

WATCHMAN

SECURITY & SAFETY TECHNOLOGY - NEWS - INDUSTRY LEADERS - EVENTS - LEGAL ISSUES

WELCOME TO THE WATCHMAN!

THE WATCHMAN launched our 2024 inaugural issue reaching electronic security industry leaders in 14 western states. **THE WATCHMAN** joins **THE SENTRY** and **THE SENTINEL** to provide nationwide coverage with nearly 7,000 printed and mailed magazines on a monthly basis.

The magazines also have a robust digital footprint with www.snnonline.com and posting at several state association websites, as well as social media including Facebook, Instagram and other outlets.

Special features include **TOP RIGHT DRAWER**, a monthly commentary from industry thought leaders who provide their unique perspective on the future of the industry.

LITTLE NOTES will be the receptacle for sneak peaks, kudos for advancements, and other news of the moment.

FIRST THING MONDAY is a weekly e-newsletter that will provide an overview of the week before and a preview of the week ahead. It is specifically designed for owners and seasoned managers to keep on top of industry movers and shakers and trends impacting the market.



TOP RIGHT DRAWER



FIRST THING MONDAY



LITTLE NOTES



We have specialized in publishing association and dedicated trade publications for the electronic security and fire safety industries since 1992. Our focus includes international, national and state reach in manufacturing, sales, installation, dealership, monitoring, technical, training and financial support of these industries.



TOP RIGHT DRAWER

A Visionary's Odyssey: A Journey Through the Smart Home Revolution

By: Tom Few

As I reflect on the evolution of the smart home industry, it becomes clear that each milestone is not just a marker in time but a testament to the transformative power of innovation. From the humble beginnings of rubber buttons on walls to the integration of cutting-edge blockchain technology, my journey has been nothing short of extraordinary.

I can categorize my journey into four distinct phases which have led me to where I am today. Phase 1 is the early days of the smart home industry which marked the introduction of rubber buttons on walls, a basic form of home fire and security. My childhood memories of that time always make me smile and I recall the days of running wires through people's attics for my father in exchange for cookies. It's a bit of nostalgia which adds a personal touch to our current era. That early work helped my family, friends and I build the largest wholesale monitoring company in the country at that time. What a ride!

In Phase 2, I found myself at the forefront of the technological advances taking place, notably introducing home automation, touch screen panels and platform apps which revolutionized the user interface of smart home systems.

However, it was in Phase 3 during my time with Vivint where I felt my contributions were making a significant impact with the launch of 2GIG. Initially, the launch of 2GIG faced rejection from industry manufacturing giants such as GE as well as other household brands. In due time, our products swept the market and we were a pioneering force in large-scale selling of smart homes and solar solutions through call centers and direct sales. The time I spent with Vivint stands out as a landmark achievement, where I led the business development and innovation lab, transforming the company's immense data resources into tailored insurance products.

