Business view magazine

JULY/AUGUST 2017

THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

THE SHOWS MUST GO ON!

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From the Editor

Here come the Millennials. Or maybe not.

An old article in the Atlantic Monthly magazine has resurfaced recently and has been causing a bit of a kerfuffle. It's titled "The Cheapest Generation – Why Millennials aren't buying cars or houses, and what that means for the economy." Naturally, other old articles and blogs have likewise been resurrected in a lively, digital rebuttal – not of the basic facts that the Atlantic's authors laid out, but rather of the use of the term "cheapest," suggesting that the epithet applied to an entire generation was a "cheap shot," at best.

The premise of the Atlantic piece is that the Millennials are fomenting a profound shift in the American economy because they are not buying new cars and suburban houses at a pace that every generation before them has done since the end of World War II. In fact, the authors suggest that for the last 70 years, car and home sales have powered the U.S. economy and propelled its recoveries after a recession. But no more.

But, say the critics of the article, it's not because they're cheap – it's because they're broke. "Cheap is when you have money and refuse to spend it; frugal is when you don't spend money you don't have. We are frugal because we're broke," opined one author. "We have nothing, other than a mountain of debt and maybe a smart phone."

Another writer repudiated, "It's awfully hard to buy a house or a car when any of the following apply: You are in student debt up to your eyeballs; you can't find a job; when you do find a job, that job is insecure, low-wage, with few to no benefits." Then some statistics: "Millennials have the highest unemployment rate of any generation. They have more student loan debt than Gen Xers and Boomers did at their age. More Millennials live in poverty than previous generations did at the same stage of life. They make up 61 percent of Americans making minimum wage."

It's been seven years since the Atlantic article first appeared, and the economy has clearly improved – even for the Millennials. But it's unlikely that their aversion to car and home buying will fade any time soon, as it is due to other factors besides a lack of money – many simply have a lack of interest.

Having a car is neither every Millennial's need nor their desire. That's what Zip Car and Uber are for. You don't have to have your own car when you can share both car riding as well as the cars, themselves.

And buying a home in the suburbs, where many of them lived with their parents when they were younger, is not held in the same high regard by the daughters and sons. They've witnessed how the "American Dream" went sour during the Great Recession, and they are tilting the balance in favor of renting – again, sometimes by necessity, but just as often, by design.

The fact is that Millennials tend to prefer a lifestyle that is more urban - and more urbane - than their parents', and want to live in walkable, bikeable neighborhoods with a lot of amenities in close proximity. They don't believe that they need the expense of a car if they can get where they need to be by other modes of transport, and even those who do have the means to afford a down payment on a home, have seen how quickly it can all go underwater when the economy turns particularly soggy.

So, there's no going back to the days when cars and houses would underwrite the American economy. We're in a brave new world, and there has definitely been a shift – both by necessity and by choice. But all is not lost. Notwithstanding their unfortunate use of the word "cheapest," the Atlantic authors actually ended their piece on an optimistic note, championing the notion that the shift away from traditional suburbs toward denser, "urban-light" living could have major economic-growth implications on its own.

"Research shows that doubling a community's population density tends to increase productivity by anywhere between 6 percent and 28 percent," they wrote. "Economists have found that more than half of the variation in output per worker across U.S. states can be explained by density. Our wealth, after all, is determined not only by our own skills and talents, but by our ability to access the ideas of those around us; there's a lot to be gained by increasing the odds that smart people might bump against each other. Ultimately, if the Millennial generation pushes our society toward more sharing and closer living, it may do more than simply change America's consumption culture; it may put America on firmer economic footing for decades to come."

So, the Millennials are coming – ready or not.

Al Krulick *Editor-in-Chief*

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Opening Lines

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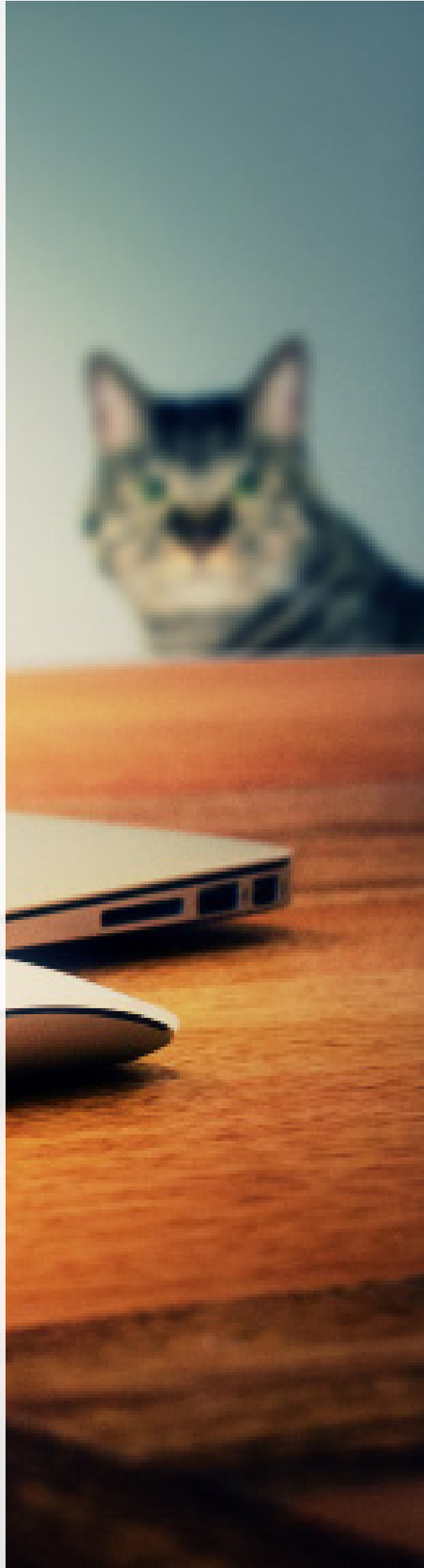
COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE DEMONSTRATES HOW 'PETS WORK AT WORK'

June 23rd is a day known for bringing furry friends to work, and pets all over the country will be roaming the halls of many businesses. And for good reason too – according to the BANFIELD™ Pet Hospital's 2017 Pet-Friendly Workplace PAWrometer™ survey, nearly 90 percent of employees at pet-friendly workplaces said having pets at work improves sense of well-being. In a day where recruiting and retaining talent is highly competitive, the survey also adds that this unique perk increases company morale, loyalty, and productivity.

To help companies across the country who may not know where to start when allowing pets in the workplace, Mars Petcare is launching a new online resource, "Pets Work at Work," to help companies create a pet-friendly workplace. This is part of the company's recently-launched initiative, BETTER CITIES FOR PETS™, which advocates for fewer pets in shelters, more pet-friendly places, and happier, healthier lives for both people and pets.

The comprehensive suite of tools includes tips and tricks for how to successfully welcome pets at work. Some of the materials include a sample pet policy to help businesses and offices define what works for them; leadership and legal considerations to welcoming pets into businesses; how to communicate a pet policy; and engaging signage to post within offices, including welcome posters and a pet-friendly space sign for businesses and offices to use.

"We see firsthand the benefits of having pets at work with our pet-friendly office year-round," said Casey Coke Murphy, Pet Behaviorist at Mars Petcare. "Pets lower our blood pressure, reduce social isolation, can contribute to lower stress levels, and increase communication in the workplace which can ultimately make a job more satisfying for employees."



ALLIANZ TRAVEL INSURANCE VACATION CONFIDENCE INDEX REVEALS MANY AMERICANS WARY OF SELF-DRIVING CARS

If the future were now, travelers would feel safer on a rocket to space than being a passenger in a self-driving or autonomous vehicle, according to the annual Allianz Travel Insurance Vacation Confidence Index released recently.

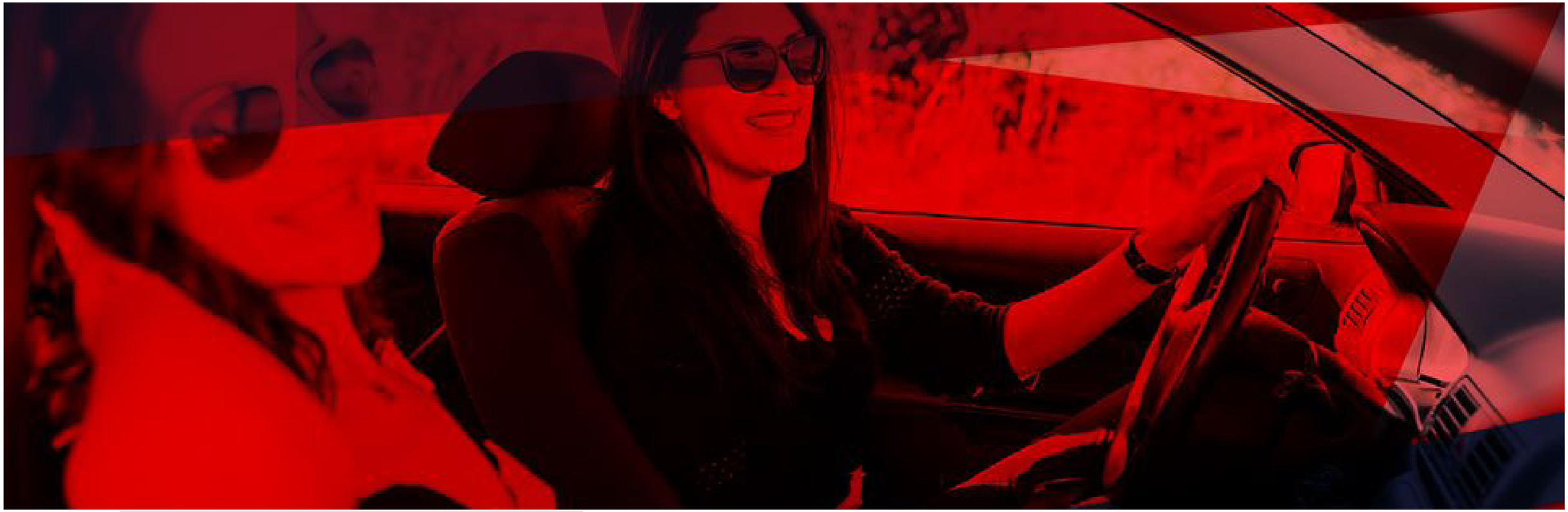
As the Future of Travel quickly approaches with experimental transport technology accelerating at a rapid pace, the vacation vehicle of tomorrow that is closest to reality today – the self-driving car – is among the most concerning for potential travelers worried about their safety.

If given the opportunity to use any of the current, experimental, or near-future methods of travel today, most Americans are at least somewhat interested in experiencing nearly all the new ways to explore the world, or even beyond it. But only 22 percent of travelers are very interested (and 32 percent "somewhat" interested) in self-driving vehicles being developed by all the major auto manufacturers and Silicon Valley companies like Google, Uber, and Tesla, with 65 percent of those not interested citing worries over "safety concerns."

Self-driving/autonomous vehicles rate lowest for travelers "very interested" and highest for "safety concerns" among those not interested when compared to all other future travel methods surveyed, including space travel, supersonic travel, Hyperloop high-speed rail, and even so-called flying cars.

"While transportation technology is poised to change the way Americans travel, safety has emerged as a top concern," said Daniel Durazo, Director of Communications at Allianz Global Assistance USA. "We expect consumers to be more hesitant in adopting new technologies like the artificial intelligence steering self-driving vehicles, than they might be with existing technologies such as space and supersonic travel that have been developed but are not yet available to the masses."

While the current outlook for traveler uptake of self-driving vehicles is uncertain, the future is brighter with 64 percent of travelers confident that this travel method will develop safely enough for them to consider using, which, along with Hyperloop high-speed rail (64 percent), is well above the confidence for the safety of supersonic travel (56 percent), space travel (51 percent) or flying cars (49 percent). In total, however, only a minority are "very confident" about the safety of any of these travel methods being safe enough for mainstream consumer use.



NEWEST RIDE SHARING SERVICE CHALLENGES UBER AND LYFT WITH ITS NEW FLAT FEE PRICING FOR DRIVERS

Pull Up n' Go, the new Nevada based ride-sharing service, sets new standards in the industry by offering a weekly flat fee of $14.99 for their drivers. By directly attacking the Uber and Lyft model that charges drivers a huge percentage of every ride, Pull Up n' Go is poised for explosive growth as it presents a huge benefit to the average rideshare driver.

With Pull Up n' Go, drivers pay a small flat fee each week and keep 100 percent of their earnings from every single ride. Under this flat fee model, drivers are able to accomplish their financial goals without paying a huge share of their income to huge corporations.

In a recent interview, CEO Billy Kirby spoke about the motivation behind his new startup. "One of the number one complaints that drivers have is that they have to pay percentages from each ride they give, sometimes up to 25%. This hurts drivers financially who are driving to pay for the basic necessities of life. Ultimately, we wanted to create a formula that would benefit the drivers and add less stress for them financially. By taking advantage of our low weekly fee, drivers now receive one hundred percent of the fare from every single ride. That extra income will do wonders for drivers and their families, and that's a game changer!"

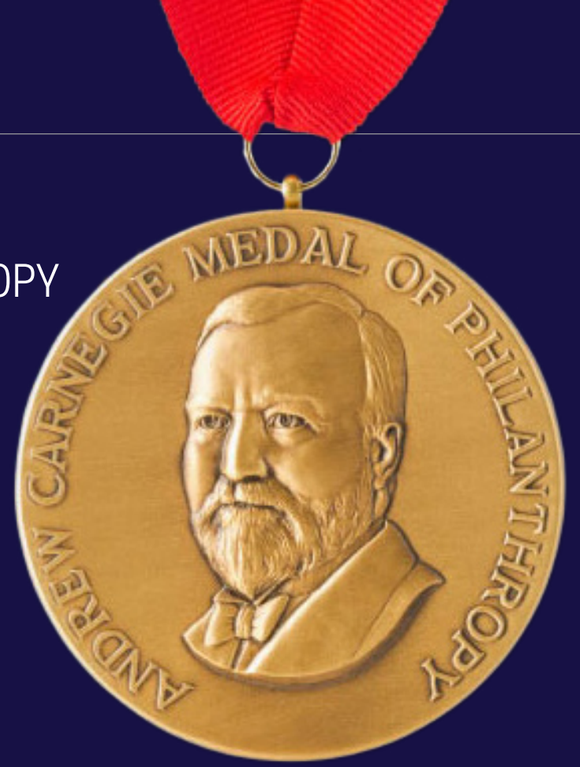
The Pull Up n' Go app is easy to use and allows payments to be made through credit or with cash. If riders want to hire Pull Up n' Go drivers, they create a request by downloading the app and selecting one of the current ride options - Economy, SUV, or Luxury. Once they provide their location and send a request through the app, a driver will Pull Up n' Go to their location in just a matter of minutes.

"As an entrepreneur, I understand the needs of other entrepreneurs," said Kirby. "We work hard for our money so that we can enjoy the things that really matter to us in life, and that means something different for each individual, but always requires money."

The company, which is still in beta test mode, is picking up momentum fast and anticipates a launch date in the very near future.

When asked if Pull Up n' Go could compete with rideshare giants Uber and Lyft, Kirby responded, "When you're people-driven and motivated by helping others, things tend to shift on their own because people will fight for what they believe in. Once rideshare drivers realize they can make more money, work less, and still offer low cost rides with Pull Up n' Go, we will quickly become their go-to favorite rideshare service."

NINE PHILANTHROPISTS NAMED RECIPIENTS OF THE 2017 CARNEGIE MEDAL OF PHILANTHROPY



The international family of Carnegie institutions named nine exceptional philanthropists as recipients of the Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy, recently, in recognition of their outstanding and innovative leadership in philanthropy, celebrating Andrew Carnegie's philanthropic ideals.

The 2017 honorees are:

- Mei Hing Chak China; HeungKong Charitable Foundation
- H. F. (Gerry) and Marguerite Lenfest U.S.A.; Lenfest Foundation
- Azim Premji India; Azim Premji Foundation
- Julian Robertson U.S.A.; Robertson Foundation
- Jeff Skoll U.S.A.; Skoll Foundation
- Kristine McDivitt Tompkins U.S.A.; Tompkins Conservation
- Shelby White U.S.A.; Leon Levy Foundation
- Sir James D. Wolfensohn U.S.A. and Australia; Wolfensohn Center for Development

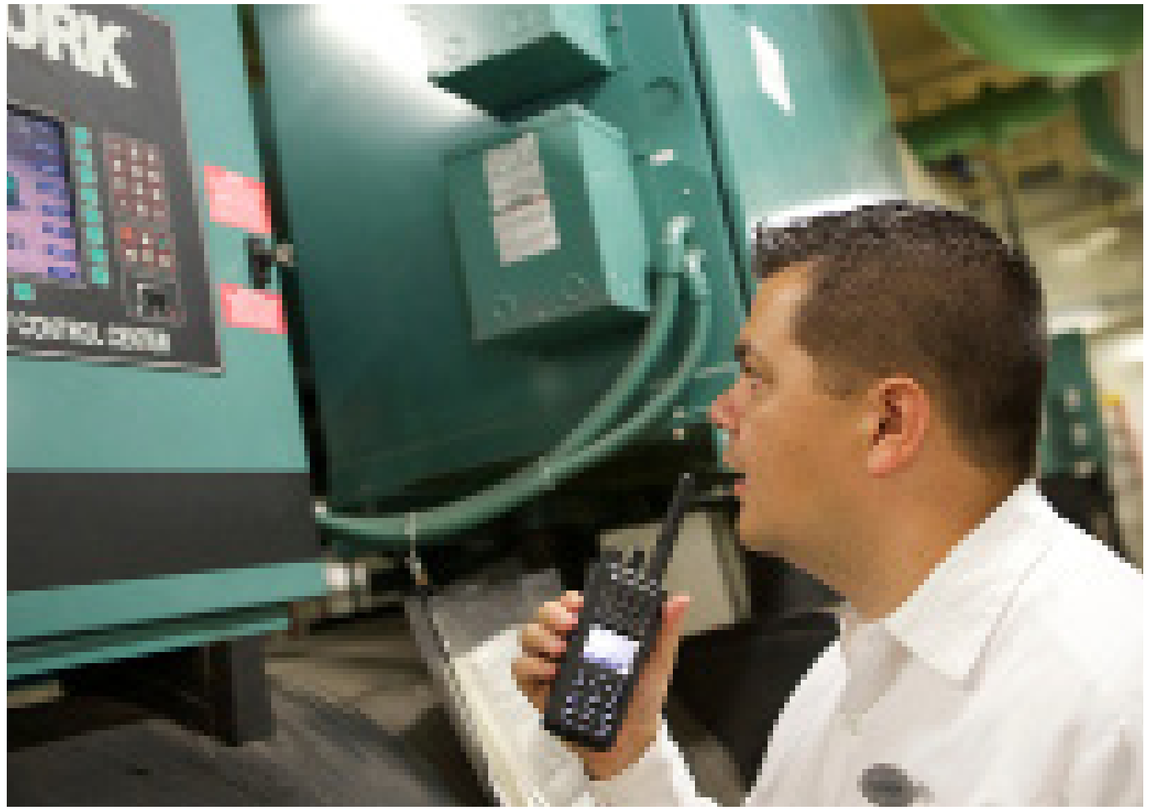
"The recipients of the 2017 Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy were selected for their distinguished and longstanding contributions to the public good," said Vartan Gregorian, President of Carnegie Corporation of New York. "The medal reflects Andrew Carnegie's enduring legacy of philanthropy and is rooted in two core principles. First: with wealth comes responsibility. Second: individuals, whether guided by religious, civic, humanistic, or democratic aspirations, have the transformative power to use wealth for the betterment of humankind."

"Just as our founder demonstrated," Gregorian continued, "the recipients inspire a culture of giving through their leadership, providing a model for the next generation of philanthropists."

The Carnegie Medal of Philanthropy was established in 2001 and is awarded every two years to individuals whose philanthropic work embodies the ideals of Andrew Carnegie's vision, serving as a continuous inspiration to others. Having amassed what was then the greatest fortune on earth, the legendary American industrialist decided to give it all away with the stated goal of doing "real and permanent good in this world."

The 22 Carnegie institutions in the United States and Europe nominate the medalists, and a selection committee representing seven of those institutions makes the final selection. The honorees are recognized as catalysts for good whose philanthropy has had a significant and lasting impact on a particular field, nation, or community of people.

The Carnegie institutions will award the medals during a formal ceremony at The New York Public Library's Stephen A. Schwarzman Building on October 3, 2017. Carnegie Corporation of New York will host the private event. Katty Kay, anchor of BBC World News America, will serve as master of ceremonies.



ARE YOU OVERLOOKING A PROVEN TOOL TO PROTECT PEOPLE AND BOOST PRODUCTIVITY?

Nearly every business is motivated to improve safety, drive growth, increase efficiency, enhance service, and reduce costs. To address these fundamental goals, there is a tried-and-true solution you may not be using.

Two-way radios (walkie-talkies) provide enormous value by coordinating mobile work teams to add efficiency throughout business operations. Improving team connectivity enhances overall performance while increasing safety and security.

A few safety benefits radios can provide:

■ An isolated worker suffers a health emergency triggering an automated alert on his or her two-way radio.

■ A security guard sees a forced entry and uses the Emergency Alert channel to call for backup.

■ The first worker on the scene of a spill uses push-to-talk communications to summon a clean-up crew while staying in-place to protect others from slip-and-fall injuries.

Some examples how radios increase efficiency:

■ Team members can collaborate more easily and get decisions faster.

■ In production environments, the radio network can interface with site alarms to alert work teams immediately if there is a failure.

■ Line workers can request service or supplies without leaving their work station.

■ Staff can get answers for customers more efficiently to increase revenue and improve satisfaction.

■ Mobile radios can connect field teams with the home base to increase productivity.

OTHER ADVANTAGES OF TWO-WAY RADIOS

In many operations, two-way radios more than pay for themselves in cost-savings, efficiency, and safety. With one-to-many communications, your mobile work teams spend less time running back-and-forth, assistance can be summoned immediately – and if one worker is busy, another can be assigned the task. Plus, you aren't relying on one-way overhead paging that can be intrusive, difficult to hear, and confusing regarding who needs to respond.

ALL THE OPTIONS YOU NEED TO BE SUCCESSFUL

Using the shared experiences of millions of

workplace users, the expert solution architects and product designers at wireless industry leaders such as Motorola Solutions and Vertex Standard have been improving and perfecting two-radios for decades. A multitude of functionality is now available to add flexibility, productivity, and safety. Depending on your work environmental, many of the following wireless features could improve your operations:

MAN DOWN, LONE WORKER, AND EMERGENCY ALERTS

An alarm sounds if a user does not check in within a certain timeframe or if the radio tilts for too long.

Transmit Interrupt. Supervisors can override other conversations to ensure everybody gets an important warning.

Group Calling. Instantly reaches teams (such as security, maintenance, or medical). Private one-to-one calling is also available.

Customizable and Flexible. You can program channels, groups, feature buttons, and more however you need them.

Extra-Tight Seals. Radios are designed to Military Specifications and IP ratings to keep out dust and moisture; optional intrinsically safe models don't emit sparks that might ignite an explosion. Hearing Protection. Noise-cancelling features along with ear muff headsets, surveillance kits, and other accessories mitigate background noise.

Digital Technologies. Integrate voice and data with internet capabilities and applications that enable text messaging, GPS tracking, work order management, and more.

INTEGRATION AND CONVERGENCE

Two-way radio networks offer a proven strategy to improve communication programs. Applications such as Motorola Solutions WAVETM OnCloud and other software options are designed to integrate voice and data across smart phones, two-way radios, laptops, and tablets.

An experienced communications integrator can provide valuable assistance to help you choose the right solutions. As the largest provider in the world of two-way radios for purchase or rent, BearCom serves more than 20,000 customers in nearly every industrial, commercial, and public sector. **BearCom stands ready to provide FREE consultation to help optimize your operations. Call: 800.527.1670, or visit BearCom.com.**

COMPARING TWO-WAY RADIOS & CELL PHONES

Cell Phones deliver efficient one-to-one calling, are simple to use, provide national coverage, and are relatively inexpensive to buy. However, total cost-of-ownership can be high due to monthly usage fees. In addition, phones are designed primarily for consumer use, not the rigors of the work place.

Two-Way Radios also provide one-to-one calling with the added capability of group calling to multiple users. Radios may require a higher up-front investment, however there are no usage fees, which reduces TCO. Plus, radios are designed for durability and extended service life.

Even with the difference in capabilities, many work places still rely solely on cell phones in emergencies – even though:

- Cellular signals can be spotty or nonexistent – especially in concrete/steel/glass structures and in isolated areas.
- Cell networks quickly become overloaded in a crisis as everyone calls everyone else.
- Phones cannot facilitate team communication or broadcast messages to all users.

First responders – and prepared business managers – generally depend on two-way radios as the first line of defense in emergency situations. Why? Because reliability, signal strength, and push-to-talk simplicity add communication features that speed collaboration.

International Association of EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS

BECAUSE THE SHOWS MUST GO ON

The International Association of Exhibitions and Events had its beginnings in 1928, when a group of businessmen formed the National Association of Exposition Managers. "The reason they got together was to talk about how they can have better negotiating powers with the exhibition centers that they were doing business with," says current IAEE President and CEO, David DuBois. "They also wanted to better understand best practices: 'Hey, I've got this scenario; and how do you do this; and what about this?' Today, it's much more complex and more sophisticated," he adds. "But the basic reason to exist continues to be sharing of knowledge, best practices, and success stories of each of these show organizers and suppliers who support the $70 billion industry in the United States."

"We've gone through several name changes to be where we are today," DuBois reports. Indeed, about 40 years ago, the original organization, the National Association of Exposition Managers – NAEM – became the International Association of Exposition Managers

AT A GLANCE
THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

WHAT: A worldwide trade association with 1,300 members

WHERE: Headquarters in Dallas, Texas

WEBSITE: www.iaee.com

– IAEM, in order to expand beyond U.S. shores. It added the word "Events" to its name several years ago in order to represent the sector of the industry that produces non-traditional events done either at company offices or hotel ballrooms, but that are still considered trade shows.

Today, the renamed IAEE is the leading trade association for the global exhibition and event industry. "We're in 51 countries, now," DuBois says. "We have members in Japan, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore, China; we just launched an India chapter a few weeks ago. We have over 1,300 organizations, non-profit associations, and for-profit companies as members; and about 9,500 individuals make up the roster of those 1,300 entities."

Over 50 percent of the IAEE's members are directly involved in the planning, management, and production of exhibitions and buyer-seller

events. The remaining members consist of those who provide products and services to the industry. About 80 percent of its membership is based in the U.S., which, according to DuBois, has the largest exhibition industry in the world, producing approximately 12,000 shows of 10,000 square feet and over, per year. China is in second place with 6,000 shows in 107 Chinese venues and Germany is in third place with an annual total of about 3,500 shows.

The IAEE, with a full-time, professional staff of 22, has been based in Dallas, Texas for the last 25 years, after the organization moved from its home in Ohio. The organization's Strategic Plan has two Pillars: Advocacy and Education. Regarding Pillar One, DuBois says that advocacy is "promoting the value of face-to-face exhibitions and events as the primary marketing medium for business development and growth." Regarding Pillar Two, he says it's about "providing timely and relevant education to our members to help them be more successful. We do it through webinars; we do it through 65 to 80 workshops at our annual Expo! Expo! meeting every December; we do it through all of our content, and through our great website. We have our CEM (Certified in Exhibition Management) program in 28 countries. It is the highest designation one can achieve in our industry."

Nicole Bowman is the IAEE's Vice President of Marketing and Communications, responsible for keeping its far-flung membership informed. "A lot of the communication that we do is on the chapter level," she explains. "We have 12 chapters around the world. It's a multi-channel mix: emails, newsletters, social media. We rely on our chapters to communicate our values and initiatives and

> When they come to our events, they know that they are going to get education and experiences that they can immediately take back and apply in their workplace. They don't just show up. We have high-level, quality education and case studies. We really immerse the attendee in the experience. And that's what really sets us apart. People want to pay to hear what we have to say.
>
> **DAVID DUBOIS**
> PRESIDENT AND CEO

things we have going on at a local level." In China, she reports that they even have WeChat and Weibo accounts – two Chinese platforms – so that they can better reach out to 800 individuals there who are IAEE-certified in exhibition management, but are not yet IAEE members.

DuBois adds that while most of the IAEE's literature is in English, the Association just began a monthly newsletter in Mandarin. "We do have communications in Portuguese because of our Brazil and Portugal members," he notes. "We do have communications in Spanish. And we're looking at getting a grant from the Japanese government to do our certification program in Japanese."

And, of course, in an industry that is actually defined by face-to-face exhibitions and events, what could be more natural than the IAEE hosting its own annual event in order to fulfill its mission of educating its own members? "We have Expo! Expo! – which is our brand for our annual meeting," says DuBois. "We draw, on average, about 2,500 members and non-members from 20 countries. It's always been in the U.S., but we're exploring, in future years, the possibility of Expo! Expos! outside the U.S. – maybe a Middle Eastern Expo! Expo! Or an Asian Expo! Expo!"

In addition, each spring the IAEE sponsors a women's leadership forum – almost 60 percent of its members are women; and every August there's another leadership conference for members looking for leadership training. "Our members want to see each other succeed," says Bowman. "When they come to our events, they know that they are going to get education and experiences that they can immediately take back and apply in their workplace. They don't just show up. We have high-level quality education and case studies. We really immerse the attendee in the experience. And that's what really sets us apart. People want to pay to hear what we have to say. Our committees, our councils, our task forces are all made up of members who take the time to further the IAEE mission."

DuBois says that the IAEE even has its own show at the Show of Shows, the giant exposition of historic arms and military collectibles sponsored by the Oho Valley Military Society. "We have about 280 companies each year – exhibition/convention center executives, technology companies, and official service contractors who stage these big, beautiful, wonderful,

fantastic exhibitions that we all know and love."

When DuBois says "all," he isn't exaggerating much, considering that 32.5 million Americans attend some kind of trade show or event, every year, pumping over $70 billion of direct and indirect funds into the nation's economy. "Those are numbers that raise eyebrows," says Bowman. And it's those types of numbers that the IAEE likes to impart to members of the U.S. Congress, when it exercises its advocacy function as mandated by Pillar One.

"Three years ago, we started Exhibitions Day on Capitol Hill," DuBois says. "This will be our third year, where we bring over a hundred of our members up to the Hill. We brief them for a couple of hours and then we make legislative calls all day long, getting to over a hundred Representatives, Senators, and/or their staffs, and we focus on issues that are important to us." "It's a great way to raise awareness of the industry," Bowman adds. "When they're out there voting on things or proposing legislation, they think back to the meeting that they had with our industry professionals, because we really are a huge economic force in local communities."

DuBois elaborates upon the industry's strong economic influence, noting that, historically, the exhibition and events industry trails just behind a country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). "If the economy is soft, attendance is soft, because people may not want to spend $50 for a ticket to a boat show or a garden show; they might need that extra hundred dollars for food that month, because the economy's tough. So, we're always trailing just behind GDP."

That being said, DuBois goes on to state that, right now, both the industry and the GDP are in good shape. "We're at 2 ½ to 3 percent growth," he says. "By 2018, we will be at the highest level of volume of exhibition revenues and attendance in the history of our industry. So, we're very healthy – predominantly in the United States; Europe's a little softer, although Germany continues to be strong; Spain is coming back a little bit; Latin America is struggling because of Brazil; Mexico's okay; Canada's always steady; China's doing well at 7 percent growth; India's at 3 or 4 percent growth. So, overall, our industry's very healthy and it's all tied to GDP in countries around the world."

Both DuBois and Bowman believe that the economic impact of the exhibitions and events industry cannot be over-emphasized. "Everybody goes to meetings," says DuBois. "Everybody is involved, as an adult, in going to and attending, or walking through a trade show at some point in time, whether it's a car show, a garden show, a jewelry show, a consumer electronics show – CES, every January in Vegas, has 150,000 people."

And as long as these shows continue to draw such large and sustained crowds, worldwide, the International Association of Exhibitions and Events will persevere in its mission of providing its stakeholders in the global exhibitions and events industry with the information and resources that will help advance and promote their success, both here and abroad.

LOS ANGELES MEMORIAL COLISEUM

THE GREATEST STADIUM IN THE WORLD

The Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum was originally commissioned in 1921 as a memorial to L.A. veterans of World War I and, in 1968, was rededicated to all U.S. veterans of the "Great War." When it opened in June 1923 at a cost of $954,873, it was the largest venue in the city with a capacity of 75,144. On October 6th of that year, the first football game was played in the stadium - the University of Southern California defeated Pomona College 23-7 before a crowd of 12,836. In 1930, with the Olympics due in two years, the stadium was extended upward to seventy-nine rows with two tiers of tunnels, expanding the seating to 101,574. The stadium's signature Olympic torch was also added above the peristyle at the east end of the stadium, and for a time, the facility was known as

Olympic Stadium.

In addition to serving as the home field for the USC Trojans since 1923, countless historic events have taken place inside the Coliseum, which was declared a State and Federal Historical Landmark in 1984. They include two Olympiads (X and XXIII), two Super Bowls (I and VII), one World Series (Dodgers vs. White Sox in 1959), a Papal Mass (Pope John Paul II in 1987), and visits by three U.S. Presidents: John F. Kennedy, Richard M. Nixon, and Ronald Reagan. On March 29, 2008, the Los Angeles Dodgers and the Boston Red Sox set a Guinness World Record for the largest attendance ever at a baseball game with a crowd of 115,300. Other historic events include Billy Graham's appearance in 1963 in front of 134,254 (still an all-time Coliseum record), and Nelson Mandela's

1990 triumphant return to the United States.

Last year, the venue became the temporary home of the Los Angeles Rams of the National Football League. "So we've got one full NFL season with the Rams under our belt and we expect them here for at least another two years," says Brian Grant, the Coliseum's Senior Facility Manager and Director of Operations. "In addition, we're a very popular site for the film and television industry in Los Angeles; they shoot commercials, TV shows, and full-length feature films in our venue. And we do pride ourselves in engaging the community in other private events – anything from a 150-person dinner to a 75,000-person soccer match. We're here for everything. Those of us working here think this is the greatest stadium in the world."

Grant adds that the venue has a booking and marketing staff that actively advertises the stadium. "They're involved in making cold calls out to clients and networking and building custom events," he states. "So, not only are we putting on events, we're actively trying to self-promote to create unique and valuable event content. We also field calls for other events that come in, and keep an active list of the repeat busi-

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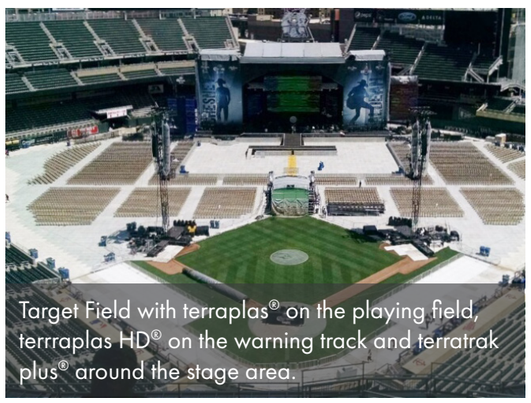
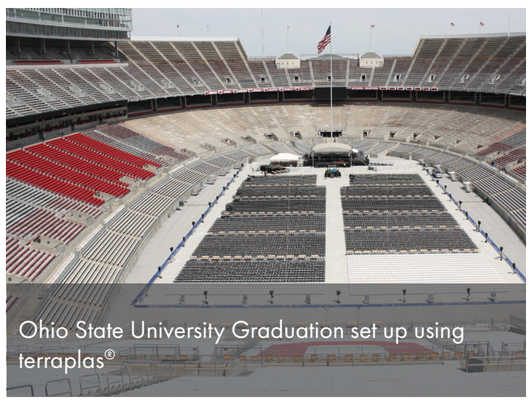
"The Call", a concert at the LA Coliseum with terratrak plus® driveable access being installed.


Target Field with terraplas® on the playing field, terrraplas HD® on the warning track and terratrak plus® around the stage area.


Ohio State University Graduation set up using terraplas®

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TERRAPLAS USA
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ness we do; it's always good to have returning clients that understand the way the building functions and desire to do their events here, year over year."

In 2013, the management of the Coliseum was transferred to the University of Southern California, whose staff of 40 full-time employees manages the facility. "We lease the land and the building from the state, and then we manage it on their behalf," says Grant. "As part of that deal, we are contractually obligated to at least $70 million in improvements to the facility over the next ten years. It's a jewel in the university's crown that they take very good care of and have a very strong reverence for."

