



BIOGRAPHY: STEVE SAVAGE

When Steve Savage gave the keynote speech at the annual fair for the Ecuadorian-American Chamber of Commerce of Georgia, the chamber president, Julio Moreno, introduced him by saying “Steve es gringo con corazón Ecuatoriano” – “Steve is a gringo with an Ecuadorian heart.” It was a compliment – that since has been expanded from “Ecuatoriano” to “Latino” -- that Steve, who is a recognized authority on advising U.S. companies about how to expand their markets in Latin America, has never forgotten on either a personal or business level. One of the reasons Steve is so effective in doing business in Latin America is because he grew up there. The son of missionary parents, he learned to speak and write perfect Spanish in Ecuador. He later lived in Brazil where he learned Portuguese, in which he is 85 percent fluent.

By the time Steve entered the corporate world, he was as a natural salesman. He didn’t find anything natural, however, about life in an ivory tower. He is far more comfortable on the front lines working in the trenches with a sales team and meeting clients. So, after five years of working for someone else, he responded to his entrepreneurial instincts. He left his comfortable surroundings and with two others began their own company. Their first company was a dismal failure. The tough experience led them to spectacular success. This time they made smart decisions with a new company they took from zero to \$60 million in six years. Then they sold the company to Colgate Palmolive.

Steve could have retired, but retirement wasn’t part of his business plan. By this time he had met Jay Conrad Levinson, author of **Guerrilla Marketing** and 29 other business books that have sold more than 20 million copies worldwide. For the first time, Steve realized he was not just an entrepreneur, but a *guerrilla* entrepreneur. He is in fact, the gutsiest guerrilla Levinson says he has ever known. Rolling up his sleeves and employing down-to-earth tactics, Steve developed 18 businesses in eight countries. Now he works with companies throughout the Western Hemisphere to design sales strategies and conduct seminars that will transform their businesses.

He is perhaps best well known in Latin America where, walking the streets, speaking the language and understanding the culture, he feels totally at home. He knows how to do business in each country in the region and has set up subsidiaries for multi-national companies seeking to expand sales and operations. He has created companies in Mexico, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Colombia, Argentina and Brazil. He has helped companies dramatically increase their sales in Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Panama. He has been doing business in Mexico since the early ’90s and is a partner in a Mexican company. He has traveled extensively throughout all 31 Mexican states, both before and after NAFTA. In these travels he has observed first-hand how the relaxing of trade barriers between Mexico, the United States and Canada has tripled trade among them -- from \$297 billion in 1993 to \$903 billion in 2007 – and benefitted all three countries. His travels have also given him a unique perspective on the immigration challenges facing Mexico and the United States. He believes the reason immigrants are in

the United States is a "supply and demand" issue -- they will take jobs Americans reject -- and the reason they are "illegal" is because it is so hard to get a U.S. work visa.

Steve's multi-national experience also extends beyond the Western hemisphere. He recently travelled to the Mideast where he and Levinson presented a two-day seminar. Steve did one day on guerrilla selling, and Levinson did a day on guerilla marketing. He also participated in a marketing conference in Angola where his theme was "How to prosper in tough times."

Steve was recently appointed to the Board of Directors of the Ecuadorian-American Chamber of Commerce of Georgia, where he serves as the Director for International Development. When he is not working for that chamber, travelling to consulting assignments or presenting seminars to multi-national corporations, he likes to relax by spending time with his grandchildren, swimming and hiking, especially in the Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield, visiting museums and reading. He especially likes history and recently has focused on the American South and the Civil War. Recent books he's read include **Sherman's March** by Burke Davis and **The March** by E. L. Doctorow. In Spanish, Gabriel García Márquez is a favorite, especially **One Hundred Years of Solitude (Cien Años de Soledad)**, and he believes there is nothing like the original **Don Quijote de la Mancha** by Miguel de Cervantes.