

Integrate



THE OFFICIAL TRADE JOURNAL OF NSCA | SUMMER 2022

Are Your Contracts Good Enough?

The language you include in contracts can make or break profitability and reduce vulnerability. Lean on these valuable tips.

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To improve
talent retention,
DO THIS.

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YOUR TRUSTED ADVISOR

From 'Just in Time' to 'Just in Case'

Amid supply chain challenges, many integrators are tweaking their tried-and-true inventory management policies. *By Chuck Wilson*

At the 2022 Business & Leadership Conference, Dr. Chris Kuehl reminded us that we've seen the end of just-in-time product delivery—for a while, anyway. For cashflow reasons, we've always coached integrators not to sit on excessive inventory. Instead, you could order products for projects as they were needed according to the schedule. This would limit what's on the shelf to service and key clients.

The supply chain situation in 2022 has changed all that. Now NSCA suggests a procurement model based on visibility and probability of your backlog and sales funnel. Business analysts equipped with the proper tools can look at the close ratios of projects stuck in the funnel and determine with some level of accuracy which item will most likely be the problem.

Integrators suffer from a "one-part-missing" bill of materials list on every project. Those missing parts could be a key component like a control system, a unique managed switch, or something more common, like IP endpoints. When multiplied across dozens of in-house projects, these missing items create big problems. Percentage of completion accounting practices for revenue recognition won't allow you to take that income until you deliver the project and, in many cases, the usage of the system.

Inventory levels have doubled at about every company I visit—not just because of the backlog and work in progress, but because of the fear of not having critical items when a project is ready for mobilization. Being strategic about this will be key; restocking unused aged items can be problematic.

You can't let the manufacturer warranty start or expire with products still sitting on the shelf. Almost every NSCA manufacturer member is willing to adjust warranties if you simply ask. To that point, a solid relationship with your vendor partners has never been more important.

Banks that provide a line of credit for financing view this as a concern, too. Many members see aged inventory being reduced from the traditional 80% to a 50% pledge against the bank's covenant on the line. The longer the materials collect dust in your warehouse, the more bankers see the risk of the project being cancelled. You might envision a full warehouse as a signal of a booming business, but they see it as risk—and a future ask to increase your line of credit.

Down payments, progress billings for stored materials, bonded warehouses, and daily project schedule meetings with project managers are the new normal. Cash is king! Keep interest rate increases in mind for the rest of this year. The cost of money is projected to rise.

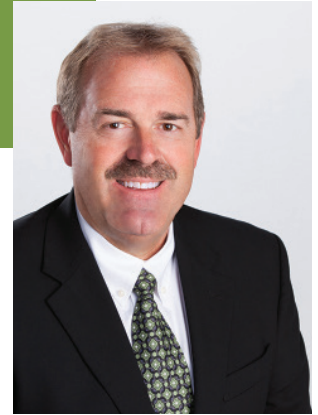
This all has a major impact on labor and scheduling project teams. Utilization in most companies isn't good. The return to project time isn't accounted for when the system is piecemealed together as parts arrive. The NSCA Labor Installation Standard guidelines (new version coming soon) are based on the premise that the system is only installed once.

It's not as easy as it seems to substitute products. This is a key message for vendor partners as well. When a specification is written by others, and the submittals and drawings have been approved, you must deliver what was in your contract or start the whole process over again.

Unexpected cost increases need to be passed on to clients. Margins aren't enough to absorb these unaccounted-for expenses within your cost of doing business. It's easier said than done, but you can't go broke, either.

Never have we seen such a need to manage "profit killers" as we do today. These profit killers include non-billable surcharges, increased shipping fees, project schedule delays that cause unplanned overtime, multiple trips, interest charges, re-engineering systems, and installing temporary equipment.

Inventory levels **have doubled** at about every company I visit—not just because of the backlog and work in progress, but because of the fear of not having critical items when a project is ready for mobilization.



NSCA's Financial Leadership Council also offers additional tips:

“Increase labor time to anticipate extra visits to the site. Our proposals indicate that labor is an estimate only. **Get 50% down upfront from the client** and be very upfront on anticipated delays. Clients hate when you go silent on them. That’s worse than delivering bad news. And don’t order all the gear now and hope it arrives soon. **Check delivery estimates and match the one furthest out.** For example, if one company quotes 39 weeks, then don’t order everything and wait the 39 weeks. Wait to order the rest of the gear closer to when you think you can deliver the project. But also keep an eye on alternative gear.”

–*Laurie MacKeigan, President of Backman Vidcom and NSCA Board Member*

“We must move the culture and mindset away from ‘the way it used to be.’ The world and supply chain have changed for the unforeseeable future. As integrators, we must adapt.

Quoting the right business at the right price—and with the right risk-mitigating contracting language—is more important than ever. At today’s cost points, if we continue to quote at the timelines we used to be able to meet, and we assume customer/bid market risk levels, then we’ll be in a race to the bottom. We’ll be hit with liquidated damages from not meeting old timelines, as well as inflationary expenses from the rising costs of labor and products. Learning to say ‘no’ early can save you time and money—and possibly the life of your company.”

–*Mat Hennings, VP of Finance at CEC*

“For maybe the first time ever, integrators have to pay attention to the macro environment in selecting and pricing potential projects. For example, inflation will erode your profits unless you anticipate and price accordingly—both for equipment purchases as well as labor (internal or subcontractor). In the past, we might have been able to say that our proposal was good for 90 days without paying enough attention to the fact that the project was a year or two away and might last an additional year or two. With declining electronics prices, this often worked in our favor. We could generally buy cheaper than at the time of bid. Now, the opposite will work against us. Current-day pricing could eat all our profits by the time we actually buy and install the equipment. **We suggest adding inflation adjustment** to bid equipment and bid labor in contract documents, as well as pass-through for any vendor surcharges. Once the inflationary period is over, we then must react to that new normal.”

–*Joel Harris, President of Solutions360*

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THIS IS YOUR MOMENT FOR ACTION

*A playbook to move integration
businesses forward*

Sept. 19-21 • Westin Hotels & Resorts • Rosemont, IL

PIVOT
TO PROFIT

Pivot to Profit 2022

Embracing disruption, taking on new challenges, and creating a culture of innovation—these are the focus of NSCA's annual Pivot to Profit conference.

Now in its seventh year, this event gives integrators the tools, resources, and community they need in order to thrive in today's shifting business environment.

Our knowledgeable Pivot to Profit presenters pack as much high-value, actionable information as possible into a short, two-day event so you get an impressive return on your investment—with a short time commitment.

At this year's Pivot to Profit, you'll learn how to:

- Provide value to customers in a completely new way
- Become a master systems integrator
- Create better annual spending benchmarks
- Avoid common compliance issues that cause project setbacks
- Build support for a recurring revenue program

Register [here](#).

Dr. Kuehl's Mid-Year Economic Update

July 19

NSCA Chief Economist Dr. Chris Kuehl updates members on how important economic factors will impact our industry:

- Dig into employment numbers and what they mean for integrators facing escalating labor costs
- Analyze pandemic-driven trends that show businesses investing in technology
- Uncover expectations for residential and commercial construction markets
- Identify vertical markets that appear on the verge of growth
- Gain insight into consumer behavior trends and expectations
- Experience an economist's view of the supply chain

Dr. Kuehl has been providing economic insight and analysis directly to NSCA members throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and market recovery. During this summer webinar, he focuses his economic analysis on the specific impact to the integration industry.

Register [here](#).



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Customer satisfaction isn't the only part that's in it for you. We're with you all the way from system design to technical support, so you can rest easy knowing you won't be wasting valuable time on the phone with multiple vendors should an issue arise. You can reduce customer visits by installing a solution that is optimized to work seamlessly together, and adapt with your customer's needs with the ability to start small, and expand their solution in the future.

Learn how you can offer more with an end-to-end solution: bit.ly/3ldbv7h



Microsoft Teams Training Series

July 28, Aug. 4, & Aug. 11

Presented by OfficePro, get your team trained on key Microsoft topics:

- O365 Key Features
- MS Teams Overview
- Microsoft Teams Updates

Dr. Kuehl has been providing economic insight and analysis directly to NSCA members throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and market recovery. During this summer webinar, he focuses his economic analysis on the specific impact to the integration industry.

[Register here.](#)

Frontline Project Management Training

Oct. 25-16 Dec. 6-7

The only way to sell profitable jobs (good estimates), manage them efficiently, and install them right the first time is by improving the performance and professional growth of your frontline team. NSCA is pairing up with Nadim Sawaya of Enterprise Performance Consulting to offer virtual customized training sessions.

This Frontline Project Management Training offers:

- 4 hours of self-study prerequisite work
- 5 instructor-led sessions (2 hours each)
- A student manual and comprehensive project manual containing best practices, forms, and checklists
- A bonus session on project team tasks assignments and project playbook guidelines

[Register here.](#)



FIND UPCOMING EVENTS

on our event calendar at NSCA.org.

“The pandemic has amplified talent and labor cost challenges for lots of members. Are you experiencing hiring, talent retention, and/or labor cost challenges? How are you reacting to them?”

NSCA's membership is a community. The individuals and companies that make up NSCA share common challenges. We take pride in providing a community where you can discuss shared obstacles and successes. “On Members' Minds” is just one platform to share thoughts on the integration market.



“Like most of our industry peers, Avidex has experienced challenges in talent and labor cost. Talent retention and hiring are strategic imperatives for us, so we took action early on with good results to date.”

“In terms of retention, we undertook a market benchmarking study to ensure we understood the competitive landscape for key roles and skills across our workforce. Based on that analysis, we proactively raised salaries for certain key roles and individuals where we felt this was needed to stay ahead of the market, and to ward off potential poaching of our employees. Before the pandemic, we reviewed benchmarks annually. Now, we review the data every six months.”

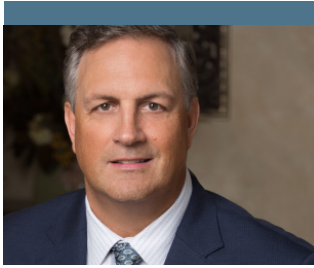
[Editor's note: Learn about NSCA's 2022 Compensation & Benefits report on page 8.]