That $70 million is only a small part of a major renovation project that Grant says will take place over the next 24 to 36 months. "Between now and July of 2019, we're scheduled for a $270 million renovation that will basically redefine the south half of the building and create a separate building within a building concept for a private, luxury box tower and press box," Grant reports. "There will be 20 founder suites,

AT A GLANCE | LOS ANGELES MEMORIAL COLISEUM

WHAT: Iconic American stadium and sports arena since 1923

WHERE: Exposition Park, Los Angeles, CA

WEBSITE: www.lacoliseum.com

After 20 years of renting turf protection from Terraplas USA, May 2017 saw the LA Coliseum start purchasing their own cover system. They have chosen **terratrak plus**®, the fully drivable, high quality, turf protection system from the Terraplas portfolio, with the first delivery in early July.

The LA Coliseum hosts a concert July 29, preceded by a Manchester United vs- Real Madrid soccer match and followed by the Rams first preseason game vs the Dallas Cowboys. The same weekend as the LA Coliseum concert, Terraplas USA is renting products to Dodger Stadium (MLB) and Anaheim Stadium (MLB) plus the 49'ers home, Levi®'s Stadium, with its own Terraplas system, has a concert too.

With no Terraplas rental products available on the west coast, Terraplas USA's solution includes moving 70,000 sq ft of **terraflor**® **(**for the patron access areas) from their Cleveland, Ohio warehouse to the Coliseum.

The University of Southern California has taken over management of the city owned LA Coliseum and have approached the operation of events in the stadium with a fresh decision making process.

Terraplas USA is proud to be the LA Coliseum's preferred vendor for turf protection products and is delighted to be building this valued partnership.

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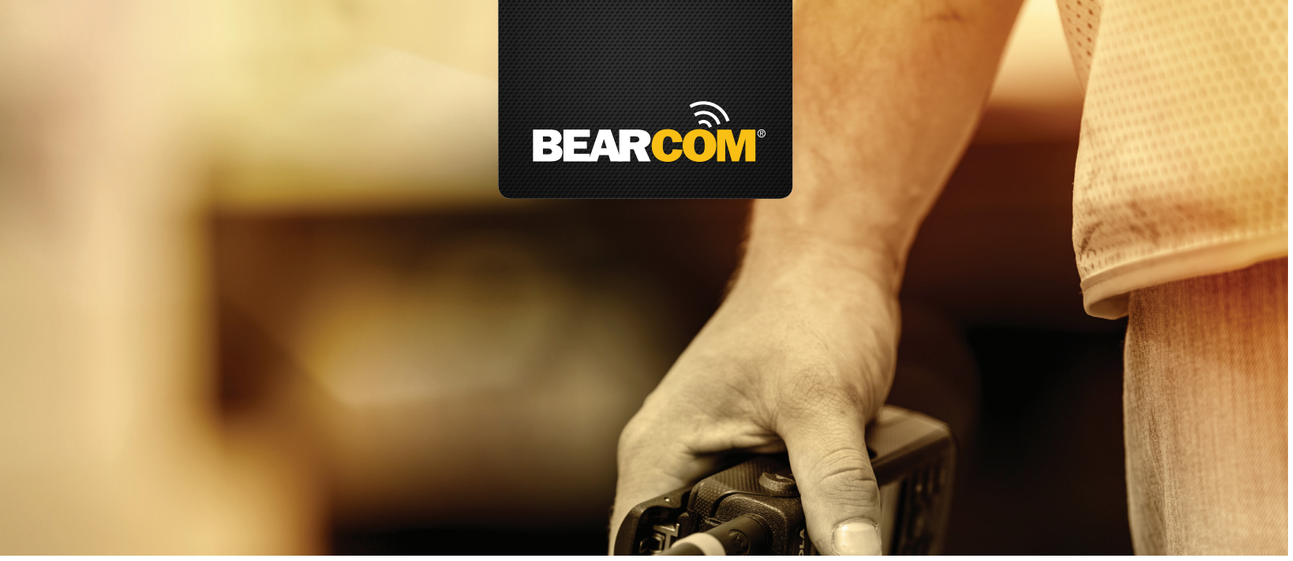

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roughly 50 individual suites, and then a collection of loge boxes and club seats, as well, leading into a brand new, modern press box and roof deck." In addition, the stadium will have a new sound system, new and upgraded concession stands, upgraded entry concourses, new lighting, and a modernization of the plumbing and electrical systems.

Last, but certainly not least, the renovation will also add eight new scoreboards – four on field level, one above the tunnel, one on the historic peristyle, and two in the northeast and southeast corners of the facility. "We have a very large screen on the west side of our building that was added in 2009, but in the 94 years of the Coliseum, there were no modern scoreboards included in the design. So they will allow us to bring in a multitude of visual tech-

BEARCOM | LOS ANGELES MEMORIAL COLISEUM

INNOVATIVE COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM IMPROVES STAFF COLLABORATION TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY AND SECURITY

> "When I have a question that I didn't even think to ask three years ago, I can pose it to BearCom today and have a solution from them tomorrow."
>
> **BRIAN GRANT,** Sr. Associate Director of Facilities & Project Management, Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum

A RICH & STORIED HISTORY

The Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, built in 1923, is an iconic venue and a National Historical Landmark. The Coliseum confines have welcomed millions of spectators and hosted scores of famous events over the decades, including the inaugural Super Bowl in 1967, and the 1932 and 1984 Summer Olympic Games. It is a timeless structure that is as impressive and imposing today as the day it opened, nearly 100 years ago.

PULLING OUT A TOUGH WIN AT THE COLISEUM

The Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum is an awe-inspiring venue. It also happens to be one of the most challenging environments conceivable for communication systems. Built largely of concrete and steel, the structure tends to block wireless signals, which can create communication dead zones.

In 2014, Brian Grant, Sr. Assoc. Director of Facilities & Project Management for the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum, was handed the daunting task of implementing a modern, fully functioning communications system within the venue. "It was an easy decision to engage BearCom," said Brian, "I knew they understood the unique nature of events operations, as well as the specific challenges an old venue like the Coliseum can present."

That decision three years ago launched a close, ongoing working relationship between the University of Southern California (USC) and BearCom to deploy a comprehensive digital two-way radio system that revolutionized communications throughout the stadium. Using a combination of infrastructure, two-way radios and repeaters from Motorola Solutions, innovative logistic solutions, and scalable rental units, the system meets team communications needs for both daily operations and high-capacity events. The Coliseum is now able to coordinate a staff of 150-200 individuals, plus additional contractors during peak traffic times. Utilizing 12 channels, each operational team (security, food & beverage, custodial, etc.) maintains its own dedicated talk group.

LOOKING AHEAD TO NEXT SEASON

Thanks largely to USC's proactive vision to embrace the new communication techniques and technologies proposed by BearCom, the years of hard work have more than paid off in improved staff productivity and increased visitor safety. The partnership resulted in a system so robust and well-engineered that organizations including the USC Campus Group have inquired about how to replicate it.

USC plans to continue working closely with BearCom both during and after the upcoming Coliseum renovations, because as Brian Grant puts it, "I don't want to work in a venue that doesn't have BearCom as its communication source… They know exactly what I need, and can deliver it for me."

nologies and screens that a building of this age would be hard-pressed to find," says Grant. "By the time we're done installing this, we'll have one of the most visually appealing and impactful board setups in the country. We may not necessarily have the biggest board, but we've got a lot of content throughout the building that can integrate the entirety of the building all at the same time."

"Once we finish that construction, our capacity will go from 94,000, where it is now, to just over 77,000 in its final configuration," Grant adds. "One of the other nice things we're going to be able to do in this renovation is: all of the seats in the seating bowl are going to be changed out. So of the 77,000 that will remain in our capacity, every single one of those will be a brand new seat. So, imagine our seats from the 1960s and '70s finally being replaced with brand new material. It will be a nice, comfortable environment for everybody who comes to the Coliseum, whether they're in the tower or not."

While some may question the elimination of 17,000 seats from one of America's iconic stadiums, Grant maintains that the diminution is in the venue's best long-term interest. "Hundred thousand person events, nowadays, are very, very hard to sell and market," he explains. "Putting us in that 77,000 range still keeps us on the high end of capacity for venues of our

type, but 77,000 becomes more realistic for large scale concerts, sporting events, and things of that nature. And it puts us in a nice realm for the Olympics, as L.A. looks to finish off the proposal for its 2024 Olympics bid. All of those things work better for us with capacity in the 70,000 range than they do in the 90 and 100 thousand range."

Finally, Grant touts the importance of a marriage between an historic building and a contemporary renovation. "We're tying modern elements into a national landmark," he avers. "The ability to do that is fairly unprecedented in our environment. Doing that type of work is once in a lifetime in terms of how something like this happens. So, it's a pretty big deal for everybody out here and it will be a nice moment if L.A. is awarded the 2024 Olympics. We'll have a nice new Coliseum to show off."

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■ BearCom

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Bear Communications began operations in 1981. Today, the company is headquartered in the Dallas, Texas area and has 29 branches across the United States. BearCom provides a broad line of high-performance wireless communications products, services, and complete mobility solutions. Its partners include major manufacturers and industry innovators such as Motorola, Icom, Vertex Standard, Sprint Nextel, Sony, Firetide, BridgeWave, and more. BearCom sells, rents, and services two-way radios, two-way team communication systems, phones and mobile broadband cards, radio interoperability systems, WLAN systems, IP video surveillance cameras, mesh broadband networks, point-to-point bridges, remote call boxes, and mobile command centers.

■ AAA Flag and Banner

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THE ASSOCIATION FOR PACKAGING & PROCESSING TECHNOLOGIES

MOST EVERYTHING COMES IN A PACKAGE

PMMI, The Association for Packaging and Processing Technologies (formerly Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute) is a trade association made up of more than 800 member companies that manufacture packaging, processing and packaging-related converting machinery, commercially available packaging machinery components, containers, and materials in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

PMMI was created in 1933 as a response to the National Industrial Recovery Act, promulgated during the Great Depression, which set strict regulations on American industry. Thirty-five packaging machinery businessmen met in Buffalo, New York to decide whether to form an association that would act as the advocate for the packaging machinery industry to the Department of Labor. In 1935, after the National Recovery Act was declared unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court, PMMI veered from its mission as a defender of packaging practices against the regulations of the NRA, to a role of homogenizing the packaging processes and educating end users about all of the different packaging machine designs that were currently in operation. By 1938, all

AT A GLANCE
THE ASSOCIATION FOR PACKAGING AND PROCESSING TECHNOLOGIES

WHAT: A trade association for the manufacturers of packaging equipment and technologies

WHERE: Reston, Virginia

WEBSITE: www.pmmi.org

PMMI members had catalogs of their equipment on file at the Institute's New York office, which became a clearing house for inquiries.

In 1956, responding to a rising need for packaging machinery by CPG (Consumer Product Goods) companies, the Association began producing the PMMI Packaging Machinery Show. Today, PMMI sponsors a family of trade exhibitions, including: PACK EXPO International, PACK EXPO Las Vegas, PACK EXPO East, PROFOOD TECH, Healthcare Packaging EXPO, EXPO PACK Mexico, and EXPO PACK Guadalajara. PACK EXPO International, held in Chicago, has become one of the largest tradeshows in the country. "Our core value is we connect users and suppliers of packaging and processing technologies via our trade shows, and online and print publications" says Jorge Izquierdo, Vice President for Market Development. This year's PACK EXPO Las Vegas, North America's largest display of packaging technologies in 2017, takes place Sept. 25-27 at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

"All of our members are companies that provide processing or packaging solutions to the world's consumer packaged goods firms - those companies that manufacture equipment to fill, close, label, case-pack, and palletize products," says Tom Egan, Vice President for Industry Service. "The majority of the members are equipment solutions suppliers with some of them being material suppliers, and others being what we call components suppliers that make components that go on to these machines. Most every product in a store in some way, shape, or form has been packaged, and in many cases, if it's other than completely manual, it involves equipment and material solutions from the PMMI members."

Egan adds that more than 40 percent of PMMI's members are relatively small businesses, with annual sales under $20 million. "We have some very big companies – in the $100 million range, and, in a few cases, over a billion dollars in total global sales," he reports.

In 2014, PMMI acquired the Summit Media Group, which is now called the PMMI Media Group. This unit of the Association publishes print and digital publications that function as a knowledge exchange for the entire supply chain from manufacturer to end user. They include: Packaging World, Automation World, Healthcare Packaging, Contract Packaging, Packaging + Processing OEM, and ProFood World.

A third PMMI unit, Egan calls its "Business Drivers." "It comprises the elements that are involved more directly with the business operations of our members, including education, research that we do, industry services, the interface between members and the CPG firms, and our global marketing efforts," he explains. "We offer a range of training programs. The majority of them are for our members, with some of them available to the industry at large. We have specific education initiatives for some technical

PMMI also offers educational opportunities to students in two-year and four-year college programs, by awarding scholarships to attend PACK EXPO and learn about the industry. In addition, PMMI U, the education section of the Association, has partnered with 51 institutions in the United States and Canada that offer packaging and processing curriculum.

items, such as risk assessment. Another is training for individuals who train operators of our equipment."

PMMI also offers educational opportunities to students in two-year and four-year college programs, by awarding scholarships to attend PACK EXPO and learn about the industry. In addition, PMMI U, the education section of the Association, has partnered with 51 institutions in the United States and Canada that offer packaging and processing curriculum. PMMI U has also partnered with the Mid Atlantic Mechatronic Advisory Council and several packaging and technical schools to develop a series of Certificate Programs focused on Mechatronics.

Recently, in a follow-up communication, Business View Magazine asked Izquierdo some specific questions about the actual technologies employed in the packaging industry. Here are those questions and his responses:

BVM: What would you say are some of the most significant changes in technology to have impacted the packaging and processing industry in the past 5 years?

Izquierdo: "The most significant change in the packaging and processing industry from a technology standpoint is the move from an emphasis on machine speed to flexibility and fast changeover. For decades it seemed every evolution in equipment was aimed at more products getting out in a shorter amount of time. Now, as consumer preferences have changed, machines need to be able to quickly change over to accommodate different products on the same production line. In the past, it was necessary to be quick at packaging a lot of one product; now, due to the explosion of SKUs, it needs to be quick at changing over to package a variety of different products in the production line."

BVM: Are there any new ground breaking technologies that have come out that are impacting line expansion or plant automation in the industry?

Izquierdo: "One notable technology that is impacting the industry is the combining of robotics and vision systems. Initially robotics were brought inline to increase speed of production. Now, with vision attached to automated systems, the machines can identify a number of different products on the conveyor belt effectively. For example, initially robotics could rapidly package cookies in a container. Now with vision attached, the robot can be programmed to see and package an assortment of cookies in one container."

BVM: How do you predict technology will continue to impact your industry?

Izquierdo: "Ultimately packaging and processing are now consumer driven industries, whereas they once followed the direction of consumer packaged goods (CPG) companies. Today's consumers are fickle and their buying habits change from month to month, or year to year. Because of this, automation will always be key to ensuring machinery evolves and keeps up with what customers want."

COLD JET, LLC

THE LEADER IN DRY ICE BLASTING

Carbon dioxide (chemical formula CO2), is the gas that we exhale during breathing and the gas that plants use in photosynthesis. It is also the same gas commonly added to water to make soda, thus the term: carbonated beverages. In its solid form, CO2 is called dry ice, often used as refrigerant and, more recently, as an abrasive in what is known as dry ice blasting. According to Tyson Marlowe, Director of Global Training and Development for Cold Jet, LLC, a manufacturer of dry ice blasting equipment, the technology was originally developed by the Lockheed Corporation in the 1970s as a method to remove the paint from the skins of aircraft.

AT A GLANCE | COLD JET, LLC

WHAT: A manufacturer of dry ice blasting equipment

WHERE: Loveland, Ohio

WEBSITE: www.coldjet.com

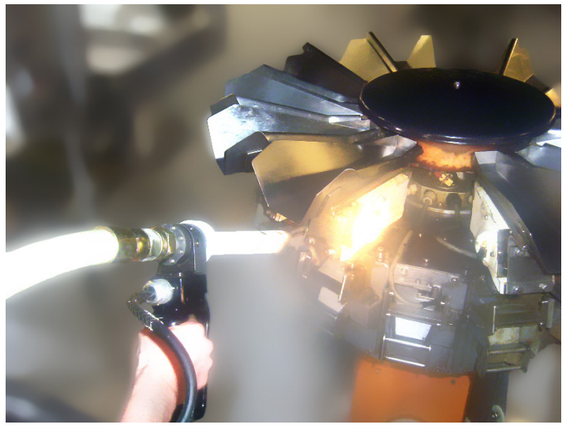
"Dry ice is not aggressive enough to do that on its own, so they never really developed it into a big commercial system," Marlowe explains. "However, there are a number of industrial cleaning applications that it works really well on. So, in the mid-'80s, an investment group got together in southern California and licensed the patents from Lockheed. They had developed a two-hose, venturi-style, dry ice blasting system. About the same time, Cold Jet started in Louisville, Kentucky. They had a different technology for dry ice blasting with a single hose, or a positive feed system, which required an air lock – basically, it mixed the dry ice particles with compressed air, rather than a vacuum tube

pulling it down and mixing it at the applicator. It turns out that the single hose that Cold Jet developed is actually the better technology because you can achieve higher velocity with the particles, which in turn, means that you can clean faster and more powerfully. In 2003, Cold Jet ended up buying Alpheus, the company in California that licensed the patents from Lockheed. So, the history really starts in the mid-'80s for developing dry ice blasting for a number of commercial cleaning applications."

Marlowe breaks down the dry ice blasting process: "In concept, it's sort of like sand blasting, but the effect is quite different. We propel particles with compressed air, but the particles we use are particles of dry ice. They hit the surface and there is some impact energy that does a lot of the cleaning. There are a couple of different formats - we can use three-millimeter pellets of dry ice that looks like rice. We can also take a block of dry ice and shave it, and you get a sugar-sized particle. The reason you'd want to do that is because smaller particles have less chance of damaging the substrate and you can do more precise cleaning because smaller particles fit into smaller gaps and vents of the different things that you're cleaning. The particle size on the shaved dry ice is somewhere between 0.0 and 0.3 millimeters; so it's quite a lot smaller.

"And dry ice has some other characteristics that other blast media do not have: dry ice is very cold so it cools the contaminants faster than the substrate, so they shrink and dis-bond. Also, as the particles hit a surface, they sublimate on impact, going from a solid to a gas, which means they disappear. There's no secondary waste. If I clean with water, or sand, or

> In fact, we call dry ice a 'non-abrasive cleaner' because it is non-abrasive on most metals. We can clean metal parts without damaging them in any way. And that's true even if they're hot. So, there are a number of applications that are beneficial to use dry ice to clean because it won't damage the surface.
>
> **TYSON MARLOWE**
> DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT



baking soda, I have contaminated water or sand or baking soda that I have to deal with and that can be quite expensive and it can be an environmental problem depending on what you're cleaning."

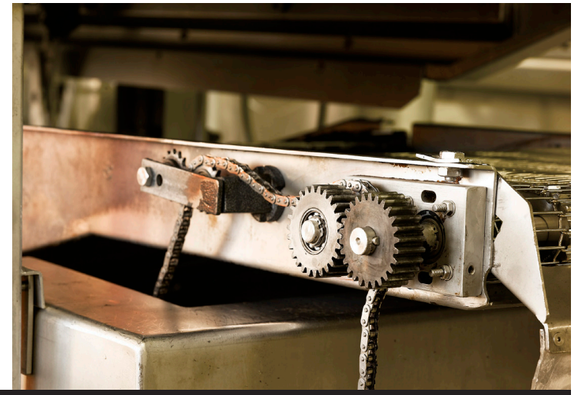
"Part of the nature of dry ice particles as a blast media is they're very soft," he continues. "A hardness scale for minerals is a one to ten scale with talc being a one, diamond being a ten. Dry ice is about a 1.5 on that scale. Other blast medias: baking soda would probably be about a two or two-and-a-half; walnut shells, maybe a four; garnet is probably around a six or six-and-a-half; aluminum oxide, which is a very hard one, would be around eight-and-a-half, or so. In fact, we call dry ice a 'non-abrasive cleaner' because it is non-abrasive on most metals. We can clean metal parts without damaging them in any way. And that's true even if they're hot. So, there are a number of applications that are beneficial to use dry ice to clean because it won't damage the surface."

Marlowe also stresses that even though CO2 is a greenhouse gas, largely responsible for the progression of global warming, dry ice blasting is actually more beneficial to the environment than utilizing other blast media. "We don't add CO2 – we just phase-change it," he says. "We take it from a gas to a liquid to a solid and back to a gas. So, we're simply phase-changing the CO2. It is an environmentally friendly and sustainable process because we don't add any CO2 and we displace using water or chemicals. You get much longer asset life and better asset utilization rates, because we can clean without damage."

Marlowe reports that about 10 to 15 percent of Cold Jet's machines go to service contract providers, but that most of the company's customers are manufacturers in many different industries. "Food and beverage is big for us. There are a lot of applications there," he states. "Power generation; oil and gas. And then, restoration and remediation – fire restoration, mold remediation, historic rehabilitation - things like that. Those are the big applications for us. We are the OEM; we make the equipment and we sell it all over the world. We'll sell to direct end-users, or we'll sell to contractors who offer the service. But everybody who's doing manufacturing probably has some application where they're using dry ice or dry ice would be a good idea to use."

Cold Jet's global headquarters are in Loveland, Ohio, near Cincinnati, where it does most of its manufacturing. "We have a fabrication and machining site and also a final assembly site where we do most of the sub-assemblies

CONVEYOR BELT BEFORE



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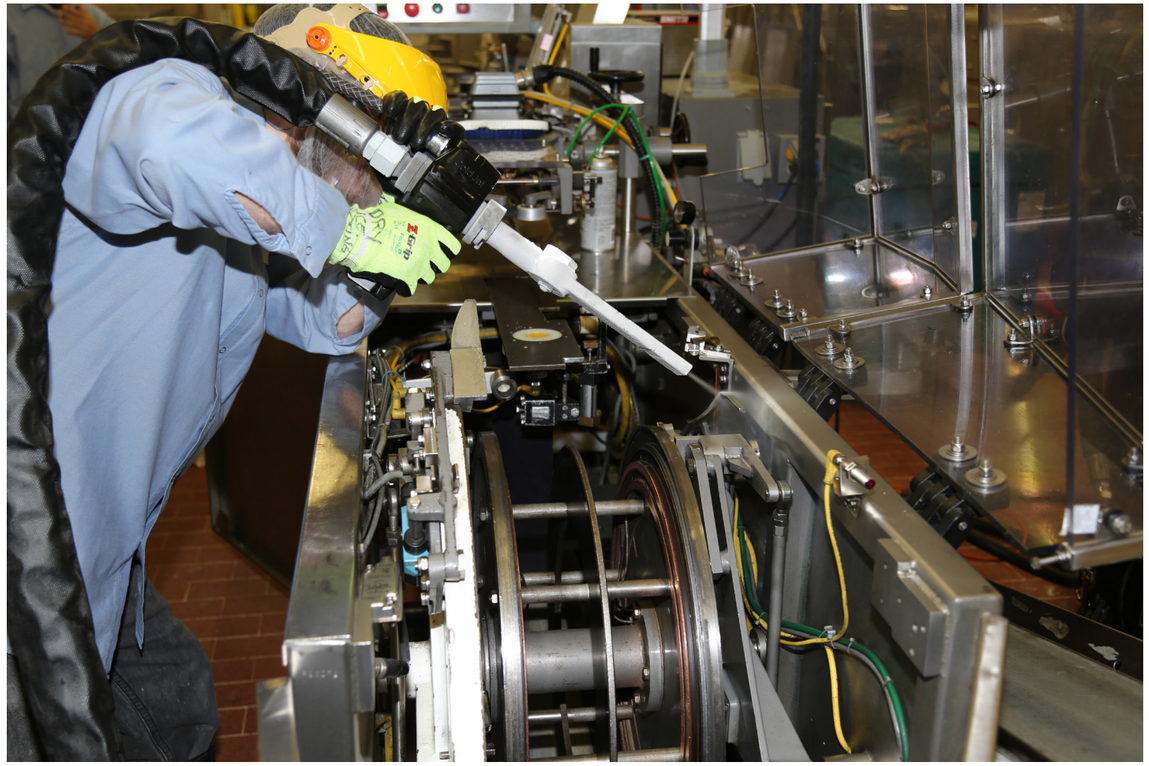


and the final assembly and testing," Marlowe says. "We do contract out some sub-assembling, depending on the equipment." In 2016, the company acquired its main competitor, Icetech, a Danish company that had manufacturing sites in Denmark and Poland, which Cold Jet continued to keep in operation. It sells its products both directly and through distribution, and maintains sales and service offices in China, Japan, Belgium (its European headquarters are in Brussels), Germany, Poland, and Denmark. "In the U.S., we mostly do direct sales," he adds. "We have a few key distributors that are also dry ice suppliers, so they have an inside track to sales, but most of it is direct in the U.S., Canada, and even in Latin America, although we have a mix of distributors in South America. In Mexico, we do mostly direct sales."

Having already acquired its main competitor, Marlowe admits that there aren't too many others in the dry ice blasting world to contend with. "It's definitely a niche market," he avers. "But the thing that separates us is we're kind of the prime mover. We have been the innovator for the last 30 years and we continue to be so. Dry ice is minus-109° Fahrenheit, minus-79° Celsius, so it can be a little difficult to work with. It wants to suck moisture out of the air and freeze it into water and it can clump up and cause problems. So, you have to have a fair amount of planning into your machine to keep it moving and keep it loose and keep it flowing. The other thing – dry ice is such a soft media, you have to get it moving very fast. When it hits something, it turns to gas so you have to take a three-millimeter pellet, or something smaller, put it in a hopper, then through an air lock and mix it with compressed air, speed it up from zero to even as high as 1,200 feet per second. You have to get those high velocities in order for it to be effective without any turbulence. And we know how to do that. We actually hired a guy from GE Aerospace to design feeders and nozzles for us just because of that. So there's a fair amount of industry knowledge, there.

"But to sum up why we're better, I would have to say: performance, which means faster, more powerful cleaning. We do more with less; the variable costs – compressed air and dry ice - go down and the cleaning performance goes up.

We clean faster, we clean better. And then, of course, there's the quality and the service, as well. We're a capital goods company; we sell capital goods, but we put a service model on that. We have customer service coordinators that are halfway between sales and service people that kind of 'own' the customer after the sale, so they continue to take care of them even though we don't sell dry ice. There's no continuing income, but we continue to take care of them. It really makes a loyal customer base and it's been successful for us."

When it comes to marketing its products, Marlowe says that Cool Jet is very proactive. "Being the number one company, we do bear the brunt of marketing expenses and we're very aggressive in getting out there, especially for certain key industries and markets," he declares. "We play big in the plastic and rubber molding space, which means we're big in automotive and aerospace because of that. Foundries – that's metal molding. We clean all that

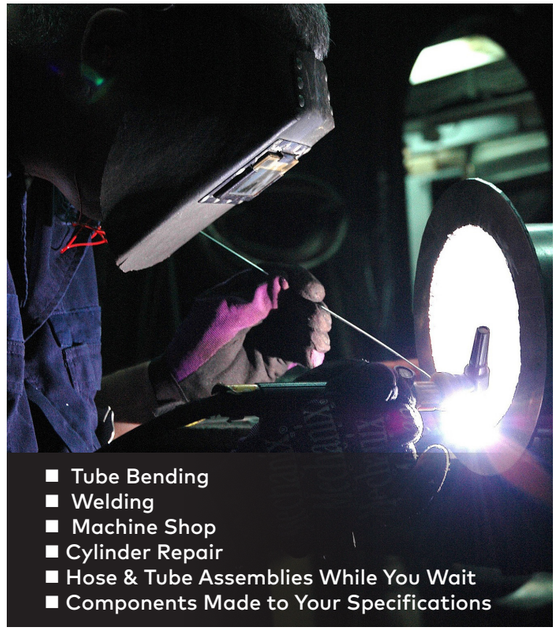
mold tooling – right in place, online, even when it's hot. We're very good at it. So, we spend a lot of time at conferences, tradeshows, and direct marketing to those people."

"What we've done recently, and what's really started to work, is we're getting a much deeper market penetration," he continues. "I can think of 40 industries and hundreds of applications where dry ice blast cleaning works, but we know it works really well in plastic molding. So, we went and hired a guy that specializes in plastic molding to come and just take dry ice into plastics. And it's really starting to pay off. We're seeing big time market penetration for the plastics industry. It's gained market acceptance as the way to clean. So, we want more of that – more specific vertical integration of markets where we can dive deep and really find solutions that make a difference to our customers rather than just being a neat cleaner that's out there."

Finally, Marlowe adds that compared to many other American companies, Cold Jet contributes to the positive side of the country's trade balance. "When we go to China, I'm the only guy on the plane going over there to sell stuff. Everybody else is going over there to make stuff," he quips. "We manufacture in the U.S. and we're proud of that. We have good quality products that we make here and sell all over the world."

PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Hydrotech Inc.**
  www.hydrotech.com
- **IRP Industrial Rubber Ltd.**
  www.irprubber.com
- **Ohio Hydraulics**
  www.ohiohydraulics.com



LOMA SYSTEMS

DESIGNED TO SURVIVE

"You could say Loma Systems came out of the ashes of war," says Mark LeMire, North America Business Unit Manager of one of the leading engineering and manufacturing companies specializing in metal detection, checkweighing, and x-ray inspection systems for the food, pharmaceutical and packaging industries. "Metal detection was a necessity coming out of the post-World War II need to find unexploded arsenal and bombs in and around the European area. It quickly developed into something where the metal detection technology was also a necessity for safety considerations for consumer products."

Loma Systems was established in 1969 in the UK as a private business and was later acquired by the Spectris Group in 1995 where Loma became highly focused on R&D development. "It was a European company for many years," says LeMire. "It was 1980, when it moved into Canada as a sales and service entity, and after a few years, it moved to its North American base in the Chicago area. In 2007, the ITW Corporation acquired Loma Systems and made it part of its portfolio in the Test and Measurement Group." ITW is a multi-national manufacturer of a diversified range of value-adding and short lead time industrial products and equipment. It consists of approximately 825 business units in 52 countries and employs approximately 50,000 people.

"In 2011, Loma Systems acquired Lock Inspection, which is another food, beverage, and pharmaceutical inspection company with comparable products, but with some technological differences that were a good fit to partner with the Loma Systems product line," LeMire adds. "So, what you see, today, in 2017, is the combination of Loma Systems/Lock Inspection underneath the ITW Corporation."

AT A GLANCE | LOMA SYSTEMS

WHAT: A leading engineering and manufacturing company specializing in metal detection

WHERE: World Headquarters in Farnborough, UK; U.S. Headquarters in Carol Stream, IL

WEBSITE: www.loma.com

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CLARKE IN ACTION:

A container load shipment to Nigeria. All export shipments are packed for long-term outdoor storage.

Petroleum refinery equipment packed onsite at a customer's location

Piece number one of a five-piece pharmaceutical manufacturing line for shipment overseas, ready to be vapor barrier protected

CLARKEPACKING.COM

CLARKE PACKING &
CRATING COMPANY
630-372-8500

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We don't take our clients for granted. What matters the most to Loma is that their shipments arrive at their customer in the same condition as when it left their floor. And what matters to them matters to us. A damaged system, particularly one shipping overseas, can cost more than the cost of a system to correct. Loma's future business with that customer could also be put into question. Which is why we place such emphasis on care and quality when it comes to our packaging processes.

Clarke has worked intelligently on a continual improvement process to achieve savings. Our compliances have helped to put us at the top of our field. Our customers are assured that our packing will meet their most demanding need for protection and compliance. We encourage you to visit Clarke Packing & Crating to see why so many big names in manufacturing prefer us to anyone else.

CLARKEPACKING.COM

LOMA SYSTEMS, AN ITW COMPANY

Loma Systems' world headquarters remain in Farnborough, UK, with dozens of sales and service offices in France, Germany, The Netherlands, Czech Republic, Poland, China, Brazil, Canada, and the U.S. Outside of these areas, Loma Systems works closely with a vast network of distributors and OEM's in over 35 countries in Central and South America, the Middle East, Africa, the Far East, and the Pacific rim. The company employs between 400 and 500 people worldwide; the North American unit employs about 80.

"We have three technologies," says LeMire. "Metal detection, checkweighing, and x-ray, which is an alternative technology for contaminant inspection that can be used either in conjunction with metal detection or in the place of metal detection within certain circumstances. Under Loma North America, we sell, service, and support all three technologies. The market is worldwide; Loma North America is a business unit that reports to headquarters."

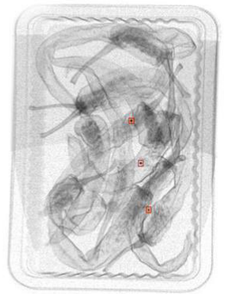
LeMire details the company's main clientele: "A good proportion of our market is in what we call 'harsh food environments' – meats and proteins. Our product is 'designed to survive' those harsh environments where you may have aggressive wash-down situations - high pressure, high temperature, or chemicals to ensure a clean environment. So, much of the focus of our core technology is to provide to those

protein processing manufacturing facilities that need to inspect either the product in process or post-packaging, the assurance that there is no contaminant within the finished product. That contaminant can range from a metal-based material, to hard plastic, bone, stone and things of that nature. So, we target our marketing, our sales, support, and service to that portion of the market. We also have a dedicated pharmaceutical product line that's meant strictly for the pharmaceutical and nutraceutical portion of the market."

Regarding its competition, LeMire states that there are only a small number of companies that provide all three technologies. "We have a number of competitors in the space that provide only one of those technologies, which means they're only addressing a portion of the customers' needs in the process," he explains. "We approach the market as a trusted advisor and solution provider to our customers, providing more of a holistic 'check and detect' inspection process, so, whether it's metal detection, x-ray, or the checkweighing portion of the application need, we're able to provide that total solution. Also, the structure that we have under the ITW Corporation, and the size and makeup of Loma Systems, both worldwide and in the business unit in North America, make us very unique among our peer group."

Loma Systems is also well-known for its continuous and far-reaching research and development programs, and LeMire says that the company is constantly improving its products. This is particularly true since it was acquired by ITW. "From the corporate level, ITW Corporation has built out an enterprise strategy approach to how you address and grow the business," he explains. "Historically, ITW has grown quite a bit through acquisition. Much of our focus now is on organic growth. It's through taking our knowledge of customers' applications of our core technology and advancing it to take it that next step in identifying and addressing future customer needs. So, there's a strong focus on engineering and development; a very strong focus on customer-back innovation of the technology and then partnering with them to provide them with the best solutions."

"For example, if you look at metal detection, there are a lot of advancements in the electronic controls of the base technology, which is opening up the doors for more flexible solutions for the customers," he continues. "If you look at the customers' needs, today and in the



future, you find that they're running a wider variety of products in the same facility and the same production line. They're doing it in more demanding environmental conditions – whether it's a cold environment, or operating 24/7, or they have other machinery electronic interference in the environment; all of these conditions raise the challenges presented to the base technology. This has opened the door for us to look at it from a control standpoint, making our products more flexible and adaptable to the customers' changing needs.

"We also have to make everything user-friendly, because we do not want the average operator to have to become an expert in this technology, and it could take a long time for them to pick up the nuances of how to make the inspection system work," LeMire adds. "So, the user interface also becomes a very critical element. Now, take those challenges for metal detection, and introduce x-ray. We've done x-ray technology for about 20 years; it's not necessarily what we're most known for, but we are presenting that product to the market as the next step in inspection if they need to augment what they're doing in their product or production line. Additionally, x-ray inspection also has the capability to find missing product in packages such as divided containers and blister packs. We have to educate the market because they ask for what they wish versus what's possible. So it's trying to present to them that there are alternatives out there and better ways of doing what they're doing today that's going to improve the reliability and quality of their finished products."

"There's a strong history, focus, and dedication to the design of products to ensure they are of the highest quality and reliability," LeMire declares, summing up. "That has been the core of this business. Overlay that with the corporate culture that ITW has brought to it to make sure that everything we provide to our customers is done effectively and reliably. All that's been done under an umbrella of an entrepreneurial

environment, so when we look at the culture of the business, it's structured to deliver and provide to our customers that trusted advisor approach – a partnership with our customers. We look for those long-term relationships; we look to ensure that they're successful, because ultimately we know their success leads to ours."

