RULES & REGULATIONS

2010 AMERICAN BUSINESS AWARDS

The American Business Awards is a competition organized by The Stevie® Awards, which also organizes The International Business Awards and other business competitions. The American Business Awards honor excellence in business in the United States. All for-profit and non-profit organizations in the U.S.A. are eligible to submit entries, including the American operations of foreign companies. The winners will be announced at an awards gala on June 21, 2010. A description of this event will later be available on our web site at www.stevieawards.com/aba.

Rules and Regulations are set forth in this booklet, and official Entry Forms are available separately in the Entry Kit.

It is preferred that entrants submit their entries directly through our web site.

Rules & Regulations

Submission of your entries on official Entry Forms, or through our web site at www.stevieawards.com/aba, implies that you have read and accept the following Rules & Regulations.

1. Eligibility

All organizations (for-profit and non-profit) in the U.S.A. are eligible to submit entries, provided

- That the entries describe accomplishments made since January 1, 2009. Entries in the categories for advertising, video, and other forms of media must have been first released or otherwise made public since January 1, 2009.
- That the entries can be judged in one of the official categories (see the official Entry Forms for the lists of categories).
- Nominees in the New Company of the Year category must have begun operations in the U.S.A. after January 1 2007.
- Nominees in the New Product or Service of the year categories must have been introduced to the American market since January 1, 2009.

There is no timeframe eligibility period for the submission of Web site or blog entries. Web sites and blogs may be nominated no matter when they were first published.

2. Categories of Awards

Categories are listed on the official Entry Forms that are available separately in the Entry Kit. Each of your entries must be submitted in one of the categories listed on these forms. Included with each Entry Form are requirements and instructions for the categories listed on that form. The following forms are available:

- Entry Cover Sheet: this is a summary form that must accompany all Entry Forms that are submitted by mail or by fax. You do not need to submit an Entry Cover Sheet if you submit your entries through our web site at www.stevieawards.com/aba.
- Organization, Management, Department, Team, and Individual Categories: this is the Entry Form for categories that honor your entire organization and/or the departments, teams, and individuals within it. The category for New Product or Service of the Year is also on this form.
- Advertising, Web Sites, Video, & Other Media Awards Categories: this is the Entry Form for categories that recognize corporate media such as web sites, advertising, film and video, interactive multimedia, corporate literature, and live events.

3. Deadline Dates

Deadline for receipt of entries with accompanying entry fees and entry forms is as follows:

First early-bird entry deadline: **November 20, 2009**
Entry fees are discounted by as much as 40% by this deadline.

Other entry deadlines are:
December 18, 2009: second early-bird deadline, with entry fee discounts of up to 25%

March 31, 2010: final entry deadline. Late entries will be accepted through **April 3**0 with payment of a late fee.

4. Submission of Entries

Entries may be submitted in one of two ways

- Through our web site at www.stevieawards.com/aba. This is the preferred method of submission. You will be able to register on the web site, prepare and submit your entries through the site, and pay your entry fees online by credit card. (You will also have the option to pay your entry fees by check instead.) This method of submission will be the most efficient for you and for the Stevie Awards staff, but the chief benefit to you is that you will be able to submit up to 500 words in your entry.
- You will have the option to submit your entries by mail or by fax instead, using the official Entry Forms, but if you choose to submit your entries by mail or fax you will only be able to submit 200 words in your entry.

5. Supporting Information

You may support the claims made in your entries by providing the addresses of web pages that feature news stories, press releases, work samples or other documents that support your entry. It is not mandatory that you provide links to supporting documents, but it is in your interest to do so, because all judges will be given access to these documents.

If the only supporting materials you can provide for your entries are offline, such as press clippings or videotapes, you may submit them to the Stevie Awards office, but the preliminary-round judges will not have access to them. If your entry becomes a Finalist, the final judges may request that your offline supporting materials be sent to them for review.

6. Language

English is the language of the competition. You must submit your entries in English.

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7. Entry Fees

Entry Fees differ per category, and are listed in the instructions that are provided with each of the two different Entry Forms. All of the categories for non-executive individuals (e.g. Support Staffer of the Year, Product Developer of the Year, Marketer of the Year) do not have entry fees.