“We also realigned our HR team to more proactively source new talent. For example, they've dedicated more resources spending more time every day to building a talent pipeline through proactive outreach to individuals and developing partnerships with technical schools and colleges. We have seen the benefits of this in recent quarters in the reduced time it takes to fill critical job openings.”

Jeff Davis,
President and Chief Operating Officer, Avidex

WANT MORE?

NSCA's Ignite program is back in a big way for 2022. Learn about becoming an Ignite Ambassador, the Ignite Internship Program, Ignite Internship Grants, and job recruitment by visiting [IgniteYourCareer.org](https://www.igniteyourcareer.org).



“Before the pandemic, the Bureau of Labor Statistics projected that AV industry jobs would grow 21% by 2030—much faster than the average for all occupations. Now that we’ve turned the COVID-19 corner, the demand for most positions is quickly escalating, especially for skilled design engineers and installation technicians.”

“The best reaction to any labor challenge is to maintain a solid reputation as an ethical business operation and ensure that employees have opportunities to develop their skills. Employee-owned organizations like AVI Systems also tend to provide more long-term opportunities to employees, which enhances retention.”

Don Mastro,
Executive VP, Global Sales, AVI Systems



If you're not offering mobile duress add-ons to your security customers, you're missing out on easy, recurring revenue.

[Learn More: Download White Paper](#)



**BOOST RECURRING REVENUE WITH INTELLISEE—
OVERALL WINNER, EXCELLENCE IN PRODUCT
INNOVATION AWARDS 2022**



EPI 2022
Excellence in Product Innovation



Discover a bold new way to secure recurring revenue for your business with IntelliSee—an award-winning video monitoring platform that turns passive security systems into proactive risk-mitigation tools.

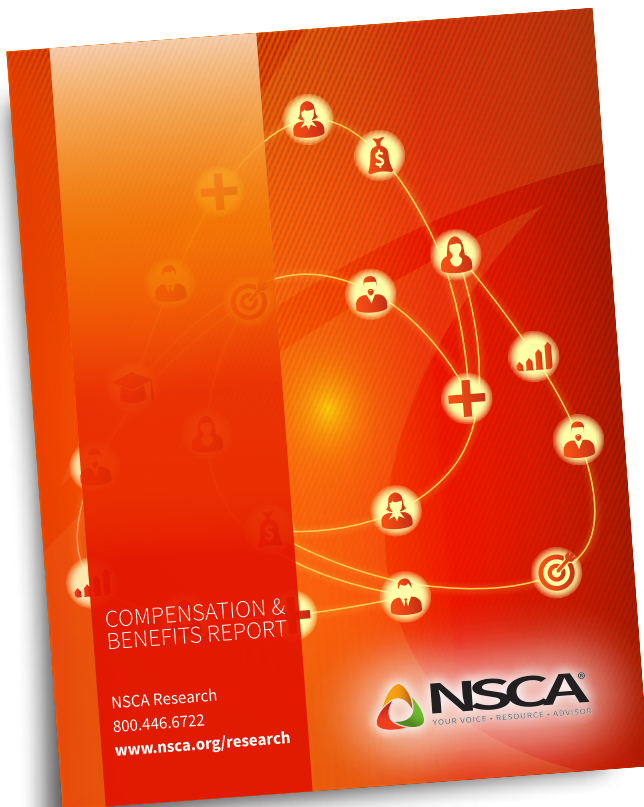
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- 🎯 **Deep-learning AI continuously evolves for better results & increased ROI**

Click to learn why users and systems integrators call IntelliSee a “game-changer”.



Benchmark Your Salaries & Benefits

NSCA's new *Compensation & Benefits Report* is a valuable tool for integrators in a volatile job market.



What Does the Report Reveal?

This new report contains valuable information to help integrators uncover wage trends, identify fluctuations in compensation, pinpoint employment trends, and determine appropriate wage levels for employees.

The 2022 *Compensation & Benefits Report* also covers:

- Staff levels (number of full-time and part-time employees)
- Benefits offered (and associated costs), including health insurance, dental insurance, life insurance, vision plans, disability, retirement, and bonuses
- Compensation for positions ranging from the C-suite to HR, accounting, installation, design, purchasing, marketing, and project management
- Ancillary compensation (bonuses) for sales, administrative, and project management professionals
- Raises for different staff categories
- Business travel reimbursement (mileage, cell phones, expense accounts, per diems, etc.)

Here's the Catch

This is sensitive information. Integration firm leaders need to be able to control distribution of the report within their organizations, so it's not available to download.

How Do You Get It?

Owners and executives can request access to the report at no cost; the report can also be purchased by approved non-members. All requests to access the report will be vetted by NSCA. For more information, or to access your copy, [start here.](#) 

Many NSCA members are seeing employees tempted by other jobs offering higher pay, elevated positions, and signing bonuses. Obviously, you don't want to lose your top performers—but you also want to make informed and rational decisions about what you should be paying your team members (and what benefits to offer).

NSCA's new *Compensation & Benefits Report* comes in extremely handy to help you understand what other integration companies offer to their employees. The report is based on data gathered from integrators across North America. It tracks and benchmarks compensation and benefits data for a variety of key positions within the industry, including technical, non-technical, and C-suite roles.



How to Use Powerful Accounting Best Practices to Improve Your Business

To boost the performance of your business, follow these accounting best practices. By Jeff Bronswick

Whether you are buying, selling, starting, or growing a business, cash flow planning is critical to the success of an integration firm. Businesses with proven techniques for cash flow planning are more successful and, therefore, more valuable than their competitors.

If you're buying a business, then make sure these practices exist. If you're selling, then identify the areas that need improvement and fix them. In the eyes of a prospective buyer, this will increase the value of your business.

Planning should be done in advance and for at least one year out. The cash flow plan should closely align with the strategic plan for the business. The purpose behind the plan is to:

1. Predict when, where, and how cash needs will occur
2. Predict the best sources for meeting additional cash needs
3. Be prepared to meet these needs when they occur (it helps to keep good relationships with bankers and other creditors)
4. Plan business profitability and growth

The starting point for avoiding a cash crisis is managing the balance sheet. Collection of accounts receivable and payments to vendors are two areas that require daily attention. A well-run business will develop short-term (weekly, monthly) cash flow projections to help manage daily cash, as well as long-term (annual and up to five years) cash flow projections to help develop the necessary capital strategy to meet business needs.


Remember, the plan should be by week or by month—not by year. Many integrators make this mistake. Most businesses have cycles and planned and unplanned major expenditures, so you need to see the highs and lows in the business on a weekly or monthly basis.

If you plan properly, then the cash needs will be very apparent on the cash flow projection in a given month. If you know in advance when the cash needs of your business are the highest, then it will trigger actions on the part of the business for capital retention, cost reduction, and bank borrowing availability.

How does a well-run business deal with these ups and downs? By negotiating in advance:

- Vendor payment terms
- Customer payment terms (and prepayments, if warranted by the business)
- Bank lines of credit
- Long-term debt
- Equity capitalization

If the business has not prepared cash flow projections before, then preparing historical cash flow statements and balance sheets will help you gain an understanding about previous cash flow performance and your potential needs in the future.

The process of planning future cash flow is very time consuming. If done correctly, however, it will not only save you money, but also save your business. 

Jeff Bronswick is CEO at Bronswick Benjamin, a Chicago-based certified public accountant and NSCA Member Advisory Councilmember.

A Q&A

About the Ignite Internship Program



NSCA Director of Workforce Development Jeff Kindig, who helped launch Ignite in 2016, answers frequently asked questions about NSCA's Ignite Internship Program.

Despite the industry's constant need for more workers over the last few years, internships were placed on the back burner as companies navigated their way through the pandemic, material shortages, and supply chain issues.

Now that the strongest impacts of the pandemic are (mostly) behind us, NSCA members are relaunching internships in a big way—and the Ignite Internship Program is here to support those efforts.

Bringing high school and college students into internship programs has never been more important: A recent survey of NSCA members reveals that interest in interns is at an all-time high. Here, NSCA Workforce Development Director Jeff Kindig, who helped launch Ignite in 2016, answers a few frequently asked questions about the Ignite Internship Program.

Q: Why do you choose to be involved in Ignite?

A: This industry has always had a “best-kept-secret” component.

NSCA Executive Director Tom LeBlanc likes to say we live in a bubble, and I agree. People inside the bubble love the industry and understand the opportunities that exist. People outside the bubble don't realize what they can accomplish in our industry. That creates obvious hiring challenges.

For most integrators and manufacturers, hiring and workforce development ranks within the top two or three business issues they currently face. When you couple that with the pandemic and the resulting Great Resignation (which some are calling the Great Migration), the volatility of workforce development continues to get worse.

Ignite helps us scratch the surface when it comes to increasing awareness among the next generation as they start their careers. It also provides professional development incentives to people already in our industry.

Q: Explain more about Ignite Internship Grants.

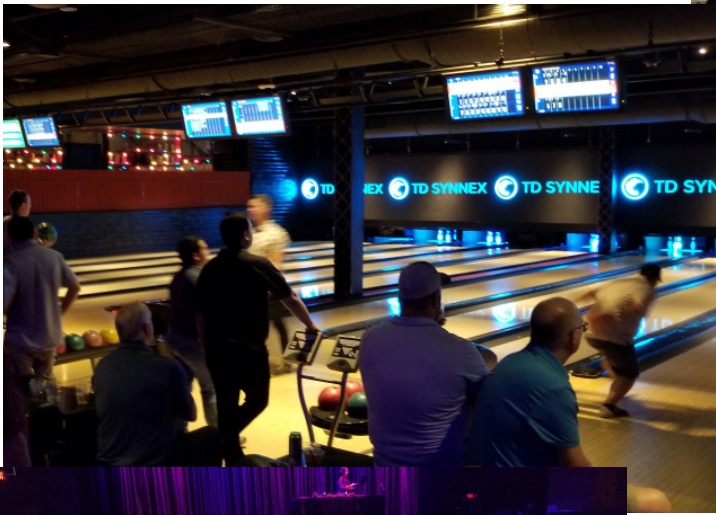
What do integrators and manufacturers need to know?

A: Although **internship grants** have always been part of the Ignite Internship Program, we're noticing that industry interest in internship programs is exploding. As a result, we've made the grant program more all-encompassing by relaxing requirements to help integrators build momentum with their internship programs.