PREFERRED VENDORS

■ **Clarke Packing & Crating Co.**
www.clarkepacking.com

Clarke Packing & Crating Company was founded in 1991, in Hanover Park, Illinois. The company's line of business includes the manufacturing of wood or wood and metal combination pallets and skids. With three modern facilities - its main location outside of Chicago, which houses a 65,000-square-foot facility, and two locations in the Knoxville area, including a 44,000-square-foot facility and a 15,000-square-foot facility – the company offers the most state-of-the-art equipment and can accommodate the most advanced packing and crating technologies in the industry.

■ **Innovative Services**
www.innovativesvce.com

Franchise view

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THE CRAFT BEER AUTHORITY

CLEAN JUICE

WHERE FRANCHISEES BECOME FAMILY

SAFARI, LTD.

TOYS THAT TEACH

FRANCHISE VIEW ONLINE

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CLEAN JUICE

WHERE FRANCHISEES BECOME FAMILY

Healthy in body, strong in spirit. This mantra forms the very essence of the Clean Juice brand. Delivering a true US-DA-certified, organic juice product in a kind and caring fashion to guests of all ages takes passion – something that husband and wife founders Kat and Landon Eckles have in abundance. Now, they're looking for potential franchisees to help them share the health, wealth, and Clean Juice lifestyle across America.

The Eckles started Clean Juice in 2014. At the time, Landon had spent years traveling internationally and was ready for a career change and more time with his family, and Kat had spent the better part of a decade making smoothies and juices at home. The idea of opening a juice bar made perfect sense. They embraced the concept one hundred percent, moved to Lake Norman, North Carolina, and opened their first location, Birkdale Village, on their 8th wedding anniversary – June 5th, 2015.

Kat speaks from the heart about their Clean Juice brainchild. "I think our basis for juicing followed the way we'd been eating at home with our kids. I had been doing it, self-taught, for about ten years. I was super interested in the benefits of wellness and eating a plant-based, organic diet. We wanted to turn that into a business because we felt passionate about it, just from being that way at home as a family."

Landon explains, "The more we delved into other franchise concepts, the more we thought we could do it better ourselves. Not to say anything bad about them, we just wanted to focus on being all organic. We wanted a strong emphasis on the guest experience – how the store was laid out. We wanted our guests to see all the fresh produce we were putting into their products, and we really didn't find that with any other concepts. I had quit my job, my wife wasn't working, we were raising our kids at the time, and we spent about a year developing the concept before we actually launched it."

Landon says, "Obviously, we wanted a strong product. We wanted to be certified organic because we believe when you're making juices and smoothies you use the best products. When we first began the Clean Juice brand, we didn't necessarily think about franchising it, but after a year of prep, and the opening, seeing how successful our first store was, we realized that franchising could be a strong possibility."

Two more corporate stores opened in the first year, and the franchising platform was launched in the summer of 2016. There are currently 63 total franchise units - five currently open and operating and 58 in development, four corporate stores open and operational, and four more corporate stores planned for this year. The first Clean Juice franchise opened March 15th, 2017, and since then interest has soared in states across the country.

Landon notes, "The most important thing a franchise owner can have is passion for Clean Juice. We want them to understand why we

AT A GLANCE
CLEAN JUICE

WHAT: USDA Certified Organic Juice franchise brand

WHERE: Headquarters in Concord, North Carolina; franchises throughout the U.S.

WEBSITE: www.cleanjuice-bar.com

are different. Why eating organic makes a difference in your lifestyle. They must meet financial requirements and have some business acumen, but we've found the best franchise owners, so far, have been ones that just come on board because they love what we do. Of course, the economics matter, but that brand passion has to be there too."

Once a candidate has signed a franchise agreement, the Clean Juice team helps them find a location, negotiate the terms on the LOI and the lease, and will not let them sign anything until corporate franchise specialists visit the space to ensure it's a suitable location. "From there, we help them through the entire architecture and build-out process," Landon adds. "We make three trips during construction to make sure everything's going smoothly. We have weekly phone conversations with the general contractor, and bring the franchisee to the home office for an intensive, two-week, Clean Juice University training program."

Before the Grand Opening, Clean Juice sends out a store launch specialist, a certified trainer, and a field support manager to assist with the opening. They stay for several days to help once the store is opened. Clean Juice has negotiated contracts with several organic produce distributors and food vendors, and all locations must use USDA certified organic material. As a result, all products look, taste and feel the same in every store.

"We are the only USDA certified organic franchise available," says Landon. "We have a sign in each of our stores that tells what isn't organic. We're very transparent with our guests about that. Normally, the sign is empty. If the product is available organically, we need to source it. We tell all our "Juiceristas" (our trademarked name for entry level baristas) that every time a customer comes in, you can make their day.

We teach them how to interact with people and give the best versions of themselves when they're on the floor."

Beyond making juices and smoothies, Clean Juice offers an individual experience. Guests can

see every piece of produce selected and juiced, just for them. And every order is delivered in a cup with the guest's name on it. That customer relationship is a key reason behind the Clean Juice success.

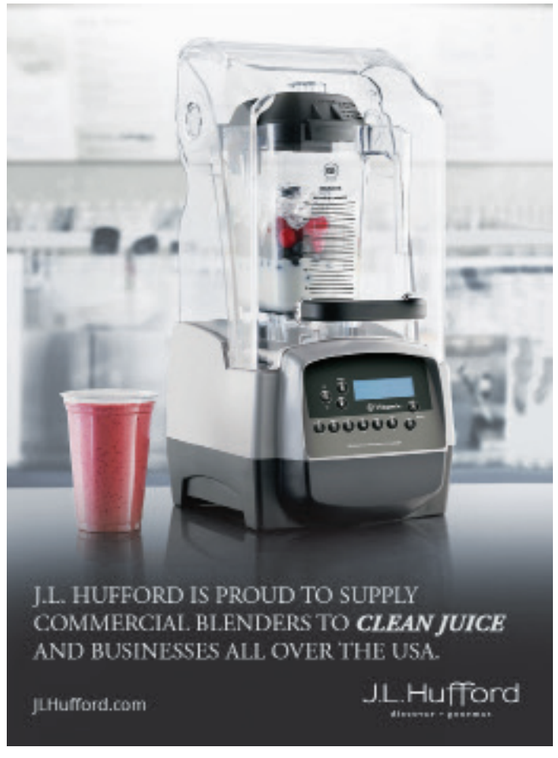
VP of Development for Clean Juice, Dave Cuff, relates, "From my perspective, overseeing the franchise side of things, what's important as we grow is our brand standard. When our employees come on board, they're taught that the guest experience is the number one priority; it's not how to make a juice or a smoothie. Through our award process, we spend a lot of time getting to know each candidate. It's important they have the same passion that we do. It's not necessarily about your business background – we can teach that. It's more about identifying in the early stages of our franchise owners' development, the ones that have drive, that really embody everything we do as Clean Juice."

There are currently eight multi-unit franchise owners, but multiple units are only sold to select individuals. It's preferred they start with one store to understand the process and get all the operations down before stepping into a second and third store.

Landon sees a future of steady growth. "We hope to sign 100 franchise units this year, and continue to grow over the next five to seven years – whether that means taking the company public or continuing to build privately. We feel that our product and concept needs to be in every market, and we truly believe we're making the communities that we serve, better. In the next three to four years, I hope we have a couple hundred stores and we're talking about going internationally."

Kat Eckles shares fond sentiments about the business she loves: "Our mission statement is a verse from the Bible, but the basic gist is that we want everyone we are in contact with to be healthy in body and strong in spirit. So, we're serving this health-oriented product that is good for your body, but the other half is being mentally healthy and spiritually strong. That's behind every decision we make, every drink we serve. Landon and I have done this together as a husband and wife team. We have five young kids, so it's certainly a family enterprise. We want our customers to feel that too. We want to serve a smoothie that your three-year-old can come in and drink, and it's so awesome and delicious that they want to get it instead of ice cream."

That family-based experience carries over to franchisees. "We have siblings that are running stores together; couples; best friends. It's something that's fun and positive. We want to extend to other people that we're happy together – not just investors looking for the best bang for their buck."



PREFERRED VENDOR

- **JL Hufford**
  www.jlhufford.com

OLD CHICAGO
PIZZA AND TAP ROOM

THE CRAFT BEER AUTHORITY

The first Old Chicago Pizza and Tap Room restaurant opened in Boulder, Colorado in 1976. "Our founder was from the Midwest and he really missed great pizza," says Mark Belanger, Vice President for Global Franchise Operations & Development for CraftWorks Restaurants & Breweries, Old Chicago's corporate parent. "In addition, he also was a big fan of beer. So, in 1976, we did two things: we brought authentic, Chicago-style pizza to Colorado - and we started the World Beer Tour."

According to Belanger, the World Beer Tour was the first-ever restaurant loyalty program. Patrons sign up to sample a grand total of 110 different beers, including well-recognized national brands, regional and local craft beers, and seasonal selections. Entrants receive a card that tracks all of their beers consumed and upon reaching 110, winners gets a plaque with their name, and at most stores a personal quote, hung in their designated "home" Old Chicago location. As an added bonus, WBT members also earn points based on previous purchases that can be traded in for vari-

AT A GLANCE
OLD CHICAGO PIZZA AND TAP ROOM

WHAT: A chain of restaurants in the CraftWorks Restaurants & Breweries Group

WHERE: Headquarters in Chattanooga, Tennessee

WEBSITE: www.craftworks restaurants.com

ous things such as credit towards a bill on future visits, merchandise, or exclusive parties.

"When you think about it, in 1976, to get 110 beers, either in a bottle or on tap, in a restaurant – that, in itself was quite a feat," says Belanger. "It helped start the craft beer craze in America. And many breweries have thanked us, profusely, for being a provider of great craft beer over the years. We've helped brands like New Belgian Ale, O'Dell's Brewing – we've been partners with them since the very beginning. Also Boston Beer Works, with Sam Adams, is another great partner. In 1976, craft beer really didn't exist in America and the beer that did exist was very light – there wasn't a lot of complexity to it. Fast forward to today, the marketplace in craft beer has exploded. About every twelve hours, there's a new taproom or brewery opening up somewhere in America."

"We consider ourselves to be the craft beer authority," Belanger continues. "We're the best local and regional craft beer, hand-crafted-pizza destination, tap-room in America. You can come into our restaurants and enjoy great food, paired with great regional and local beers, and, in some cases, we even have hyper-local, where you can see, from our patios, the brewery that you're enjoying the fine beer from. Every Old Chicago has between 36 and 40 taps and out of that, we have eight to twelve dedicated taps that are local and regional beer. The other differentiator with Old Chicago is that we do lots of collaborations with different breweries, where you can only get that beer in our restaurants. So, for the folks who are beer enthusiasts, that's really a benefit for them to come in and taste a beer that they can only get at an Old Chicago."

Today, there are 110 Old Chicago Restaurants in 22 states - 77 are company-owned and the rest are franchises. The chain is part of the CraftWorks Restaurants & Breweries Group, which has several distinct brands, including the Gordon Biersch Restaurant and Brewery, the Rock Bottom Restaurant and Brewery, the Chop House Restaurant and Brewery, and several other, smaller operations. "Old Chicago was the first brand; the other companies were acquired and/or developed over time," says Belanger. "Today, we have 209 restaurants and 71 breweries throughout America. So, the CraftWorks orga-

nization is actually the largest onsite brewing restaurant concept in the country."

Of all the CraftWorks brands, Old Chicago is currently the only one that is being actively franchised. Belanger explains the vetting process: "Ideally, what we're looking for is someone who has experience in the restaurant business, already, and who has managed and run multiple locations. Because of our cost of entry and investment, we're looking for someone who can develop between three and five restaurants. Most of our franchisees are multi-unit operators that not only have multiple units with us, but also have other brands within their portfolio. We tend to find that the candidate that works best for our brand is somebody that maybe doesn't have a pizza concept in their

portfolio or a craft beer concept and wants to get into the craft beer craze without having to operate a brewery.

"What makes us different from a franchising perspective is the 41 years of our operating model. We've got this thing figured out. And so, the benefits of investing in a franchise brand like Old Chicago Pizza and Tap Room is we have the systems already in place for a successful restaurateur to come in who knows about the business – how to manage food costs; how to hire the right people; how to select the right real estate. We help the franchisee through all those processes with our great system. In 2016 and 2017, we've signed 25 new development units with five different franchisees. Several of those were existing franchisees within our business, and several were new ones, as well."

Going forward, Belanger says that CraftWorks' long-term vision is to see an Old Chicago Pizza and Tap Room in every major market in the U.S. that currently they're not in. "We're not in the northeast yet; we're not in California; we're not in the Washington market," Belanger opines. "We are growing in the sunbelt markets – the southwest, Texas, and the southeast. I'd like to see our brand continue to grow in the Midwest, as well, where we have a nice strong presence."

Regardless of how successful the Old Chicago concept has been, still is, and will, no doubt, continue to be, Belanger knows that continued execution is the key. "You've got to execute," he says. "If you have a really cool concept, but you don't execute well, your guests don't feel value in what they're getting. We stand for great food that's distinctive; we're passionate about everything we do when it comes to beer and food; and we focus on being part of the community and sharing great local and regional beers. We're as relevant, today, as we were 41 years ago - but we're going to continue to never be satisfied with our quality and our consistency."

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PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Multiple Ventures LLC**
  www.multipleventuresllc.com

Incorporated in 2005, in Eaton, CO, Multiple Ventures is a source for hospitality equipment and technology, including new and used equipment, design and layout service, furniture, hood systems, refrigeration, and point of sale systems.

- **Performance Food Group**
  www.pfgc.com

SAFARI LTD.

TOYS THAT TEACH

Safari Ltd. is an American, family-owned manufacturer and global distributor of hand-painted, scientifically accurate educational figures, spanning from the natural world to the imaginative realms of mythology and fantasy. The company features a product line of more than 1000 educational, hand-painted toy designs that teach by creating authentic figurines that speak to the innate curiosity in all of us. Their mission is to teach children the importance of nature and its conservation through the joy of play.

In 1982, Bernard and Rosemarie Rubel founded the company after discovering an endangered species card game while visiting the Munich Zoo in Germany. Fueled by their passion to educate through play, they transformed that rummy game into a collection of museum-quality figures enjoyed by children, adults, educators, and collectors alike. Today, their grandson, Alexandre Pariente, is at the helm of the family business and making great strides in the global landscape. He began his role with the company at an early

AT A GLANCE
SAFARI LTD.

WHAT: Family-owned manufacturer and worldwide distributor of educational, hand-painted toys

WHERE: MIami, Florida

WEBSITE: www.safariltd.com

age in the warehouse. Alexandre acknowledges, "My grandfather was old school and believed I needed to work my way up. After proving myself, he one day invited me inside - and I never left." In 2014, Alexandre became full owner and CEO when his mother, Ramona Pariente, retired after 28 years at Safari Ltd.

Stacie Beavers, Director of Business Development for Safari Ltd., says, "Demand for our product has grown, and now we want to share our vision with the world. Since Alexandre took over, there has been a shift towards creating global awareness for our brand. We are streamlining our processes and investing in technology, marketing and sales aspects to prepare for continued expansion." The company sells directly to the U.K. and Canada, and distributes across the U.S. from its Miami warehouse. Internationally, it works with distributors based in Japan, Germany, Mexico, South Africa, UAE, and South America.

Safari Ltd. employs about 60 people, known in-house as "Safarians", at their Miami Lakes global headquarters. "Our company invests a lot, not only in technology, but also in our employees. To attract and retain top talent, we built a fun family-like culture centered around providing a fantastic work/life balance to promote a healthy lifestyle. The perks range from 7 ½ hour workdays to events and challenges hosted by our corporate wellness team, SafariFit, designed to improve both fitness and wellbeing with topics such as nutrition, financial wellness, and stress management."

Safari fills an important niche in the toy sector. According to Beavers, "We are one of the top companies in the animal figures market. What sets us apart is the pride we take in listening to our customers, and using those insights to make informed, customer-centric decisions that span from internal processes to new products. Our sales representatives, dubbed 'Toy Gurus,'

have a lot of conversations with our customers to find out, for instance, what new exhibits are opening at zoos and aquariums in the coming year, so we can provide them with products that pair well with their exhibits. Our retail customers email us with product suggestions which we add to a wish list that is reviewed when determining new releases. We are really in tune with the needs of our customers and strive to provide them with an unmatched customer service experience every step of the way."

"Manufacturing is outsourced to partners in Asia who have worked with Safari Ltd. for over 30 years; however, the entire creative process happens in the main distribution center in Miami." Safari Ltd. was housed for 20 years in a building in Miami Gardens, and moved to the current location in Miami Lakes to satisfy increased space needs for the warehouse and offices. A significant amount of construction was done to "Safari-tize" the new headquarters and make it just right for this growing entity. The building features a winding ramp at the entrance to take Safarians to the upstairs offices to promote walking as an active design, an on-site fitness facility, and many more custom features from the lobby to the warehouse. The company is also investing in technology to provide a best-in-class customer service experience and streamline internal processes for greater efficiency. Additions include new systems for enterprise resource planning (SAP Business One), warehouse management (Acellos), and customer relationship management (Salesforce), as well as a redesigned website and a strategic partnership with FEDEX for shipping.

Looking towards the future, Beavers admits, "The challenge for us is technology – in that people are moving away from the tangible toy or animal figurine, and moving towards iPads and apps to educate children. By focusing on creating lifelike Toys That Teach, we're emphasizing that a physical product like ours helps children know what an animal looks like, not just by viewing a picture on a tablet, but by holding it in their own hands. In the future, we'll always have that struggle with emerging technology; the whole toy market is going through that. We're trying to bring back teaching with a tangible object – whether in the classroom, or with toddlers who are just learning develop-

mental skills. That's the direction we're taking."

The Safari Ltd. team has done much research in the field of play therapy, which has been shown to be an effective method for allowing children to express themselves and their feelings naturally, in a comfortable setting. Play is important for early childhood development from a neurological standpoint as well as a therapeutic perspective, and can also help children resolve a range of challenging issues that may arise during their development. Safari's customers include licensed play therapists who utilize their figures for an exercise known as "sandplay therapy," in which a client is tasked with creating a contained environment to reflect their imaginary world using sand and miniature objects. "When children play, they learn," says Christina Pariente, Alexandre's wife and Safari Ltd.'s President. "They must have time for imaginative play to develop correctly. Imaginative play teaches children creativity, coping mechanisms, independence, problem-solving skills, and much more. We make sure our twelve month old has imaginative play time every day. It is that important and should start right away."

All Safari Ltd. toys are non-toxic and free of lead, phthalates, and BPAs. For over 35 years, their products have been laboratory tested to meet all lead safety requirements, and are in compliance with worldwide safety standards. Quality control is a major focus at Safari Ltd. Throughout the year, Alexandre and Christina visit their Asian partners to stay close to the manufacturing process. Ongoing, open communication between the manufacturers and the Safari product development team is key to achieving their strict quality standards.

"Staying true to our mission, Safari also supports conservational and environmental initiatives. This year alone, we partnered with the Humane Society of Broward County, the Nature Conservatory, and several National and State Parks to provide donations to help preserve our environment. Overall, our company culture, and what we believe in, is making sure we conserve the environment so our children's children can experience it in the way we did," notes Beavers.

With caring, intelligent companies like Safari Ltd. working hard to bring interaction back to a tangible toy experience, our next generations have a great chance of learning, reviving, and enjoying the basics of 'unplugged' play.

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MURRAY HOMES

THE RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

There is an old saying in the restaurant business that there are three things that are absolutely necessary for success: location, location, and location! That tongue-in-cheek locution of the necessity of being where the action is may well be applied to the area of home construction. At least Steve Murray, President of Murray Homes of Sarasota, Florida, a luxury home builder, believes it to be so, and that being in the right place at the right time has certainly contributed to his company's success.

"If you do a Google search on Sarasota, and see where we come in terms of rankings - best places to retire, best small cities to live in, best beaches to visit - we rank right up there with all of them," he declares. "We're somewhere where everybody else wants to live. So, we're getting good national press, which is leading to a lot of increased

AT A GLANCE | MURRAY HOMES

WHAT: A luxury custom home builder

WHERE: Sarasota, Florida

WEBSITE: www.murrayhomesinc.com

awareness, which leads to a lot of cranes going up for condos, hotels, etc., which leads to more people coming down, and, subsequently, sustained business. I think without where we live, my job would be a lot harder."

Murray adds that a portion of that sustained business comes from clients fleeing high-tax states, such as California, New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts, and relocating to income-tax-free Florida. "People are trying to get away and make Florida their primary residence," he explains, "and as a result, we're building nice homes with the money they're saving from not paying taxes." And those nice homes don't come cheap. "We're not in the $200,000, knock 'em up quick range," he avers. "Our price per square foot is anywhere from $375 to $800. So, the opportunity for luxury within that price range is absolutely there in the marketplace."

Over the last several years, Murray Homes has built more than 85 unique custom waterfront residences in the finest neighborhoods around Sarasota, including Longboat Key, Bird Key, Harbor Acres, and Casey Key. "Everything is within a ten-mile radius of my office in downtown Sarasota," says Murray. "Ten miles will get you up as

far as Anna Maria, down as far as Casey Key, and inland as far as Lakewood Ranch. So, we have a big conforming area, which is a lot of waterfront and a lot of high end real estate."

Being in the middle of one of the hottest real estate markets in the country was actually part of the plan, when, in 1999, Murray followed his father, John, a master builder of luxury homes in their native London for more than 30 years, to Florida's west coast. "The goal was to set up a custom home building company that deals with the luxury end because that was our history and experience in London," Murray says. "It was really bolting it into the geography and how it translated, based on where we were. We've got a lot of waterfront here in Sarasota, and the opportunity for waterfront construction was absolutely there. So we took it by the scruff of the neck and gave it a shake."

Today, Murray Homes has a sister company – Murray Realty, a full service real estate company specializing in waterfront residential real estate on and around the keys of Sarasota. Together, the two companies allow Murray's clients to

one-stop-shop, while the Murray team gets to participate in more of the entire real estate, home building or buying, transaction. "We're involved, early on, with a lot of clients who come to us and say they're interested in finding a piece of land," says Murray. "Or they come to us because they know what we're talking about when it comes to tearing a house down and rebuilding, or remodeling. And so, because of that, we do tend to have a lot of influence over the process from early on."

Regarding the company's marketing strategy, Murray says, "We're very progressive in terms of how we use technology to get in front of clients. We've got a good, interactive website; I've got a good marketing department which stays on top of both social media and SEO. We just completed a TV program, which was supported by 16 of my sub-contractors – a half-hour program which has aired a couple of times already, and will air another couple of times. But more than that, it's a case of the relationships that you share with architects and professionals, existing clients, realtors – all the influences within the market, because, obviously, recommendation is a huge part of what we do."

Murray stresses the significance of those relationships to his company's achievements. "Our concrete guys are important; our cabinetry guys are important; the relationships that we have with our lumber houses, with our window companies. It's all the major structural, elemental businesses that are important with us, because without the solid relationships with those guys, it's impossible to build a solid company and to know you've got the strength and depth to continue."

Murray Homes has a staff of 17, and, as a general contractor, hires its architects, landscape architects, interior designers, and sub-contractors on a per-project basis. And Murray says they run a tight ship. "We have three or four 'subs' in every single line code,

"Our concrete guys are important; our cabinetry guys are important; the relationships that we have with our lumber houses, with our window companies. It's all the major structural, elemental businesses that are important with us, because without the solid relationships with those guys, it's impossible to build a solid company and to know you've got the strength and depth to continue."

STEVE MURRAY
PRESIDENT

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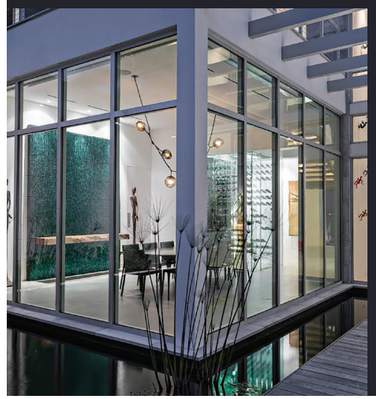

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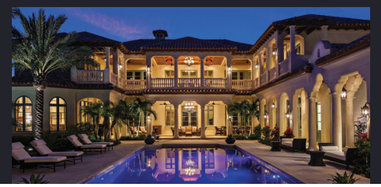

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and we bid to those three or four subs per line code and nobody knows whether they've got the job or whether they haven't," he states. "They have to be accurate in their bidding and the takeoff on every job."

That devotion to tight business management is a hallmark of the company's ethos and partially comes from having had to weather the shocks, just years after its founding, of both 9/11 and the Great Recession, neither of which did much good for the luxury custom home market. "So, what we needed to ensure we built, was a solid company with good business principles, tight management, and tight control on expenses and how we did business," Murray says.

He also believes that since, lately, construction and general contracting has gotten "a bad name in a lot of circles, where it's 'twice as much money and three times as long as the guy says to begin with,' he wants to make sure that his company does the opposite. "We want to be upfront, truthful, and correct in what we say, and do what we say. My office staff is excellent in what they do and how they run their jobs, the site guys, the subs, and the expectations of the client. We differentiate ourselves in who we employ in terms of facilitating the build, the design, the customer service - the whole experience of construction."

Today, business is booming for Murray Homes. The only potential threat on the horizon, Murray says, is the possibility that the availability of raw land and/or buildable teardowns may dry up. "As a result, you have to look at the next location," he muses. "So I think it's possible there will be new markets in terms of distance from where we currently are now. I think the opportunity in providing a high-quality, small-scale subdivision – you see a lot of that in Naples, an enclave of high end houses – I think that is an opportunity."

Meanwhile, Murray's immediate focus is to continue to foster the synergy between Murray Homes and Murray Realty. "I think the primary goal for me is the collaboration with Murray Realty, and taking advantage of the growth within the real estate side, which ultimately has a very good knock-on effect with my construction side," he says. "The busier we become with realty, the busier we naturally become with homes."

In the end, while location, location, location may still be important, Murray Homes proves that running a tight ship, creating a quality product, and providing top-notch customer service is still the best recipe for success.

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ANTIGONISH, NOVA SCOTIA

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Bullish on business

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STOUGHTON, MASS.

Realizing the master plan

GRIFFIN, GEORGIA

Growing together

THE ASSOCIATION FOR IMPROVEMENT OF AMERICAN INFRASTRUCTURE

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS: GOOD POLICY THAT'S GOOD FOR TAXPAYERS

By John Parkinson

The Trump Administration touts plans for a $1 trillion investment program over the next 10 years to modernize U.S. infrastructure. It is an ambitious and much-needed proposal considering the current state of our roads, bridges, pipelines and municipal facilities.

The American Society of Civil Engineers' latest 2017 Infrastructure Report Card again gives the state of the nation's infrastructure a D, showing little improvement from the last report four years ago. Despite some investments in recent years, the organization specifically spotlights the nation's failure to close the investment gap with needed maintenance and improvements, which will most certainly affect our nation's ability to compete in the global economic marketplace.

To modernize our infrastructure, we're going to need to tap into every possible resource in the public and private sectors and assess, evaluate and implement innovative ideas to deliver, maintain and operate sustainable infrastructure assets.

Simply stated, we need to make better use of public-private partnerships (P3s).

THE EVOLUTION OF P3

The P3 project delivery method is a powerful vehicle to help reverse the deterioration of our nation's assets across a broad range of public sectors. Some people associate P3s only with toll roads. But in truth the vehicle is used for almost any infrastructure sector, including projects to build or upgrade roads, bridges, hospitals, water/wastewater systems, university campuses, convention centers, courthouses, and even streetlight networks. The P3 model creates opportunity for both the public and private sectors, while maintaining public ownership across an asset's lifecycle. Public ownership is the key difference between a P3 and infrastructure that is fully privatized.

Beyond getting public projects off the ground and completed on time and on budget, P3s also account for the full cost of operating and maintaining the project over many decades—not just the initial design and construction.

Common public construction contracts typically focus on the initial construction of an

infrastructure asset. Too often, the maintenance of these assets is subject to unidentified or inadequate funding, and delayed, time after time, until the asset falls into disrepair, shortening its design life and necessitating early replacement and eroding public confidence in government services. One of the key components of a P3 relates to ongoing operations and maintenance (O&M) activities that sustain assets for their full-service life. During the procurement of the project, the public owner and private partner determine the appropriate service levels and performance standards necessary for the full duration of the O&M period, often 30 to 50 years.

It's also worth noting that a P3 is not a one-size-fits-all contract – it's an incredibly flexible model that is only limited by the public entity's ability and willingness to explore new infrastructure delivery methods.

Most importantly, P3s allow private sector investors to put skin in the game. These investors help finance a project to ensure the project is built on time and on budget. If it's not, the government can withhold payment. That's called risk transfer, and in a P3, it means taking away risk from the taxpayer and transferring it to the private sector. That's just good policy.

THE STATE OF P3S

Two creative examples of the implementation of alternative project delivery come to mind which showcase the value proposition of P3s. First, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (DOT) used the P3 model as a way to fix over 500 structurally deficient bridges located throughout the state, largely in rural areas. In Michigan, the Michigan DOT used the P3 model to design, construct and finance the replacement, operation and maintenance of 15,000 lighting fixtures and the underlying infrastructure throughout Detroit. This innovative use of the project delivery mechanism allowed Michigan DOT to get out of the lighting business, save money, reduce maintenance headaches, and focus on their core business of transportation. Michigan DOT estimates that this project will generate approximately $13 million in savings.

So what's holding back the increased adoption of P3s at the federal, state and local level? One key issue is the lack of legislation, which limits P3 implementation in more transportation and vertical (e.g., courthouses, prisons) infrastructure projects—and that's where the non-profit, AIAI – the Association for the Improvement of American Infrastructure has made a difference.

P3 ADVOCACY

AIAI was founded by leading infrastructure developers in November 2012. Today, the organization is the leading pro-P3 organization in America. Our sole focus is to advocate for legislation and policy changes that enable P3s to grow nationally with an emphasis on good policy that's good for the community. At AIAI, our motto is to educate, advocate and engage.

AIAI's membership includes many of the leading companies building America's infrastructure.

Since its founding, AIAI has grown from six member forms to over 70 corporate member organizations nationally. These members represent a broad spectrum of the professional disciplines in private enterprise and public service—leading construction firms, investors, developers, service firms, planners, and academics.

The organization's competitive advantage is largely built on the fact that it is plugged in at state and local levels. That's because that's where most U.S. infrastructure is built and owned. Our members believe that effective and well-planned education can provide civic leaders with the knowledge they need to make informed decisions about the benefits of P3, which includes economic development, lifecycle cost savings, risk transfer and accelerated project delivery. AIAI

does not advocate for individual projects—instead we focus on policy that enables a strong program that promotes a pipeline of projects. For states that have existing local legislation, we're focused on providing additional insight about how to adequately conduct the P3 delivery method. At its heart, our mission is to shape a clear, sustainable P3 project pipeline by providing clarity to politicians, procuring authorities, and the general public.

To that end, AIAI introduced the AIAI Best Practices Guide, a national educational resource on P3 best practices, in 2016. This year, the organization introduced the AIAI Guide to Increasing Private Investment in U.S. Infrastructure that outlines a set of specific policy proposals to help increase private investment in U.S. infrastructure projects. As a follow-up to the investment guide, AIAI will begin working with states and local entities to help them prepare for opportunities that will emerge from those recommendations.

We're also putting together best practices guidelines for procurement as a means to support states, municipalities and agencies as they look to utilize the P3 model for their procurement needs. AIAI's goal is to enable informed decision making through the education and outreach

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Anthony Phillips/Director
Managing Director, Primary Investment, North America, John Laing

we provide. The purpose is to encourage state and local entities to have open and continuing conversations both internally and with constituents and taxpayers about when and where a P3 works.

P3 LEGISLATION IN THE NEWS

There are currently 36 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico which have some form of P3 legislation, though most are limited to transportation. Only 14 of the 38 jurisdictions have P3 legislation in place for vertical infrastructure such as municipal buildings, courthouses, schools and other community-use facilities. There are also 13 states whose P3-enabling procurement authority applies to water works.

In this first half of 2017, progress has been recorded through the legislative chambers in Arkansas, Hawaii, Oklahoma, and Utah. Arkansas expanded its procurement authority to enable alternative project delivery for a broad range of municipal facilities and water projects. Hawaii approved a statewide P3 office to lay the foundation for a program that can address a wide range of project types. Oklahoma was the most recent addition to the P3 landscape, with passage of bills that authorize P3 procurement for state-level assets, as well as at the county or municipal level. Utah took a simplified step by broadly authorizing the use of P3s as an acceptable procurement method for public works.

The 2016 legislative season was a big winner for alternative project delivery. Newly enabling statutory authority was passed into law in Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Tennessee.

Previous successes on the P3 front have included expanding alternative project delivery and financing authority to the buildings and water sectors in Texas. AIAI also worked closely with state officials to develop and shape quality legislation that protected the statutory authority for Colorado's P3 program. This include support for regional transportation and facilities in support of the Denver metroplex, including: P3 procurement for the US 36 Express Lanes Project; Regional Transportation District's FasTracks mass transit program; and Denver's Union Station redevelopment. There was also a substantive step forward to introduce and implement P3 capabilities for the procurement of public infrastructure in the District of Columbia.

For communities across the country, both rural and urban, public infrastructure development and maintenance programs provide a meaningful opportunity to build and restore sustainable, resilient infrastructure for generations to come. AIAI and its members stand ready to help policy makers build the best possible infrastructure for the long-term strength and security of our nation's economy, its taxpayers and citizens.

MAULDIN, South Carolina

SUBURBAN COMMUNITY WITH AN INTERNATIONAL REACH

Location, location, location! The City of Mauldin shines like a beacon in the heart of Upstate South Carolina – three hours from the coastline, just over an hour from the Blue Ridge Mountains, and 15 minutes from Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport. The City's central location, convenient accessibility to I-85 and I-385, exceptional infrastructure support, incentives, and highly skilled work force make it the ideal landscape for businesses to locate.

Mauldin is also the perfect spot for families to call home. Recognized as the best place to buy a house in the state, the city's 25,000 residents enjoy great schools, excellent parks, and recreational facilities. One of the most popular places to visit is the Mauldin Cultural Center, hosting nearly 30,000 people and over 1,000 events annually.

AT A GLANCE
MAULDIN, S.C

WHAT: Suburban city with a population just over 25,000

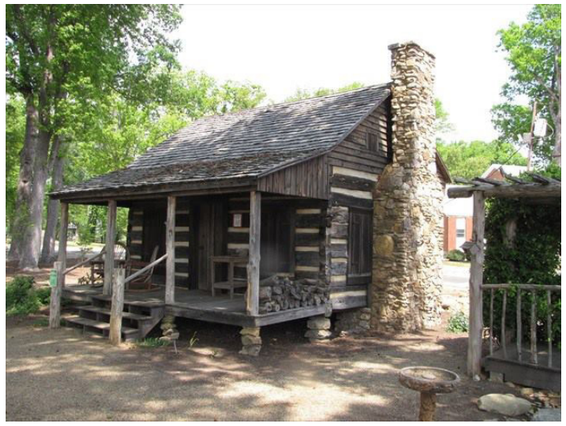
WHERE: In Greenville County on the I-95 between Atlanta and Charlotte, South Carolina

WEBSITE: www.cityofmauldin.org

Originally called "Butler's Crossing," the area was renamed "Mauldin" in honor of the President of the Greenville and Laurens Railroad, W.L. Mauldin, who helped bring the railroad through the community, and later became the state's Lt. Governor. The Town of Mauldin was incorporated on Christmas Eve, 1890, and in 1969, Town Council voted to change the name to City of Mauldin. Today, it's one of the fastest growing cities in South Carolina.

To garner insight into Mauldin's ongoing success, we went directly to the people in the know: Trey Eubanks, City Administrator; Van Broad, Community Development Director; and Taft Matney, City Councillor and Chair of Mauldin Recreation, Planning and Economic Development Committee. Here's what they shared:

EUBANKS: "We continue to focus on fundamentals, maintaining a high quality of life by maintaining a high quality of municipal services. That's the basis upon which we build and recruit industry and development. Regarding infrastructure, we are 75 to 80 percent finished with a $3.4 million sewer system rehabilitation project. That project has come in under budget and ahead of schedule, and it's going to ensure we have a viable sewer infrastructure well into the future. Our sewer management system is one of the best in the region, so, businesses and industry looking to locate here have no issues when it comes to those services.



"The other thing is our roads. Over the past five years, we have taken advantage of matching grants for road resurfacing, and have collectively invested over $4 million in resurfacing programs. Transportation-wise, last year, we completed a council-authorized study on one of our major corridors that goes from our main intersection, up to the high school towards interstate I-385. This year, it is in the State Dept. of Transportation's program for preliminary engineering. With a lot of public input, we're going to have the best solution to the investment we need to make in this important commercial corridor.

