

## **New Networking Strategy, SKIRTworking™, Proof of How Relationship Marketing Can Help Beat the Odds in a Down Economy**

### *Learn How Women Can Leverage Innate Networking Skills to Build Powerful Networks*

**SAN FRANCISCO, September 10, 2008** – How did a San Francisco financial planner, mortgage broker and real estate agent exceed their business and financial goals in the challenging economic environment that has defined 2008? The answer is SKIRT™, a networking strategy that taps into women’s natural networking prowess to build a powerful business network that supports their personal and professional goals. The SKIRT™ approach is outlined in the new book, “SKIRTWorking™, How to Network Using SKIRT” available at [www.skirtworking.com](http://www.skirtworking.com), and a #1 best seller on Amazon.com’s women and business category.

**SKIRT™: Sharing Knowledge, Information and Resources Together**, is a concept and networking group created by financial planner Michelle Alberda, real estate agent Michelle Balog and mortgage broker Stacey Fleece. After working together for years, the SKIRT™ founders and authors agreed that typical marketing and business building techniques were ineffective and expensive. However, Alberda, Balog and Fleece had seen tremendous results from their collaboration and referrals and established SKIRT™ in 2005 to give businesswomen tools to accelerate unleash the power of referrals through relationship marketing, the most efficient and cost effective way to develop and build a business.

Beyond supporting the business and personal goals of members, SKIRT™ founders Alberda, Balog and Fleece wanted to empower and inspire women in the business community. Since its inception, SKIRT™ has grown as a resource, networking and support team that has accelerated business growth for its members in meaningful ways.

“We created SKIRT™ to effectively change the way business is done by giving women tools to unleash the power of their personal and professional networks,” said Stacey Fleece, co-author and mortgage professional in the San Francisco Bay Area, “SKIRT™ has delivered. In 2007 alone, referrals from network members and their contacts represented over \$100,000 of my annual gross sales, and we’ve seen similar results for other members in the San Francisco network.”

Member associations are also recognizing the power of SKIRTworking™ and how it can help build business efficiently and effectively in this challenging economic environment. The California Department of Insurance has approved the book SKIRTworking, How to Network Using SKIRT as a continuing education course for all licensed insurance brokers in the state of California.

### **The Power of Relationship Marketing: How SKIRT™ Works**

Since its inception, the SKIRT™ Network in San Francisco has grown four-fold, and yielded hundreds of referrals for its members and inspired them to thrive in their

business. “SKIRT™ has given me the opportunity to align myself with some of the most dynamic, powerful, and motivating women in my community.”, said Samantha Strickler, insurance broker and SKIRT™ Network member, “SKIRT™ has helped me grow both personally and professionally.”

The new book, SKIRTworking™, available exclusively at [www.skirtworking.com](http://www.skirtworking.com), describes how to achieve success using the SKIRT™ tools regardless of the industry or environment:

- Why the SKIRT™ networking strategy is effective.
- The innate powers that make women better networkers than men.
- Why nurturing is an important part of successful SKIRTworking™.
- How to generate unlimited referrals.
- How to nurture professional ambitions with the support of like-minded professional women.
- How to get what you want personally and professionally – and why an eye towards personal growth is always critical.
- How to implement SKIRT™ strategies in your business.
- How to start a networking group using the SKIRT™ model.

### **About the Authors**

SKIRT™ founders are award-winning, recognized leaders in their chosen fields for both overall production and client acquisition. In addition to their professional successes and SKIRT™, all three women are active leaders in philanthropic organizations.

**Stacey Fleece** is one of the premier mortgage bankers in the San Francisco Bay Area. Prior to earning her mortgage license, she was one of the few women to be General Partner in the hedge fund industry. She is also a member of the Security Analysts of San Francisco and a licensed sales agent with the California Department of Real Estate, and formerly was President of the Junior League of San Francisco. Fleece earned a B.S. in Business with a finance and marketing emphasis from the University of Southern California and a M.A. in Sports Management from the University of San Francisco.

**Michelle Balog** is a top producing real estate agent at Vanguard Properties, one of San Francisco's most innovative and successful real estate offices. Balog is also a member of the Real Estate Auxiliary Leadership Council for EARN. A talented and accomplished photographer, Balog ran her own photography business in New York City prior to moving to the Bay Area. She has a degree in film production and photography from the University of Southern California, School of Cinema Television and is a licensed sales agent with the California Department of Real Estate.

**Michelle Alberda** founded a solo financial advisory practice in 2007 after earning her CFP® certificant status in 2004. Prior to this, she worked in South East Asia where she co-founded a consulting firm specializing in government infrastructure projects. Alberda is also the immediate Past President of the Financial Women's Association of San Francisco. She has a degree in Marketing and Asian Studies from Western Michigan University and is a Chartered Life Underwriter.

For more information, or to purchase a copy of SKIRTWorking™, please visit [www.skirtworking.com](http://www.skirtworking.com).

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