As long as the internship(s) you're offering to a student or young professional is within the communications technology industry—and you're putting forth an effort to help them experience different departments and work with mentors along the way—then that internship will qualify for an Ignite Internship Grant.

For companies that don't have an internship structure --and even for those that do—we offer our Ignite Learning Management System, which serves as a blueprint for newcomers to get started. It's structured in four phases to help interns gain an understanding of your business, receive in-depth exposure to different departments and career paths, complete **NSCA's C-SIP program**, and choose one department to focus on for the final weeks of their internship.

If you already have a successful framework, then you can rely on that instead if you choose.



The NSCA Education Foundation held a successful Ignite fundraiser during InfoComm 2022 at the Brooklyn Bowl Landing Pad in Las Vegas.



Q: Tell us about an Ignite internship success story.

A: There have been many over the past few years! Take **Fallyn Levitz**, for example. Today, she works at Keysight Technologies, which is a leading technology company. She got her industry start at Applied Video Technology through the Ignite Internship Program. She started the program thinking she was only interested in math and computer science—but she soon discovered her love for the creative side of the business, including engineering. She gained experience in turning hand-drawn sketches into technical drawings and learned lots of industry lingo to build an understanding of what sales, operations, and project management departments do.



Q: As companies begin to launch or re-launch programs after COVID-19, what has interest been like in the internship program this year?

A: In the last three months, interest has exploded. As compared to two years ago, we've had conversations with twice as many companies that are interested in creating internship programs and taking advantage of the Ignite Internship Grants. We predict double-digit growth with the Ignite Internship Program this year.

Q: Even if an integrator or manufacturer doesn't plan to launch an internship anytime soon, what else can they do to get involved in workforce development?

A: We know that integrators are trying to figure out how to get more people interested in the industry. We've seen them take on the initiative to find and build relationships with the schools in their community—even helping build curriculum to ensure that students are taught the skills they need. That's such a monumental task; it's obvious as to how important this is when people are willing to spend time on projects like that.

If an integrator needs support in this area, then they can become an **Ignite Ambassador!** As an Ignite Ambassador, you can position yourself as a leader as you help your company, your community, and our industry. All you need to do is use the remarkable resources available to Ignite Ambassadors:

- **Share our resources** and your insights about career opportunities, certification programs, etc. with educators and students.
- Host special events for students and/or your community to introduce them to our industry.
- Speak to or host guests to speak in classes and arrange tours at your company (or at impressive client locations) to show interested students what's out there.
- Provide valuable opportunities for students while also supporting tomorrow's workforce gap and today's vast workload.

To learn more about Ignite, visit www.igniteyourcareer.org. ♻️

Are Your Contracts Good Enough?

You know this phrase: “Big projects, good paper.” This year, it’s more important than ever to use contracts for risk management to protect profitability and reduce vulnerability.

Even though it’s not written about much, and you rarely see a crowded seminar at an industry conference about it, the language you include in your contracts is every bit as important as the impressive systems you provide to customers.

One of NSCA’s 2022 priorities is to encourage members to prioritize their “back-of-house” operations. Today’s integration projects face profit-draining product delays and logistical trickiness. Due to market competitiveness, you often pay higher rates to employees, including onsite technicians. This chips away at margins and profitability.

During last year’s Pivot to Profit event, the “Big Projects, Good Paper” session led by Siddharth Bose, an attorney at Ice Miller; Lauren Mastro, an attorney and VP of legal at AVI-SPL; and Chuck Wilson, CEO at NSCA, educated integrators on the nuances needed in project contracts.

Procurement is now a daily priority. We’re not suggesting hoarding, but you may want to do a three-month investigation of your pipeline, your backlog, and the WIP to see what the most common and known materials look like for delivery.

WANT MORE?

Walk away from this year’s Pivot to Profit with a contract language playbook. Join us on Sept. 19-21 in Chicago. Register at www.nasca.org/p2p.



This year, **Pivot to Profit** (held in Chicago on Sept. 19-21) will include even more specific guidance on contract language. To get you ready, here's a recap of the points hammered home by Bose, Mastro, and Wilson last year:

4 Ps: Project, Product, People, Payment

Project

Schedule compression, postponement, or cancellation; all of these can cost you money. To mitigate risk:

- Ask for the most recently updated construction schedule and have your PM review and confirm that they can meet their portion of the schedule. Propose to the owner, construction manager, or general contractor that they develop the overall construction schedule based on your input for your portion of the work.
- Strike any language in the contract that allows the owner, construction manager, or general contractor to unilaterally instruct you to accelerate your work or compress your schedule without additional and reasonable compensation.
- Redline your contract to exclude your liability for liquidated or actual damages when delays are caused by reasons beyond your reasonable control (e.g., acts of the owner, construction manager, general contractor, architect, or other trades). State in the contract that, in the event of any suspension, you will be allowed to bill for all labor performed and equipment received and suitably stored at your warehouse or at the project site.
- Redline your contract to state that, if the project gets terminated for the owner's, general contractor's or construction manager's convenience, then you receive compensation for work performed plus the non-labor expenses associated with the project (material restocking, freight, etc.).

Product

Supply chain issues are creating delays beyond your control.

To mitigate this risk:

- Communicate the issues to your impacted customers. Stress that it's an industry-wide issue you don't have control over, but that you're working closely with manufacturers on a regular basis to provide your best estimates of product lead times.
- Get the customer's written approval for down payment, reimbursement for restocking/cancellation fees in the event of early termination/cancellation, and billing for stored materials. Don't order anything for the job without the executed contract or binding LOI (where contract is forthcoming) that requires the customer to pay you for work performed and restocking/cancellation fees incurred in the event of early termination/cancellation.
- Especially for larger orders, develop a product ordering and delivery timeline that takes cash flow (payment to vendors and from customers) and project schedule into account. Negotiate different payment/billing terms with the vendors you purchase lots of equipment from in a short period of time.
- Be open and transparent that the products specified and approved on the submittals may have to be substituted temporarily or, in some cases, a surcharge or additional expedited charge may be required. You can't eat this!
- Procurement is now a daily priority. We're not suggesting hoarding, but you may want to conduct a three-month investigation of your pipeline, your backlog, and the WIP to see what the most common and known materials look like for delivery. As NSCA Chief Economist Dr. Chris Kuehl terms it, just-in-time ordering is a thing of the past (for now, anyway).

People


The project is now ready, the materials have finally arrived—and you have all your labor resources committed to other projects. What hasn't changed is the completion deadline. To mitigate risk:

- Attempt to strike out contract language that requires your employees to perform the work if you think you'll need to sub out any portion of it.
- Get in writing the prevailing wage determination on the project and know your SOC code before putting in your final price. Make sure your team is aware of certified payroll reporting requirements.
- Know applicable building codes, industry best practices, licensure requirements, manufacturer/industry certification requirements, permitting processes, timelines for approval of submittals, and timelines for giving notice of delays or change order submissions.
- If the schedule moves, then you make your moves. Don't allow schedule compression to force unbilled overtime. Strike language that triggers a default if not properly staffed until things stabilize.
- With the skilled workforce shortage, there's often 20%+ turnover in field staff. Don't let lengthy delays with approvals and signoffs prevent you from starting on time.
- Make sure you have the requisite insurance policies and limits; order the certificate of insurance in accordance with contract instructions.
- Know and communicate to your field team the site safety requirements well in advance in case additional OSHA or customer-mandated safety training is required before starting.

Payment

Cash is king, and payment cycles aren't improving. To mitigate risk:

- The profitability of your projects is largely measured in maintaining margin, labor accuracy, and efficiency, along with a predictable cash conversion cycle. You have a responsibility to do everything in your power to eliminate reasons why you shouldn't be paid. That includes just about everyone in the company.
- Deposits, progress billings, and stored materials are things you can accomplish.
- Have your finance/credit department do a credit check on the customer or require the customer to submit a credit application. When working under a general contractor, construction manager, or other intermediary party, get a copy of all upstream payment and performance bonds. Particularly when a project is not bonded, never waive your right to file a mechanics lien in accordance with applicable state law. Make sure you send out all required notices within the prescribed timelines.
- Watch for retainage delays beyond the normal closeout period.

NSCA encourages integrators to recognize the critical importance and consequence of the language included in contracts. Attend Pivot to Profit, use the [Essentials Online Library](#), and reach out to NSCA for additional guidance. 

Common Language vs. Optimal Language

Here are examples of how certain items are typically alluded to in integration projects—and examples of better contract phrasing.

Common Language Favoring “Others”

Should the contract terminate for any reason, the integrator shall be compensated for work performed to date.

The contractor/integrator agrees to deliver the project free of all liens and agrees not to file liens for late payment beyond our control.

The contractor/integrator agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the owner and GC from any claims related to this project.

Contractor may require subcontractor, at no additional cost to contractor, and in contractor's sole discretion, to prosecute subcontractor's work in such sequence as the progress of the other subcontractors and the project schedule reasonably dictates. It's expressly understood and agreed that the scheduling and sequencing of the work is an exclusive right of contractor and that contractor reserves such right to reschedule and re-sequence subcontractor's work from time to time as the demands of the project require without any additional cost or expense to be paid to subcontractor.

What You Want It to Say

Should the contract terminate for any reason, the integrator shall be compensated for work performed, including pre-planning activities, design, CAD, shop drawings, staging, storage, material costs, and other itemized costs associated with the project.

The contractor/integrator will deliver the project free of all material liens from vendors to the extent the GC/owner has paid the contractor/integrator in accordance with the terms and conditions of the contract.

The contractor/integrator will indemnify the owner/GC from claims to the extent caused by contractor/integrator's (gross) negligence, willful misconduct, or fraud. No waiver of subrogation will be provided without the insurance provider's written permission.

Contractor may require subcontractor, at no additional cost to contractor and in contractor's sole discretion, to prosecute subcontractor's work in such sequence as the progress of the other subcontractors and the project schedule reasonably dictates provided; however, that subcontractor shall be entitled to additional compensation equal to subcontractor's reasonable costs of acceleration (plus reasonable markup and overhead) in the event such schedule changes require subcontractor to accelerate its work. Subject to the foregoing, it's expressly understood and agreed that the scheduling and sequencing of the work is an exclusive right of contractor and that contractor reserves such right to reschedule and re-sequence subcontractor's work from time to time as the demands of the project require without any additional cost or expense to be paid to subcontractor.