"The Greenville Health System Swamp Rabbit Trail is another infrastructure element. It's a 19.9-mile, multi-use rail trail that follows the bed of a former railroad, and was nicknamed after the indigenous swamp rabbit. If you're familiar with Greenville County, you're familiar with the Swamp Rabbit Trail. It starts at the northern end of our county, and Council has received plans to include it as part of the City of Mauldin – not only as a recreational component, it is also a true economic development driver. The County of Greenville, particularly the small town of Travelers Rest, has been extremely successful at recruiting businesses due to the presence of the Swamp Rabbit Trail through that area."

BROAD: "Another example of work being done involves a valuable 40-acre site that needed remediation. The city partnered with the landowner, the county and the state to certify the site as SC Certified for putting a business entity there. That means we did all

the geotechnical work, the soil samples, the environmental work. We ensured there were utilities on the site – sewer, water, anything and everything industry needs. That takes away some of the costs for a business. We just landed MP Husky. They're building a 150-square-foot complex – 150 employees currently, adding another 100 to 150 to that site. Developers were hoping to consolidate three companies on this one site, but MP Husky has grown so much, it may be the only facility they're able to fit."

MATNEY: "Our location makes us ideal for corporate relocation and expansion, as we're situated centrally between Atlanta and Charlotte along I-95 with access to I-385, and substantial rail line access, as well. But, as we bring in those corporate expansions and our new business neighbours, we try to achieve work/life balance as much as possible. We want to offer something they can be proud of; something they can enjoy with their families – whether it's the recruitment of new retail, restaurants, or our complete recreation services and programs, primarily with youth sports. As we continue building, we want to make sure we take good care of the folks who work here and decide to live here as a result."

BROAD: "Mauldin is an underserved community, with an exciting redevelopment opportunity from what I would call our 'downtown' throughout. What makes that palatable is the wonderful industrial base we have here within a 1½ mile location of our downtown. Mauldin has become a kind of mecca of corporate companies locating to the community.

"Verizon Wireless has a call center here, so does Anyone Home. We just had a ground breaking for BB&T Bank Mortgage Service Division. They're building a 140,000-square-foot office complex; 600 employees will be locating here – some from the area, others from outside the area, with another 100 to 200 to be added over the next several years. In Verizon's case, they already had a complex here, but they did a $3½ million expansion with another 260 employees added to their current roster. Anyone Home has around 270 to 400 employees. Samsung is another significant employer. Jacob's Engineering and Liberty Life have major divisions here. In all, there are 8,000 to 10,000 employees in this area.

"What makes it exciting is that we've leaked a lot of retail potential out of the community, and now we've got an opportunity to bring it back with the foundation the city has laid with incentives in tax abatements, priority inspection services, and façade improvement grants. We already have a phenomenal performing arts center and a great amphitheater, both with expanding programming. And we've started a Farmers' Market. Just north of that, on North Main St., we

Duggan & Hughes
Attorneys at Law

Duggan & Hughes, LLC proudly serves as general counsel for the City of Mauldin. Mauldin is a vibrant community that is blessed with great leadership. Our firm is committed to serving the citizens of Mauldin and the entire Upstate of South Carolina through hard work and a commitment to excellence in the practice of law. Duggan & Hughes is a full-service law firm because we believe in providing as much support as possible for our clients. Whatever your legal needs are, we find a way to provide you a solution.

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have an 18,000-square-foot Class A office complex coming in that will house a governmental entity. It will bring a major impact to the redevelopment of that area. City Center is going to change our downtown as well."

MATNEY: "Mauldin never really had a downtown. Where other cities are trying to reinvent, rehabilitate, reimagine their existing downtowns, Mauldin is looking at it from a blank canvas standpoint; to understand what's needed, and work with developers to create a City Center that meets those needs. Mixed use – that liveable, walkable, shop/dine hangout place where you want to come, be with your family, and spend your time and money."

EUBANKS: "We have had a recycling program in effect for over a decade. To reinvigorate that program, six or seven years ago the city encouraged residents to exchange their old 20-gallon recycling bin with a 60-gallon, rollout recycling container, provided at no cost. We saw a tremendous response to that because it was free. We now have a vigorous recycling program with participation in the 30s to low 40s, slightly above our state's percentage rate.

"We're in the process of creating an urban village district, working some sustainable features into that zoning plan. Our downtown, as well as a couple other areas, is going to be very viable for an urban village zoning classification that will direct and provide flexibility for future development. Current codes require developments to have public park areas. One of the better things Mauldin has done over the years is provide for green spaces in the community.

"The City of Mauldin lighting ordinance is one of the most effective in Greenville County at restricting light pollution. Also, our storm water requirements are some of the most robust in Greenville County. We want to make sure as we continue to grow, we plan appropriately for storm water issues. There are areas for infill development. Some have not been developed because of topography or other challenges, and as we continue to update and amend our ordinance, we want to plan properly and facilitate that happening.

"We also have a handful of areas where we are working on annexation with residential, as well as business and commercial use. South Carolina's annexation laws make that a challenge, and I wish that were different because municipalities are economic drivers for our state. It's important that it becomes easier for us to grow to our natural boundaries more than current laws allow."

BROAD: "Mauldin has tremendous redevelopment opportunities for others who have that entrepreneurial spirit. The city, through its foundation and development work, has set itself up to help make businesses that come here, successful. So, if you're hungry and looking for an opportunity, Mauldin is it.

"We have the Best Median Household Income and Best Disposable Income in the Upstate. We are the fourth Smartest City in the state. We've gotten all these accolades the past three years running. Our demographics are off the chart. We leak 30 to 40 million dollars in retail potential out of Mauldin to other areas – hotels, hospitality – the opportunity here is crazy good, and everything is growing this way."

PREFERRED VENDOR

■ **Duggan & Hughes**
www.dugganhughes.com

A full-service law firm in Greer, South Carolina, Duggan & Hughes' practice areas include: State and Federal Civil Trial Practice, Social Security Disability, Personal Injury, Estate Planning and Probate, Workers Compensation, Mediation and Alternative Dispute Resolution, Real Estate, State and Federal Court Appeals, Corporate Law, and Government/Municipal Law.

Sunrise, Florida

A CITY FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

In 1960, Iowa-born developer Norman Johnson paid $9 million for 2,650 acres of land in western Broward County, Florida.

In order to lure prospective buyers – mainly retirees from the northeastern U.S. – to the community he called Sunrise Golf Village, Johnson and his partners built an "upside-down house." The home was completely furnished, and the carport featured an upside-down automobile. The structure became a national attraction that drew thousands and was featured in LIFE Magazine. People came to stand on the ceiling – and many stayed to make their home in the community.

In 1961, Johnson was appointed by Florida Governor Farris Bryant as the first mayor of Sunrise Golf Village, and in 1967 it became a chartered city, with a 1.75 square-mile foot-

AT A GLANCE | SUNRISE, FL

WHAT: A city of 92,000

WHERE: Broward County, southern Florida

WEBSITE: www.sunrisefl.gov

print. The city changed its name to Sunrise in 1971, and experienced significant growth during the ensuing decade. As Broward County began pushing west, Sunrise annexed more and more land, eventually encompassing more than 18 square miles.

Since that time, the City of Sunrise has become one of South Florida's economic powerhouses, built on a foundation of business, tourism, and entertainment. It's a diverse suburban/urban community with an estimated population of more than 93,000 – a number that's expected to increase substantially over the next 20 years. This growth is due to Sunrise's convenient South Florida location, as well as City leaders' commitment to creating a vibrant economic climate that continues to attract new businesses and upscale housing to the area. It's progressive five-member City Commission is helmed by Mayor Michael J. Ryan.

"We are in Broward County, which is in the center of South Florida's tri-county area - Palm Beach County, Broward County, and Miami-Dade County," explains Mayor Ryan. "These three counties have a combined population of approximately six million; that's almost a third of the state's population of 20 million residents. Sunrise is uniquely positioned in the most desirable and central location in Broward County, neighboring the Everglades and just minutes from the Fort Lauderdale beach and airport. With arts, culture, shopping, nightlife, and entertainment for the entire family, we have it all!"

Brown AND Caldwell
Engineers
Scientists
Consultants
Constructors

"From a business perspective, what makes us so attractive and one of the reasons we've seen such growth is because all the major transportation corridors have direct and rapid access to Sunrise," explains City Manager Richard Salamon. "We are within one hour of three major airports and three major seaports. Major roadways – the Sawgrass Expressway, I-75, and I-595 – all intersect in Sunrise, and all have direct linkage to the Florida Turnpike and I-95. So, from Sunrise, you can literally get to anywhere in the state with ease. This makes us very desirable from a logistical perspective because businesses can move people and products very easily in and out of Sunrise."

Salamon says that during the city's first 25 years, it was focused on growing its physical footprint and infrastructure. "Now, we're focused on developing the long-term, sustainable economic future, which for us means developing a very diversified corporate presence here in Sunrise, attracting major corporations and providing them with a welcoming environment in which to work. We pride ourselves on being a very

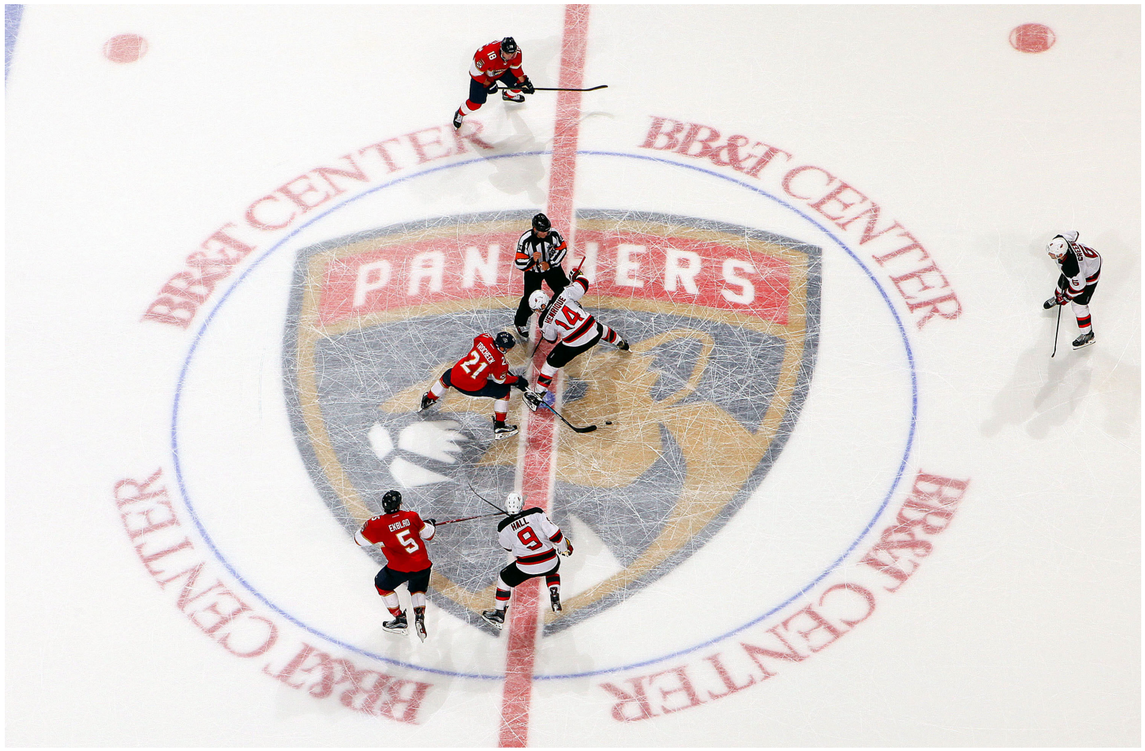
business-friendly community from start to finish. For decades, our message to the business community has been consistent: if you're willing to invest in us, we will invest in you and you can trust that your investment in Sunrise is safe. The City staff and City Commission recognize that we are competing regionally, nationally, and even internationally to attract and retain capital investment, jobs and residents. So we work together to create a supportive environment to get businesses open on time. That may mean providing guidance as some work through issues at a regional level, offering strategic assistance to build and expand, and providing incentives to businesses that intend to invest long-term in Sunrise. We work with businesses, large and small, every step of the way. Sunrise is now recognized as a great place, not only to live, but also to build and grow a business."

If that's Sunrise's master plan, it's already achieved some exemplary results: The city has been home, since 1990, to Sawgrass Mills Mall, one of the largest retail shopping centers in the country. In fact, it's the second most popular tourist destination in the state of Florida, after Disney World. "Sawgrass Mills attracts approximately 40 million visitors a year. Approximately 25 million are visitors from outside the area, and about 12 million are from outside the U.S.," Salamon says. "It's very well-known in Latin America. Cruise ships come into Port Everglades and their shore excursions include shopping for a day at Sawgrass Mills."

The mall has over350 stores across 2.4 million square feet of retail space and sits in a four-square-mile area called the Sawgrass Business and Entertainment District, an already thriving part of the city that is targeted for even more development. "In addition to thousands of homes, we have approximately $3.5 billion worth of corporate investment and more than 30,000 jobs," Salamon reports. "In that same area, over the next ten years or so, we have planned development of another $2.5 billion-plus capital investment generating between 10,000 and 20,000 additional jobs."

Salamon elaborates on other commercial and economic assets: "In addition to the Sawgrass Mills Mall, we have two other significant assets in that area. One is the Sawgrass International Corporate Park, which is the largest office park in South Florida. At over 600 acres in size, the Sawgrass International Corporate Park is home to many major corporations with national and international presence. One new addition is American Express, which just built a 400,000 square-foot regional headquarters housing over 3,200 employees. There are also significant industry clusters in healthcare, insurance, financial services, technology, and biomedical. The roster of corporations operating in Sunrise is impressive, and includes HBO Latin America, Grant Thornton, Emerson, Sprint, New York Life, Cigna, HCA, Centene Health, Marsh Insurance, Fortinet, NCL, Synergistix, Actavis Pharmaceutical, Broadspire, and the University of Florida MBA program.

"The other major asset we have in this area is the BB&T Center, a 20,000-seat arena that's home to the Florida Panthers of the National Hockey League. It's consistently ranked as one of the top ten indoor concert venues in the country. We get all the big names." The $200 million arena is owned by Broward County and surrounded by more than 100 acres of parking and other developable land. Broward recently engaged the Urban



Land Institute (ULI) to conduct a study aimed at developing the property to take advantage of the existing significant attractive assets in Sunrise. Broward County is very interested in developing that area with mixed-use type of development – resorts, hotels, residential, office, and other entertainment options – things that are complimentary to the other developments in the area.

"According to the ULI study, this particular property is well-positioned to become the western, downtown core for Broward County," said Salamon. "The County intends to develop that site over the next 10 to 20 years, and to work with the City, Sawgrass Mills, and other major stakeholders in that area, to become Downtown West Broward. They want to re-brand the entire area as the bookend to Fort Lauderdale."

Any discussion of continued investment in Sunrise must include Metropica, perhaps the most exciting and densely-developed project in Broward County history west of Interstate 95. It will feature some of the tallest structures in the western skyline, soaring some 25+ stories high. "It's a 50-acre site that is programmed for approximately $1.5 billion worth of development," says Salamon. "They're building approximately 20 acres of commercial retail space that will include a fantastic array of restaurants and entertainment venues, shops, a hotel, luxury apartments, and some office over retail. The next 20 acres or so is

slated for condominium/residential development. The developer has broken ground on their first 28-story condominium tower. The adjacent 10 acres of this property is going to be a Class A office park. This will be a very high density, urban development. It's adjacent to the Sawgrass Mills property and directly across from the BB&T Center within the Sawgrass Business and Entertainment District."

"We have another project called Westerra that is owned by one of the preeminent South Florida developers, the Stiles Corporation," Salamon continues. "They're getting ready to get under way. Westerra is a 32-acre parcel and the entitlements include about $500 million worth of mixed-use development. These developments collectively align perfectly with the live, work and play philosophy of our synergistic strategies."

"We also have the 550-acre Sunrise Commerce Center, a light industrial park just a few miles north

of the Sawgrass Business and Entertainment District," Salamon explains. "It includes a 120-acre vacant parcel, one of the largest undeveloped parcels of land in Broward County that is highly attractive for smart development. With easy access to the highway system, the possibilities are endless for the Sunrise Commerce Center."

While Sunrise is growing its economic bounty, Salamon says that the city is concurrently investing in its own facilities and infrastructure, which benefits not only its business community but, perhaps more importantly, its citizens.

"We went to the voters in 2014, and asked them to approve general obligation bonds to enhance, improve, and develop additional parks, leisure, and recreation facilities," he states. "We've issued the first $40 million of bonds and we plan on issuing another $25 million. These funds are being used to improve and expand many of our parks and recreation facilities. We have an incredible diversity of recreation and leisure facilities across the city and we're investing in most of them with this money. We also have started the process of redeveloping our municipal campus, including building a new city hall. As part of this redevelopment, we will be building structured parking, adding a family aquatic facility, expanding our civic center and senior center, and creating a 'great lawn' as part of our outdoor amphitheater expansion."

Sunrise is also a major force in the supply of water and natural gas to the region. The city provides water throughout a 70-square-mile service area that reaches more than 215,000 residential and commercial customers. In addition, Sunrise supplies natural gas to over 10,000 homes and businesses in Sunrise and neighboring cities. "Protecting our significant investment in these utilities, we have a five-year Capital Improvement Program that exceeds $200 million in value," highlighted Salamon. "We are focused on maintaining our dominance as a provider of water and natural gas regionally. So we are constantly reinvesting in our community.

PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Brown And Caldwell Corp.**
  www.brownandcaldwell.com
  Brown and Caldwell, founded in 1947, is the largest engineering consulting firm solely focused on the U.S. environmental sector. Its nationwide network of engineers, scientists, consultants, and constructors has created leading-edge environmental solutions for public agencies and private industry for 70 years.

- **Florida Municipal Insurance Trust (AKA: Florida League of Cities)**
  www.insurance.flcities.com

Sunrise is incredibly fortunate to have a visionary City Commission and a workforce that is completely dedicated to our residents, businesses, and visitors."

Mayor Ryan's passions include developing a sustainable community, focusing on conservation of natural resources, finding long-term solutions to transportation and traffic issues, and providing the public with opportunities for world-class cultural programs and education. "The City Commission has begun implementing a bicycle and pedestrian master plan, adding bike lanes and trails, and even partnering with neighboring cities on additional bike lane and corridor improvement projects," he explains. "We are also starting our first Complete Street projects, where we're partnering with the County's Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Florida Department of Transportation to transform our neighborhoods. At the same time, we are incredibly sensitive to the fact that we are adjacent to the Florida Everglades, a national treasure that we all have an obligation to protect. And, of course, we know a strong community focuses on providing its residents and visitors with access to the arts and intellectual pursuits. In recent years, Sunrise has become one of the premier communities in the United States for the advancement of scholastic chess in public and private schools, and in 2015 Sunrise was named 'Chess City of the Year' by the United States Chess Federation. These efforts and others have been recognized by the United States Conference of Mayors with multiple awards for livability. Our focus on early learning initiatives and quality education standards continues to garner regional and statewide attention."

Today's Sunrise, Florida is a far cry from Norman Johnson's sleepy retirement and golf community. But Salamon and the team at City Hall wouldn't have it any other way. Whether it's facilitating the expansion of its business sector, or enhancing the amenities that help make Sunrise a great place to live, city leaders are optimistic about the future. "It's a very exciting time to be in Sunrise," Salamon declares. "We are confident in our resiliency, and in our vision to make Sunrise not only a City for today, but for the next 50 years and beyond. We truly are a city for today and tomorrow."

ANTIGONISH, NOVA SCOTIA

WHO COULD WANT FOR MORE?

The first European settlement took place in the area that became Antigonish, Nova Scotia, in 1784, when Lt. Colonel Timothy Hierlihy, of the Royal Nova Scotia Volunteer Regiment, received a large land grant surrounding Antigonish Harbor. Hierlihy and his party founded the Dorchester settlement, named for Sir Guy Carleton, who was Governor General of Canada and subsequently Lord Dorchester. By the late 1820s, Dorchester was commonly referred to as Antigonish.

St.F.X. was established in Antigonish in 1855. It was originally a Catholic seminary but was granted full university powers in 1866 by an act of the Nova Scotia House of Assembly. In the 1920s, the university was the source of the Antigonish Movement, which was led by a group of priests and educators, and whose objective was the blending of adult education, co-operatives, microfinance, and rural community development to help small, resource-based communities around Canada's Maritimes improve their economic and social circumstances.

AT A GLANCE | ANTIGONISH, NS

WHAT: A town of 5,000

WHERE: Eastern Nova Scotia, across the bay from Cape Breton Island

WEBSITE: www.townofantigonish.ca

Today, Antigonish is still a small, but bustling rural town of approximately 5,000 - a number that almost doubles when the university is in session. St.F.X is still one of the town's largest employers, along with St. Martha's Regional Hospital. Preserving Antigonish's small-town feel coupled with the necessity of providing services and amenities to its local businesses and residents, is partly the responsibility of Mayor, Laurie Boucher, and Town Planner and Development Officer, Brynn Nheiley.

"Over the past year and a half, we've been working on amending our municipal planning strategy and land use bylaw with a focus on addressing housing needs in town, as well as to provide more flexibility to our commercial property owners," says Nheiley. To achieve that, the town has been making use of what is known as form-based code as a means of regulating land development to achieve a specific urban form. Form-based codes are a new response to the modern challenges of urban sprawl, deterioration of historic neighbourhoods, and pedestrian safety in new developments; they use physical form, rather than separation of uses, as the organizing principle for built structures.

Nheiley explains: "Last year, for example, we created the 'flag lot' (so-called because of their limited street frontage) development opportunity, particularly in commercial zones, where residential flag lots are permitted to be built behind traditional commercial property. That policy allows up to a seven-story building with a floor area ratio of 2.0, considered high density for the Town of Antigonish. The intention there is to establish a more walkable community and to provide as much support to our business community as possible.

"Most recently, the Mayor spearheaded updating an initiative called the 'Commercial Periphery Zone Overlay.' At the edges of our commercial district, we are allowing for form-based code to create a building that looks like, and can potentially operate as, a commercial building with retail or service at ground level street front, but in particular areas we would allow for entirely residential use, while preserving that commercial look to the building.

"On the flip side of that, residential areas which abut against our commercial houses can now operate entirely as a business. Again, we are using form-based code to preserve our historic residen-

tial neighbourhood look, inside that traditional looking home. We see this as a great opportunity to incubate new business in town and, again, focus on creating that walkable neighbourhood and supporting our businesses with more population living close to where their shops and services are.

"It's only in designated areas; we didn't want to put any risk, for example, to the heart of our Main Street – it is important to us that those storefronts operate as store fronts. But on the fringes of our commercial/residential transition zones we wanted to allow more of a market demand as to whether those operate as commercial or residential. We see a wide range of opportunity – for example a clothing retailer or a café could open up in designated residential spaces, as long as the aesthetic of the property

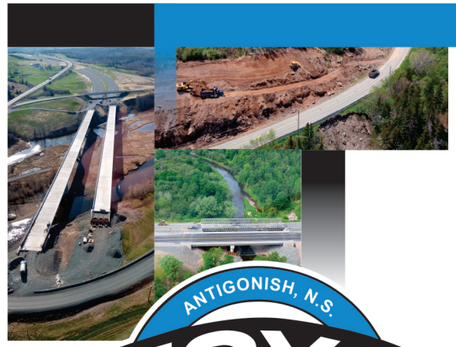
continues to look like our traditional neighbourhood homes."

Tourism is also one of Antigonish's main economic drivers, along with the university and the hospital, and Boucher says that a lot of the town's small businesses rely on the tourism season to supplement their annual income. "We're investigating the possibility of a Business Improvement District," she says. "So, we're looking at other municipalities that have already accomplished this to see the pros and cons, and we're looking at ways we can bolster our tourist season and make sure that people stop in Antigonish on their way either to Cape Breton or the Halifax region. We want to bring people in from other areas and we're looking at the BID as a way to accomplish that."

Even though it's important for Antigonish's leaders to preserve the best of the town's past, they certainly are also looking toward its future. And part of that future revolves around green energy.

Even though it's important for Antigonish's leaders to preserve the best of the town's past, they certainly are also looking toward its future. And part of that future revolves around green energy. "We are a little bit different than other municipalities," says Boucher. "There are five municipalities within Nova Scotia that own their own electric utility, and we are one of those. So, we formed AREA – the Alternative Resource Energy Authority." AREA is a consortium of three towns – Antigonish, Berwick, and Mahone Bay. Together, they own a windmill farm in Ellershouse, Nova Scotia and, today, Antigonish produces 30 percent of its electricity through wind power from that facility.

"We're owners of seven windmills and some construction has now started on the third phase



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of our windmill farm," Boucher says. "When phase three is complete, we will be producing over 40 percent of our electricity from wind power, and will probably be one of the only municipalities to reach the mandate set by the province for the year 2020. That's something we're very proud of and we pass that savings on to our electricity customers and constituents."

In addition, Boucher says that the Town Council recently passed a motion to allow grid-tying, which means that homes and businesses that have photovoltaic panels on their roofs, to create their own electricity, can tie back into the municipal grid to consume electricity when needed, or feed excess capacity back to the grid for a rebate. Since the wind farm consortium has worked so well, Boucher adds that the three AREA municipalities are now investigating the possibility of expanding their electricity generation to include solar technology.

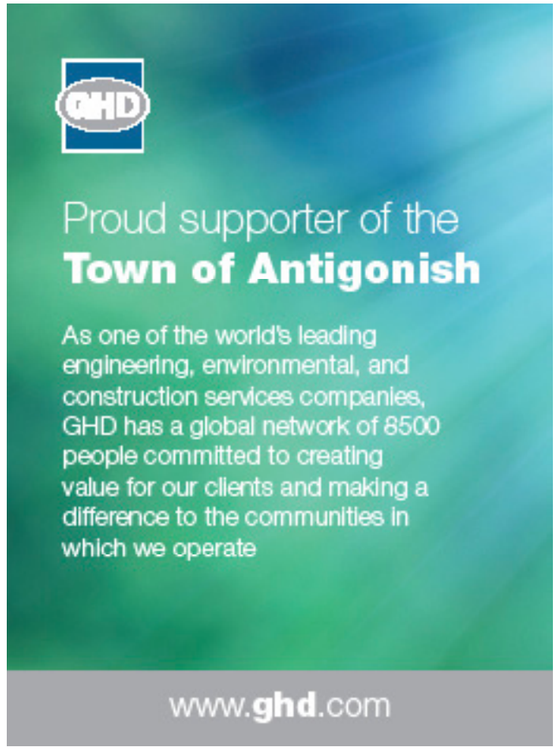
Another aspect of Antigonish that gives this small town a progressive blush is its connection with the university, which Boucher characterizes as symbiotic. "It's an equal relationship," she avers. "They bring so much to our town, but we also offer so much to the university by providing a quality of life that makes it easy to recruit quality staff and quality professors. Also, when parents bring their children here to see if they want to attend St.F.X., often people will remark on the type of town that we are and they want to send their children here.

"On the other hand, as a major employer, the university is essential to the lifeblood of our town. We have students that work in our town. St.F.X. has a Service Learning program where students get credit for volunteering in the community. The students also coach many of our minor sports programs as well as tutor and mentor our youth. The university is a big part of who we are. When something good happens on campus, it's good for the Town of Antigonish, as well. Something else that the university brings to the town is diversity. We have a lot of international students and professors. It enables our town to be progressive."

Nheiley agrees. "Having the university in town causes us to have very vibrant and active community groups; we have amazing restaurants and other lifestyle amenities such as the stage theater; we have a movie theater that most towns our size cannot support," she states. "For a small, rural community, it's an amazingly progressive place. We have a resident base as well as the seasonal student population that pushes the town forward, which is fantastic."

Boucher sums up Antigonish's charms: "It's a quaint town with a rich history. There's a small-town feeling, but it still has the amenities of a city as far as our infrastructure, culture, and our community, which is thriving. We're very close to trails and beautiful beaches, we have a huge sporting community; we have great places to shop."

That's Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Who could want for more?



PREFERRED VENDORS

■ **Nova Construction Co. Ltd.**
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Nova Construction Co. Ltd. provides a wide range of heavy construction, road building, site clearing, and earth moving services. The rental of heavy equipment is also available. The company operates four surface coal mines and owns and operates a regional shopping mall.

■ **GHD**
www.ghd.com

Automotive view

IN THIS ISSUE

GENERAL RV CENTER

GROWING WIDE AND DEEP

GIANT RECREATION WORLD

REMAINING ON TOP

ICE CASTLE FISH HOUSES

“YOU CAN CAMP IN A FISH HOUSE, BUT YOU CAN’T FISH IN A CAMPER!”

AUTOMOTIVE VIEW ONLINE

CONTINENTAL MOTORS GROUP

Still a family affair

THE RECREATIONAL VEHICLE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION

On the rebound

NATIONAL AUTOMOBILE DEALERS ASSOCIATION

Best practices to improve dealer performance in the digital age

GENERAL RV CENTER

GROWING WIDE AND DEEP

"We're the largest family-owned RV group in the country," declares Loren Baidas, President of General RV Center, the award-winning company that sells and services motorhomes and travel trailers from its eleven locations in six states. "My grandfather started the business in 1962. He had owned a number of gas stations and decided, after taking his family on a vacation, that RVing was something that was going to be around for a long time. He decided to get out of the gas stations and start selling RVs. It started from one location and we're now up to eleven and growing."

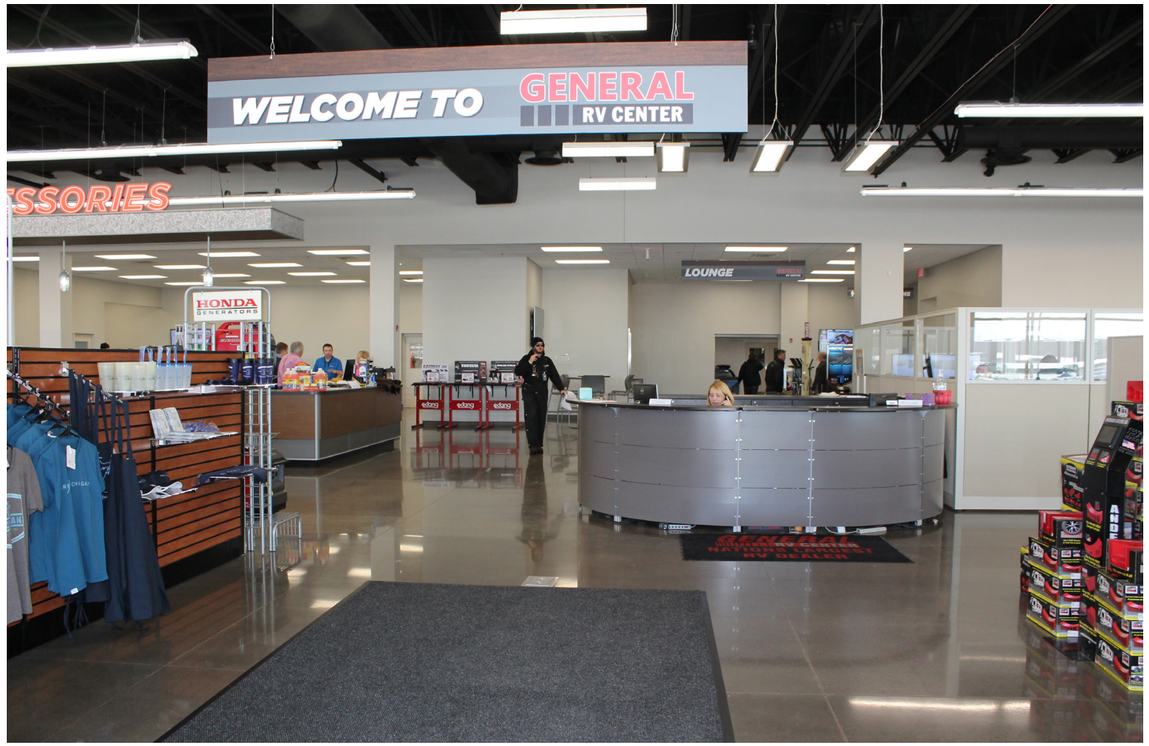
AT A GLANCE
GENERAL RV CENTER

WHAT: A seller and servicer of motorhomes and travel trailers

WHERE: Wixom, Michigan

WEBSITE: www.generalrv.com

Today, General RV Center has 1,300 employees working out of its six stores in Michigan, one in Ohio, one in Illinois, one in Utah, and two in Florida. Among them, they sell over 15,000 new and used RVs a year. And, unlike many other RV dealerships, countrywide, all of the company's dealerships were built from



the ground up. "We haven't done any dealer acquisitions," Baidas says. "In some cases we had a small store that grew to maximum capacity, so we built a bigger store nearby and closed the small one. So it's all been organic and internal growth."

Baidas maintains that the company's growth plan has always been strategic, stressing the notion that "bigger isn't always better – better is better. So, when we look at growth and opportunities, we want to make sure it's an opportunity to make the company better and that we have the personnel to do it well," he states. "We're always looking for opportunities, not just in regional areas within our marketplace, but outside of our current footprint. We get calls from dealers who are trying to sell out, but again, that's not our growth model. If we find a market that we feel is underserved and a place where

we can walk in and our services would allow us to be one of the best, if not the best in that market territory within a year or two, those are the opportunities we look at. We're not just going to grow for growth's sake."

Baidas believes that General RV Center differentiates itself from the competition because of several factors. "The biggest thing is relationships," he asserts. "We have great relationships with our manufacturers, making sure that we get the best product that is available in the marketplace; in negotiating good deals and getting good programs that we can pass along to our consumers. That's very important for us. The relationship with our employees is also important. We want to provide a great working space for them – not just for today, but for the long term. We have a lot of tenured employees here; we have a couple of people who have been here 35 or 40 years, because it's a great place to work. The last part is our relationship with our consumers – making sure they have a great experience from the time they walk in the door, to finding the right RV, to delivery, and then to the ownership experience. We're not just trying to sell you something; we're trying to help you into a lifestyle and help you enjoy it as

THE ONE HOOK UP YOU WON'T REGRET. EVER.

much as possible.

"The only other thing I would add is that we continue to reinvest in our facilities. Three fourths of our facilities are dedicated to service after the sale. When we came out of the Recession, we recognized that we needed to grow our service capacity even though we were probably one of the leaders in the industry as far as service capacity based off of sales. So we've more than doubled our service capacity at every single store over the last five years. And there are some dealerships out there that don't spend a lot of time and energy and focus on that. So those are definitely some significant differentiations."

Regarding General RV Center's consumers, Baidas takes issue with the notion that all RV owners are Baby Boomers and retirees. "I think that's part of the misunderstanding of the RV industry," he avers, "that it's 55 to 75 year-old people buying these RVs and that's all it is. And it's not. We're seeing newer buyers come into the marketplace. I look at the increase that we're seeing in the industry over the last year or two, and the significant part is from a younger crowd. It's first-time buyers; it's families and people getting away for the weekend or a week here and there; it's people that haven't owned an RV before and they want to try the RV lifestyle. Maybe they did it as a kid with their parents or grandparents and they want to provide that for their own kids."

Baidas adds that a big reason he believes that

VALUE THAT IS STROMBERG STRONG

Founded by a man with an outstanding work ethic, the company Stromberg Carlson Products, Inc. is in its third generation in the RV aftermarket business. David Stromberg was a man who would roll up his sleeves and do any job that needed to be done. He did whatever it took to find a solution, and believes no one was above honest, hard work.

Bob Brammer Sr. traveled through a young industry, cementing relationships and meeting the needs of the company's customers. He believed a person's word was their bond and he focused on the relationship with the customer, knowing they were the most important part of the business.

Now Charlie and Bob Brammer Jr. are the third generation and the lessons from the first two generations are hammered home. The hard work and dedication to clients helps them serve needs in such a way where success is the only option. Until they understand what lies ahead for their customers we can not orchestrate our business, leading to a service and dedication unlike most others.

Stromberg Carlson Products, Inc. has served the RV aftermarket for more than 54 years. We are located in Traverse City, Michigan, but our products are available at RV dealers.

www.strombergcarlson.com

a younger demographic has taken to the RV lifestyle has been the manufacturers' drive to add more creature comforts and more bells and whistles to their offerings. "In the last number of years, flat screen TVs have been a big improvement," he says. "You can put a TV just about anywhere, now. Six or seven years ago, it just wasn't affordable. There are outside camp kitchens; more slide-outs to make more space. The technology has gotten significantly better."

