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Promoting success and The Donald



JONATHAN WILSON / Inquirer Staff Photographer
Real estate developer and billionaire Donald Trump addressed makers of promotional products at their show yesterday at the Convention Center.

Donald Trump was keynote speaker at a trade show for promotional products. Industry associates had been surveyed about who most inspired them.

By Suzette Parmley
INQUIRER STAFF WRITER

Donald J. Trump gave a crowd of businesspeople a few pointers yesterday on creating the ultimate brand.

"Having a good product helps," said Trump, dressed in a dark suit and pink tie. "You can sell really well, but it really helps if you have a good product."

His nearly one-hour speech was all about being Donald Trump, probably one of the best-known brands. This being a trade show for the makers of promotional products, the Convention Center was decorated with posters featuring the New York developer and this message: "His name alone inspires thoughts of greatness and power."

Philadelphia played host for

the first time to the ASI Show, the Advertising Specialty Institute, which puts on a series of trade shows for the promotional-products industry.

In Trump, who puts his name on buildings, books and everything else he touches, the trade show found the perfect marriage between a tireless self-promoter and an industry whose very existence depends on marketing brand names through key chains, coffee mugs or buttons.

Trump, as keynote speaker, waxed on about his personal journey to the top of the business world as a billionaire real estate developer, best-selling author of self-help books, casino mogul, and star of the reality-TV show *The Apprentice*.

"You have to love what you do," Trump said. "I've never seen a really successful person who doesn't love what he does."

The 1968 graduate of the Wharton School encouraged entrepreneurs to "go against the tide and sell a product that no one else is selling."

From 1989 to 1991, when the real estate market was in the tank and banks were collapsing, Trump was \$900 million in the hole.

"I lost my focus," he said. "My saying back then was 'Survive until 1995.' I had to beat out the banks, and I did."

He pulled off another turnaround recently when his Atlantic

City casinos emerged from their second trip through bankruptcy. Trump managed to retain a significant ownership stake, but lost his name — for gambling promotion only — to the casinos.

Trump, who has expressed interest in obtaining a slots-parlor license in Philadelphia, said he can't always get what he wants. Like the time he approached NBC executives to pay him "Friends-type money," or \$2 million per episode of *The Apprentice*.

"They didn't give me that."

Trump considers the TV show "the ultimate form of

"I've never seen a really successful person who doesn't love what he does."

Donald Trump
real estate developer

knows? I may lose some hair."

ASI Show president Matthew Cohn said his Trevoze company had surveyed members about the person who most inspired them and who they most wanted to learn from. Trump was the clear favorite.

"He was No. 1," Cohn said. "Today, he delivered. He was phenomenal — everything we expected and more."

Cohn gave Trump the gift of a blanket emblazoned with a giant image of the developer. But perhaps the greatest flattery for Trump came when he fielded questions from the audience. A man who identified himself only as John said he was 73 and still working. He requested Trump's world-famous boot.



JONATHAN WILSON / Inquirer Staff Photographer
Members of the promotional-products industry listen to Donald Trump express his vision on creating brands. Trump was keynote speaker yesterday at the Advertising Specialty Institute Show at the Convention Center. "He was phenomenal," said an official.

branding." He only alluded to the fickleness of viewers and did not mention that ratings have slipped since the show's first season. "It's a cold business," he said. "It's all about ratings. Someday, I may not get the ratings. Who

"You've got it," said Trump, clearly relishing the moment. "John, you're fired!"

Contact staff writer Suzette Parmley at 856-779-3818 or sparmley@phillynews.com.