Integrate

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THE SPECIAL JOURNAL OF INTEGRATION

Getting Through It Together
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Integrate top authors on the integration business.
nscasummit.com

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POWERFUL STRATEGIES for an Evolving World
NSCA's 2022 members can't miss this business-critical, actionable strategy at the 2022 Business & Leadership Conference on Feb. 22-23, 2022, in Irving, TX. PAGE B1-4

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Back to Work!
Enter 2022 with optimism and get ready to play your part in helping your customers to thrive. NSCA's Emerging Technologies Committee offers tips. PAGE 16

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2022 Is a Great Time to Be an Integrator, BUT ...
NSCA is currently on track to be a great year for integrators. To help you see where you get more out of your year, we've put together a special guide to help you succeed. PAGE 1

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EVERY QUARTER
AT NSCA.org





Rethinking WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Better recruiting is a top priority, but NSCA members should also look internally to make sure their company culture fosters loyalty and breeds performers. *By Tom LeBlanc*

There's no question that workforce development is a top priority for many integrators. Two of NSCA's association priorities this year focus on workforce development: creating ideal workplaces and redefining talent recruitment.

Are you creating an ideal workplace that fosters retention and a high-performing culture? NSCA members are the cream of the crop, but even top integrators need to make sure they're doing what they can to support their talent.

NSCA CEO Chuck Wilson and I have been spending lots of time talking about workforce development recently—not only with our members, but also at other industry events and conferences. Here are some points we've been sharing ...

Is Your Company the Place to Be?

You want to create a work environment that's known as "the place to be." That's the attitude great companies are founded on—built on the backbone of the notion that, if you do your stuff right, then you'll attract the best of the best.

Along those lines, great integration companies need to weed out the C-teamers. Build a reputation for not tolerating unacceptable behavior or work ethic. If you build a reputation for building up A-teamers, then you'll attract more A-teamers. It's a difficult goal—but a worthwhile one.

Is There a Mutually Beneficial Relationship?

Think about the relationship between company leadership and employees. Does it demonstrate mutual support? Is it mutually beneficial? Do employees feel like they're rewarded with great career opportunities if they work hard, follow the processes, and deliver great work? Do company leaders feel like the team has their back when representing the company—not just in the work they do but in their outward communication?

Does Everybody Know What Your Company Stands For?

What's your company's story? What makes your company unique? Sometimes leadership doesn't even know the answers!

Do You Only Offer a Vertical Corporate Ladder?

You might remember when, at the 2017 Business & Leadership Conference, Cathy Benko of Deloitte introduced us to the “corporate lattice” concept. A corporate lattice is about options that allow top performers to find their comfort zone, giving them tools to be nimble and successful in their careers.

It's also about weeding out C-level performers. Built into the concept are guidelines on recognizing when someone doesn't fit within your organizational model.

The corporate lattice in an integration company allows people to back out of their current roles and start a new and different role. A top performer might quit their job—but they don't quit the company.

This is a great fit for any generation—but particularly for today's younger generation. Top employees don't want a path of least resistance; they want to go through the levels and show that they're ready to advance. They want to prove themselves. These accomplishments are empowering.

This isn't about someone getting sick of project management and deciding to try business development: It's about providing a path for that person to receive training and preparation to succeed at business development. If we just slide them over and say, “Good luck,” then they may fail.

Remember to train people properly for the jobs they want—and be open to letting people move laterally while providing them the training to do so.

Does Your Culture Support DEI?

Hopefully, your company culture already supports diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Many companies inside and outside this industry can do much more to make sure their company culture optimizes everyone's potential.

NSCA's DEI Action Council is focused on encouraging NSCA members to rethink how they reflect DEI in their company cultures.

NSCA also added livingHR as a new Member Advisory Councilmember to provide oversight of DEI practices and a system of checks and balances. Their team can step in and play a consultative role to help you make a big impact.

Hold Yourself Accountable

NSCA encourages you to challenge yourself on creating the “ideal workplace” concepts discussed here. We all know that project profitability is more challenging these days thanks to things like escalating labor costs (and the supply chain, of course). We're seeing integrators desperate for talent poaching other firms' key employees. It's tough to say no to things like higher pay, higher-level roles, and signing bonuses.

That leaves other companies scrambling to find new talent or pay higher rates to keep their top employees. Sometimes they even have to pay “stay bonuses” to match another company's proposed signing bonus. This all results in high labor costs that jeopardize profitability.

For companies boasting an ideal workplace that fosters loyalty, retention, and a culture of high-performance, however, all of this becomes less of a problem. 🔄

*Tom LeBlanc is executive director at NSCA.
Contact him at tleblanc@nsca.org.*



5 STEPS

to Boosting Digital Marketing Leads

In Spring 2020, when COVID-19 arrived in the United States, Level 3 Audiovisual knew uncertain times were ahead—and new challenges call for new approaches.

Jeremy Elsesser, president and CEO at Level 3 Audiovisual, had recently taken over the company's marketing leadership role, and he realized the website and overall marketing efforts could be stronger when it came to communicating their value proposition to the world.

"We knew that, if we were able to fire up and get a good marketing engine moving, with regularly developed content firing on all channels to drive a very consistent message, then we were going to be able to generate more leads for our business—and, most importantly, generate the right kind of leads for our business," he explains.

To weather the storm ahead, the company decided to take a unique approach: improve digital marketing efforts in hopes of better supporting sales and boosting lead generation in a different way.

Although Level 3 Audiovisual's original goal was to revamp its website, a discussion with NSCA Member Advisory Councilmember **One Firefly** changed the company's strategy.

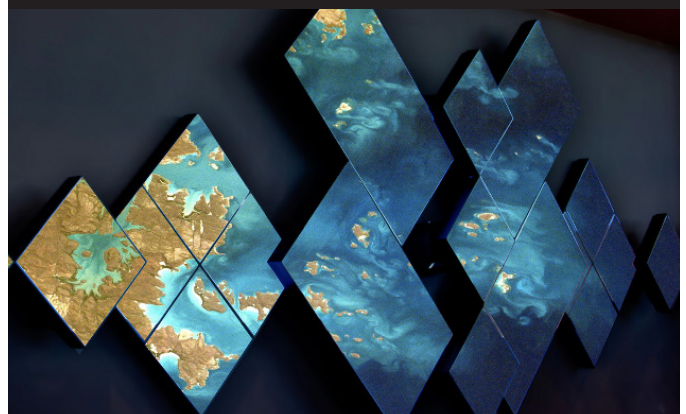
"When we were first looking for a marketing firm, we thought we knew what we needed," says Elsesser, "which was a new website. Then we would build from there. Instead of spending our budget on a website, [they] challenged us in terms of what was most important for our organization now. It was a really simple answer: The most important thing for our organization was to start generating leads to prepare for the uncertain times ahead. Right out of the gate, [One Firefly] took a lot of time to help educate us on what we should be thinking about in terms of a wider scope of marketing strategy and initiatives within our organization."

“

“We knew that, if we were able to fire up and get a good marketing engine moving, with regularly developed content firing on all channels to drive a very consistent message, then we were going to be able to generate more leads for our business—and, most importantly, generate the right kind of leads for our business.”

–Jeremy Elsesser, Level 3 Audiovisual

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To reach a much wider audience faster, One Firefly recommended an active digital marketing plan. While a new website was integrated into the strategy, it was only one part of the comprehensive plan.

Here are the five steps Level 3 Audiovisual took to generate new digital marketing leads during the pandemic (and beyond).

1. Amped Up Blogging

Regular blogging can be a key driver of brand awareness and online growth. Four new blogs are created every month—optimized with SEO keyphrases—and published on One Firefly’s website. The content discusses what target audiences are searching for. As a result, topics range from digital signage best practices to hybrid workplaces. The outcome: organic website traffic that is consistently on the rise, with higher Google rankings and more first-page results. Blogs are now the company’s second-highest driver of website traffic.

2. Re-Energized Social Media Efforts

By posting timely, relevant, and educational content on LinkedIn and Facebook, Level 3 Audiovisual has seen a significant uptick in customer engagement. The company uses these platforms to spotlight employees, highlight new projects, showcase its philanthropy work, and share its blog content. The outcome: consistently higher levels of interaction with organic content and paid ads. As a result, social media is the company’s third-highest driver of website traffic.

3. Rolled Out a Live Chat Service


To provide website visitors with faster customer support and nurture potential leads in real time, Level 3 Audiovisual now relies on a live chat service that makes its team members more accessible. Through this feature, the company has answered more than 700 questions for customers in less than one year. The outcome: record-high website engagement, with more than 100 new digital marketing leads coming in through online chat.

4. Built a New Website

By merging two separate sites into one cohesive online site, the **new website** features custom branding, engaging videos, and SEO-optimized copy, such as case studies. In less than 12 months, Level 3 Audiovisual has seen a massive increase in the number and quality of leads coming from its website after its relaunch.

5. Invested in Online Advertising

To expand online visibility and direct more traffic to the site, Level 3 Audiovisual invested in paid Google Ads. As part of an integrated digital marketing program, this type of targeted advertising can help drive more traffic, high-quality leads, and brand awareness. After only a few months, Level 3 Audiovisual is already seeing clicks and conversions from ad campaigns.

In about 18 months, Level 3 Audiovisual has significantly grown its online presence and can now effectively communicate with the right potential buyers and market influencers through many channels and platforms. “Digital marketing gives us endless opportunities to get in front of people who might not otherwise have heard of Level 3 Audiovisual,” says Lucy Peterson, internal marketing associate at Level 3 Audiovisual. 

| [Read more about NSCA Member Advisory Councilmember One Firefly here.](#)

9-to-5 No More:

Why Flex Schedules Are the New Norm



Whether you're thinking about how to attract the best employees for your business, or you're looking for ways to maximize the productivity of existing employees, flexible work schedules—or flex schedules—are becoming a more common talent strategy in many successful organizations.

As with any evolutionary process, it involves a paradigm shift of sorts for companies used to the conventional 9-to-5 workday. It also requires a willingness to look beyond “the way we’ve always done it.”