As for the future, Baidas says that expanding to more locations is less important than making sure the company continues to offer the best in product, pricing, and service. "For us, it's about what do we do every day that makes us a better company? What items can we work on to make us a better company today and tomorrow?" he

posits. "So, training and development is an area that we're going to spend a lot of time on. We're going to train and develop our people better; we're going to give them resources to make them better at their jobs. We just spent money on Dale Carnegie training for our managers and our key personnel to get them exposure to training they probably hadn't had before. We feel like we have the best people and we want to give them more tools to be successful."

"So, we're continuing to find ways to reinvest in not just us, but in our customers and in the industry," Baidas states, summing up. "Those things are going to continue. We believe we can provide a better experience all the way through the sales and ownership process that most dealerships can provide. It's in our DNA and it's easy to see when you walk in the door. We're going to be here tomorrow, and we're going to work really hard to make sure you don't miss a vacation."

PREFERRED VENDORS

■ **Stromberg Carlson Products, Inc.**
www.strombergcarlson.com

Stromberg Carlson Products, Inc., located in Traverse City, MI, is a third-generation company that has served the RV aftermarket for over 54 years. The company was founded by David Stromberg, and is now run by his grandsons, Robert Brammer Jr. and Charles A. Brammer. Its products are available nationwide, and include: fifth wheel tailgates, RV handrails, steps and accessories, cargo storage and carriers, RV jacks, and more.

■ **Wiper Technologies by Diesel Equipment**
www.dieselequipment.com

GIANT Recreation WORLD

REMAINING ON TOP

Giant Recreation World is a family-owned and operated RV dealership, based in Winter Garden, Florida that was founded in 1976, by Don McNamara. "My father was running the location for Coachman Industries, under a program they called Dealer Development," says current President and CEO, Larry McNamara. "At the time, Coachman Industries was trying to increase their dealer body, so they would give individuals the opportunity to work for a salary and then purchase the dealership location. It didn't take my father long to purchase it, which

AT A GLANCE
GIANT RECREATION WORLD

WHAT: A family-owned and operated RV dealership

WHERE: Winter Garden, Florida

WEBSITE: www.giantrecreationworld.com

> I cut higher-level employees' salaries; we made a lot of hourly employees, part-time, and we struggled through the hard times. We were still doing business because of our great reputation, quality service and loyal customer base.
>
> **LARRY MCNAMARA**
> PRESIDENT AND CEO

was part of the deal when they hired him to be their General Manager. My father is still heavily involved; he works part time five or six days a week guiding me to be my best and live up to my potential; he's a great visionary and mentor."

Today, in addition to its flagship location, Giant Recreation World has two other outlets, both of which were recently moved from their original sites to land that the company bought during the 2008 Great Recession. "We purchased a couple of highly visible properties, one of which was bank-owned, that we felt would be a great investment for the future of our company," McNamara explains. "Our end goal was to move our dealerships to better locations to better fight the big name-brand, national dealers. Our previous Ormond Beach location had been there for over 20 years; now it has been moved about a mile down the road to Destination Daytona. The new facility has good I-95 frontage and is a popular location with several anchor retail establishments that cater to outdoor enthusiasts. It was the perfect fit. The third location is in Palm Bay and it has excellent I-95 frontage as well. Prior to the move it was in Melbourne, and before that it was in Cocoa. That location had also been around for 20-plus years. Both of those buildings have a similar design, minus a couple of service bays. The new locations allow potential customers driving by on I-95 the opportunity to notice us and increase dealership traffic on the lots."

In fact, even though the new locations have only been open for several months, McNamara says, "I only expected a 25 percent increase in sales; pleasantly, business has almost doubled

since relocating two of our locations and expanding our Winter Garden location." In addition, because of their more visible locations, he doesn't need to spend as much on advertising to get customers to visit them.

"At the Winter Garden location, we recently purchased our neighboring competitor dealership, which was Leisure Time RV," says McNamara. "We didn't buy the business; we bought the property. So, we were able to expand our original location, which was landlocked for years and years. The expansion gave us a whole lot more frontage on the busy Highway 50. Some of the new offerings at Winter Garden are golf carts, ATVs and towing trucks. We also offer Rhino Lining for the local car and truck dealers."

Between the three locations, Giant Recreation World has about 130 full-time employees and 25

part-time. McNamara proudly reports that during the 2008 Great Recession, when many RV dealerships went under, his company didn't lose a single employee. "I cut higher-level employees' salaries; we made a lot of hourly employees, part-time, and we struggled through the hard times. We were still doing business because of our great reputation, quality service and loyal customer base," he says.

McNamara believes that another reason that the company remained solvent during the down years was because of the exclusive benefits that its customers receive when they purchase their RV from Giant Recreation World. These benefits include a lifetime RV warranty on all new and qualifying used RVs at no cost to the customer that pays for parts and labor for their vehicles, and membership in both the Priority RV Service Network, and their exclusive VIP Camping Club.

"The Priority RV Network is the largest network of dealers in North America," says McNamara. "We sign a contract with each other saying that if one of their customers is at our location and they have a problem that's keeping them from enjoying their RV, they can come to the front of the service line just as if they were one of our own customers. It's been a great success while competing with the national dealers. Our VIP Camping Club gives people a reason to use their RV." The VIP Camping Club features monthly hosted campouts and an annual rally with fellow customers and the Giant Recreation World staff. "Because of our Camp-

ing Club, we can promote the RV lifestyle," he adds. "They enjoy spending the time with us. We have a very tight-knit group of customers and employees."

Going forward, McNamara says that new locations are a possibility in the future. "Now that I've successfully moved our locations, we will look elsewhere," he avers, "maybe south on our eastern coast; maybe start working on the I-75 corridor; and maybe even the Gainesville/Ocala area."

Meanwhile, McNamara stresses that the company will continue to work hard at keeping its customer service positive. "Anyone can pick up the phone and call me at any time; plus my email address is on the front page of our website," he states. "I ask people to contact me if there is any type of problem. I send out a postage paid return survey card to every customer that purchases an RV from us or has service work done at Giant Recreation World. My mailbox is consistently full of reply cards, which I use for continuous training and improving. Since I started doing this, our customer satisfaction rate has gone to the high 90s. I am proud that we have over 45,000 happy local customers who call Giant Recreation World their Hometown RV Dealer. We're very excited about the future, and we see consistent growth in our industry. Our employees and our customers are very loyal – and that is why we continue to grow and remain on top."

NO MESS! NO STRESS!
You're Not Protected Unless You're
DURATAIN PROTECTED
What Your Customers Want & Need

PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Duratain**
  www.duratain.info
- **Blue Ox**
  www.blueoxbungalows.com
- **Eco Pro Products**
  www.ecoproproducts.com

LONG VIEW RV SUPERSTORES

THROUGH GOOD TIMES AND BAD

Fran and Shirley Roberts opened their original Long View RV Superstore in 1959, in Greenfield, Massachusetts, not far from the Long View observation tower on the town's Mohawk Trail. The tower, with its three-state view from the top, supplied the company's name and is still part of its logo, almost 60 years later. In 1984, the business was moved to a five acre site in Northampton, MA, and, in 1993, the acquisition of a prime location in Windsor Locks, CT brought with it the need for a new name that would better suit the company that now had two major facilities. So, Long View RV SuperStores (plural) was born.

In 2000, Long View opened a sales outlet in Canaan, NY; followed by the establishment of three locations in

AT A GLANCE
LONG VIEW RV SUPERCENTERS

WHAT: A family-owned and operated RV dealership

WHERE: Windsor Locks, Connecticut

WEBSITE: www.longviewrv.com

Florida – Leesburg and Kissimmee in 2001, and Tampa, in 2004. The company was growing rapidly, and times were good, but things turned sour during the Great Recession. In order to survive, Frank Roberts, company President and son of Fran and Shirley, says, "We had to work harder than everyone else. But the good thing is, our customer service is so much better than everyone else's, and the loyalty from our customers is what made us keep going when things turned down."

Customer loyalty, notwithstanding, the economic downturn hit the RV industry particularly hard, and downsizing and consolidation also helped Long View RV Superstores weather the storm. In 2009, the

Northampton property was sold and its inventory consolidated at the larger Connecticut facility. Then, the Florida properties were sold, outright. Today, two outlets remain – Windsor Locks and Canaan.

But since that time, the RV sector has rebounded and so has Long View. "The industry is on track for 490,000 units; last year was a record with 435,000," says Roberts. "There's a real bottleneck right now in production and the dealers getting enough inventory. There's a greater demand right now than what is coming out of the factories." Long View's rebound can be inferred by last summer's complete renovation of the Connecticut dealership. "New service department, new parts department, new sales department, new everything at the Windsor Locks location," Roberts reports.

Through it all, Long View RV Superstores is still known as "New England's Largest and Oldest Fami-

ly Owned and Operated RV Dealership," and it still sells all classes of new and used RVs, travel trailers, fifth wheels, park models, toy haulers, and tent campers. It represents over two dozen brands from such manufacturers as Forest River, Gulf Stream, Hymer, Keystone, K-Z, Thor Motor Coach, and Winnebago. Its services include: roof maintenance, appliance services, general and engine maintenance, winterizing and cleaning services, and product installation. Its Parts and Accessories Department offers a wide supply of items which can be purchased onsite or bought, online.

During good times and bad, though, Roberts and his long-time staff remember that the most important thing is to just keep satisfying their customers. Service Manager of 23 years, Joe Nero, puts it this way: "I'd say one of the things that we do differently – a lot of dealers 'date' their customers and we 'marry' them. We want them to be part of our family; we help them on their vacations; we help them on their weekends; any one of us will talk them through a problem because we have so much experience in the industry. We'll help them on nights, weekends; that's one thing that we bring to the table that a lot of dealers don't."

Controller, Molly Meehan adds: "This is a family business; I'm the newest person in management at Long View, and I've been here over ten years. It feels like a family here and I think that's how we can keep our customer service so high. We work as a great team."

Long View is also a member of the Priority RV Network. "We have 135 dealerships across the United States and parts of Canada," Roberts explains. "If the customer breaks down in Florida, they pick up the phone, call our service department, we book the appointment for them and hopefully, they are in and out of there within a day."

With over 30 years in the RV business, Frank Roberts has seen it all. Still, he is cautiously optimistic about the future of the business he inherited from Fran and Shirley. "With no oil embargos, with no spike in interest rates, this business will keep growing," he avers. "This is what people work hard for their whole lives. So that when they're finished working, they want to retire and enjoy time with their families."

Frank Roberts and his Long View RV Superstores family intend on helping those people get on their way.

PREFERRED VENDORS

- **KZ RV**
  www.kz-rv.com

  K.Z., Inc., a subsidiary of Thor Industries, Inc., is a manufacturer of travel trailers, fifth wheels, and toy haulers to fit a variety of lifestyles.

- **Olender's of Enfield Region Inc.**
  www.olenders.com

Long View RV Superstores is the largest and oldest family-operated RV retail chain in the world. Come in and check out their complete line of Durango lightweight, full-profile, luxury fifth wheels today!

KZ RV
EST. 1972

Vernon
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www.olenders.com

ICE CASTLE FISH HOUSES

"YOU CAN CAMP IN A FISH HOUSE, BUT YOU CAN'T FISH IN A CAMPER!"

Move over cold, lonely fishing hut… and say hello to the ultra-tweaked, state-of-the-art, Ice Castle Fish House on wheels. These customized recreational vehicles act as a home-away-from-home for ice fishing on the frozen tundra, hunting in the fall, or in the role of a luxury camper. Family-owned American Surplus & Manufacturing (AS&M), better known as Ice Castle Fish Houses, has come full throttle; starting out as a small shop in 1993, and growing to become the largest manufacturer of premium portable ice fish houses in the state of Minnesota.

Brett Drexler, General Manager and son of founder Jeff Drexler, wants to get the word out that "ice fishing is not roughing it any more! That used to be the case – you'd go out on the ice with Grandpa and a bucket and sit there in all kinds of weather conditions. But now you've

AT A GLANCE
ICE CASTLE FISH HOUSES

WHAT: Largest manufacturer of 'fish houses on wheels' in the world

WHERE: Montevideo, Minnesota

WEBSITE: www.icecastlefh.com

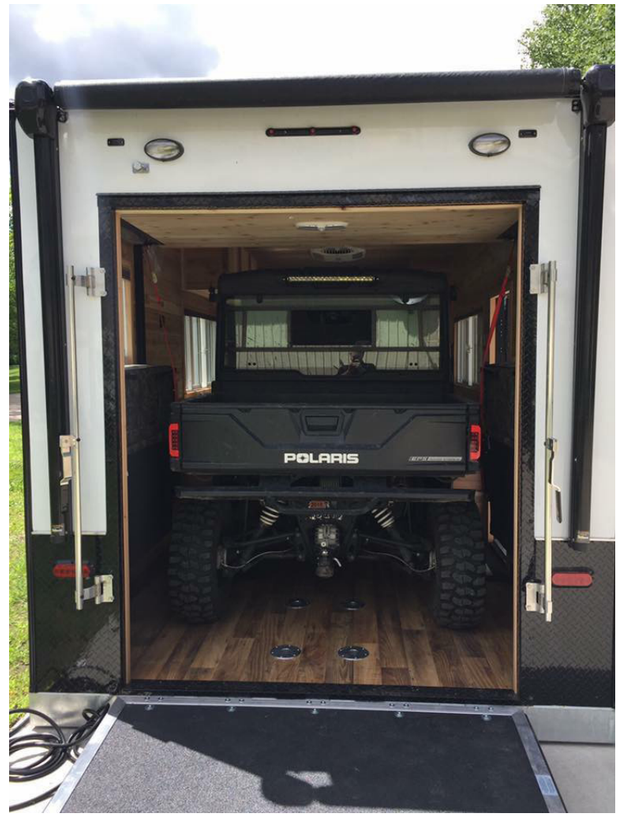
got the luxuries of satellite television, sofas, recliners, fireplaces, big screen TVs. You name it, we've got it. That's getting more families out there; more women involved. You all know about Minnesota winters… they're cold. People don't like them. The weather hurts your face. But now, with Ice Castle, it's giving people the opportunity to go out and enjoy the weather without being stuck in the uncomfortable conditions."

Today, Ice Castle Fish Houses is known as an innovative leader in the recreational vehicle industry, but its roots go back to simple beginnings as American Surplus & Manufacturing (AS&M). Drexler relates, "It started in 1993 as just a basic surplus store. But my Dad, Jeff, had a lengthy background in manufacturing. He moved to Minnesota from Wisconsin to work at Friendship Homes, which is a mobile home plant. From there he started building wishing wells and storage sheds as a side business."

Milaca Unclaimed Freight was a dealer for the sheds, and one day in 1997 one of their managers asked, "Why don't you build us a fish house?" With that single request, the line was cast. Drexler continues, "So, we built a 6 ½-foot-by-12-foot wheeled

fish house. Just a small one, very basic, and it sold before it even hit the store. From there it started snowballing. What really set us apart was when we started putting in full RV packages four of five years ago. The complete water system – the shower, running water, toilet, sink – so, now our product is used in all seasons."

To date, Ice Castle has built over 20,000 units. Drexler notes that 80 percent of the models they are building now are pre-sold; retail orders received at the plant by email from a large dealer network. Clients are spoiled for choice with over 40 different models to choose from. At present, the bestselling fish house model is the 8'x16' Lake of the Woods Hybrid and the bestselling RV model is the 8'x17' Ice Castle RV Edition.



The customizable aspect of what is essentially a motorhome continues to wow consumers and competition, alike. Designs are available to accommodate every fishing lifestyle through an amazing menu of options. A large bay window in the rear? Satellite TV? The basic Ice Fish shack can be converted into a luxury Ice Fish House home, and all models have maintenance-free aluminum siding. Even better, the road-licensed Ice Fish House features deluxe double-pulley suspension with retractable wheels, so it can be used year-round; as a hunting shack in the fall, or a trailer for hauling snowmobiles, four wheelers, motorcycles and other toys in the winter, spring and summer months.

Ice Castle products have sold as far west as Wyoming, and as far east as New York. “Some of the units are basically RV trailers,” says Drexler. “Our customers are typically outdoorsmen – we attract hunters, fishermen and women – but we’re also getting people who will just buy our product for a camper. We do a lot of work with handicapped people; a lot of veterans who aren’t as mobile. Unlike a regular camper, our chassis goes right to the ground. You can be down and set up in an Ice Castle in five minutes, compared to a normal RV where it’s necessary to use levelling jacks. You don’t have to do that with ours, it just sits on the ground or the ice.”

The company has grown from 8-12 employees at its inception, to 160 employees during peak demand. Presently, about 130 people are on the payroll. With success comes the need for expansion, and Ice Castle is always on the grow. A 12,000-square-foot addition is in progress; one of numerous additions incorporated into the facility over the last five years to keep up with the growing demand. One of the reasons for the ever-increasing sales is attention paid to improving the product in practical and innovative ways, such as incorporating urethane insulation, which many other camper outfits do not. The Ice Castle Arctic Package features urethane insulation under the floor, in the ceiling and walls to improve the comfort level and lower the heating cost.

Drexler says his company actually fared well

during the recent recession. "That was one of our better years, for some reason – maybe it was our price? A good-sized unit sells from $12,000 up to $40,000. I think we offer a price range that a lot of companies can't hit. We did very well during the recession. We do a lot of business in the Elkhart Indiana region. That's where a lot of our supplies come from. We definitely saw some suppliers go through tougher times. It wasn't pretty but we stuck in there, and we've been growing ever since."

Ice Castle is proud to support and partner with local businesses. Currently, they have 24 Minnesota companies supplying products that go into or on each fish house. Drexler makes particular mention of some valued long-time relationships: "Lippert Components make anything and everything in the camper industry, so we do a lot of business with those guys.

Foremost, we get a lot of supplies from Patrick Industries … they've really grown in the last two years. They've been buying up companies left and right. AMC Aluminum is where I get all my metal. I send three trucks a week down to Indiana for supplies."

Drexler has several great ideas for growing the business, and a strong passion to see them through. "In the next few years, I would like to stretch our demographic reach more into the west. More of the rugged areas like Colorado, Utah, and I'd like to attract more of the elk hunters. And even down south, with the amount of hunting that goes down. Basically, these can be mobile hunting shacks. So, I'd like to see what we can get into there. We've had a lot of auctioneer companies approach us to build auction toppers and off-clerking trailers, because I know there aren't many people doing that anymore and there is a growing market.

"We have a separate business, Greater Minnesota Rentals, where

> A good-sized unit sells from $12,000 up to $40,000. I think we offer a price range that a lot of companies can't hit. We did very well during the recession. … It wasn't pretty but we stuck in there, and we've been growing ever since.
>
> **BRETT DREXLER**
> GENERAL MANAGER

we rent out about 25 shacks throughout the winter on Red Lake. But the bulk of our business is sales. In fact, one of our dealers just sold 35 units over a weekend. That's pretty good for what you would call an ice house. Many of our exclusive features, and perhaps the greatest advancement of RV certified models, have come from AS&M listening to customer/dealer input. Adding AC units at customers' request triggered adding water and wastewater holding tanks, which set us into motion to earn the RVIA certification in 2010. Providing an All-Season RV, equipped with the right materials to handle harsh weather conditions is a product we are proud to offer. We're seeing more and more people discovering the benefits of Ice Castle over just owning a standard RV. Here, they don't have to pay insurance for two different items; they don't have to make payments for a fish house and a camper. You're all in one.

"What's important with Ice Castle is obviously our customers, and our ability to take their ideas and make them a reality. Customization. We customize these things like no others. There's just one thing: though we do provide big access holes in the bottom of the unit to drop your line and fish… you still have to drill through the ice."

PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Clarkfield Enterprises**
  www.clarkfieldoutdoors.com

- **AC Nelsen RV**
  www.acnrv.com

CLEAN SEAL

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE RV AND TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY

Clean Seal, Inc. has been serving the aftermarket automotive, marine, military, recreational vehicle, and transportation industries since 1978 - and grown every year! The company provides original equipment manufacturers and fabricators with high quality seals that are compounded, mixed, tested, and produced using the most advanced equipment and technologies available to the polymer industry. Clean Seal's plant in South Bend, Indiana is centrally located just 1 1/2 hours from Chicago, 3 1/2 hours from Detroit, and 2 1/2 hours from Indianapolis.

For four decades, Clean Seal, Inc. has provided superior service to diverse industries. A full complement of experienced staff helps guide customer choices from project start to application of the product selected, recommending the most effective material and profile shape for the service environment. Uniform materials and design are critical to any manufacturing process, and Clean Seal's strict adherence to quality control procedures and ISO 9001:2015 certi-

fication assures that all products meet specific tolerances for project requirements.

An extensive product line includes stock extruded rubber seals, custom extruded rubber seals, grip seals, trim seals, trim moldings, automotive hose, EPHA hose protection parts, extruded plastics parts, EMI shielding, and custom manufactured metal springs. Along with a variety of secondary operations that make parts application easier.

Clean Seal customers appreciate the quality products, huge inventory, and low minimum requirements. And, while the company is large enough to service major recreational vehicle manufacturers, it's still small enough to offer the personal service people expect and enjoy.

Jeremy Klotz, Vice President of Operations/ General Manager for Clean Seal, Inc., shares the innovative history of the company, and what makes it stand out, today, in a very competitive marketplace. He explains, "About 40 years ago, the original owners of Clean Seal were looking at the RV industry and what they were doing to seal windows. They used a sticky butyl material around the window frame, put the window in the side wall of the RV unit, and the stuff would eventually soften up in the heat and come down the side of the vehicle. Our owners thought there had to be a better way."

AT A GLANCE
CLEAN SEAL, LLC

WHAT: Full-service source for standard and custom-designed seals and related products for the transportation industry.

WHERE: South Bend, Indiana

WEBSITE: www.cleanseal.com

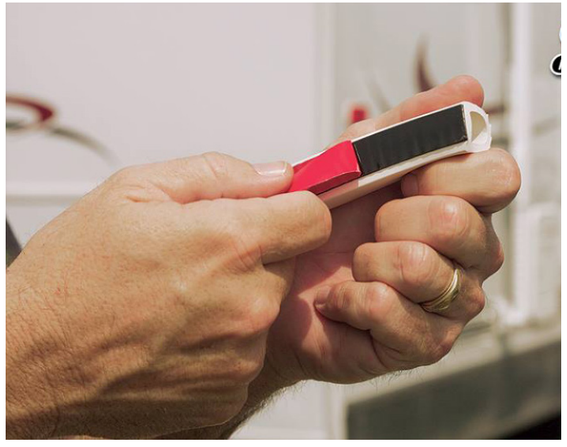
True entrepreneurs to the core, they saw there was a need and set to work at the kitchen table, applying adhesive to extruded rubber. The solution worked well, so they started using the material for windows and doors, and that evolved into many other applications. The name Clean Seal came about because, in the summer, the traditional butyl mixture would ooze out, leaving dirty-looking black streaks. The new rubber seal was clean, no residue.

Clean Seal celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2018. Original owner, Juanita Moore, had two partners when the business began; they couldn't see the vision behind it, but Moore held on and saw the potential. The other partners ended up selling out to her before the company really got moving. Juanita took the reins and hired Bill Dawson the first year. A natural salesman

with keen instincts, Dawson went out and sold and sold, and got people interested. Today, he is the Sr. Vice President of Clean Seal.

Klotz notes, "We sell to big and small manufacturers of RVs and, we also branched out into truck, bus, and boat markets over the last two decades. We have an automotive hose division, where we supply fuel hoses, and we're getting a program for springs going, which we sell to firearms manufacturers. For the future, we're open to everything."

Clean Seal has a single location in South Bend with about 45 employees; conveniently situated close to Elkhart, where a lot of RVs are manufactured. Competition on the rubber side of the business is intense. Most of those products are a standard profile, widely available. Clean Seal carries many off-the-shelf items, but also sells

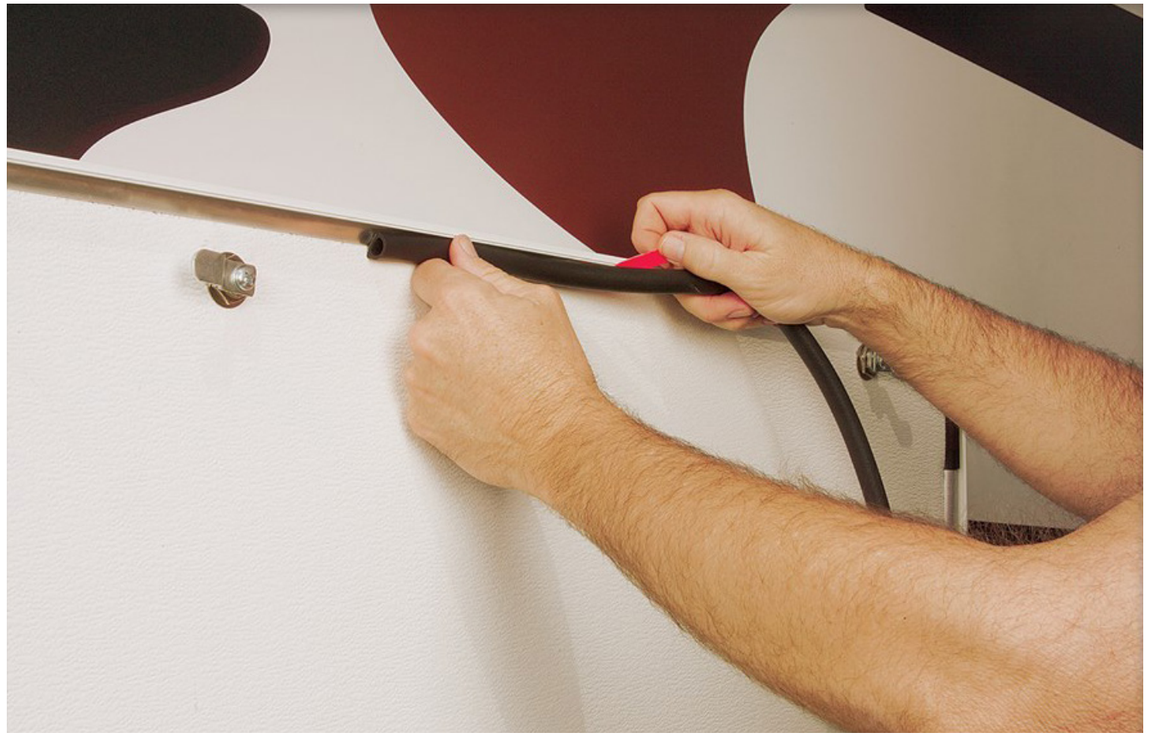


a good amount of proprietary parts, for when a customer needs a specific shape and size. The customer pays a set-up fee or tooling fee, and the company will custom make the product.

"We are strictly a business to business operation," says Klotz. "We try to stay away from the consumer side. We know we can't service the individual properly because we have minimums we have to meet. But we do have distributors out there that we'll send individuals to when they call. As with any smart business, we're always interested in what we can add to our product line. We've tried a few things in the past and some haven't panned out, but we really look at what fits with our current customers that we could also branch out into other markets."

Springs are a stretch from what Clean Seal normally produces. "There was a lot of education involved. When you think of a spring, you think of the standard compression kind – and that's not something we're going to get into because they're already mass produced. We tried to go more toward the custom side, looking at specific needs, where we can help the customer figure out what's required, and get them something that really works for their application."

In an industry with intense competition, Clean Seal has created valuable relationships with suppliers and customers, and always maintained a high regard for quality products and quality service over the years. Klotz adds, "With a new product, we would go back to our current customer base and say, 'Yes, we're doing such and such.' With springs, we didn't find that was effective. There wasn't a need for it. It took a few years to determine we had to go a different direction, and we finally got into a new market arena."



In an industry with intense competition, Clean Seal has created valuable relationships with suppliers and customers, and always maintained a high regard for quality products and quality service over the years.

In the next five years, Clean Seal has plans for more additions to the product line. They are currently doing some molded hose for engines – all custom at this point – very specific to individual customers. Whereas, the standard hose line they sell is a fuel injection hose, fuel fill hose, found on many types of machinery and could be used by anyone. But more custom work is the direction the company is heading.

One of many valuable long-term suppliers is 3M. Klotz says, "We've worked with them for a long time, and use a lot of their heat-activated tape systems to apply our products. On the customer side, it's hit and miss. We've held onto long-term relationships with the larger RV manufacturers, though, it's a little more difficult in this generation when some of the guys that started these companies are retiring. So, we need to develop new relationships and earn their trust all over again.

"At Clean Seal, we care about our customers. We're not just out there to make a fast buck, and then send them down the road. I want to treat a customer how I would like to be treated from a supplier. That is so important. I talk often with our production staff about the appearance of the product, the quality of the product, and I usually end with 'treat the product like you would be buying it.' Just put yourself in the customer's shoes. Make sure you're not sending anything out that door that you wouldn't personally use yourself. Treat the customer with respect and care, making sure it's the right product and the right fit for them. That way, you develop complete satisfaction and trust.'"

PSSI helps manufacturers and distributors install and deploy full enterprise software systems. Our emphasis is on meeting each client's unique business and workflow requirements.
Our deeply experienced and certified team of business consultants utilizes a variety of software tools that can improve your team's productivity, including Microsoft Dynamics NAV, the solution deployed at Clean Seal.
Proud provider of Clean Seal's ERP solutions for over
20 YEARS
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For more information call or visit us online:
PSSI
Productivity Strategies & Solutions, Inc.

PREFERRED VENDOR

- **P.S.S.I.**
  www.pssiusa.com

The Napleton Automotive Group

AT A GLANCE
THE NAPLETON AUTOMOTIVE GROUP

WHAT: An automotive dealership with 32 locations in six states

WHERE: Headquarters in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois

WEBSITE: www.ednapleton.com

SECOND TO NONE SINCE 1931

The Napleton Automotive Group, with headquarters in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois, was founded in 1931, when Edward W. Napleton opened his first automotive business on Chicago's South Side with a $700 loan. "My great-grandfather opened a Buick sub-service station, which was not a full-sized new car dealership, but he was allowed to service Buicks out of there," says Kristen Napleton, Vice President of Corporate Development, and a fourth-generation family member.

"Shortly after that, my grandfather opened a DeSoto store where he worked for many years. In 1961, my family found out via a radio announcement, that

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LOTLINX®

Check us out at www.LotLinx.com.

LotLinx is revolutionizing the way car dealers market their inventory online. Car dealers are becoming extremely savvy on how to connect with potential car buyers via their digital devices – and LotLinx is powering this trend with the auto industry's first direct-linking technology platform, supplying new and used vehicle inventory to auto sites reaching 65 million consumers each month. LotLinx is seamlessly connecting in-market car shoppers with dealer websites.

In 2010, founders Len Short, Robert Vucic, Jason Knight and Denise Chudy realized an area of need in the automotive buying industry. Realizing there were too many layers between automotive dealers and shoppers, they created a method that eliminated the middleman and tore down third-party walls between dealers and their customers. They began a process that provided a more positive and efficient experience for dealerships and consumers alike.

But LotLinx is more than just another portal site – it is the only platform that begins with determining a dealer's inventory needs, and uses cutting edge technology and machine learning to put specific cars in front of specific buyers – all the while making it easy to access meaningful data on ROI. All for a simple cost per unique shopper, with completely transparent pricing. The marketing platform provides several channels to merchandise inventory at the VIN level.

LotLinx's technology replaces forms on third-party web sites with direct links that take potential buyers directly to a dealer's vehicle detail page – all at a higher conversion rate and for a fraction of the cost of other options online. LotLinx doesn't just generate web traffic, they convert shoppers into buyers and show an increased level of engagement. LotLinx reaches more than 85 percent of all online car buyers and powers more than 500 automotive search sites.

Furthermore, LotLinx solves the major problems dealers can have when syndicating their inventory on third-party sites: conversion diversion, misaligned messaging, shared leads and inconclusive reporting. With LotLinx, these issues are solved and dealers are delivered a cost-effective, transparent way of VDP advertising. Google Analytics allows dealers to audit invoices and track conversion rates and website clicks in a fully transparent solution.

Since their 2010 founding, LotLinx has grown quickly and consistently. The company has grown to be thousands of dealers strong, including hundreds of rooftops under the Nation's Top 100 Auto Groups. LotLinx partners with OEMs directly, is approved for co-op programs and works with a wide network of resellers.

The automotive retail industry is experiencing a digital revolution, and LotLinx is leading the way.

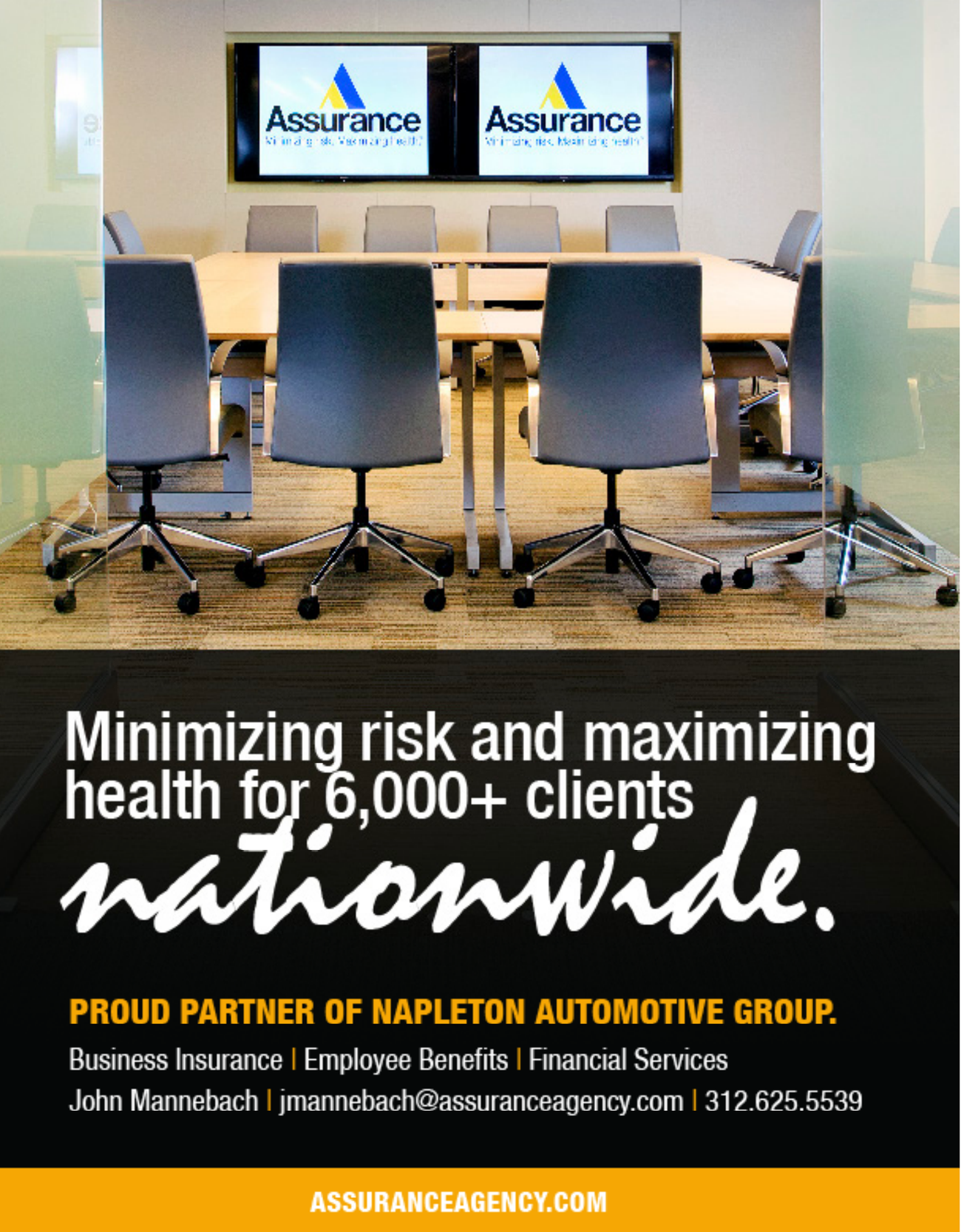
WWW.LOTLINX.COM

THE NAPLETON AUTOMOTIVE GROUP

DeSoto was going out of business. They sprang into action, desperate to find a solution. Not long after, they got someone from Chrysler on the phone and were awarded a Plymouth franchise. Had it not been for their quick thinking, I'm pretty sure we wouldn't all be here today."

