overall quality.

With its expanding customer base and product offerings, Eagle Promotions is one of the largest promotional products companies in the country and offers substantial volume discounts, aggressive pricing on branded apparel, and is very competitive for all product lines.

(6) What is Eagle Promotions’ policy regarding return items?

For most customized orders (anything with a logo) returns are not possible. However, if there is a mistake in production on your order Eagle will gladly work with the campus department to remedy and re-deliver a corrected order.

(7) In your opinion, what are the major obstacles for small and disadvantaged businesses in Las Vegas and how can UNLV be a part of the solution?

In some instances, smaller firms have challenges with financing large scale projects. According to Sean, one solution that has been effective is the “the pairing of two companies” to help burden the financing cost of large orders. The company lending support in this arrangement acts essentially as a tier 2 supplier and can bring value and perspective to the transaction.

UNLV plays a prominent role in supporting local companies. Sean pointed out that at times it is challenging to know exactly who to talk to at the university to discuss Eagle Promotions’ products. The ability for a campus department with a promotional product need to locate and

find an able supplier is also a challenge. Sean is adamant in his commitment to meeting customers' needs for UNLV when his company is contacted, and wants the university to know about Eagle Promotions and to allow his company to provide quotes when preparing to make a promotional product purchase.

(8) The Nevada System of Education has recently published a Supplier Inclusion statement. I know you have had an opportunity to review it. What does it mean to you and how would you like to see it impact the business community serving UNLV?

The Nevada System of Higher Education supports equal opportunity for minority owned, women-owned, and other small disadvantaged business concerns (MWDBE) to compete for contracts awarded by NSHE. NSHE also supports efforts to encourage local businesses to compete for NSHE contracts. In some situations, MWDBE and local business concerns may not have the depth or full capability to meet all the requirements of large contracts. Nevertheless, NSHE supports finding opportunities for such MWDBE and local business concerns to participate as subcontractors or Tier 2 suppliers in large contracts.

Sean highlighted the strong position in which Eagle Promotions currently finds itself and believes that it is an asset in doing business with UNLV. Sean pointed out that there may be occasions when a small disadvantaged business in Las Vegas struggles to meet the specific need of a company or public agency and that often there is a natural synergy between two businesses who can then offer a competitive response to a business opportunity. Eagle Promotions has the structure, staff, and expertise to handle projects of any size and looks forward to working with UNLV's departments to discuss and deliver on their promotional product needs.

Another great observation Sean made was that it would be helpful if UNLV conducted seminars or conferences on how to business with the university which could be attended by prospective suppliers in the Las Vegas community.

(9) What one word or phrase best describes Eagle Promotions?

“Striving to be a better company each day. Trying to be a better owner each year.”

Thank you to Sean Ono and Eagle Promotions for their time in granting this interview and their interest in UNLV!