As technology simplifies the logistics of work, today's workforce is increasingly able to do their jobs from any location that has a power outlet and Wi-Fi connection. As a result, businesses are recognizing that untethering employees from their desks yields myriad benefits. With that, however, comes greater flexibility.

What Is a Flex Schedule?

First things first: A flex schedule is one that allows employees to tailor their working hours to better fit their lives. It gives them the autonomy to choose to work at times of the day that may vary from typical business hours.

In most cases, as long as 40 hours are worked per week, and the nature of the work allows for flexibility, then flex schedules empower employees to do things during the day that they might not otherwise be able to do.

It's important to note, however, the difference between flex time and working remotely. An employee who chooses to take advantage of flexible scheduling may still be expected to log a certain number of hours at the office or be available for in-person meetings from time to time. Many organizations offer opportunities for remote or hybrid work in conjunction with flex schedules to strike a balance between business and employee needs.

Done right, flex schedules enable employees to tend to life circumstances without worrying about time away from their desks. That might be a doctor's appointment in the middle of the day or picking their child up from daycare. When they get home, they finish out their day by working a little later into the evening—or perhaps logging on earlier the following day.

Is Your Business Flexible Enough for Flexible Schedules?

If you're considering flex schedules as part of your talent strategy, then ask yourself these questions:

1. Do you believe your best employees are the ones who show up early and work late?
2. Are you convinced that the best way to communicate with your team is by gathering them in the same room?
3. Do you find that employees are able to work efficiently while traveling or away from the office—without any sacrifice in quality or service?
4. When an unexpected challenge occurs at work, is it typically something that can be handled offsite when an employee can get to it? Or does it usually require urgent attention and a trip to the office?

Challenging the Mindset Behind the 9-to-5

Embracing flex schedules means considering alternatives to how you've always done things and challenging some deeply rooted assumptions.

1. ***Living at the office doesn't always equate to high productivity***
Just because an employee is the first one in the building or the last one to leave doesn't necessarily mean they're productive the whole time. And if you do have an outstanding employee who fits this "first in, last out" mold, then they may be at risk of burnout. The same holds true for remote workers who start earlier and work later without the boundaries inherent to working in an office.

Would employees have more long-term success and satisfaction if they had more control over where and when their work gets done? Would it allow them to establish a healthier work-life balance?

2. ***Virtual communication is the new normal***

Thanks to technology, an in-person presence is no longer necessary for face-to-face interaction. We live in an era where people routinely communicate via text, email, instant messages,

and videoconferences. The convenience of not having to be somewhere physically lends itself to more flexible scheduling.

For example, instead of commuting for an hour to give a presentation in person, employees can deliver the presentation via videoconference and get back an hour (or maybe even two) in their day. That's time they can put back into work itself.

3. ***Good-quality work happens at all hours of the day***

Let's face it: We don't all do our best work "on demand" from 9am to 5pm. The beauty of flex schedules is that they give employees more freedom to tailor their hours around not only the demands of their lives, but also the times of day when they work most effectively.

Whether that's before hours, after hours, or somewhere in between, setting up your workforce to be able to work when they'll produce the best results is good for everyone. Depending on the nature of the business and their role, it probably doesn't matter where they're doing the work—at the beach or at the office.

Flexible Schedules Are a Balancing Act

To be fair, there are certain employees, especially frontline workers, who need to be onsite at certain times to make sure customers receive the best possible service.

Making flex schedules available to these employees requires more of a balancing act. Some companies, for instance, offer employees the option of working four 10-hour shifts and having three days off each week. This can be a strong incentive to attract motivated frontline staff.

Similarly, hourly workers and traditional desk jobs require creativity and attention to detail when introducing flexible schedules. You should:

- Tailor your policy to the needs of your business and your team.
- Have an official, well-communicated policy detailing the program's parameters and expectations.
- Ensure that employees or direct reports properly track time and comply with policies and laws.

Skepticism about flex time often stems from a concern that people who are not physically at work—or aren't available during normal business hours—won't work a full eight hours.


If you think this, does it show that you don't trust your employees without direct supervision? If that's the case, then you might consider re-evaluating your hiring strategy.

Indeed, a positive culture and effective hiring practices will help ensure that your workforce is productive—no matter where or when they log in every day.

The Takeaway

The bottom line: Giving employees choices can prove beneficial to your team and your company. To the extent possible, consider providing your people with more flexibility to perform some of their duties outside normal business hours or away from the office.

Chances are, you'll see a long-term upside, less turnover, a more satisfied and driven workforce, and a stronger, healthier culture within your organization.

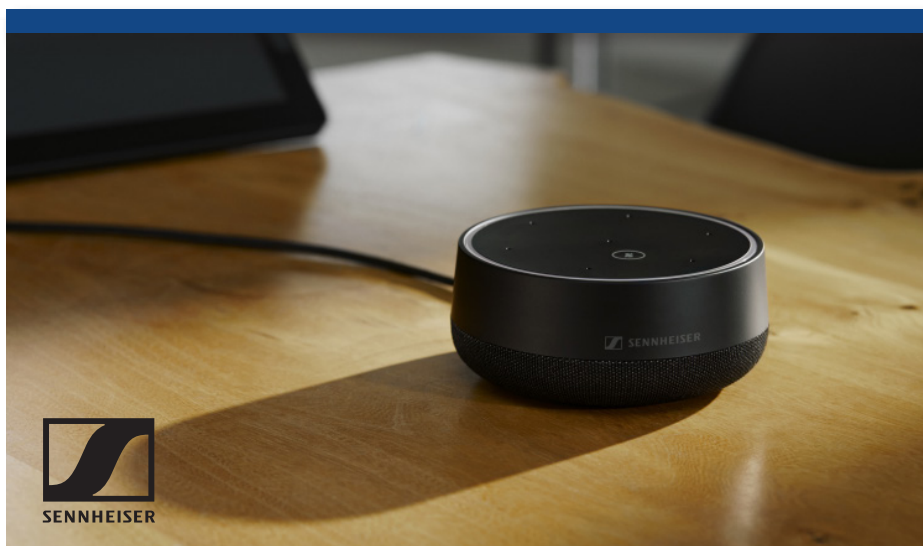
Want to learn more about strategic HR solutions that can help your business maximize talent and productivity—with preferred pricing for NSCA members? Visit insperity.com/nsca. 

Adapted from an article originally published at insperity.com/blog/flex-schedule/.

Dannie Diego is a strategic alliances manager for Insperity, an NSCA Business Accelerator.

The Latest from NSCA's Solution Provider Members

Unfiltered content provided directly from NSCA's manufacturer and solution provider members to keep integrators updated.



Sennheiser

Learn about Sennheiser TeamConnect Intelligent Speaker (TC ISP)

The TeamConnect Intelligent Speaker is the ultimate audio solution optimized for mid-sized Microsoft Teams Rooms for up to 10 people. It is designed specifically to give teams a whole new way to collaborate in hybrid meetings: smart, focused, inclusive and as if everyone is in one place. The TC ISP's powerful speaker and 7 beamforming omnidirectional microphones cover a 3.5 – meter radius and ensure perfect speech intelligibility in every meeting with excellent double-talk performance.

Installation and connection have never been easier. You can fully utilize the speakerphone right away after installing it in your Microsoft Teams Room. With this immersive and user-friendly setup, there is no audio preparation or additional devices required to make it work seamlessly.

Microsoft Teams users can join Microsoft Teams instantly and without touch. The TeamConnect Intelligent Speaker understands voice commands and responds seamlessly to them. The Microsoft Cortana voice intelligence allows users to control the mic verbally for video conferencing and team meetings.

The speaker will also transcribe the meeting in real-time while identifying up to 10 different voices in the room. For remote participants or those who are hard of hearing, live transcription gives them a new seat at the table for immersive and supportive collaboration. The corresponding transcription documents are available immediately after the meeting - for teamwork without any barriers at any level.

Together, Sennheiser and Microsoft continue to push boundaries, and Microsoft Teams Rooms are now a much more collaborative environment with the TeamConnect Intelligent Speaker.

Learn more [here](#).

Cornell Communications, Inc.

Navigating Areas of Refuge Codes

Cornell Communications, Inc. is always here to help you navigate the complexities of Area of Refuge Codes, we have seen it is a great add on product to gain more business with old customers, or it can be a business all on its own.

Areas of Refuge or Two-Way Communication is required in all new multi-story buildings as of 2013 to meet ADA code. Save the day by recommending it when it is missed on the plans and talk with one of our experts so you know exactly what is needed for different applications. Please visit our [website](#) to learn more.

BrightSign

BrightSign Announces Its Most Powerful Player to Date

BrightSign will ship the new XC5 series of players in Q4 of this year. The two models offer our most powerful HTML5/graphics engine to date. One model has dual out and the other quad out. Both support 8K video resolution. The products were announced at InfoComm and will be shipping in Q4 this year, available through BrightSign's usual channel of distribution and reseller partners. For more information about BrightSign's player and cloud offerings, visit www.brightsign.biz.

Eagle Eye

Eagle Eye Networks High Security Standards Validated

Eagle Eye Networks successfully completed the SOC 2 (System and Organization Controls) Type 2 examination, a rigorous security standard, which certifies that Eagle Eye Networks policies and procedures securely protect and manage customer data. The company also completed conformance with ISO 27001:2013 security standards. The SOC 2 Type 2 audit evaluated internal controls over six months to ensure that Eagle Eye Networks satisfies the Trust Services Criteria. The criteria include security, availability, processing integrity, and confidentiality. Eagle Eye Networks offers additional data security and cybersecurity resources on its [website](#).

OneScreen

OneScreen Expands into Security

For more than a decade, OneScreen has manufactured innovations that led the AV industry with the highest quality interactive flat panels, software for interoperability, collaboration hubs and custom EdTech.

In 2022, OneScreen built on their existing relationships to break out in a brand new direction with offerings in Security Cameras tailored for Business and Education customers.

OneScreen Security Cameras include NeuroCam, the AI-enhanced smart camera with powerful on-board analytics; and PrimeCam, the advanced but affordable option that integrates easily with existing VMS systems.

All OneScreen IFPs, Security Cameras and more are supported by our signature Screen Skills Guru service, offering resellers and their customers free, unlimited help and training.

Become a OneScreen partner by visiting [here](#).