"My dad, Ed Napleton, is one of eight children, and growing up everyone worked at the dealership," Napleton continues. "And they started young –cutting the grass, sweeping the floors, cleaning the shop – you name it, they did it. Eventually they became technicians, salespeople, finance and general managers. In 1975, my dad became the youngest Pontiac dealer in the country at the age of 23. Shortly thereafter, he acquired a Honda dealership, when no one really knew what Honda was and it didn't have the reputation it does now. He started out in Blue Island, Illinois, with the Pontiac franchise, eventually moved Honda to Oak Lawn, Illinois, and it has grown from there."

Grown indeed. Today, through both ground-up construction and acquisition, the family-owned-and-operated company has over 2,500 employees and has expanded its geographic reach to include over 32 locations and 55 franchises in six states – Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Florida. The company's latest acquisitions were one Toyota and two Lexus dealerships in Milwaukee;



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Assurance is among the largest and most awarded independent insurance brokerages in the U.S. A "Top 50" broker and repeated national "Best Place to Work" winner, Assurance creates value by minimizing risk and maximizing health for 6,000 businesses and individuals across the country. The company is headquartered in Schaumburg, IL with centralized office locations in Chicago, IL and St. Louis, MO.

Visit Assurance at
www.assuranceagency.com

its newest location, an Infiniti franchise that the company built, will open in July in Macon, Georgia.

In 2016, the various dealerships sold over 40,000 cars, and, according to Napleton, continued growth is the company's number one priority. "We want to add locations, we want to add more geographic diversity to our portfolio, and we want to add additional franchises, as well," she announces. Adding more brands, however, might present a challenge, as the Group already offers all of the following: Acura, Aston Martin, Chrysler, Dodge, Genesis, Honda, Hyundai, Infiniti, Jeep, Kia, Lexus, Maserati, Mazda, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Porsche, Ram, Toyota and Volkswagen. "We run the gamut as far as what people want and need," Napleton says in an apparent understatement.

Napleton also believes that the Group's size gives it a competitive advantage, because it has the economies of scale of a large group. Additionally, its broad geographic footprint helps both its customers and the company's bottom line, as well. "We have multiple locations of the same franchises," she says. "So, if you wanted to buy, say, a Dodge Durango, and the particular store you're at doesn't have it,

we can call another location and get it from there. There are a lot of snowbirds, so when they go from Illinois to Florida, we can continue to service their cars. So, our geographic diversity helps."

What has also helped, according to Napleton, is the sort of fiscal discipline and strong cash management skills that her father, Ed, has displayed over the years; something that came in particularly handy during the Great Recession, when not all car dealerships survived the economic downturn. "We've been growing like gangbusters since 2008," she declares. "We had the cash on hand to continue to acquire locations and grow. And that was a huge plus for us at that point in time; that he'd been so disciplined from a cash management standpoint."

But, in the end, being family owned and operated, while employing the strong work ethic and common courtesy first displayed by great-grandfather Edward W., has been the most important characteristic that has kept the Napleton Automotive Group alive and profitable for over 85 years. "One of my great-grandfather's sayings was 'customer satisfaction is the number one priority.' Because, obviously, if you don't have customers, you don't have any business. And if you're not focused on customer service, retaining the customer after the purchase or service, you're missing out because customers have so many choices. Even though we're a large group, we're still family owned. Family members are here at the office every day, involved in day-to-day operations."

Over the years, the company has also been a good corporate citizen in the com-

CMS

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Our roots date back to 1828 when Citizens Bank first began offering retail and commercial products to individuals, small businesses, middle-market companies, large corporations and institutions. It's that collaboration that brought us to where we are today.

To find out more, call our Dealer Services Group at 1-800-610-7300.

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munities in which its employees live and work. “We’ve gotten involved more in our local communities over the years,” Napleton maintains. “We’re a big supporter of the March of Dimes; we’ve done USO car shows; and, last year, we started a Flint water initiative, thinking it would be a small operation. Instead, we ended up with two large trucks filled with water that had been donated by our employees and customers.”

Offering lots of brands, treating the customer the way they’d want to be treated, and taking pride in their community, it’s no wonder that the Napleton Automotive Group was ranked the #1 dealership group in Illinois in 2015, by Automotive News.

They really have been “Second to None Since 1931”.

PREFERRED VENDORS

■ Lotlinx

www.lotlinx.com

Lotlinx is a digital marketing company that helps dealers sell more cars faster by driving low funnel, in-market shoppers directly to inventory on dealers websites with the auto industry’s first direct-linking technology platform, supplying new and used vehicle inventory to auto sites reaching 65 million consumers each month. Founded by a team of veteran automotive and digital innovators, the company’s mission is to tear down the third-party wall between dealers and their customers, and provide a more positive and efficient experience for dealerships and consumers alike. Powering 500+ automotive search sites, Lotlinx reaches over 85% of all auto shoppers.

■ Assurance Agency Ltd.

www.assuranceagency.com

Assurance creates value by minimizing risk and maximizing health for over 6,000 businesses and individuals across the country, through a suite of insurance solutions including business insurance, employee benefits, financial services, private insurance, and surety. John Mannebach is a captive insurance agent with Assurance Agency Ltd., based in Schaumburg, Illinois. He has 17 years of experience as an insurance agent and is licensed to write Auto, Home, Life, and, Health insurance policies in Illinois.

■ Certified Management Services Inc.

www.certifiedmgmt.com

Certified Management was formed in July 1996. It was designed to provide Inventory Management and Consulting Services to automobile dealerships. Today, the company has over 200 dealership clients in the Southeast, Midwest, and Northeast.

■ Citizens One

www.citizensbank.com

Citizens One’s roots date back to 1828 when Citizens Bank first began offering retail and commercial products to individuals, small businesses, middle-market companies, large corporations, and institutions. Today, the company partners with auto franchises to service their consumers’ loans.

■ CDK Global

www.cdkglobal.com

AKZONOBEL COATINGS

ESSENTIAL PROTECTION

International Paints was originally founded in England in 1881 by brothers Max and Albert Holzapfel to produced marine coatings for the local shipping industry. In 1968, the company was acquired by Courtaulds, a United Kingdom-based manufacturer of fabric, clothing, artificial fibers, and chemicals. In 1998, AkzoNobel, the Dutch multinational company, which is headquartered in Amsterdam and employs approximately 50,000 people, worldwide, took over the Courtaulds Company, and today, AkzoNobel Coatings Ltd. Canada, based in Burnaby, British Columbia, is a division of AkzoNobel, and International Paint is now the leading brand of AkzoNobel's Marine & Protective Coatings business unit, which has approximately 5,500 employees in more than 60 countries.

Chad Milbrandt is one of International Paint's Engineering Solutions Representatives. "We cover North America as a group," he explains. "In Canada, we operate out of Vancouver, Calgary, Toronto, and Montreal, liaisoning with owners and engineers on projects that involve protective coating solutions." Key markets for the division include Infrastructure, Mining & Minerals, Oil, Gas & Chemical, Power Generation, and

AT A GLANCE AKZONOBEL COATINGS LTD. CANADA/ INTERNATIONAL PAINT

WHAT: A manufacturer of protective paints and coatings

WHERE: Burnaby, British Columbia

WEBSITE: www.akzonobel.com
www.international-pc.com

Water and Wastewater.

Some of Milbrandt's significant clients are potash mining companies in Saskatchewan. "The typical customer is a mine owner and a consulting engineering firm," he explains. "We're supporting consultants, providing technical recommendations from the expertise that we have developed over the last fifty years through our testing, case histories, and tracking of assets and their performance. We follow mine owners' projects and developments, and once at detail design, we engage with the consultant, specifying our technologies to meet the desired lifecycle goal of durability and corrosion resistance. We were the first to recognize the value of immersion grade technology on structural coating systems in the Potash Industry to double the life expectancy of coated steel. Today, we continue to innovate through new coating technologies, which include Low Temperature Curing Fire Protection, Fast Return to Service Lining Systems, and Universal Pipe Coating."

Milbrandt believes that AkzoNobel Coatings Ltd./International Paint differentiates itself from the competition, which sometimes only provides product, because the company's business model is relationship-based, service-based, and experience-based. "What we're doing is working with owners to help provide a maintenance coating program," he states. The program is called InterPlan.

"We perform a site condition assessment with the owner, include costs and remedies with their own priority matrix, because not every location is the same priority from an owner's perspective, and work with them to define a painting program," Milbrandt continues. "So, we're not supplying any paint in that service stream that we're moving towards; we're supplying our expertise in building a program for that owner.

Should they choose to perform maintenance or not to perform maintenance is based upon the final, deliverable report. We want owners to choose us because we can best solve the problem, we're the most experienced, and we offer the most insights into their problem."

Going forward, Milbrandt says he is looking into new markets within the whole potash mining chain from ground to customer. "We're seeing a lot of planned potash projects in development," he reports. "We're also looking at rail cars and getting more integrated into mining production sites to the retail fertilizer depots." On the macro level, he says that the company's aim is to continue to build strategic alliances

directly with mine owners, and to be known as a full-service provider for a client's protective coatings by detailing the best specifications and supporting its execution during construction and beyond. "We want to continually strive into deep relationships and be viewed as a solution provider and work with owners in a strategic manner," he declares. "That's the long-term vision that we have to undertake."

Milbrandt believes that the company's long legacy and expertise in the field of protective coatings, provides a stepping stone to manifest that vision. "When dealing with International Paint, you can expect to deal with professional, technical, and experienced support with recommendations based on significant history and testing," he states. "We're unique in that we can engage in worldwide projects; we can work on regional specifications; and we can deliver product throughout the world. We look forward to future project investment from increased infrastructure spending and mining and commodity increases in 2018 and beyond. We will be engaged thoroughly to support owners, industry consultants, and service suppliers to support best practices in asset protection and maintenance planning."

PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Park Derochie**
  www.parkderochie.com

Providing uncompromising, quality workmanship to clients is a strong component within the core principles of Park Derochie. With more than 60 years of experience, Park Derochie provides shop and/or field services to both industrial and large commercial customers throughout North America and continues to lead the way as one of Canada's premier industrial contractors. Their long-term, knowledgeable staff and qualified tradesmen are dedicated to meeting or exceeding project requirements while providing customers with integrity, exemplary safety standards and exceptional quality.

- **Reichhold**
  www.reichhold.com

supply chain & logistics

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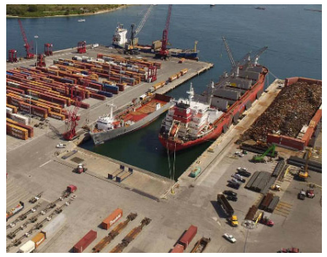
Putting the customer first

TEXAS-PACIFICO TRANSPORTATION CO.

Staying on track

CAMPBELL BROS. MOVERS

Moving your world



THE PORT OF PALM BEACH

Import, export, your port

MIEBACH CONSULTING

The supply chain engineers

THE TULSA PORT OF CATOOSA

Where the barges are running

THE AMERICAN SHORT LINE AND REGIONAL RAILROAD ASSOCIATION

SMALL CUSTOMERS AND NOT-SO-SMALL CUSTOMERS TO SMALL RAILROADS

All railroads in America began as short lines. From the first commercial railroad, the Granite Railway, built in 1826, to haul granite blocks from Quincy, Massachusetts to the Neponset River for trans-shipment to Boston, these independent, short line operations were financed and built by 19th-century, entrepreneurial risk takers, within the communities they served, in order to move freight and people in local commerce.

As the nation grew, and by the time the century had ended, more and more short lines were consolidated into regional systems that served ever widening areas of the country. These large railroads were owned by a coterie of wealthy industrialists (sometimes known as barons), and their shareholders. Those independent railway lines that either were not subsumed into these systems, or over time, became marginal and unprofitable branches for the major lines that did own them, became the core of today's short line railroad industry.

The American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA) has been the voice of the short line industry since 1913, when 22 short line railroad managers met in Atlanta, GA, to form the Short Line Railroad Association (SLRA) of the Southeast. The new organization's central purpose was to deal with legislative matters, primarily on the federal level. Annual dues were five dollars. By 1915, its membership had increased to 75.

In 1916, the SLRA of the Southeast combined with the SLRA of the Southwest to form the Short Line Association of the South, with 115 members. That year, there were 254,037 miles of railroad track in the United States.

Between 1917 and 1921, more short line organizations merged together to increase the ranks of the newly formed American Short Line Railroad Association (ASLRA). In 1997, the ASLRA merged with the Regional Railroads of America to form the American Short Line and Regional Railroad Association (ASLRRA). Today, the ASLRRA continues its mandate of representing the interests of the American short line industry, and railroads, in general. Its current membership is 550 rail lines and 500 suppliers and contractors.

Short line railroads are thriving today and are an important part, both of the railroad industry and the national economy. Short lines connect the rural communities of America and provide a viable and affordable means of transportation for goods and people, not served by the larger railroads. They operate and maintain 30 percent of the country's railroad mileage – approximately 50,000 miles – and account for nine percent of its freight revenue and 12 percent of all railroad employment.

But for decades throughout the 20th century, the survival of short line railroads was far from assured. Hard times began in the 1920s. Trucking competition was increasing, and the legislative agenda in Washington was tilting toward the newer way of delivering goods and services, imposing burdensome regulations on railroads, while subsidizing the trucking industry with government-built highways. At the beginning

of the Great Depression, 50 percent of all short lines reported net losses. By its end, that number had increased to 65 percent.

The downward trend continued into the

1970s, largely because of the country's new Interstate Highway System, which further eroded rail traffic in favor of trucks and automobiles. In addition, punitive taxation policies and burdensome federal regulations helped drive many independent lines into bankruptcy. As the situation worsened, ASLRRA membership continued to decline, even as the organization persevered in its advocacy role, trying to get Congress to ameliorate what was clearly seen by many as the last dying throes of a once profitable and vibrant American industry.

Finally, in 1976 Congress passed the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform (4R) Act and, in 1980, the Staggers Act, two pieces of legislation that ended most of the economic regulation on the rail industry and gave the larger railroads a viable exit strategy for divesting themselves of their unprofitable lines.

All at once, the major railroads began to market these lines to short line operators and independent entrepreneurs, and America's small railroad industry was, in essence, reborn, returning to its early 19th century roots of serving local customers with efficient and cost-effective transportation. Between 1980 and 2014, America's freight railroads invested $575 billion on capital expenditures and maintenance expenses related

to locomotives, freight cars, tracks, bridges, tunnels, and other infrastructure and equipment.

Having just celebrated its 100th Anniversary, the ASLRRA continues to further the industry's legislative priorities in the nation's capital, as well as providing networking possibilities for its members via events and conventions throughout the year. Its committees are designed to advance issues such as technology, legislative policy, mechanical issues, passenger rail, etc. It communicates with its members via its website, e-newsletters and bulletins, and bi-monthly articles to Railway Age magazine.

Once again vibrant and viable, the American short line industry serves the needs of its last mile/first mile customers by connecting them to the larger rail lines; providing their transportation needs when the larger railroads can't or won't; and, generally, saving all of its customers, large and small, money, compared to the costs of truck transportation. And, according to Jim Howarth, Vice President for Business Development for the New York, Susquehanna & Western Railway, "Small customers and not-so-small customers to small railroads."

For the next hundred years, the ASLRRA will continue to champion the sustainability and growth of what The Economist magazine has noted about the American freight rail system: "[It's] one of the unsung transport successes of the past 30 years. . .universally recognized in the industry as the best in the world."

THE RIVERPORT RAILROAD

WAITING TO GET IN

Riverport Railroad, LLC. (RVPR) operates a short line railroad that serves a commercial, industrial, and distribution complex located at the former Savanna Army Ordinance Depot, now named the Savanna Depot Business & Technology Park. RVPR is located in northwestern Illinois, on the Mississippi River, 40 miles south of Wisconsin and across the river from Bellevue, Iowa, just south of Hanover, Illinois, and just north of Savanna, Illinois. The company was organized in 2000, to purchase track, rail assets, and significant real estate assets located at the Savanna Depot. Today, RVPR has the ability to meet most long and short term railcar storage, transloading,

AT A GLANCE
THE RIVERPORT RAILROAD

WHAT: Railcar storage, switching, transloading, repair, and cleaning

WHERE: Savanna, Illinois

WEBSITE: www.riverportrailroad.comgov

and switching needs, with over 50-plus miles of track that is in operation for storage of up to 2,500 railcars.

Amiee Martelle is President and CEO of RVPR, and she first spoke with Business View Magazine back in May 2016. We caught up with her recently and learned that RVPR had just acquired an additional 20 acres of land to add to its 337 acres on a railroad right-of-way of 664 acres. The new acreage will make available an additional 250 rail car spots, with work on the new storage area to begin this summer. And Martelle adds that, within the next five years, she's hoping to have up to 3,500 railcar spots available for rent.

Last year, Martelle said that their rail yard was totally full and that there was a waiting list to get in. A year later, that has not changed. Some of the stored cars at the yard are oil tankers, and they, too, are still sitting in storage, as the depressed nature of the oil sector has not changed much, either. Meanwhile, Riverport gets the daily storage rent. Martelle notes that some of those oil cars are getting cleaned which suggests that they will not go back into the oil service any time soon. "They will potentially be leased for a different commodity," she explains. "Chemicals for food grade items, such as corn syrup. Any liquid commodity can go in those cars – we've had tequila cars here in the past."

RVPR still has its two tenants on the property: Rescar and TLC Rail Services. Rescar provides railcar repair, interior coating repair, railcar cleaning, testing and inspection, billing, and NDT (non-destructive testing) services. TLC Rail Services provides railcar-to-truck transloading,

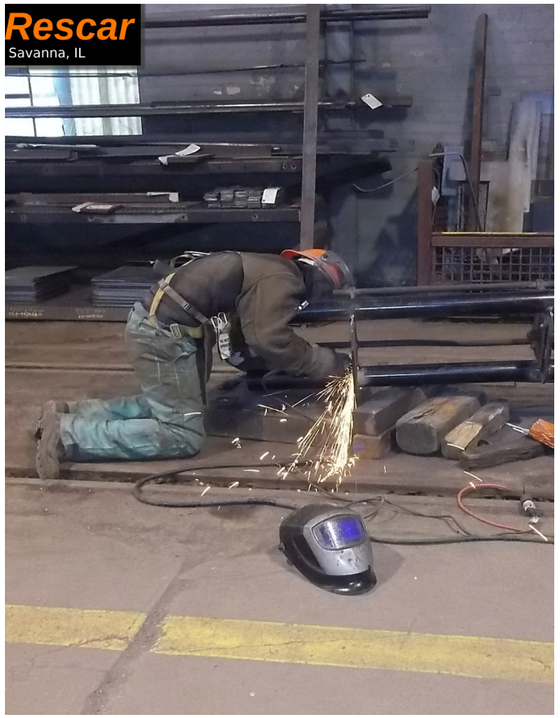
on-site mobile cleaning, blasting, and running inspections and repairs. Both businesses are healthy. "Our two tenants are flourishing very well with the rail car and cleaning businesses that they have here," Martelle reports.

RVPR continues to give back to the community - for the 3rd year in a row it has, again, offered scholarships aimed toward the area's youthful population. "We offer scholarships at the two area high schools," Martelle says, "and part of those scholarships are paid internships during the summer – learning railroading work and helping with maintenance." One aspect of the yard has changed, however. "We no longer have our truck scale," she says. "We turned that into a

huge garage shed that we can do transloading out of. We sold the scale and the building now has a dock where the scale was."

Martelle reports that the company still has the potential for more development and it is always looking for rail-related businesses, either in manufacturing or production, that would utilize rail service. "We're really trying to market all our acreage," she states. If the right business comes in, we're willing to partner with them and do the rail to their facility. We work with our Class 1 partner, BNSF. They have lots of companies that come to them looking for space and we are listed as a premier transloader with them, so that helps market us. Also, the Jo-Carroll Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) does marketing of all available properties. The whole Depot falls under Foreign Trade Zone 271 and the whole area is part of an Enterprise Zone, so there are many incentives."

So, all in all, it's been a good year for the Riverport Railroad at the Savanna Depot Business & Technology Park – still offering a safe and secure location for railcar storage, switching, transloading, repair, and cleaning.



INSERV
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Contact Us Today
Terry Barker
(574)-876-6128
tlcrailservices.com
tbarker@inserv24-7.com

About Us:
TLC Rail Services is a business unit of INSERV, Inc. which operates complete rail car cleaning services at Riverport in Savanna, IL, as well as Wright City, OK, and White Pigeon, MI. In addition to cleaning, TLC also offers a variety of other services at certain locations. TLC can also mobilize a crew and equipment to your cars which cuts down on both shipping and switch fees.

Services:
- Cleaning
- Blasting
- Transloading
- Scrapping
- Mobile Cleaning
- Mobile Repair
- Valve Work
- Inspections

TLC Rail Services

Jo-Carroll Depot Local Redevelopment Authority

Savanna Depot Park
Located within the boundaries of an Enterprise Zone, Foreign Trade Zone and Upper Mississippi River International Port District

Development Opportunity
• Industrial • Commerical
• Research & Development
• Technology (on site fiber optics)
• Existing Infrastructure
• Rail Served Sites

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www.lrasavannail.us

PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Inserv, Inc.**
  www.inserv24-7.com
  www.tlcrailservices.com

  Inserv is an industrial cleaning and environmental services company located in Mishawaka, Indiana. TLC Rail Services, which serves the Riverport Railroad, is a business unit of Inserv. It provides car cleaning (mobile and onsite), interior blasting, valve replacement, car inspections, transloading, and training and consulting.

- **Jo-Carroll Depot LRA**
  www.lrasavannail.us

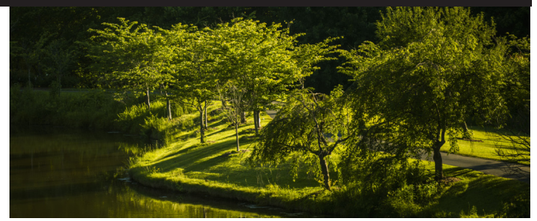
clean & green

IN THIS ISSUE

GREEN MARINE

BY AND FOR THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY

DUFFIELD ASSOCIATES, INC.



CHAMPIONS OF SOIL, WATER, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

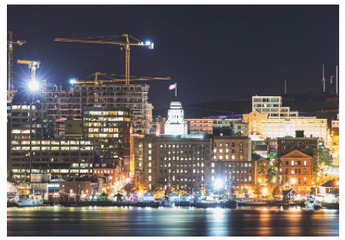
PINNACLE RENEWABLE ENERGY INC.

SUSTAINABLE WOOD PELLETS

CLEAN AND GREEN ONLINE

GREEN COMMUNITIES CANADA

Positive action for the environment

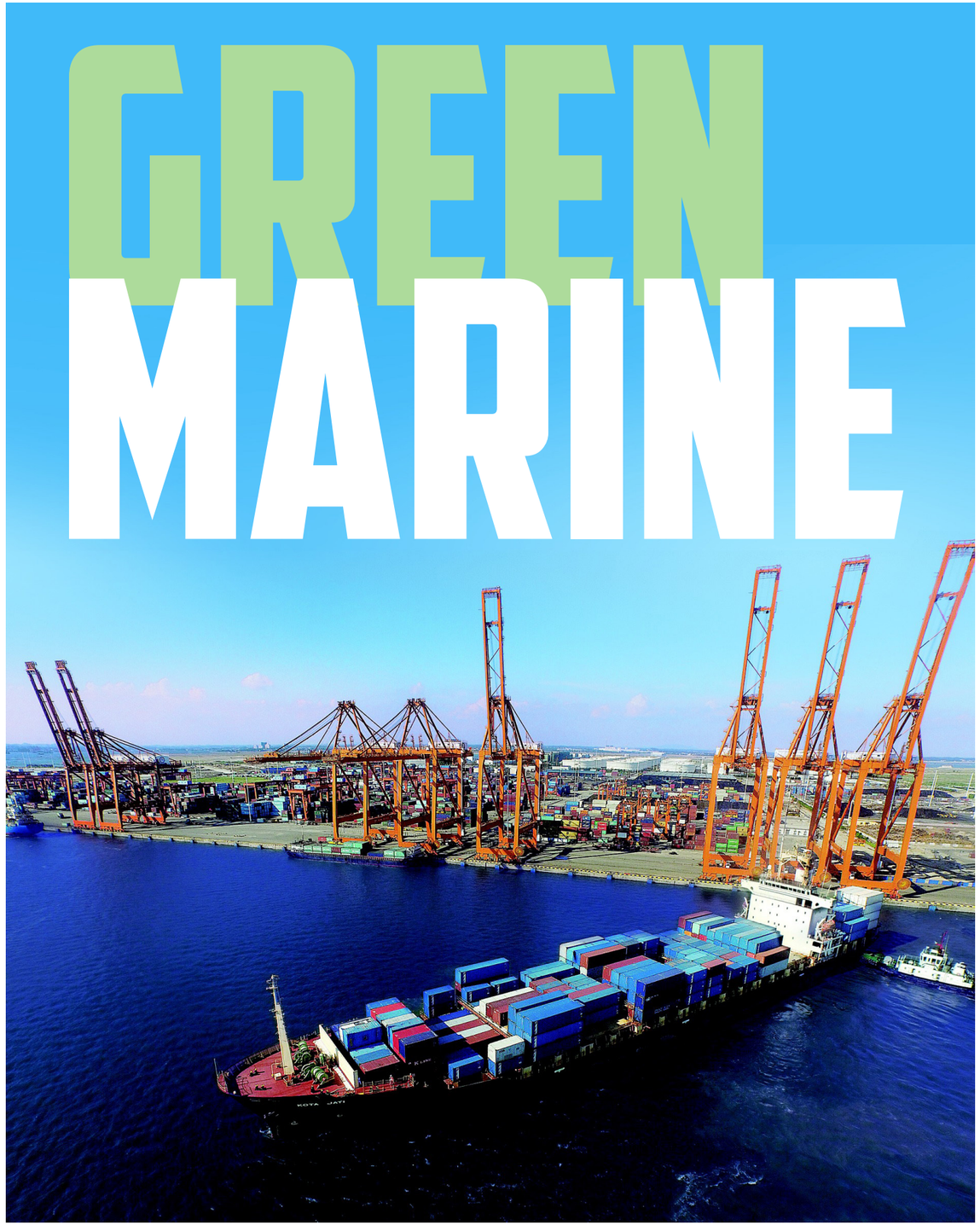


HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

Come have a look

EDSON, ALBERTA

A resourceful town



BY AND FOR THE SHIPPING INDUSTRY

Green Marine is an environmental certification program for the North American marine industry. Launched in 2007, its participants are ship owners, ports, terminals, and shipyards. It is a voluntary, transparent, and inclusive initiative that addresses key environmental issues, and makes it possible for any marine company operating in Canada or the U.S. to reduce its environmental footprint by undertaking concrete and measurable actions.

To receive their certification, participants must benchmark their annual environmental performance through the program's exhaustive self-evaluation guides, have their results verified by an accredited external verifier, and agree to the publication of their individual results.

Green Marine has more than 60 official supporters, and a pivotal element of Green Marine's success, from the outset, has been the active support from environmental stakeholders and governments, several of which participate in shap-

AT A GLANCE
GREEN MARINE

WHAT: An environmental certification program for the North American marine industry

WHERE: Quebec, Canada

WEBSITE: www.green-marine.org

ing and reviewing its environmental program.

Recently, Business View Magazine spoke with Green Marine's Executive Director, David Bolduc, who talked about the program, how it came to be, what it does, and what its value is to North America's maritime industry. The following is an edited transcript of that conversation:

BVM: David, can you begin by recounting the genesis of Green Marine? What prompted its founding? And how has it evolved since then?

Bolduc: "Maybe you've heard about the zebra mussels in the Great Lakes – the invasive species that was introduced through ballast water? This prompted a media crisis for the marine industry in the Great Lakes back in the early 2000s. Suddenly you would see, in the mainstream media, calls to close the St. Lawrence Seaway. So, the social license of the maritime industry was at risk and there was a group of CEOs who got together and realized that they needed to be more proactive in making everybody know what the industry was doing with regard to the environment.

"That prompted the creation of this program, and I think it was a good call because, instead of taking the decision to establish a communications campaign, which could have been accused of 'greenwashing,' they decided, instead, to create this long-term, sustainability program, where there would be specific goals and actions that would be evaluated and rated, so that it would be possible to demonstrate that the industry was serious about improving its environmental performance.

"And one of the things that distinguishes Green Marine is that it's a partnership. It was created in collaboration with environmental groups, governments, and scientists. So, I think it's pretty unique as far as similar environmental initiatives go for the maritime industry. Also, it was meant to be non-sector specific; the goal was to cover the entire industry. That's why, in this program, you have shipping companies, ports and terminals, even shipyards.

"Initially, it was only intended for the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence region, because that's where it was created and where the invasive species was a really huge issue and one of the most important that we addressed immediately after the program was launched. But there were other environmental issues addressed in the program, as well – air emissions, cargo residues, oily water.

"At first, the approach was very regional, even though it was bi-national right from the start – Canada and the United States. After a few years, the program proved to be extremely successful; it was vetted by environmental groups who thought that this was a serious program which they could support publicly and formally - the same with the governments. And so, in 2010, we started seeing companies and ports from outside the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence wanting to have the certification, as well.

"In 2010, our first port from outside the region was accepted in the program – the Port of Prince Rupert on the west coast (of Canada), and the decision was made to open up the membership to any company or port operating in Canada or the United States. And, since then, the program continued to be very successful; we started with about 30 certified companies and ports in 2007, and we now have almost 110 in all regions of Canada and the United States. Green Marine is incorporated in both countries; we have an office in Seattle as well as the main office, here in Quebec City."

BVM: How do you explain to those who haven't yet become a member, the value of doing so?

Bolduc: "There are many good reasons to join a program like this one. I think the first and most important one is to invest in your social license. We saw what happens when you don't – you become at risk - a bit like what happened with the zebra mussels in the Great Lakes. You need to show that you are taking steps; that you don't do business the same way it was done in the 1970s, for example, and that sustainability is being considered at the highest level in your company. So, by implementing a program like this one, where you have to follow a process, and publish your results, this is an investment in your social license.

"There are other reasons, as well. The program was tailor-made for the maritime industry, instead of being a third-party program coming from people who are not really involved in its day-to-day operations. It was made by the industry for the industry, and it is still managed by the industry – the Board of Directors of the Green Marine program is made up nine CEOs of nine participating companies, representing the different sectors: ports, terminals, and shipping companies. It was really built by the companies, themselves, so it's very focused on specific actions. For a company, it can mean a great deal to have this roadmap of environmental actions to implement, instead of investing in consulting firms that can be very expensive. This program represents a consensus in the industry about the main environmental issues and what you should do about them. So, it's very cost effective in that regard.

"Also, Green Marine is a not-for-profit organization so the membership fees are kept low. The program also offers communication tools so that companies can promote and showcase what they're doing for the environment. That was another reason behind the creation of this program. You already have many companies doing a lot of great things in addressing environmental issues, but nobody knows about it. So, this is something we offer – a logo and a brand that is recognized. We also have a magazine and a newsletter. We reach people, not only in the industry – and that's an important thing – but we're being followed and read by a lot of

environmental groups, research centers, and governments. That's another interesting aspect of the program.

"On the ports side, we rate terminal operators, independently of the ports. So for a port authority, the Green Marine program can become a government's tool by encouraging their tenants to start implementing sustainability actions, in a voluntary way, individually, so they don't have to manage everything, themselves.

"That's a couple of good reasons to join a program like this one. And again, the difference from some other programs is its very high level of credibility and transparency.

BVM: What is the size of the staff and what are their main priorities?

Bolduc: "We are a very small, efficient team of five people. We have one Director, three program managers who support our participants with the whole process of certification – implementing the program but also developing it. We also have a communications manager, working more on the marketing aspect of the program.

"Since it was launched in 2007, we've added several environmental issues that we address, for example: waste management and, more recently, water noise. These were things that were not there at the beginning. But developing these new performance indicators where companies are rated on their performance takes time. And the way we do it is very inclusive. We meet with working groups, where any participant in the program can get involved if they wish, and we involve the other stakeholders, as well.

BVM: Is there anything new on your agenda that might alter the way Green Marine functions?

Bolduc: "Yes, we are in the process of working on our strategic plan with the Board of Directors. And one of the most important questions that we are asking ourselves, right now, concerns the international possibilities. This program is very successful; a lot of companies and ports put a very high value on this

certification, and we are getting requests from companies and ports from outside North America. So that would be a big step for us. We don't want to lose our focus on North America, so it's an important strategic decision to decide, or not, to allow other companies and ports outside North America to get their Green Marine certification. So, we need to think carefully of how we do this if we decide to do it.

"Other than that, we keep developing the program; we keep adding environmental issues that are important to the industry. So, for the near future, we plan on working, for example, on ship recycling, and on social license for port authorities. We plan on adding more metrics, like being able to calculate the number of tons of GHGs (Green House Gasses) that were reduced over the years thanks to the program."

BVM: How do you reach out to, and stay in touch with, your members?

Bolduc: "The conference is our main tool to stay in touch with our members and be able to see them face-to-face. This is an annual conference – every year in a different city. It will be in Florida, this year, for the first time. We've been to Montreal, Toronto, Chicago, Seattle, and Vancouver, for example. But we also have a lot of working groups and advisory committees. Some of them are face-to-face; others are on the phone because of distance. We also have regional offices – one in Seattle, that I mentioned, and one in Halifax. That helps cover more ground.

"Sometimes we have a critical mass of members in one region and usually we try to create an advisory committee there, and have face-to-face meetings. So, this is one thing that I hope will be happening, soon; we are seeing more and more members, now, in the southern United States, on the Gulf Coast, in Florida. Hopefully, we'll be able to create an advisory committee there and maybe, eventually, have an employee in the region."

BVM: How do you see the landscape for the industry, as a whole, over the coming decade, and how will Green Marine continue to be an important program for those people who participate?

Bolduc: "Sustainability and environmental issues are not going away. And if there's more business and industrial activity, and more people on the earth, pressure on the environment is there to stay. A lot of people are asking for cleaner air, cleaner water, and in the long-term, we want the business to grow, but we want it to grow in a sustainable way. So, this need will remain – for communities, especially.

"Sometimes, maybe, you lose sight of the global issues, but you never lose sight of the local issues. For example, communities living around large ports will continue to see, close-up, the impact of this industrial activity; and they will continue asking the ports and companies to continue growing their businesses - because it's beneficial for their prosperity - but to do it in a sustainable way. And I think that Green Marine will be even more important in the future, because it's a new way of conducting business. That's how I see it."

(Note: The annual conference in Fort Lauderdale was May 30 to June 1. The next one, in 2018, will be in Vancouver BC.)

DUFFIELD ASSOCIATES, INC.

CHAMPIONS OF SOIL, WATER, AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Duffield Associates is a growing service provider of geoscience technology. Established in 1976, this award-winning engineering firm has aggressively implemented energy saving, water conservation, and sustainable practices throughout its offices and facilities. From constructing a new green building, to a pioneering recycling program, to geothermal climate control, to adaptive reuse, "living green" is a full-time priority for the company's talented and dedicated team of professionals.

Guy Marcozzi, President and CEO of Duffield Associates, elaborates on this impressive consulting firm and its laudable 'green' initiatives. "Geotechnical engineering is a relatively new profession only formally practiced since the

GUY MARCOZZI
PRESIDENT AND CEO

AT A GLANCE
DUFFIELD ASSOCIATES, INC.

WHAT: Engineering & science consulting firm specializing in civil, environmental, and geotechnical engineering; construction review and testing services

WHERE: Corporate headquarters in Wilmington, Delaware

WEBSITE: www.duffnet.com

> A design with soil is inherently uncertain, unlike concrete or steel that is very precise. We were providing input for various foundations, and realized that in specialty situations, the structural engineers were adding additional factors of safety onto the soil factors, and clients were getting overly conservative designs. Being able to do construction and inspection services, and verify your assumptions is critical. Therefore, we added specialty structural services into our repertoire.
>
> **GUY MARCOZZI**
> PRESIDENT AND CEO

1930s," he says. "By the '70s, it was still kind of a 'black box science' where structural engineers just wanted to know the design parameters, but it wasn't really understood what they actually meant. Everybody assumes that the ground should be able to support anything – until it doesn't."

Into that world stepped Jim Duffield, the company's namesake. He was practicing for a large, local architect-engineer firm that wasn't developing soils as a key area of the business. So, in 1976, Jim stepped out and formed a one-man geotechnical engineering firm. He understood that soils work with structure; an interplay of sciences that is the essence of effective design. Today, this interplay remains the foundation of Duffield Associates.

"A design with soil is inherently uncertain, unlike concrete or steel that is very precise," says Marcozzi. "We were providing input for various foundations, and realized that in specialty situations, the structural engineers were adding additional factors of safety onto the soil factors, and clients were getting overly conservative designs. Being able to do construction and inspection services, and verify your assumptions is critical. Therefore, we added specialty structural services into our repertoire."