No refunds will be made after March 31, 2010.

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8. Shipping Information

This information applies only if you will submit your entries by mail. Please include all items specified on the official Entry Forms. :

- Ship PREPAID
- Entry Forms and any supporting materials should be sent directly to:

The Stevie Awards
11885 Grand Commons Ave., #210
Fairfax, VA 22030
Tel: 703-547-8389
Fax: 703-991-2397

9. Final Decision

In the event of a dispute as to the category in which an entry(s) will be judged, the decision of the Stevie Awards committee will prevail. Judges may recommend that an entry be switched to a different category, and at their discretion Stevie Awards staff may change an entry's category.

Materials submitted as part of your entries will not be returned.

10. Judging

HOW YOUR ENTRIES WILL BE JUDGED

All entries are first reviewed by Stevie Awards staff to ensure that eligibility requirements are met and that entries are formatted properly in order to go forward to be judged.

All judges receive written instructions about how to score entries. Judges are asked to score the efforts and accomplishments portrayed in each entry based on (a) their own experience, and (b) their understanding of how companies and people in the nominee's industry performed in the eligible timeframe, given the condition of the economy in general and the nominee's industry in particular. For entries in Advertising & Corporate Media categories, judges are asked to read the brief submitted about the entry's communications objectives, and to review and score the submitted media (web site, videotape, tear sheet, etc.) based on their originality, creativity, production values, and how well they believe the media meet the stated communications objectives.

Preliminary Judging:

Preliminary judging will be conducted in April-May 2010. Preliminary judges will be recruited nationwide, will volunteer to judge on the American Business Awards web site, and will be accepted or disqualified, and assigned categories by Stevie Awards staff, based on their industry, function, and experience. A judge will not be assigned categories to which their own company has submitted entries.

During preliminary judging, each entry will be reviewed and rated by no fewer than five (5) volunteer judges who have been approved as qualified (by Stevie Awards staff) to judge those entries. Rating will be done on a scale of 1-10.

All entries that receive a high average score in the preliminary round of judging, regardless of category, will automatically be designated as Finalists, and will receive a Certificate of Finalist Recognition if they don't also move on to receive a Stevie Award.

Finalist entries may be audited. Any entry found to contain false or misleading information will be disqualified.

Final Judging:

In late May 2010, members of the 2010 final judging committees will perform the final judging. Chairpersons of final judging committees will be named by January 2010. Chairpersons will form committees of 7-20 members. Committee members will review and score Finalists, and their average scores will determine the Stevie Award winner(s) in each category.

11. Awards

At least one Stevie Award will be conferred in every category that has at least one Finalist.

Final judges will have the option to award multiple Stevies in a category. For example, final judges will be able to award Marketing Executive of the Year Stevies in the Chemicals, Insurance, and Media Industries; and within the Media industry, for example, there may be a Marketing Executive of the Year Stevie winner among companies of up to 100 employees and also among companies with more than 2,500 employees.

In addition, any category that has at least five (5) Finalists from a particular industry will automatically have at least one (1) Stevie Award winner from that industry.

Finalists will be notified approximately one month before the Stevie Award winners are announced during The 2010 American Business Awards gala to be held on June 21, 2010 in New York.

The names of Stevie Award winners will be closely guarded and will not be revealed before they are announced at the awards gala.

Stevie Finalists and winners will be able to purchase additional, personalized certificates, wall plaques, and Stevies Awards to share with employees, executives, and clients. Order forms for additional awards will be made available after the winners are announced.

12. Publication of Entries

Entries and materials submitted may be displayed, shown, duplicated, published, or disposed of as Stevie Awards, Inc. deems appropriate. By submitting entries, the entrant agrees to hold Stevie Awards, Inc. and its employees exempt from any costs or expenses of any claim arising out of any such use by the Stevie Awards.

The only entries that will be openly published will be those of Stevie Award winners. Finalists will be given the opportunity to inform Stevie Awards staff in advance of publication whether they will permit their entry to be published in whole or in edited form, should their entry(s) win.

Failure to comply with these Rules & Regulations will render the Entries ineligible. Entry fees will not be refunded.