Legrand | AV

Top Trends for Designing Hybrid Conferencing Spaces

Companies must start thinking about their objectives for returning to the office. What is the value? What have we lost and want to recover? The companies that address these questions best will be able to build excitement in gathering once again at the office. They'll find their teams are fully engaged and ready to collaborate.

“Building in better practices of connecting and communicating at the workplace is essential,” said David Albright, Business Development, Commercial Interiors for Legrand | AV. “We need to find new ways to leverage the office as a vehicle of communicating your culture and making it a place people want to come back to.”

Smart, effective AV design can add substantial value to hybrid conferencing environments. Legrand | AV has identified several trends that integrators should keep in mind when designing hybrid conferencing spaces.

Meeting Equity

Companies that set up an equitable meeting experience for both remote and on-site workers show employees they care about creating a culture of belonging and value.

Adaptability to Changing Needs

Specifying the more adaptable solution now can leave the door open when it comes time to upsize the room.

Repeatable Success

Easily ordered, fast-to-install solutions from one vendor create time savings as well as uniform experiences for end users.

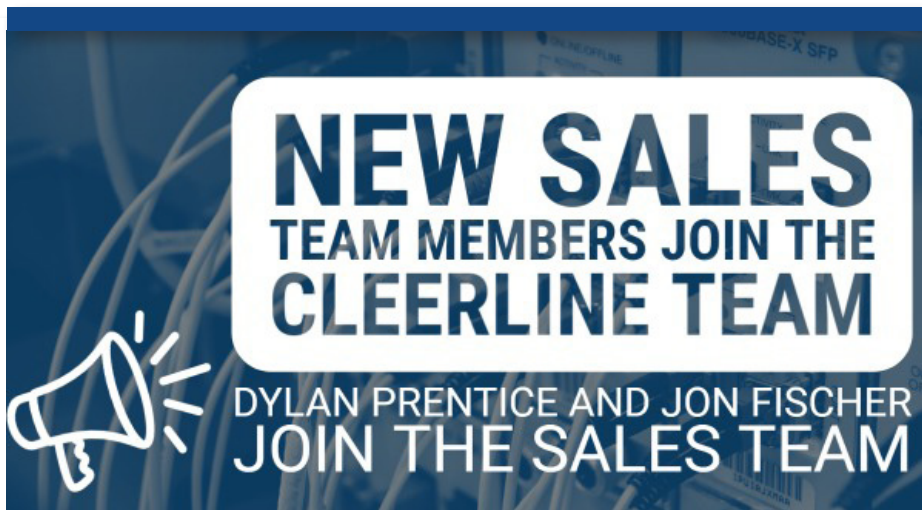
Reliability

AV infrastructure designed to protect and optimize technology results in team collaboration that's productive every time.

Familiarity

Integrators know Legrand | AV brands are designed to provide an intuitive experience for everyone from the installer to the end user.

Learn [more](#).



Cleerline Technology Group

New Sales Team Members Join the Cleerline Team

Cleerline Technology Group is excited to welcome Dylan Prentice and Jon Fischer to the Sales Team! Their fresh ideas and industry knowledge will be a great asset for our team, and yours.

Dylan Prentice began his career in the trenches of the warehouse, pulling cable, and fulfilling orders. Dylan is excited to be joining another part of Cleerline. "After almost 5 years working in the logistics and warehouse side of the company, I am happy to bring that knowledge to the sales side," says Dylan. He is looking forward to combining his love of traveling and ease of talking with people to sell this interesting and unique product. He will be providing support in the Pacific Northwest / Mountain West. Dylan can be reached at dylan.prentice@clrtec.com or 406-519-4250.

Jon Fischer, a residential integration expert based in the Midwest, also joins the Cleerline Team as a Sales Manager. Jon brings with him over 20 years of experience in residential and connected home integration sales markets. Over the years Jon has been involved in everything from providing tech support, teaching production and tech support teams about products, and most recently channel management. Jon is excited to share "a product offering that is truly versatile and not limited to one market." He will primarily be focused on supporting customers in the Midwestern region of the US. Jon can be reached at jon.fischer@clrtec.com or 406-519-4215.

For more information about Cleerline Technology Group visit cleerlinefiber.com.



SCT

Learn About RC-SDA+ Camera Bridge

SCT is excited to announce the NEW RC-SDA+ Camera Bridge. This new solution is designed to work with Poly cameras and Poly Group Series Codecs. You now have expanded options for meeting rooms, including using Poly cameras for BYOD soft codec integration or HDMI distribution. The RC-SDA+ is compatible with Zoom Rooms and can translate USB PTZ commands into Poly PTZ camera protocol. It can also translate VISCA PTZ commands from serial joystick controllers into Poly PTZ camera protocol, as well as facilitating control from a 3rd party control system. Additional features include multiple digital and analog audio routing options and more.

Learn more [here](#).

Liberty Cable

Learn About Liberty Cable

Liberty is the premier wire, cable, and electronics manufacturer of quality AV wire and cable, custom plates, panels, and audio/video distribution devices. We provide products, services, and support needed for a smooth install, providing innovative, value-added, and managed service offerings as well as access to a large variety of distributed brands. Throughout the years, Liberty has evolved into a full-service business partner with extensive service offerings that make installations easier and more profitable by providing customized, pre-kitted, and supported installation solutions designed to position the installer for a successful deployment at the time of the install and beyond!

Learn [more](#).

CLOUDWORK|PRO

CLOUDWORK|PRO Adds Features

CLOUDWORK|PRO has added several noteworthy features to its recently released on-demand IT field services marketplace that streamline processes for both clients and technicians. For clients, they can now create work order templates for multisite projects that need only minor changes, saving them time and effort. For technicians, in addition to being able to sign up on mobile, CLOUDWORK|PRO now offers desktop sign up and onboarding, making it easier than ever for technicians to join the future of on-demand IT field service marketplaces. If you'd like more information or to schedule a live demo, please visit cloudworkpro.com.

AtlasIED

Visually Blended Audio Solution 'Wows' Customers

Siren Rock Brewing Company in Rockwall, TX, wanted an audio system that would "wow" their customers upon entering the building and keep them comfortable throughout their visit. The entire system features AtlasIED solutions including the Atmosphere™ digital audio platform, including a processor, amplifiers, wall controllers, and input accessories. All areas are full of rich, clear sound from AtlasIED speakers including pendant-mount, outdoor garden speakers, surface-mount, ceiling, and Strategically Hidden Speakers (SHS). The system was designed to visually blend into the environment, while sounding great, and having exceptional control and zoning abilities. Just in case you stay too long while enjoying Siren Rock Brewing Company, this is your reminder to drink responsibly.

Learn [more](#).



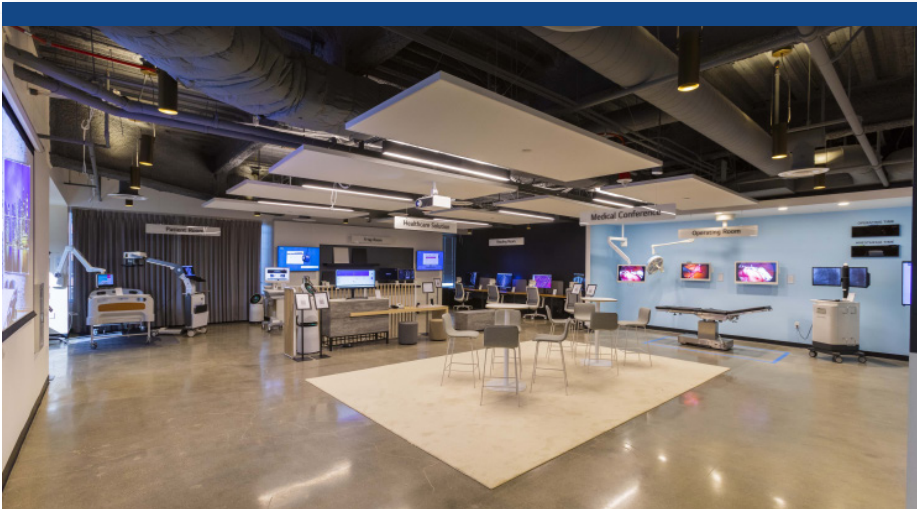
Primex

Primex Delivers Solutions to Help Our Partners Optimize New Revenue Opportunities

Primex is a leading manufacturer for Environmental Monitoring solutions. Its OneVue Sense™ portfolio offers secure, medical-grade wireless sensors to continuously monitor conditions, such as freezer and refrigerator temperature, ambient temperature, humidity and air pressure, unexpected water leaks and access to critical areas. Environmental monitoring plays an important role in our customer's facilities to help keep their assets, occupants, and staff safe. Whether vaccine safety, indoor air quality or negative pressure management, with continuous, automated monitoring and logging of data, staff will no longer have the task to manually log this data, enabling them to spend more time on patient care, building safety and strategic objectives. Real-time alerts will be sent via text, phone all or email, if a monitored assets goes out of its desired range.

Primex has recently launched its new Subscription support and service plans which includes software support, trend analysis and other training services, to help maintain continued safety throughout the facility. Primex Partners can now leverage these plans to play a key role in adding to their expertise to optimize the configuration and application of the technology and training to customers, which also enables partners to continue a trusted, indispensable relationship with their customers. The OneVue platform is a highly reliable, customizable solution to fit each customer's specific needs. If problematic situations or issues do occur, correcting them with immediacy and expertise is critical. Therefore, as OneVue continues to add valuable services to customers, Primex partners can choose to own the service and support plan to augment the relationship with their customers while obtaining recurring revenue year after year.

Contact us at 262-602-2934, info@primexinc.com or visit our [Partner Program](#) page to learn more.



LG Business Solutions

Inside LG's New Innovation Center

LG recently opened its first comprehensive LG technology and education hub focused on commercial displays and devices designed for medical environments. Featuring LG's diagnostic and clinical review monitors, digital X-ray detectors, and smart hospital TVs, the new Los Angeles Business Innovation Center has 12 distinct zones dedicated to various spaces common throughout hospitals, doctors' offices and other medical settings.

The new innovation center offers medical device purchasers and healthcare providers hands-on experience with market-ready displays and devices designed specifically for healthcare environments, as well as future product concepts.