Implementation of the Clean Water Act in the mid-80s propagated a slew of regulations related to natural resources. Duffield Associates was an early identifier of these opportunities because wetland science involves soil structure. It added those types of services, which led to permitting services, and ultimately water resource services including flood control, ground-

water extraction, stormwater management, and land development civil engineering.

The company employs approximately 110 people, and covers the mid-Atlantic region with offices in all three counties of Delaware. Home turf is northern Virginia to eastern Pennsylvania, eastern Maryland and southern New Jersey, with eight offices spread around that area. Marcozzi notes, "Southern Delaware is more agrarian, so there we support the poultry industry with waste treatment and things of that nature. Shoreline and inland bays in southern Delaware have us working with State and Federal agencies on beach replenishment or nutrient management. In northern Delaware, we focus on the energy industry, ports along the river, refineries, industrial businesses, and large commercial operations."

The central Pennsylvania office specializes in landfills, supports the Department of Transportation on issues with bridges, and works with the powerful warehousing and distribution market. In Philadelphia, work is tied to urban stormwater management strategies like green roofs. Marcozzi says, "The City of Philadelphia is a big client, and because we work with them so much, we understand the rules and that drives our private sector work with urban stormwater management and civil design. We try to keep a nice mix of one third government, one third industry, and one third private development, but those percentages fluctuate based on the economy."

Duffield Associates offers a broad array of services, yet it's still a relatively small firm, with a team culture designed to aggregate people across disciplines and incubate collaboration on a personal level. According to Marcozzi, "A lot of smaller firms are less diverse than we are and struggle with today's complex regulatory environment. It requires a broad understanding of environmental remediation, zoning codes, variances, geotechnical design, wetlands – all the pieces we can fit under one roof - with a team that knows each other and works together. It gives us a competitive edge over smaller firms that subcontract services. Large firms struggle to collaborate because they're not all in the same office, and many times don't know each other on a personal level."

The company has made three small acquisitions, one in each of the last three years, and is now working to integrate them while looking for more "bite-size" acquisitions to fit its strategy. Surprisingly, bidding on contracts is not the norm. In professional services, most of the public work is qualifications-based selection.

In the private sector, it's usually relationship based; the industrial sector is a hybrid of those two. However, all clients pay attention to costs, and Duffield Associates is not immune, usually competing directly against one or more firms.

Marcozzi speaks candidly about the future: "We're a small firm with a diverse ownership group that is dependent on evolving ownership transition. The new Millennials don't have the same mindset that the Baby Boom generation had, so we need to bridge that gap and have an active succession plan for transfer of ownership. Today, one of my largest challenges as the CEO is how to acquire these folks, integrate them, keep them loyal, and demonstrate to them that being part of an ownership team is in their best long-term interest. We're actively working in urban markets like Philadelphia and Baltimore because that's where our young staff wants to live."

Climate change is also a real concern, especially in low-lying Delaware, southern New Jersey, and eastern Maryland. Marcozzi explains, "Delaware issued a directive that all public projects must consider the effects of sea level rise over the next 100 years. The challenge is there's not full consensus on what that means. We're all battling against tight budgets, and when you have discussions about sea level rise – particularly with ports, or beach replenishment, or inland bays that are directly affected – it's very expensive. There's an interest in doing the right thing and being proactive, but also the reality of determining how to pay for it. Sometimes it can double or triple the cost of a project. It forces a level of pragmatism, even within state agencies. In a region where half the state would be significantly impacted by a large storm event in a one meter sea level rise situation, it's an important issue."

Recognizing its greatest resource is people, Duffield Associates fosters relationships in university communities to attract the best and brightest students, and considers the schools a vital supply chain partner. It also relies on environmental testing laboratories for environmental analytical work, works closely with a survey partner and specialty consultants, and long-term service partners in accounting and insurance. As business advisers, those insurance groups help Duffield break into different markets, so they are somewhat synergistic.

Marcozzi admits, "Our partners and staff are committed to the business of solving problems

for our clients and, as CEO, it pains me to say that it sometimes takes precedence over financial aspects. We need to make enough money to stay in business, but we don't want the cookie cutter stuff. We enjoy the challenge of projects that are complicated. We want to look at it differently and develop creative solutions that add real value for clients."

"Our founder, Jim Duffield, was fond of saying, 'We should be looking for ways to save our fee.' He believed that design is a relatively small part of the entire project cost, and it's not difficult for us to bring an idea to the table that's going to save the client money on construction or operation that's more than what they pay us for our services. That's a great aspiration that we can't always deliver, but we do think about it a lot and hit the goal more often than we realize.

"Sustainability and environmental concerns are our passions. Many of us are from the generation where we learned conservation in school and we joke that we were green before it was cool. We were the nerdy conservationists. We have 19 LEED APs (Accredited Professional), which is a lot for a firm our size, and we try to work sustainable practices into our projects. For example, in the maritime industry, some of the cranes operating at the ports have a fair amount of emissions. We have a client facing that issue as they are in a non-attainment zone, which means they can't contribute any more emissions. So, we came up with a separate, cleaner powering system for the other energy source at the port that would offset the new emissions.

"We also have a township client that wants to restore an old mill in disrepair because it has historical and community significance. We came up with the idea, 'It's a mill that used to turn a turbine. Let's drop a turbine in there and generate some power. And let's use the power to set up an annual maintenance fund for it.' The town's pretty excited about the idea, and we're looking for grants to fund this as a pilot project because old mills are pretty common in the area, and they could be saved by just reinvigorating old water power."

Looking at things differently and green… the fuel that powers Duffield Associates to succeed.

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PINNACLE RENEWABLE ENERGY

SUSTAINABLE WOOD PELLETS

Pinnacle Renewable Energy Inc. based in Richmond, British Columbia, is a leader in the production and sale of wood pellets used as a fuel for heat and for the generation of power. According to Vaughan Bassett, Vice President of Sales & Logistics, the company was founded by brothers, Rob and Jim Swaan in the late eighties as a manufacturer of pelletized animal feed. "The original owners looked around and saw a whole lot of wood fiber, much of it in the form of shavings and sawdust, that wasn't being utilized, and they came up with pelletizing wood for the purpose of providing a fuel for thermal energy."

Having no model that they could relate to, in terms of equipment and processes, the brothers experimented until they came up with the right combination of motors and dies in order to successfully extrude wood pellets from fibrous woody raw material. "They kept at it until they got something that worked," says Bassett, "and that started the whole Pinnacle Pellet empire." Today, the company operates seven pellet plants throughout British Columbia - Houston, Burns Lake, Meadowbank, Quesnel, Williams Lake, Armstrong, and Lavington - and one new plant, currently under construction in Alberta. Its 250-plus employees produce about one and half million tons of wood pellets annually.

In the beginning when there was only one plant, Pinnacle be-

gan supplying bags of pellets to Canada and the United States for use in the heating of homes.

"During those years, there was an emerging trend for wood pellet residential heat in Europe, too," Bassett explains. "Furnace and water heating manufacturing companies became involved in making home heating appliances aimed at weaning their customers off imported gas, which came largely from Russia, and was very expensive. So, they needed an alternative and, as a result, a lot of the housing, starting from the late '80s onward in Europe, was designed for wood pellet heating."

Pinnacle began exploring the idea of using wood pellets as a greener replacement for coal in thermal power plants, based on developments in Scandinavia, which has a long history of using wood as a combustible fuel for both large scale heat and power generation. "The Scandinavian governments were some of the early adopters of subsidizing renewable energy in the form of wood or biomass derived electricity going into the grid," says Bassett. "They started consuming quite a lot of wood pellets in places like Sweden, Denmark, and to some extent, Finland. One of Pinnacle's very early shipments was a combined vessel that it shared with another BC producer that carried around 10,000 tons into Sweden. This effectively started our export effort."

AT A GLANCE
PINNACLE RENEWABLE ENERGY INC.

WHAT: A manufacturer and supplier of wood pellets

WHERE: Richmond, British Columbia

WEBSITE: www.pinnacle pellet.com

All of Pinnacle's wood fiber comes from sawmilling operations in Canada, particularly BC. "The sawmilling business is one where you take a mature tree, cut it down, bring it to your sawmill and then cut it up into lumber," Bassett says. "In the process of doing that, about 50 percent of the tree is wasted. That waste is in the form of woodchips, bark, sawdust and shavings. About half of that waste is woodchips, which generally flows to a pulp mill and ultimately gets turned into paper. But the sawdust, shavings and bark were simply burned – they didn't have any value. So every sawmill in the old days would have a 'beehive burner,' which looks like a massive teepee, and all the waste was collected up, thrown in there and burned. Today, we take that same waste material and turn it into wood pellets, which obviates the need for burning it. Eventually it is burned, but it's burned to create electrons, rather than smoke."

Bassett explains how burning wood pellets for fuel is more environmentally friendly in a number of ways, when compared to coal and natural gas: "Coal-fired power stations are pretty old technology and probably the best efficiency that you're going to get is 40 percent or thereabouts. That's the amount of heat that you can generate by burning coal that can be turned into electrical power. The remainder is basically waste heat. Combined Cycle Gas technology is more efficient because it essentially puts the heat through the system twice, so you get more electricity out of it. You're still, however, burning fossil fuel - material that has up until that moment been safely sequestered underground. The process of mining it is an activity that in itself burns a lot of fossil fuel. So does transporting it to the power station. Ultimately, in burning it there's no renewable 'return circuit' on fossil fuels. Once you've taken it out of the ground and you burn it, the carbon dioxide it produces just goes straight into the atmosphere.

"Wood, on the other hand, can be thought about in much different and more renewable terms. This is because while the tree is growing from a little

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sapling into a mature plant, it has, all the while, been absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and giving off oxygen, in the process of photosynthesis. The carbon is stored in the tree's molecular structure as wood. Once the tree reaches maturity, it's no longer growing and no longer absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere the way it did when it was younger. So, it's helpful to chop that tree down and allow a younger tree to grow in its place in order to drive more carbon absorption from the atmosphere.

"When you harvest a mature tree, half of that tree goes into the lumber industry and is sequestered safely in the form of housing or structural timber. This could be for the next two or three hundred years or however long the structure lasts. The other half of it was traditionally wasted and it's that half that we now concern ourselves with because that's our raw material for pellet fuel.

"The process of producing wood pellets, admittedly, uses fossil fuels and electricity, but in the full analysis, it still produces less than 70 percent of the carbon dioxide produced by coal. Once you burn wood pellets at the power station, the CO2 liberated from that burning becomes the essential raw material reabsorbed by the young growing replacement trees. If you left everything as it was - didn't work the forest - you'd end up with a system of mature trees that wasn't absorbing as much CO2 and converting this to oxygen. That system would also, more than likely, be more susceptible to fire and disease. So, the extraction of mature trees, and the simultaneous regrowth of younger trees in their place, provides the absorption engine for removing the carbon dioxide from any biomass that you subsequently burn.

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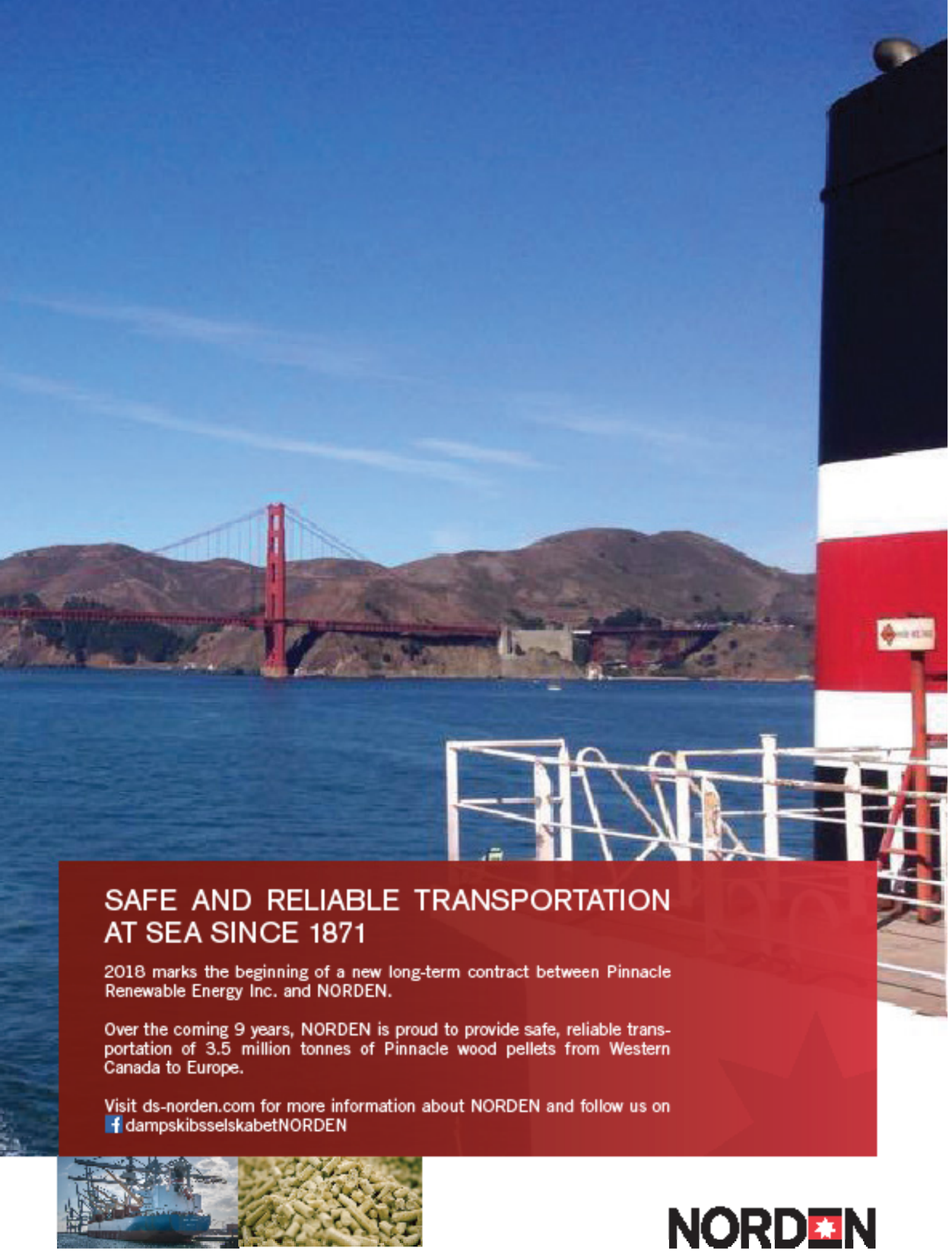
That is why it's called 'low carbon electricity,' and that's why it's declared and accepted as 'renewable' by the governments of the world."

In Canada, the government's forest certification process mandates that harvested trees must constantly be replaced, and Bassett believes that this system gives his country the edge in providing a more sustainable product. "Canada has an extremely comprehensive set of laws and regulations associated with the management of its forests," he stresses. "You have to replace wood after a certain period with exactly the species mix that was found there originally. The good part is that as long as you're using the forest, you've always got more active growth in there than you would otherwise have had just by leaving it alone. By extension, the sawmilling and logging residual fiber in Canada pretty much all originates from government land, which is about 98 percent forest-management certified. In BC, where Pinnacle is based, there is more certified forest than the next biggest country. Plus, don't forget, it's 95 percent residual-based. We find this combination very helpful in selling our products as, probably, the most sustainable wood pellet fuel in the world."

Bassett maintains that the current market for wood pellets is very strong and is expected to grow. "Our markets today are mainly in Europe – the UK being very strong," he reports. "There are a couple of what used to be coal-fired power stations that have converted, or are converting, to wood pellets. And there are a couple of new projects that will be using wood pellets as their preferred fuel from



NORDEN – PROUD SHIPPING PARTNER OF PINNACLE

In December 2016, Dampskibsselskabet NORDEN A/S entered into a 9-year contract for the transportation of wood pellets with Pinnacle Renewable Energy Inc. Beginning 2018, NORDEN will transport a total of 3.5 million tonnes of wood pellets from Vancouver and Prince Rupert in Western Canada to Europe. The transports will be carried out on Supramax vessels, of which NORDEN is one of the world's largest operators.

Founded in 1871, NORDEN has a proven track record of delivering safe, flexible and reliable transport solutions to some of the world's leading enterprises. Services which also are in high demand by Pinnacle:

"We picked NORDEN for a couple of reasons. We needed a partner with their own fleet to ensure they could ride out whatever cycles we will meet in the almost 10 years the contract covers. That partner also needed to have a very good reputation in the shipping industry and to be flexible and customer focused enough to satisfy both ourselves and the receiver consistently over the long term. We look forward to a long and mutually beneficial relationship," says Vaughan Bassett, Senior Vice President in Pinnacle Renewable Energy Inc.

The first delivery will be performed in the summer of 2018 with representatives from both Pinnacle and NORDEN present in Tyne in the United Kingdom overseeing the first unloading of pellets to the receiver.

NORDEN

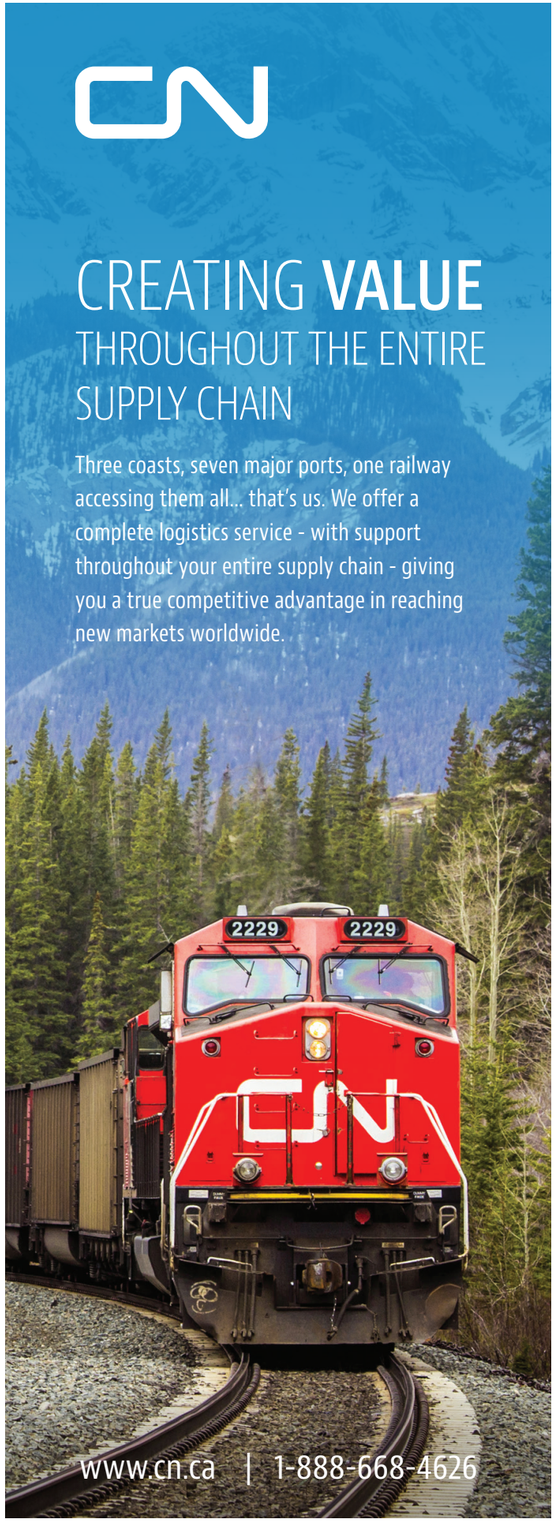
the outset. All of that is going to result in a wood pellet demand of somewhere in the region of 12 million tons a year. At the moment, the demand in the UK is somewhere around six to seven million tons a year. So, you're looking at a doubling over the next five years. That's created a huge demand for additional capacity coming out of highly sustainable areas, such as Canada. With that wind blowing firmly at our backs, we want to grow substantially in the years ahead. There's a continued high demand from Europe, but there's also an increasing demand from Asia, and given our geography, we're very well set up to supply to Asia, and that's been my focus for the last couple of years – developing a decent supply base that we can support for the next 10, 20 years."

Finally, Bassett is firm in his conviction that replacing fossil fuels with wood pellets, both for residential consumption (Pinnacle sells 40-pound bags of pellets through retail outlets, which go directly to more than one million homes, businesses, and schools in North America for heating fuel), as well as renewable fuel for power generation, is important in a world that is increasingly being impacted by climate change and global warming. "We are helping to de-carbonize electricity around the world," he declares. "People have to do something; we can't continue the way things are. And any change that we can make that's in the right direction should be welcomed and supported. At Pinnacle, we are passionate about exactly that kind of change – we think of it as sustainability all the way from seedling to burner tip."

PREFERRED VENDORS

■ The Andersons Inc.
www.andersonrail.com
The Andersons is a diversified company rooted in agriculture, conducting business across North America in the grain, ethanol, plant nutrient, and rail sectors. The Rail Group provides a variety of services to the rail industry including fleet management, leasing, repair, and custom fabrication. The Group has a fleet of more than 23,000 various railcars and locomotives that it leases, manages and sells.

■ Norden
www.ds-norden.com
Norden was founded in 1871, making it one of Denmark's oldest internationally operating shipping companies. It operates in dry cargo and product tankers worldwide. The company's head office is in Hellerup, Denmark and has offices in Singapore, China, the U.S., Brazil, India, Chile, and Australia. In 2018, Norden will be providing safe, reliable transportation of 3.5 million tons of Pinnacle wood pellets from Western Canada to Europe.



PREFERRED VENDORS

■ **SGS Canada Inc.**
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From its beginnings in 1878 as a grain inspection house, SGS Canada has become a division of one the world's leading inspection, verification, testing, and certification companies, and a global benchmark for quality and integrity. SGS Canada presently has a staff of over 2,000 employees in more than 40 locations from coast-to-coast.

■ **CN**
www.cn.ca

CN, the Canadian National Railway, headquartered in Montreal, Quebec, is a transportation company that offers integrated transportation services, including rail, intermodal, trucking, freight forwarding, and warehousing and distribution, across Canada and the Midwestern and Southern United States.

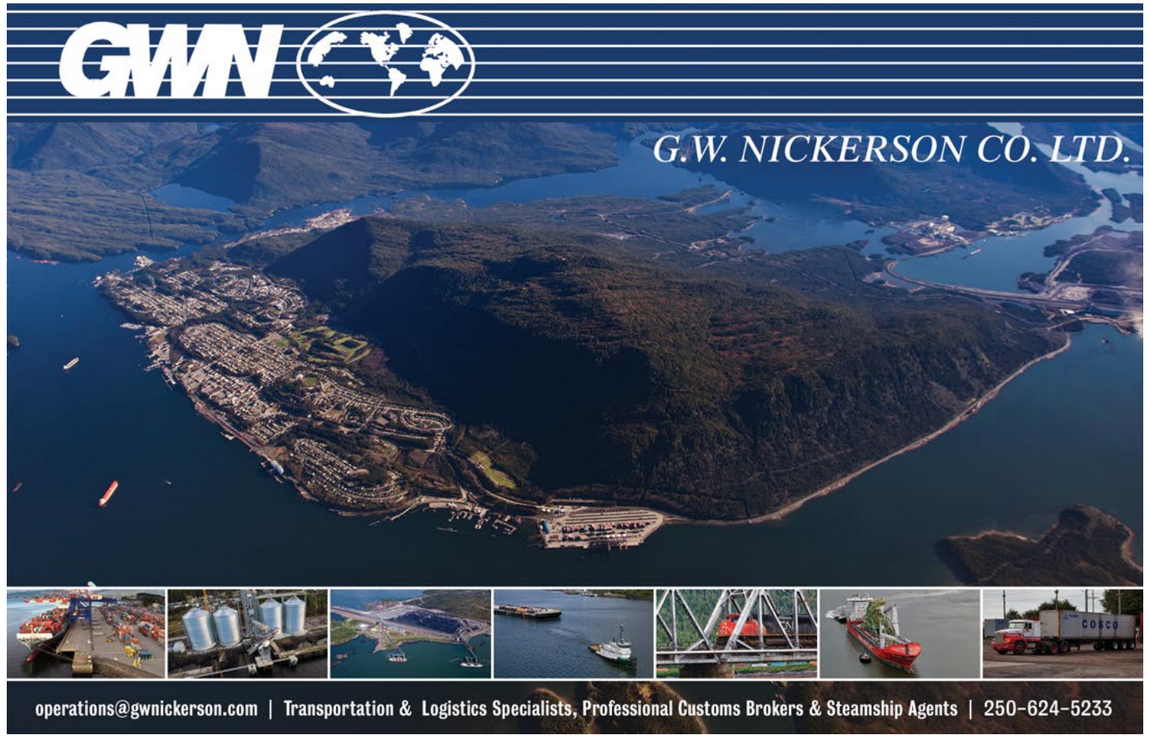
■ **Trinity Rail Inc.**
www.trinityrail.com

A division of Trinity Industries, the Trinity Rail Group manufactures and sells railroad cars (hopper cars, gondolas, flat cars, roll cars, intermodal cars, tank cars, etc.) and component parts. Its customers include railroads, leasing companies, and shippers of products.

■ **Control Union Canada**
nbrink@controlunion.com

■ **G.W. Nickerson Co. Ltd.**
www.gwnickerson.com

■ **Interstate Commodities Inc.**
www.icigrain.com



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TERRAGON ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

WASTE INTO RESOURCE

As a society, we are ingrained with certain habits and frames of mind. When it comes to waste, both solid and liquid, we generally believe "out of sight – out of mind." Our solid waste gets bagged or boxed up to be hauled away to a landfill, somewhere, and our wastewater either gets treated by a large municipal facility or, just as often, gets flushed, untreated, back into the environment. Either way, the pervading ethos is that waste is simply something to be gotten rid of - taken away from our own habitats where it's created and exported to others. Most current waste treatment technologies support this approach.

However, for many communities and habitats, the conventional approach to waste management is not practical. Examples include ships, isolated

communities such as offshore oil rigs, remote resorts, mining camps, research stations, and numerous other habitats that, for various reasons, cannot transfer their waste to others. Wouldn't it be a wonderful thing if the waste products generated in these habitats had a way, not only to be safely disposed of onsite, but also to be transmuted into a useful resource? Terragon Environmental Technologies of Montreal, Canada and its 35 workers believe so, and they have been working precisely toward that goal, since 2004.

"Terragon was founded by Dr. Peter Tsantrizos, who spent his entire life in waste solutions and renewable energies," says Andrew Korney, Terragon's Director of Business Development for Marine Applications. "He started Terragon with a different mindset; instead of developing technologies where you would bring waste to one facility to process and recycle, he took a different approach. He wanted to put these unique appliances in the habitats that are creating the waste, to use the waste, or the water, to produce resources, onsite, and enable off-grid sustainability. It's something we call TRU Habitat – Total Resource Utilization. You move away from the hauling, and transportation, and landfilling – an unsustainable, centralized approach."

Terragon's flagship product is called MAGS – the Micro Auto Gasification System. It's for solid waste, garbage, and sludge oils. "That was the first product we developed," says Korney, "and, technically, is our only commercialized product at this point. It's been available commercially for the last three years." MAGS is the world's most compact, efficient, and environmentally safe technology for the conversion of any combustible,

organic materials into thermal energy for use by the site where the materials are generated. Waste streams that can easily be converted into energy by MAGS, without the need for segregation, include, but are not limited to, paper/cardboard, plastics, food, oily rags, oils, and sludges.

MAGS' patented technology breaks down hydrocarbons in waste, and transforms them into a small volume of residue, called bio-char, which is safe for use as soil amendment, and a gas consisting mostly of hydrogen and carbon monoxide (syngas).

AT A GLANCE
TERRAGON ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGIES

WHAT: A manufacturer of products for onsite management of solid and liquid waste

WHERE: Montreal, Quebec

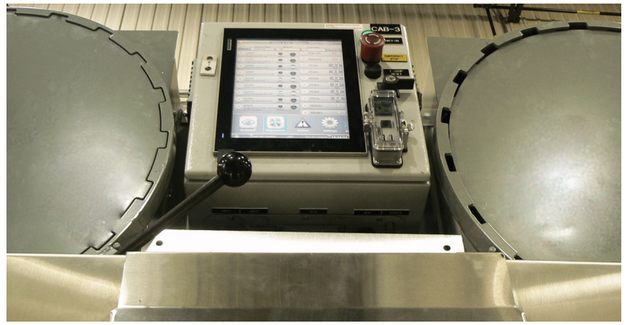
WEBSITE: www.terragon.net

In Terragon's proprietary Auto Gasification process, the syngas is combusted under controlled temperature and air flow conditions, and then used as the fuel for the process, itself. In other words, the waste is converted to inert carbon products by "cooking it" and the vapors generated from the "cooking" become the fuel for the whole process. This renders the appliance virtually self-sustainable.

Terragon's second product is called WETT – Wastewater Electrochemical Treatment Technology. "WETT is still in the late stages of R & D," says Korney. "We expect the first products under WETT to be ready by the end of this year. That's going to be for oily, contaminated water (WETT-O); but there's also going to be a WETT for greywater (WETT-G), and one for black water or sewage (WETT-S). Those are probably about two to three years out."

The leading sector for Terragon's market penetration for WETT is the maritime industry. Not only are ships isolated habitats that can't haul their waste to others, but the regulations for the shipping and offshore industries, which can include both commercial ships and cruise lines, as well as oil and gas rigs, are particularly stringent when it comes to the disposal of waste and wastewater at sea. Thus, waste management on ships and sea platforms remains a serious operational challenge characterized by excessive costs and potential health and environmental risks. It is often complex, inefficient, and labor-intensive. Terragon's WETT system offers an innovative and easy way to implement solutions for ships and sea platforms for their waste water, greywater, sewage, and oily bilge water.

All WETT systems consist of one or more modular units based on electrochemistry, supplemented by pre-treatment and post-treatment units, depending on the type of wastewater being treated. Central to all WETT systems is a marinized Electrocoagulation (EC) unit which has been perfected over the years to overcome the difficulties that are common to many simple EC units available commercial-



ly. In addition, there is the Electrochemical Oxidation (EO) unit for highly concentrated wastewater or for the removal of dissolved organics; the Oxidant Decomposition (OD) unit to reduce any residual oxidant content; the Bead Filter (BF) unit to remove all traces of residual turbidity; and several separators for the removal of large suspended solids, free oil, and/or residual organics.

So far, MAGS systems have been deployed mainly in large and/or remote habitats – ships at sea, military bases, research camps, etc.; and WETT systems have only been experimented with in a few residential settings, and onboard vessels. But once MAGS systems are scaled down to fit in residential units, and WETT systems can be scaled up for different applications, such as ships or apartment buildings, Korney believes that Terragon's macro vision can be realized. "When you combine the two technologies together, that's the TRU Habitat," he declares. "When you've employed MAGS and WETT systems together, there's a lot of synergy between the two. MAGS

generates a bit of water in the process that can go to WETT, and WETT generates a small amount of sludge from these wastewaters that can be gasified by MAGS into energy. When you put these two applications into whatever habitat, it truly can make it off-grid – being left with energy and clean water (non-potable) for reuse."

"There's a way to move away from the grid and do it simply and economically," Korney adds. "You don't need to put this bag of garbage on your street to be picked up; you can actually use it to harvest energy for your home. Or you can put this technology in your basement that's going to clean your wastewater stream that can be used for irrigation or to flush your toilets again. But, this mentality that's been built in by the traditional processes – hauling garbage away, turning the faucet on and off – is ingrained in us. That's the hardest part – getting people to try something new. That's the real challenge."

At Terragon Environmental Technologies, the prevailing ethos is that that challenge will be met with continuous perfection and commercialization of its revolutionary technologies, systems, and products. "From our point of view, we don't consider the word waste," says Korney. "We see it as a way to generate more resources. And there is a growing interest to look at waste this way."

PREFERRED VENDORS

- **Dimartech**
  www.dimartech.com
- **Fibrecast Inc.**
  www.fibrecast.com

We wish to congratulate TERRAGON on their ongoing success and we are privileged to be part of their team. Their dedication to finding solutions to proper waste management is highly respected within the industry.

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"How many times have you been in a conference room and you go to use something and it doesn't work? Or you don't know how to use it? Or you can't get the image up? Or you don't have the directory to be able to call in? There are a million things that happen all the time. Our job is to make sure they don't happen and that the stuff is ready to go when you need it to. Part of the challenge with these technologies is that traditionally they could be tough to use and maybe not as reliable as they should be. Our job is to make it like picking up a phone – you do it and it works."

So says Chris Henry, CEO of Cenero, the company he founded in 1999 as a service-focused, audio-visual, unified communications and IT solutions company, and which, today has 150 employees and five east coast office locations. "We have two basic business units," Henry continues. "One is a

AT A GLANCE
CENERO

WHAT: A unified communications and IT solutions company

WHERE: Malvern, Pennsylvania

WEBSITE: www.cenero.com

design/build systems integration unit, which designs, builds, installs, and services media conferencing systems, video-based, presentation-based communication systems, infrastructure systems – things like that - in training rooms, conference rooms, class rooms, and board rooms.

"We have a second group which is symbiotic with the design/build firm – it's a managed services division, basically software development and services. It's kind of like OnStar for cars - a lot more functionality for these audio/visual and video conferencing systems. We have a product called Constant Connect, which basically allows us to test and make sure everything in these systems is working as they should." In fact, Henry proclaims that the company's software will generally know when something has gone wrong, before the client does.

"It's part of our software," he says. "We have a suite of 'proactive tests,' which means that every night, local time, we go in and there's a series of tests that physically exercise every piece of equipment in the room or in that system – it launches calls, we look at metrics, we look at connection speed, we'll display an image up on a screen or a monitor and there's a

digital picture taken of that image, and then it's analyzed automatically to make sure it's working right. We look at microphone and speaker levels to make sure that everything's working.

"Then we have a suite of products called 'reactive tests' which is more like monitoring; it looks to make sure calls are happening as they should; battery levels in all your devices are where they should be; if you need to talk to somebody, you touch the tablet that we put in the system, and a video call is launched immediately into our call center staffed by engineers, with video links to all of our systems that we cover, and we can access all of your stuff to make sure it's working right. We also have what we think is the world's largest data base of functional information on these types of systems."

Henry says that the company can fix approximately 90 percent of all problems that generally come up, remotely. "Our managed services allows us to support these systems and have them operate appropriately anywhere in the world," he remarks. In fact, last year, over 60 percent of Cenero's revenue came from geographic locations outside of the reach of any of the company's five offices – Malvern, PA, Baltimore, MD, Charlotte and Raleigh, NC, and northern New Jersey - including about ten percent, from international clients. "The remainder of those problems will require someone to go onsite; every office has a team that does that and

> There are companies that offer similar services, but not with the breadth. The managed service offering is a huge differentiator for us. And there are certainly other systems integration companies, but none that have the depth of service products that we offer.
>
> **CHRIS HENRY**
> CEO

then, where we are remote, we have local partners all over the place; we have a very large network of folks on retainer that can support us anywhere in the world."

Henry believes that one of the reasons Cenero has experienced such rapid growth over the last several years (the company has consistently doubled in size in terms of revenue every three years) has been the relationship between the company's design/build integration business and its managed service business. "When we do the design/build work, you can imagine that the service business will come along,"

he proffers. "And we also do a lot of service work that brings along a lot of design/build work. So, they reinforce each other."

He also believes that the two complementary units within Cenero's business model helps separate the company from the competition. "There are companies that offer similar services, but not with the breadth. The managed service offering is a huge differentiator for us," he states. "And there are certainly other systems integration companies, but none that have the depth of service products that we offer." In addition, Cenero also offers SaaS – Systems as a Service model, where companies can rent systems. "The client will not own the equipment; they will rent the equipment and

it's their job to keep it up, keep it refreshed and serviced," Henry adds. "That's a model that some clients prefer."