Visitors are treated to LG's full healthcare-of-the-future experience, starting with large-format Direct View LED displays, sliding doors built from multiple Transparent OLED displays, and the LG CLOi GuideBot robot. Guests then progress through the center to learn about how LG's Thin Client cloud-based laptops can help enhance safety and security while UltraWide™ Ergo monitors provide ample screen real estate for critical tasks and feature adjustable swivel stands for information sharing and group viewing.

Also featured are various models from the LG gram laptop line, along with LG ProBeam 4K Laser projectors, UltraFine™ 4K monitors and One:Quick Flex displays. Special-purpose products on display include LG's Digital X-ray Detector, Diagnostic Monitors, Clinical Review Monitors and Surgical Monitors.

Learn more [here](#).



Sharp/NEC

Transform your space with the award winning solution ActiveScene™ from Sharp/NEC!

ActiveScene™ using Vela™ film turns underutilized glass surfaces into dynamic digital signage. ActiveScene™ is adaptable to windows of any dimension, transforming transparent windows to advertising display screens, alerting customers and onlookers about promotions, flash sales, and new products. The ActiveScene™ solution offers a large display canvas without bezels to distract from the image. The many installation options deliver the flexibility to adapt to most locations while offering a stunning solution designed to transform glass into new creative messaging surfaces.

Learn [more](#).

Lencore

Get to Know Lencore

Lencore manufactures system solutions for Sound Masking, Paging and Audio with applications in a variety of industries, delivering speech privacy and productivity, with exceptional comfort. We help teams re-engage their workforces by creating essential workspaces no matter where they are or how they work. Lencore delivers innovative sound masking that is comfortable, paging that is clear and audio that entertains.

Learn [more](#).

Jetbuilt

Learn About Jetbuilt Sales & Project Management Software

Jetbuilt Engineering Lab —JEL provides a seamless way to commission CAD drawings, REVIT, presale engineering and more, as part of the integrated workflow within the platform. Jetbuilt partnered with AV Design Labs, highly regarded and used by many of the world's most respected integrators for a cost-effective way to scale engineering services to your changing needs.

New Service Module —Service ties into existing functionality such as Assets and Stock for a truly integrated experience, allowing techs to see warranty info, serial numbers and more, while end users can automatically generate a Service case by scanning an item's QR code.

jetbuilt.com



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Complex Projects

"We did some time and motion studies which showed Jetbuilt has reduced our quote time by at least 50%."
Alexandre Pecqueux • Solotech

"Jetbuilt has changed the way we conduct business. Their product, support, and integration with our pricing has made developing proposals efficient."
Joseph Yost • CCS Presentation Systems

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CLOSE MORE PROJECTS. FASTER.

Inovonics

Understanding Your Mobile Duress System

Is an ineffectively deployed mobile duress system nearly as dangerous as having no system at all? A key component of physical security is the mobile duress system, which, when thoughtfully deployed, ensures help is just a button press away. However, the flip side is also true. An ineffectively deployed system can create a false sense of security and put lives at risk. Learn what experts in the field recommend when it comes to selecting life safety system solutions. Download our white paper "Duress Systems in K12 Schools: Best Practices for Effective Deployment" [here](#).

Learn [more](#).



Ascom

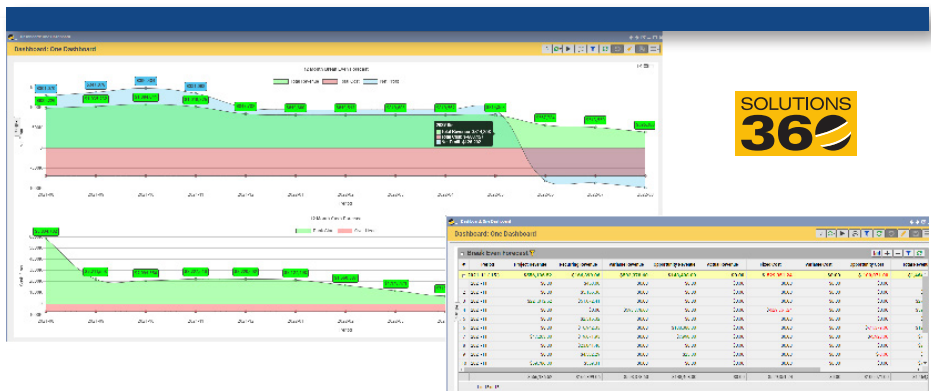
Ascom Targets IT Integrators

Ascom, a global solutions provider focused on healthcare and mobile workflow solutions, is actively recruiting new IT solutions-based resellers with a proven track record of successful healthcare technology integration deployments. Ascom provides mission-critical, real-time solutions with proven outcomes for highly mobile, ad hoc, and time-sensitive environments. Ascom supplies resellers with powerful sales tools such as detailed market planners as well as an ROI calculator to help demonstrate the value of its unique solutions portfolio and software capabilities.

Ascom's Global headquarters is in Switzerland, and the North American HQ is in Morrisville, North Carolina. The company operates businesses in 18 countries and employs approximately 1,300 professionals worldwide.

For more information on becoming a certified Ascom Partner, contact Mark Teder at 919-535-6129 or mark.teder@ascom.com. Visit www.ascom.us and follow @AscomNA on Twitter and [Ascom Americas](#) on LinkedIn for the latest news.

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Solutions360

Taking One View of the Business

Solutions360 is the leading provider of Professional Services Automation software, creating **One View of the Business**

- One solution with real-time information driving one version of the truth
- Managing your company's projects, services, and resources to achieve forecasted and predictable results
- Drives highly predictable revenues, cashflow and profits through forecasting
- Allows for an information driven management approach driving data backed decisions
- Improved visibility into process efficiency to drive increased margins
- Eliminates duplicate data entry
- Automated workflow across all departments
- Real time data-driven interactive dashboards

Solutions360 has just released the One Dashboard. The One Dashboard introduces reliable, highly accurate predictable forecasting. The One Dashboard consolidates all your revenue and cost sources mixed with your project plans to show you the profitability and cash reserves into the future.

The power of the One Dashboard is that it points out the problems in various departments and shows you which lever to use to course correct. This tool changes how you manage and approach planning, it points out surprises along the way. With the One Dashboard your managers can steer your business by the numbers with confidence. It's a game changer for the industry!

Learn More

Biamp

New Arrivals from Biamp

Biamp is shipping several new products:

- The **4K Vidi 250 conferencing camera** is intended for huddle room or small to medium conferencing rooms. With a wide 120° field of view, it allows everyone in the room to be seen.
- Our **USB 200** allows easy switching between an in-room computer and a laptop. It supports automated priority switching or the source can be changed manually via an external control system.
- **Desono ceiling loudspeaker accessories** ensure an easy, consistent installation experience, regardless of application. The suite includes new construction brackets, installation trim rings, black grilles, tile rails, and high humidity grilles.

Jeron

Jeron Electronic Systems, Inc. Experiencing Zero Supply Chain Affects

Unlike the ongoing supply chain issues experienced by many industries, as a U.S. manufacturer, Jeron Electronic Systems, Inc. has had no delays in supplying systems and components for existing and new Nurse Call and Area of Rescue customers.

While following all safety protocols over the last two years, Jeron continued **manufacturing** and even increased production throughout the pandemic. This continued availability of Jeron systems and parts has allowed healthcare and commercial facilities to keep their existing systems running and enabled Jeron to replace aging and obsolete systems in a timely manner.

As a family run business, Jeron anticipated large supply issues and ordered the components needed to manufacture **Provider® Nurse Call Systems** and Pro-Alert™ Area of Rescue Systems.

BTX

Meet Erika!

The new **Erika Wireless Microphone System** by Convergent Design is an innovative audio solution utilizing AI and advanced wireless technology to deliver a powerful yet cost-effective audio solution. Erika is ideal for Zoom, livestreaming, webinars, podcasting, and content creation. The Erika Wireless USB receiver seamlessly connects to your PC/Mac without the added cost/complexity of an external converter box. USB audio compatibility enables a wide range of applications. Typically worn on your shirt/blouse, the Erika mic makes it easy to maintain a consistent audio level, and you no longer need a pop-filter.

SurgeX

Buy 6 SurgeX SQUID Products, Get the 7th FREE!

Offer valid through June 30, 2022.
Contact Your SurgeX Representative for Details

The SurgeX SQUID is the only product that provides AC/DC power protection, boxed network control, and analytical software in one chassis. Its combination of 4 controlled and monitored AC receptacles, and 3 DC banks allow service teams to install equipment with fewer wires and connections. It also eliminates unsightly wall warts!

The Squid's software offers a single solution for management, mitigation, and control of a system's power. Plus, its 360 degrees of power protection ensures equipment remains up and running without disruption.

Learn [more](#).



EPI

2022

Excellence in Product Innovation



IntelliSee

IntelliSee Takes Overall Winner at NSCA's Excellence in Product Innovation Awards

In February, IntelliSee was named Overall Winner at the eighth annual Excellence in Product Innovation Awards presented by NSCA. Out of more than 50 companies vying for the top spot, IntelliSee was chosen for its exceptional performance, ease of use, and recurring revenue opportunities for systems integrators.

One customer who testified to IntelliSee's performance—a large public health system made up of more than 1,300 employees that serves thousands of patients every year—has been using the AI-powered risk mitigation platform across its expansive campus since 2021.

As part of an initiative to decrease the number of slip and falls among both patients and staff, the hospital installed IntelliSee in its inpatient behavioral health unit, emergency department entrances, and crisis hallway. In addition to scanning for slip risks, IntelliSee alerts staff to fallen persons and can recognize when someone has been dropped off and left outside the ER, increasing the hospital's response time at critical moments.

While many hospitals have dedicated staff and security teams to review alerts, IntelliSee recognizes each organization has its own unique circumstances. To provide further value, IntelliSee introduced a new sensitivity slider feature that allows users to further tailor IntelliSee to their specific environment. Beyond IntelliSee's continual deep-learning, this enables organizations additional customization depending on whether they have dispatch or not, lighting conditions, priority risks, and so on. Like all IntelliSee updates, this new functionality is immediately available to all users at no additional cost.

Learn more at intellisee.com.



exertis | ALMO

Combined for you.

More products, more services, more resources.
Same personal approach to distribution you expect.

Exertis Almo

Almo Professional A/V and Exertis Pro AV Unite to Form Exertis Almo

Following **Exertis' acquisition of Almo Corporation** last December, Almo Pro A/V and Exertis Pro AV have combined to form **Exertis Almo**. The newly joined division harnesses the combined sales, service, marketing and subject matter expertise of both companies to become the largest and most specialized value-added North American Professional AV distributor.

Exertis Almo is comprised of more than 300 employees, 12 distribution facilities and 2.7 million square feet of warehousing space, providing the expertise and resources its partners need while maintaining the personal distribution approach they expect.

Exertis Almo is being led by Sam Taylor, Executive Vice President and COO, who brings 35 years of Pro AV leadership to the newly unified division. Exertis Almo's highly accomplished leadership team includes:

- John Riley, Sr. Vice President of Sales, East
- Kevin Welling, Sr. Vice President of Sales, West
- Chris Lubick, Sr. Vice President of Sales, Special Markets
- Bill Woodard, Vice President of Product Management
- Rob Ziv, Vice President of Business Development and Strategy
- Melody Craigmyle, Vice President of Marketing and Communications, Almo Corporation
- Ashley Flaska, Vice President of Marketing

Exertis Almo hosted its first fully unified event, **E4 Experience Chicago** on May 3, which featured the largest exhibit hall space since the E4 program launched in 2009. Exertis Almo will also have a large presence at InfoComm 2022 (#N2531) in Las Vegas.

exertis | ALMO

Electro-Voice

Learn About MTS High-Output Point-Source Loudspeakers

Electro-Voice expands its portfolio of installed sound solutions with the MTS series — designed to deliver an unprecedented combination of massive output and precise coverage.

- Full-range horn-loaded loudspeaker with four 15" woofers and dual coaxial mid/high frequency compression drivers generates more than 151 dB peak SPL
- Proprietary, state-of-the-science, dual lossless Hydra waveform converter feeds a coherent arc source into a large constant-directivity waveguide to ensure pattern control to below 350 Hz
- Equipped with two additional 15" woofers, cardioid versions deliver full-bandwidth directivity control that reduces sound spill outside the pattern, enhancing dynamics, improving sound quality and clarifying speech intelligibility

Watch the MTS launch video

Watch the MTS overview video

Visit the MTS webpage

HELLO NSCA SOLUTION PROVIDERS!

Want to communicate directly with NSCA member companies or optimize your platform?

Contact NSCA Senior Marketing & Channel Manager Max Johnson at mjohnson@nsca.org or **319.861.8629**.



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Q&A

with **President Kelly Nagel and Head of Channel Sales & Distribution Cheryle Walline**

GN Audio Jabra
US Headquarters: Lowell, MA
World Headquarters: Copenhagen, DE
Number of Locations: 100+ countries
www.jabra.com

Executives: Kelly Nagel, President;
Cheryle Walline, Head of Channel Sales & Distribution

Primary Focus: IT, Call Center, AV

Q: What is it about your company's approach that makes you unique within the NSCA community?

Cheryle: We take an overall solutions perspective that highlights all aspects of the audio and video solution, no matter where or how one works.

Q: What are the biggest business challenges that lie ahead for your company and how will you overcome them?

Cheryle: One of Jabra's biggest business challenges is helping our partners and customers navigate the needs of the hybrid / back to office space. With so many companies migrating to the AV space, it can be difficult for a customer to decide on which vendor and product is truly best. Jabra's audio and video solutions are optimized to work best no matter where the need is. It is our priority to deliver the best audio and video solutions regardless of the environment.

Q: What is the most important benefit or resource provided to you by NSCA? Provide an example of how you leverage it.

Cheryle: Being able to network and engage with other organizations and partners to better tell the overall solution and ecosystem within the video collaboration and hybrid workspace. The events that NSCA facilitates and the opportunities both virtually and face to face to present our solutions and products.

Q: Why is being part of a trade organization and part of a community important?

Kelly: It's always good (and important) to hear feedback from our partner community on how we can help their businesses grow and remain relevant to their clients. It's definitely a two-way street. Being part of those conversations helps drive relationships and engagement at the integrator level as well as with end users.

Q: What is one lesson that the NSCA community can learn from your company's approach to business?

Kelly: Integrators are customers, too. It is important that we tell the whole story and that we be a resource and solution for B2C and B2B, giving integrators and their clients options on audio and video solutions no matter where they work.

“It’s always good (and important) to hear feedback from our partner community on how we can help their businesses grow and remain relevant to their clients. It’s definitely a two-way street.”

–Kelly Nagel, President

Q: Does your organization have an NSCA “champion”? If so, who is it and what is an example of how he or she serves as the champion?

Kelly: Danielle Moore, our video marketing manager. She ensures that NSCA has Jabra solutions and material and engages with Jabra resources to offer thought leadership material and other activities as they pertain to video collaboration and audio.

Q: Why are your employees proud to be part of your organization?

Kelly: As an example, Jabra took on a new leadership role with GN Group in 2018 and proposed launching a women's network aimed at getting more women into leadership positions and increasing GN's female employee population. The GN Women's Network is now a global, employee-led group of women and men committed to supporting, empowering, and advancing women in the GN Group community and beyond. The network was built for the women in the company, by the women in the company, and is dedicated to advancing stronger gender diversity—from hiring to leadership—across GN Group. The network that began in 2018 as a grassroots effort led in the United States and UK with 120 employees has since expanded to an entire professional network of employees that encompasses all GN Group brands globally.

The GN Women's Network has been a successful catalyst for expanding and advancing women in the GN workforce while also helping to catapult GN in its broader diversity and inclusion. Last year, it helped launch Black at GN and Pride at GN—two new employee resource groups for North America. ▲

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN AT THIS YEAR'S PIVOT TO PROFIT

The premise of this year's Pivot to Profit is to identify and directly tackle challenges and opportunities for integrators at this specific point in time. Here's a look at what will be covered. By Tom LeBlanc

The difference between NSCA's two signature business conferences—the Business & Leadership Conference (BLC) and Pivot to Profit (P2P)—is best summed up by an on-stage exchange that NSCA CEO Chuck Wilson had a few years ago.

Before I worked for NSCA, I was on stage with Chuck at BLC to lead a “Beer & Bull” discussion. One audience member was a little disgruntled and challenged Chuck on why there isn't more discussion about products and technology at BLC.

Chuck was completely comfortable with responding to that challenging question. “You're at the wrong event,” Chuck told the audience member. “We leave the product and technology discussions at the door here. This event is about focusing on business strategies to move your company forward.”

It's a unique characteristic of BLC. It forces integrators to keep product and technology at arm's length so they can focus on the big picture. Meanwhile, P2P dives into the nitty-gritty of running an integration company. The P2P Committee spends time each year identifying where integrators have opportunities for new revenue and pinpointing roadblocks along the road to success. Each year's P2P session lineup reflects a snapshot in time in the integration industry.

The Business & Leadership Conference forces integrators to keep product and technology at arm's length so they can focus on the big picture.

PIVOT TO PROFIT DIVES INTO THE NITTY-GRITTY OF RUNNING AN INTEGRATION COMPANY.

Let's take a look at the topics that P2P attendees will experience on Sept. 19-21 in Chicago:

Integrators' Role in Healthy Buildings

Most integrators don't consider the role they play in providing safe, healthy working and learning environments—but the timing couldn't be better to change that. Think of how many touchpoints there are in a building for integrators: HVAC, emergency systems, remote monitoring, voice notification, electronic locks, occupancy management, unified security management, connected fire systems, thermal and mask detection, access control, self-assessment solutions. So much of it can make an impact on healthy buildings.

Becoming a Master Systems Integrator

There's a reason why integrators are well-positioned to benefit from the big push toward sustainability in all markets. When you look at the foundation of a healthy building, integrators can play a key role in helping customers achieve their goals: using systems to monitor lighting, thermal health, noise, and, of course, safety and security. We see integrators evolving beyond the area they specialize in—whether that's AV, security, or life safety—and becoming master systems integrators that solve many facility challenges.

Finding Profitability

To be profitable in 2022 and beyond, every penny in your budget counts. Integration companies need better metrics when it comes to what they should spend on different aspects of their business (e.g., marketing, vehicles, labor, benefits). The NSCA Financial Leadership Council recently conducted a focused research project to help you create better annual spending benchmarks, and we'll share those results. Your accounting department will love the specific insight you bring back.

Staying in Compliance

It's getting harder to keep up with the codes that impact your projects and weigh heavily on the minds of customers. Making sure a proposal, contract, and project comply with specs can be the work of several full-time jobs. P2P will outline specific information and advice on how to understand and apply local codes and requirements.

Pursuit of Recurring Revenue

You don't want to sit through a session on whether recurring revenue or managed services is right for your company. Instead, this session focuses on how to move past the general talk and get down to details. Dive into recurring revenue challenges and specific steps to overcome them. Exactly what should sales professionals say to transition customers from capex to opex? What should you include in your managed services solutions? How should you arrive at pricing? How can you build support for a service program?

Being Cyber Resilient

Integration business leaders know the cyber risks involved with managing sensitive internal and customer information. If you've been fortunate so far, then you know these risks in theory only. Hear the story of an integrator that experienced a ransomware attack first-hand. Find out how it impacted the organization and the steps (and missteps) the company took after it happened. The risks are very real: You'll walk away with a cyber resiliency plan to protect your company before and after an attack.

Make Sure You Attend Pivot to Profit

These are just a small sample of the topics covered at Pivot to Profit this year. These sessions will be more than discussions: You'll walk away with a playbook on how to tackle these business challenges in 2022 and beyond. 🚩

*Tom LeBlanc is executive director at NSCA.
Contact him at tleblanc@nsca.org.*



Don't Miss Pivot to Profit!

Sept. 19-21 in Chicago • Register at www.nasca.org/p2p



THIS IS YOUR MOMENT FOR ACTION

A playbook to move integration businesses forward

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You'll walk away with a strategic playbook on:

- An integrator's role in healthy buildings
- Becoming a master systems integrator
- Benchmarking your spending
- Staying in project compliance
- Keeping pace with emerging technologies
- Recurring revenue implementation
- Establishing your company as a service provider
- Finding elusive margins in 2022
- Cyber resiliency
- Establishing deeper relationships with customers
- Plus golf, networking, giving back, **and more**

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