Another facet of Cenero's continuing success is its dedication to its core values. "When you're

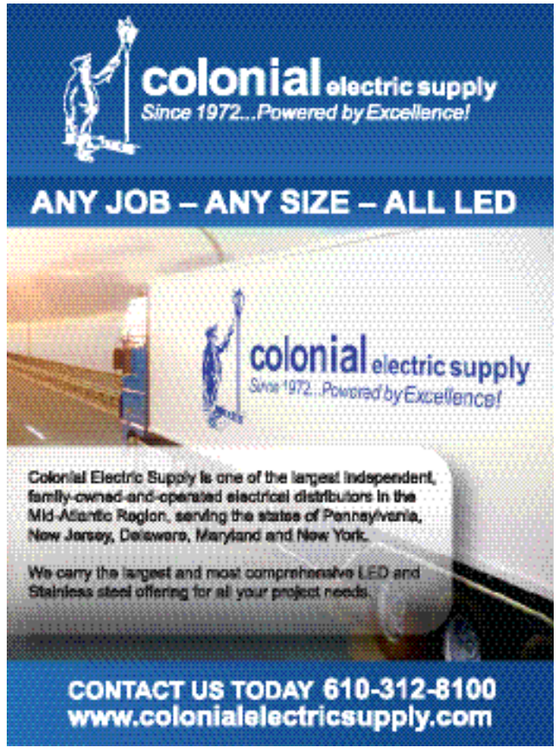
growing and hiring as fast as we are, having everybody on the same page with the same core values is really important," Henry avers. "We spend lots of time and money looking for people. If we find somebody who meets our criteria, even if we don't have an open position, we'll try and find one for that person. Things like integrity, emotional intelligence, natural intelligence, ability to learn - there are certain key parameters that we are looking for in all of our employees; we use them in our hiring process. We try to use them in our decision-making process, what clients we're going to work with, what vendors we're going to work with, and the like."

Whatever systems, services, or models a client may prefer, as a complete solutions and services company, Cenero has managed to supply it and intends to keep on doing so, building upon its success with more and better product offerings. "We continue down a path of more and more services, more and more integration with client applications, and making it simpler and easier to fully use and leverage these technologies. Unified communications is an area we spend a lot of time, effort, and money to refine and improve. It's a constant process. It's tying all that stuff together."

PREFERRED VENDOR

- **Colonial Electric Supply**
  www.colonialelectricsupply.com

- **Comprehensive Connectivity Company**
  www.comprehensiveco.com



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Since it's inception, The Remi Group has

- Analyzed 850,000+ vendor service agreements valued at $1.9 billion

AT A GLANCE
THE REMI GROUP

WHAT: Provider of equipment maintenance management programs for large institutional customers

WHERE: Head office in Charlotte, North Carolina

WEBSITE: www.theremigroup.com

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CPLUS employs only the most qualified and experienced people in the industry in order to provide you with excellent service and unparalleled expertise in technology systems and products.

We relentlessly pursue one goal: constantly improve upon our innovative best-in-class approaches and processes in order to help our clients cut costs and extend the useful life of their I.T. inventory.

www.computerplususa.com

- Covered more than 800,000 pieces of electronic equipment
- Worked with 2,500+ service vendors across the country
- Managed more than 1 million service events

Remi prides itself on selecting services and products from vendors that practice recycling whenever possible. At company headquarters, paper, plastic, glass products, and printer cartridges are recycled regularly. The IT Department donates out-of-date equipment to local North Carolina schools and non-profit organizations for refurbishing. Remi's office building, located in Ballantyne Corporate Park's Irby Building in Charlotte, NC, features special 'green' roofing and solar powered water heaters. Almost 75 percent of the construction waste was recycled and diverted from landfills and 30 percent of the construction materials were recycled. As a result, the Irby Building was awarded the first LEED Gold Certification in Ballantyne.

Dan Schuster, CEO of The Remi Group, founded the company in 1998, as part of a Royal & SunAlliance Insurance program. He relates, "Royal & SunAlliance Insurance, headquartered in Charlotte, North Carolina, wanted to take the concept of large-scale equipment management into the marketplace as an insurance offering they could distribute through their insurance agents and brokers nationwide. So, they recruited me out of Wisconsin as their first employee, because I had expertise in this space to basically build a branch inside of the

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insurance company. That's where I met our current President, Brent Howison. We started Remi with one employee, and successfully built the business up inside Royal & SunAlliance; rapidly growing to $30 million dollars in revenue."

Things went well until the U.S. division of Royal & SunAlliance ran into problems associated with 9/11. They were insuring part of the twin towers; they did a bad acquisition, and then decided to exit the United States. At that point, Schuster negotiated take-over of the business, the employee liabilities, and the run-off liabilities, and moved across the street to become an independent. He says, "We went from being Remi, owned by an insurance company, to The Remi Group, consisting of myself, and people like Brent, and some of the original shareholders."

The company covers the entire continental United States and now has 125 employees, plus many distribution partners – independents that get paid a commission for selling Remi programs.

BIS as we are commonly referred to by our family of associates is a trusted provider of real-time service, repair and maintenance, as well as new equipment sales in the office products marketplace. Our customers are our colleagues and their satisfaction is our major concern. This is our 34th year.

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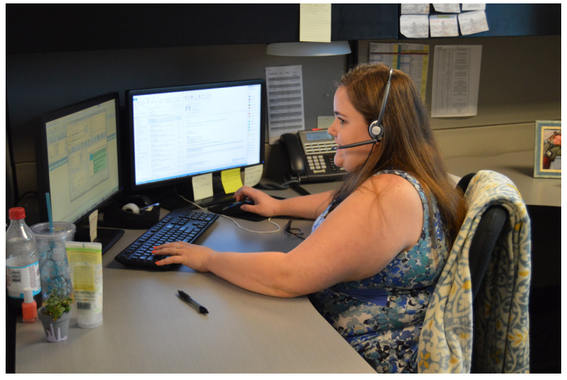
The programs involve equipment management for large institutional customers, including federal and state government agencies, public and private universities, hospitals and healthcare systems. These organizations outsource the maintenance of a collection of equipment, and instead of buying a contract from the OEM (Original Equipment Manufacturer), they buy protection from Remi.

Schuster explains, "When the equipment breaks, they call our dispatch center, and we send the appropriate vendor. We manage the repair process to ensure good response time and repair completion. We then pay the vendor. The client has outsourced the headache of dealing with all that administratively, plus our program saves them 15 to 25 percent over what they were paying



previously for maintenance contracts. That's our basic value proposition."

The company tries to keep a balance among four segments – federal government, state governments, higher education, and healthcare; not wanting to be overdependent on any one sector.

It's a portfolio play. If they have a down year because something's going on with the Fed, they can make it up in healthcare. And healthcare can be up and down too, so diversification is important.

Competitors, 99 percent of the time, are OEMs – Siemens, GE, Philips, Xerox, IBM – the big guys.

Howison adds, "The few like competitors we have are folks that dabble in the business. It may be an insurance company that tried to get into this a little bit and is still out there on a small scale. For another company, it might be a part-time thing. With us, it's all we do. That's what distinguishes us. It's what our 125 employees do every day. We invest all our money back into the business and have been for about 20 years. There are some serious entry barriers to get into this business, and if you look at what we've built up in a database and intellectual property and a knowledge base, it's very hard for others to compete with us."

Maintenance contracts are a significant revenue generator for OEMs. Equipment servicing is done either on a maintenance contract, or on a

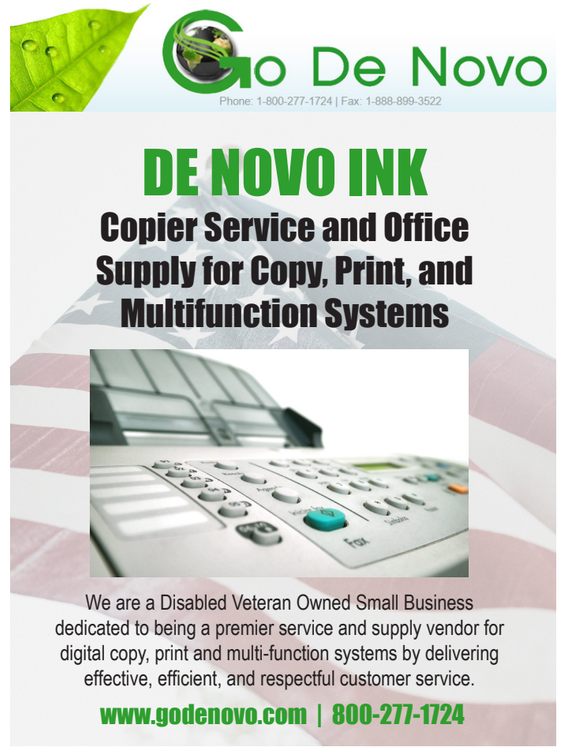
time-and-materials basis. A hospital, for instance, may have hundreds of different maintenance contracts scattered about the organization; all high-margin contracts for the OEMs. Remi eliminates those, systematically moving them onto one contract. If Remi continues to use the OEMs, they'll still get paid to provide service on a time-and-materials basis. They may forego a high profit margin under the Remi model, but it's better for the customer to pay through a program, where maintenance is only paid for as required.

Schuster says, "It was really Jack Welsh of GE who revolutionized the thinking. He saw the service side of the business as a huge profit generator for the organization. So, you can assume if they're trying to sell you a warranty at Best Buy, it's very profitable. That's why we are able to exist because we can pay for every repair, provide a discount to our client, and still have enough left over to run a business.

Howison gives the example of a hospital buying a maintenance contract from on OEM for a CT machine and paying $100,000 per year, whether the machine has a failure or not. "What we're doing is taking that 'pay an excessive amount for no failure' out of the equation. Offering a fixed cost, so it's easier to budget without surprises. We charge $75,000, and incur whatever happens underneath that. Most often the charges that come into us are under $75,000, that's how much margin there is. On the other side, we may incur $150,000 in repair charges, so we take all the financial risk for the customer, provide them upfront guaranteed savings, and one number to call.

"For the future, we want to grow in the U.S. and beyond. As technology continues to improve, there will be more electronic devices to be covered, and we'll be trying to gain market share. In our business core model, we collect a lot of useful data. Right now, we're looking at ways to use the data and knowledge base to help customers with more than just a maintenance contract. We can consult on capital asset purchases, streamlining the process, leasing new equipment - different services that we're just on the cusp of providing to the market."

Schuster acknowledges, "For a long time, we would have viewed ourselves as a product company. In the next five years, we're moving towards becoming a consultative solutions company. We have States that come to us, now, with equipment issues – part of it might be the procurement process; part of it might be the choices available. They ask us to help find a solution, because many times, they don't have the resources to solve the problem."



Long-term relationships are valuable – of note, CNA Insurance in Chicago. Remi works with them on a private label program. And Government Sourcing Solutions (GSS) in D.C. is a great distribution partner, with expertise in cooperative procurement vehicles. Per year, The Remi Group deals with 2,000 vendors on the service side of the portfolio, and continues to vet that list every day.

For this innovative industry leader, offering an outstanding customer experience is the top priority. Maintaining that experience through third-party service providers can be challenging and takes a great deal of time and money. But Remi is committed to making sure that every customer issue is heard. Howison sums up why he believes his company is the best choice as a maintenance provider:

"There are many organizations that either don't know there's an alternative to buying an OEM maintenance contract, or they know it, but are hesitant because they are nervous about what happens if they move away from it. We'd like everyone to know that in most cases there is an alternative. And it's not something that happened last night, or out of somebody's garage. It's an alternative that's been here for 20 years and is serving federal agencies, state governments, police crime labs, high-end healthcare customers, and the like. We at The Remi Group are a legitimate and viable alternative that should be explored."

PREFERRED VENDORS

■ ComputerPlus Sales & Service
www.computer-plus.com

ComputerPlus Sales & Service Inc., founded in 1991, and based in Greer, South Carolina, provides 24/7 service and support for critical computer system and network integration services. The company also offers preventive maintenance, system configuration, installation, administration, site preparation assistance, and analysis of local and wide area network infrastructures. It is the leader in information technology service and support for mid-range and enterprise-level I.T. systems nationwide.

■ De Novo Corp.
www.denovocorp.com

■ PartsSource
www.partssource.com

■ BIS Copy Systems
www.biscopy.net

BIS Copy Systems sells, installs, services, supplies, and supports networked or stand-alone copiers, printers, facsimile, scanning, and engineering machines. The company, with 24 locations throughout New York State, services and supports single and multiple networked equipment for New York State, the federal government, and retail accounts throughout New York City, and from Plattsburgh, to Buffalo.

■ Lab Squad
www.thelabsquad.com

■ Transtate Equipment Company, Inc.
www.transtateonline.com

TRANSPERFECT

HELPING TO NAVIGATE THE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE

We're all familiar with the story about how Apple Computer, Inc. was started in a garage by its two co-founders, Steve Jobs and Steve Wozniak, and then went on to become the world's foremost multinational technology company. But most people don't know that TransPerfect, the world's largest privately-held provider of language services and technology solutions, had a similar genesis - only this company wasn't founded in a garage, but rather in a New York University dorm room.

TransPerfect began in 1992, when Liz Elting, a linguaphile who had already lived in five countries, spoke four languages, and worked for three years at Euramerica, then the best-known translation firm in the world, decided that there was a gap between what clients really needed and what was available in the translation industry. "I wanted to create a company which would deliver the absolute highest quality with top-of-the-line service, along the lines of a top tier investment bank or law firm; an entity that would be a one-stop-shop for language and business solutions, with an office in every major city around the world," she explains. "That was what I envisioned—being the pioneer in the industry."

So, Elting went back to school for her MBA, majoring in international business and finance, and, after graduating, with $5,000 in savings and another $5,000 credit card advance, asked her then-boyfriend, Phil Shawe, if he would start a company with her. "This was really the beginning of the globalization of business," she says, "and it seemed like the perfect time to start my own translation company."

With a fax machine, a phone, and a rented computer, the couple and co-CEOs made and wrote hundreds of calls and letters daily, offering anything businesses needed in a foreign language,

AT A GLANCE | TRANSPERFECT

WHAT: The world's largest privately-held provider of language services and technology solutions

WHERE: Headquarters in New York, NY

WEBSITE: www.transperfect.com

faster and better than the competition. Their first job was translating a legal document from English to Slovak. From the beginning, Elting and Shawe outsourced the language work to highly specialized freelancers, while putting in 100-hour weeks running the company from Shawe's dorm room. After seven months in business, the pair moved to a rented office on Park Avenue South. A year later they hired their first employee and reeled in their first million-dollar client, J.C. Penney. By 1996 they had opened TransPerfect's permanent New York headquarters, along with offices in San Francisco, Atlanta, and Washington, D.C.

Today, TransPerfect is a global firm that operates in 170 languages. It has 100 offices in 90 cities, 4,000 employees, 15,000 sub-contractors, and annual revenues of over half a billion dollars. The company services 11,000 clients, completes over 50,000 projects per year, and works with many of the world's most recognizable enterprises in the following sectors: Retail & E-Commerce, Life Sciences, Legal, Media & Entertainment, Finance, Advertising, Marketing & Public Relations, Industrial & Manufacturing, Travel & Hospitality, Energy & Mining, Hardware & Software Technology, and Government. If its current growth trend continues, by 2019, it is expected to bring in yearly revenues of over $1 billion.

"Our core business is translation and other language services," Elting says. "And that means anything from document translation, to oral interpreting, to website localization, to software localization, to cultural consulting, to foreign language desktop publishing. The work we do for our clients is extremely labor intensive and we have specialists who work on it – translators, editors, proof readers – these are people with advanced degrees, usually in the field they're translating."

"We also do a tremendous amount of work for the life sciences industry – that's about a third of our business; we work for all of the biggest pharmaceutical firms and CROs (Contact Research Organizations) in the world," Elting adds. "We do over-the-phone interpreting and we do simultaneous interpretation, as well. We have been involved in several large-scale events for both the government and the private sector. For example, we've provided interpretation services for the

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Republican National Convention, or for large conferences featuring the President or Prime Minister of another country. Oftentimes companies will host massive conventions for thousands of people from all over the globe, and we've had the opportunity to provide the keynote speeches at these events in multiple languages, so all attendees can feel welcomed and involved."

"But what we found over the years is that there were more immediate needs that our clients were facing, and going along with our one-stop shop mentality, we wanted to be able to provide solutions for these additional pain points as well," Elting continues. "As a result, we started several related lines of business. We have a separate division called TLS – TransPerfect Legal Solutions. We were working for all of the major law firms in the world, and identified that while they had translation needs, if they were involved in a major case, there were additional services they needed support for – copying, scanning, e-discovery technologies, and temp attorneys who would review documents. So we created a separate, verticalized division with industry experts to ensure we could service all of our legal clients' needs in-house. One of those services was staffing additional people to manage these tasks during the case, so we built up our staffing services department, which is part of our litigation support services group. So, that's an example of an area that we've built up completely as a result of client need. We even do BPO (Business Process Outsourcing) – basically call

sensenet

Sense/Net Inc., a pioneer in the European web-based business solutions market, was founded in 1995. The company had developed the enterprise portal engine which has been the foundation of the company's portal solutions since 1999.

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center business, through our TransPerfect Connect division. We truly believe there is no business service we cannot provide for our clients, and we're constantly innovating to stay ahead of their needs and provide consultative solutions to their problems."

In contrasting TransPerfect with its competitors, Elting points to the company's size and scale as a relative advantage. "We handle extremely large projects," she avers. "In a major litigation – and this has happened many times – a client may need millions of words translated in a short time; we can handle the project because of our scale. Also, we're in more cities than any company in the industry, so we can establish in-person relationships with our global clients and be available for a meeting on a moment's notice.

"We are also ISO-certified in every one of our production centers. Of our hundred offices in 90 cities, about 40 of them are production offices and each one has their individual ISO certification. That's very important because we're dealing with very technical, high-risk material in regulated industries such as life sciences or finance, where ISO certification is critical because quality is their highest priority. With our ISO certification, our global presence, our technical specializations, and our top-of-the-line service provided by our team members available around the clock, our quality and service is truly the best in the industry.

"And, finally, we're extremely innovative, and that's what really sets us apart. We've built proprietary technology to target specific client needs, such as our GlobalLink suite to streamline the localization process. Five years from now, our industry, and every industry, is going to be very different, and therefore, we must continue to be at the cutting edge of technology. We have an extremely smart, dedicated, and talented team made up of individuals who are already looking a decade ahead and developing new and exciting technologies."

As for the future, Elting says that TransPerfect will continue to grow. "It's a very exciting time," she exults, "because we work with the biggest and best companies in the world and their needs are changing and increasing. It's all about keeping up with the times. In each one of our client relationships, our goal is to anticipate what our clients need before they know they need it. So, we will continue to innovate—particularly with ideating and creating new technologies; we'll be acquiring more compa-

nies; we'll continue to open offices and start related lines of business to service growing client needs as they evolve. As the business landscape continues to grow and change, TransPerfect will be growing and changing right alongside it. That's what we've done and that's what we'll continue to do."

And to think: it all started in a dorm room with only two people and a rented computer.

PREFERRED VENDORS

■ Sense/Net

www.sensenet.com

Sense/Net ECM is an affordable alternative to proprietary ECMS software, such as SharePoint. The company has developed the industry's first open-source Enterprise Content Management System (ECMS) for the .NET platform. The software is dual licensed, with a free Community Edition, and a licensed, fully supported Enterprise Edition. Sense/Net's Product Team is continuously working on and supporting the current version of Sense/Net ECMS by providing consultancy and releasing updates. The Business Solutions team features project managers, consultants, designers, and developers to complete ECMS deployment- and related custom development projects.

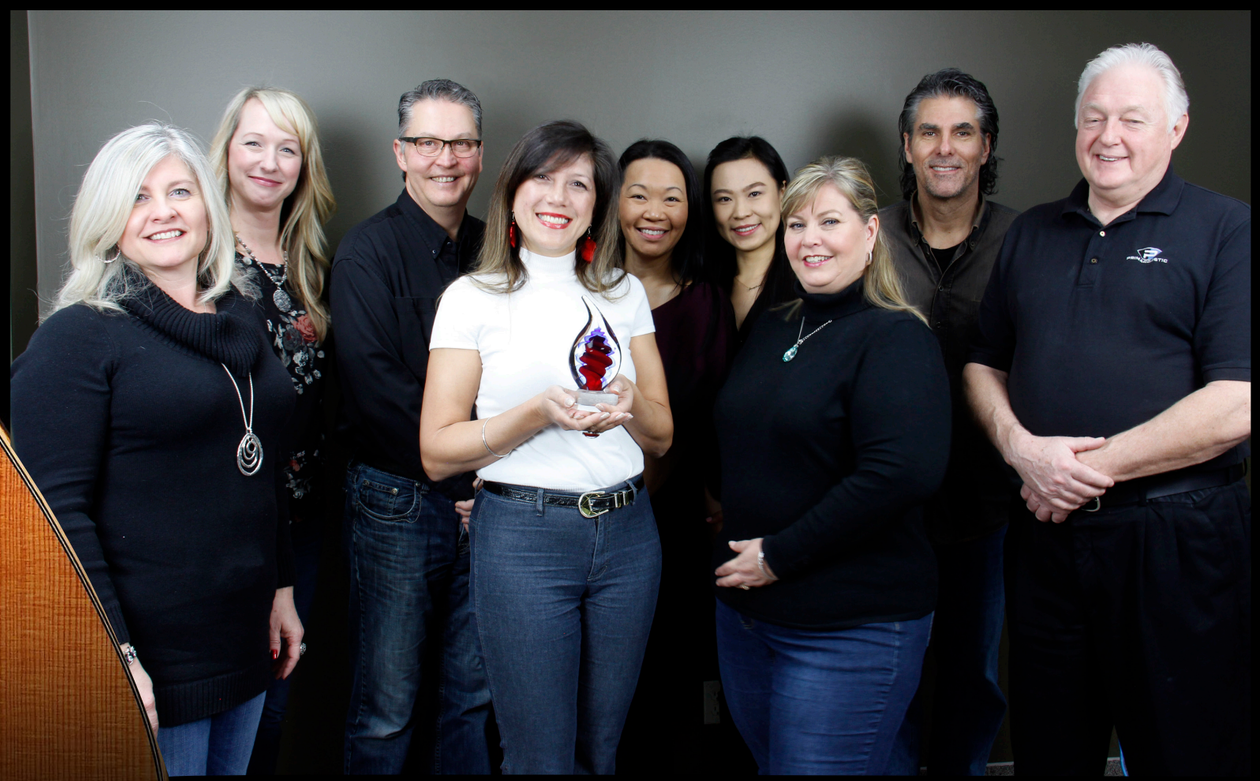
■ Knowledge Pool

www.knowledgepool.de

Founded in 1999, knowledge pool brings almost 20 years professional experience into the translation business and has been a reliable partner for US-based companies seeking entry into German-speaking markets. Following a unique approach, knowledge pool's mission is to fully grasp the client`s business to adapt and convey their brand message and content for a German-speaking audience, so they can successfully pursue new opportunities in these markets. The company has a staff of 12, working from their office in Munich, Germany, and hosts a network of expert linguists specializing in various industries and fields.

RADIAL
Engineering Ltd.

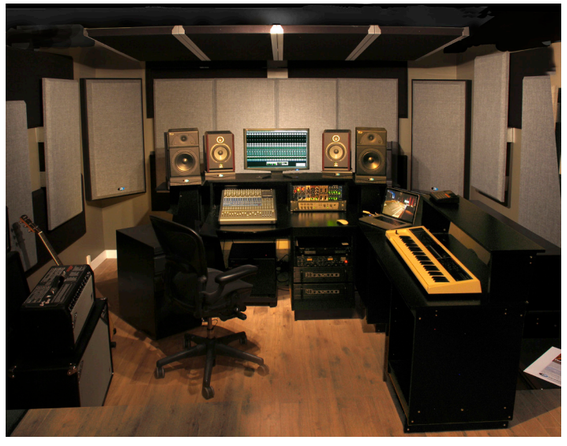
A MARKET LEADER IN MUSIC ELECTRONICS



Peter Janis has been involved with music all his life. From learning piano at age seven, to playing guitar in a rock band at age 16, to working in a music store at 18, where he started in shipping, moved to sales, and finally began dabbling in the exotic universe of music electronics. Years of playing on the road led him to a job at Lauzon Sound, where he expanded his technical skills in the area of PA systems design, putting together audio systems for everything from night clubs to arenas. Another gig in a music store then led to a position in Vancouver as New Product Di-

rector for Fender Canada (TMI), Canada's national distributor of Fender amplifiers and guitars.

Ten years later, after turning down an offer to take a job in the States when Fender Canada was shut down to centralize all its operations in the U.S., Janis went on to start a few of his own businesses and finally wound up founding Radial Engineering. "A few years later, there was this aha! moment, when I realized that there was a certain product that was just underrepresented in the market place and it was the direct box," Janis remembers. "What this device does is allow you to connect a bass or a keyboard or laptop computer to the PA system, so the thing can be heard. And no one was specializing in this area; this little box



was just an afterthought."

Radial produced its first direct box, the Radial JDI, in 1996. "It was purchased by Bruce Springsteen," says Janis. "He wanted a custom-made box,

so it was that band that kind of launched our first product in the marketplace." Soon, Janis and his own band – this time of engineers - began innovating and exploring. "It's no different than anything else," he says. "Once you start to look into it, you want to optimize things; you start to make specialty products. So, if I look at where this company's come from, it's always been about trying to find underserviced niche markets, and trying to establish the brand as a market leader. Over the years, we've become such a dominant player in that game because we don't offer one box – we offer a hundred solutions."

Today, Radial Engineering, with its team of over 90 employees and a large number of sub-contractors in Canada, the U.S., and around the world, offers a wide array of professional audio products that it markets under several brand names, and sells only through a global network of dealers and distributors. They include:

Radial - products for the professional live audio

AT A GLANCE
RADIAL ENGINEERING

WHAT: A manufacturer of professional audio products

WHERE: Vancouver, British Columbia

WEBSITE: www.radialeng.com

and recording markets such as direct boxes, splitters, and isolators.

Tonebone - guitar and bass pedals for musicians such as distortion pedals, instrument preamps, and switchers.

Primacoustic – an acoustic product for recording, broadcast, and installations such as houses of worship, call centers, and restaurants.

Hafler - amplifiers, headphone amps, and phono stages for hi-fi, contractors, and recording studios.

Dynaco - tube-based preamps and power amps for the high-end audiophile market.

The company's Radial and Tonebone brands cater strictly to the crème de la crème of the music industry, and Janis is very matter of fact about how being number one has its privileges. "Just this last weekend, U2 was in Vancouver rehearsing and preparing the stage show ready for their world tour," he reveals. "Everything is very hush-hush, big security, and yet, we walked in the door and we're given a backstage tour. We have this level of access that you don't get unless you are a market leader, and I think that says it all – where our stature is in the industry."

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And the industry seems to agree that the stature is justified. "We're getting great reviews, great artist endorsements; we've got the best of the best," Janis exults. "We've got mastering engineers endorsing Primacoustic. We've got Chick Corea, a world-famous piano player, endorsing Hafler. Because we are working in the production side of things, we know these people. We can get them great product to try out and then they can say, 'Yeah, I'm going to endorse that.' So, we're using that to strengthen the brand."

Primacoustic has been in the Radial portfolio since 2000. "You walk into a restaurant, you sit down for dinner with some friends and you can't hear the conversation," Janis opines. "We've all been there. We sell acoustic materials for that reason, to solve that problem. Those same acoustic materials go into recording studios; they go into gymnasiums; we do conference centers; we do churches; we do dog kennels; we do interrogation rooms for police; we do call centers. Primacoustic is the single biggest growth opportunity we have. It's the number one player in this market segment because our competition are just little regional guys and we're on a global level; we're shipping all over the world and our sales are growing at roughly 25 percent a year. We're adding people to that division, all the time."

The Hafler and Dynaco brands are Radial's newest explorations. Janis explains their genesis: "We

continue to strive to come up with new areas of potential business and we diversified outside of the music industry into home listening and other businesses," he states. "David Hafler started Dynaco in the 1950s and was a dominant player, back then. My dad had Dynaco speakers at home - they were the Sony or Bose of their time. What David Hafler did in the 1960s, was he presented an affordable tube amplifier. We own the Dynaco and Hafler brands, now, and we've got a high-end, tube amplifier and a tube pre-amplifier on the way.

"We're putting out products that are going to be kind of nostalgic, yet updated for today's music listening tastes - still with tubes and at a reasonable price point compared to the competition. This tube amp that we're coming out with – our competition's is $5,000 or $8,000, let's say. We're coming in at about 3,000 bucks. And it's going to be world class." Another new product under the Hafler brand is a phono stage, also known as a phono pre-amp; it connects a turntable to a CD input. It's a necessary item in many high-end systems for phonograph sound clarity. "You can spend $40,000 on a phono stage; ours is $600," Janis adds.

Janis also reports that the rollout for the new commercial amplifier product line is coming soon. "We got approval on three designs," he says. "They've gone for initial inspections with UL (Underwriters Laboratories), and they've gone through initial inspections with the FCC (Federal Communications Division in the U.S.), and they've been able to pass those things. We're waiting for the final metalwork to come in, you know, little finish issues, and if the prototype, which is supposed to arrive this week, comes, and everybody's happy, we hit the go button and start shipping in July. So it's imminent."

When asked where he would like to see Radial Engineering several years up the road, Janis responds thusly: "Because we've got multiple

brands, you have to look at it from a number of different perspectives. So, if we take a look at the music industry from the performance side of things, simply stated, the world of digital, the world of internet, has made it that these guys make no money with record sales. The whole marketplace has shifted towards concerts. So, all these guys who have been in retirement and getting these royalty checks every month have now turned around and realized that they're not making any money and they have to get in shape, suit up, and go back on tour. And that's why everyone's touring. And we're the number one player in that area in what we do. So, as a result, we see that continuing to grow as more and more artists get out there and work."

In terms of the company's newer, niche hi-fi market, Janis can only learn if it will succeed by diving right in. "These amplifiers have been a year and a half, two years, in development," he explains. "But, we don't yet know how multi-channel amplifiers will interface with the new world of 'all things internet.' As home automation moves to where the cell phone will be used to turn your heat up and turn your fridge down, we have to play that game. So, we will develop a digital interface that goes with the multi-channel amplifiers that allows someone to turn the music on when they come home and control it wirelessly through Bluetooth or WiFi. It is difficult to know how big that market's going to become, because it's new and it's evolving very quickly. Are people going to go online to download music as the quality improves or are they going to ignore their CD or LP records? You don't know, but you've got to go into it with eyes wide open."

Already a market leader in three categories, Janis and Radial Engineering are hoping to succeed just as robustly with this next business venture, which Janis refers to as "affordable mid-fi." "We're a busy little operation," he quips. "That's all there is to it."

PREFERRED VENDOR

■ **Leading Edge Manufacturing**
www.leadingedge-mfg.com

Founded in 1991, and based in Langley, British Columbia, Leading Edge Manufacturing Inc., a contract manufacturer for the electronics industry, supplies its customers with the highest level of quality products and services, including: PCB parts and assembly, cable and harness production, prototyping and R&D Projects, component supply, conformal coating, electromechanical assembly, device programming, and full functional testing.

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The company is a leading full-service distributor and remanufacturer of softwood and hardwood lumber, and specialty panel products for the crating and industrial packaging industry, construction and infrastructure sector, lumber and building materials dealers, and truss manufacturers throughout North America. It also acts as an exclusive sales agent for a group of SPF (Spruce, Pine, and Fir) sawmills in northern Ontario. Weston Forest Products operates distribution and remanufacturing facilities at its head office in Mississauga, Ontario, and in Quebec, Ontario, Michigan, and New York.

AT A GLANCE
WESTON FOREST

WHAT: Distributor and remanufacturer of wood products to North American industrial and construction sectors

WHERE: Head office in Mississauga, Ontario

WEBSITE: www.westonforest.com

The business began in 1953 as Weston Road Wholesale, a small lumber yard run by Frank Ekstein on Old Weston Road in Toronto. In 1978, he was joined by his son, Rick, and over the next few years, the single lumber yard with 12 employees and annual revenue of $8 million grew to become the Weston Forest Group – one of Canada's most diversified forest product remanufacturing and distribution companies, conducting business on four continents and in over forty countries. Weston Forest Group directly employed 200 people, and achieved sales of over $200 million.

Reorganization in 2000 led to the creation of six separate companies some of which have been sold to staff or third parties. Steve Rhone, President of Weston Forest Products, shares some insight into the success of this progressive company. "Rick Ekstein and his brother Peter wanted to build a national, and then global, forest products company. Their father, Frank, challenged them to aggressively grow the business, providing they generated enough income to pay for their ambition. They developed strategies and did the research; poking into different areas of the market. To that point, we had basically been a walk-up lumber yard where you came to pick up a few pieces of 2 x 4 to fix up your basement, or pressure-treated lumber to build a deck."

In the early 2000s, Weston Forest Group had several distinct segments competing for resources under one roof. Rhone explains, "We'd grown north of 200 employees, still in the same facility we'd started with. Whoever screamed loudest got looked after that day. So, we split those various businesses into stand-alone operating entities; individual corporations operating in their own facilities with their own administrative and operational support."

Only Weston Forest is in the original location, and is one of two still operating independently. Nearby, Weston Wood Solutions operates under separate ownership, focusing on window and door components, moulding, and millwork. Weston Premium Woods, also just a few miles away, produces higher-end hardwoods and decorative wood elements. That company was just recently purchased by a public company.

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Rhone notes, "We have a trading group, and a distribution group, each with numerous segments, and a specific market focus. In late 2000, we took that model and identified eight different market segments that we wanted to participate in, and we're building up the businesses that could stand alone and operate independently. There is potential at some point in the future for Weston Forest to become eight different companies if we choose to go through that process again. The advantage of that is to create enough scale to operate an independent business that gives employees the opportunity to share in the equity that they're building. Having said that, this would only happen if it was a benefit to our people; division is not the goal, it's just a possibility."

As for competition, Rhone states the obvious. "There is nothing unique in our product offering. We sell lumber and plywood – there isn't anything too special about a piece of 2 x 4. What we do is create a value-add-

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ed sales model; a customer-centred relationship where people love doing business with us. It's what drives our success. Believe it or not, our industry is still somewhat archaic, and delivering what you promised, when you promised, to the place you promised is not a given. It doesn't happen all that frequently. We don't have a 100 percent success rate, but we do have a fill rate in the high 90s, and because of that we stand above the crowd in our segment."

Rhone is adamant that it's not about price. "If the only reason you buy from us is because we're the cheapest, we're probably not the right supplier for you. We provide the whole value proposition, the experience, the consistency, the long-term relationship of dealing with the same people for extended periods of time. We employ the best in the industry. We bring people here, they stay here, they become experts in their area of the market, and then we come to you as a consultant. We give you advice, share best practices, encourage you to investigate and find alternate ways of using wood, or manufacturing your finished product with wood, that will help you create efficiencies or overall lower costs while allowing us to remain your supplier. Customers are incredibly loyal to us for the things we bring them other than a cheap piece of wood. And we still bring them a competitive piece of wood."

Currently, the company has about 150 employees; a combination of seasoned experts and fresh perspective. It is just as common to encounter

> "There is nothing unique in our product offering. We sell lumber and plywood – there isn't anything too special about a piece of 2 x 4. What we do is create a value-added sales model; a customer-centred relationship where people love doing business with us. It's what drives our success."
>
> **STEVE RHONE**
> PRESIDENT

a 20+ year veteran as it is to meet a 20-something running a major business unit. More than 95 percent of the products sold by Weston Forest are sourced in North America; primarily from British Columbia and south into Oregon and Washington; Alberta, Ontario, and Quebec and the Maritime provinces; and Maine, Michigan, and New York.

The company is certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), and not only advocates, but champions proper management of the world's forest resource. A significant part of the business involves extending the forest resource through remanufacturing and sustainable practices.

Looking ahead, Rhone says, "We are committed to consistent growth. We want to outperform the economy. Our target is to exceed 15 percent growth per year, but only if it makes sense to do so in markets that are profitable.

Part of our business model is to have diversity. Our largest supplier represents less than 5 percent of our purchases; our largest customer represents less than 5 percent of our revenue. We do that intentionally, so we're not reliant on any one person or relationship for the health of our business. We have many relationships and deem all of them critical – both suppliers and customers. We don't enter into them or retain them unless we believe we can bring long-term value to each other."

Weston Forest is a diverse, forward thinking company committed to delivering an outstanding experience for employees, suppliers, and customers. Rhone sums it up well, "We believe

that Weston Forest represents the successful execution of a solid business plan by a team of outstanding people."

PREFERRED VENDORS

- **TradeTec**
  www.tradetec.com

TradeTec has been a leading technology company in the forest industry for over 28 years. The company provides solutions for lumber inventory management, log inventory management, log accounting software, lumber tally software, and log scaling and grading software. From the evaluation of standing timber to the distribution of value-added products, its log and lumber inventory software provides the information to seamlessly manage the movement of wood from source, to supplier, to customer. TradeTec has a software application for every segment of the industry and for all sizes of manufacturers and distributors of forest related products.

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