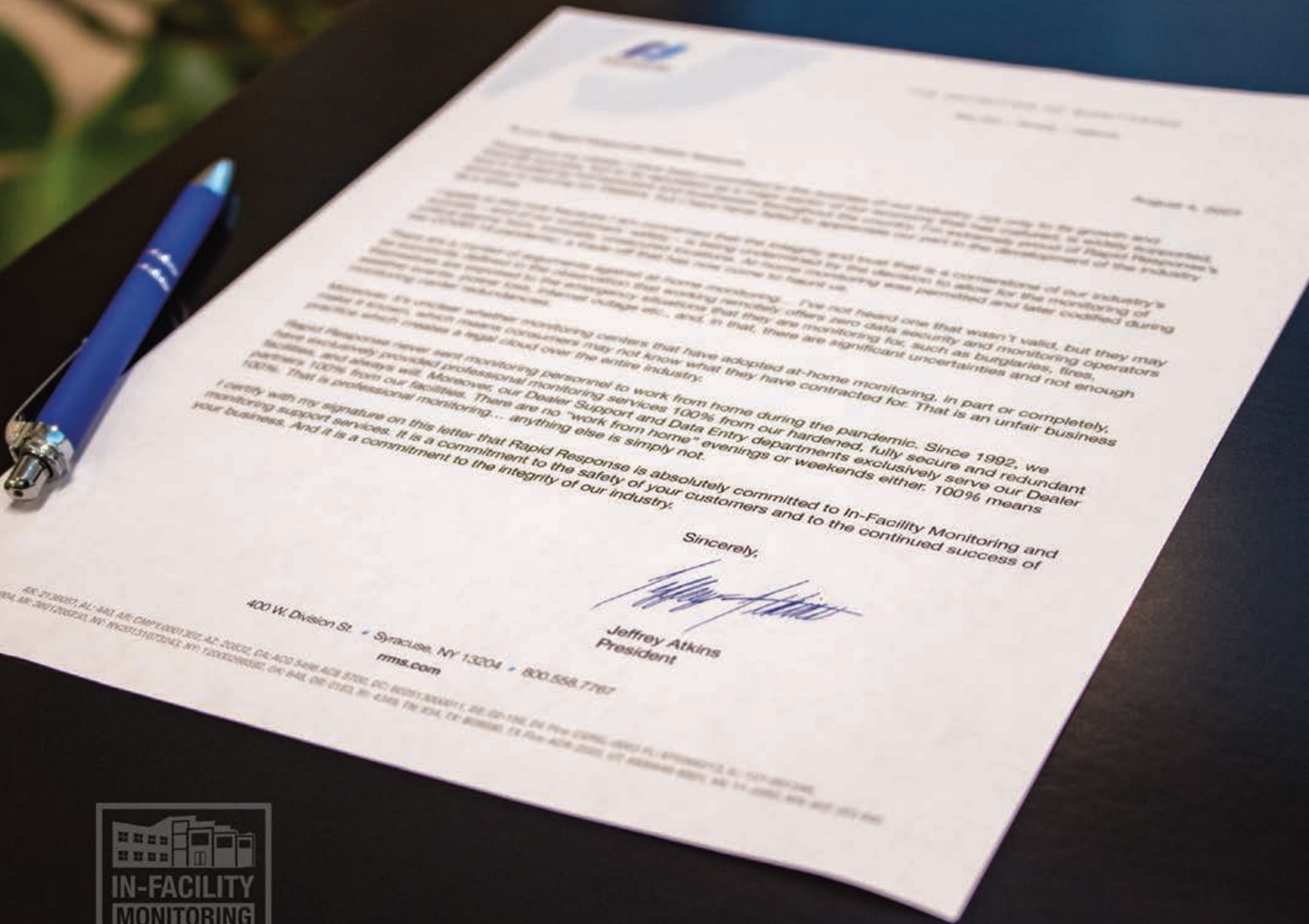
Now, we stand at the cusp of Industry Phase 4 – the future of smart homes. The focus shifts to homeowners' authority over their data, driven by blockchain-based products and services. The problem is crystal clear: although we are the creators, we are not the primary beneficiaries of our own data.

In my newest venture at (Smart), a SaaS company, we have developed a new way to offer blockchain based solutions to empower consumers with their data through the Compass platform, which I believe to be a game changer. The Compass platform facilitates data aggregation, digital rewards including Crypto currency, and optimized outcomes for users participating in the iQue Blockchain.

Top Right Drawer, continued on page 3

100% MEANS 100%

We provide professional monitoring services 100% from our hardened, fully secure and redundant facilities.



August 4, 2020

Dear [Name],

As you know, the COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the services of our industry. Not only do the growth and success of our industry depend on the services of our industry, but the safety of our customers is also dependent on the services of our industry. It is the responsibility of our industry to ensure the safety of our customers and the success of our industry. It is the responsibility of our industry to ensure the safety of our customers and the success of our industry. It is the responsibility of our industry to ensure the safety of our customers and the success of our industry.

I've not heard one that wasn't valid, but they may have exclusively provided professional monitoring services 100% from our hardened, fully secure and redundant facilities, and always will. Moreover, our Dealer Support and Data Entry departments exclusively serve our Dealer partners 100% from our facilities. There are no "work from home" evenings or weekends either. 100% means 100%. That is professional monitoring... anything else is simply not.

Rapid Response never sent monitoring personnel to work from home during the pandemic. Since 1992, we have exclusively provided professional monitoring services 100% from our hardened, fully secure and redundant facilities, and always will. Moreover, our Dealer Support and Data Entry departments exclusively serve our Dealer partners 100% from our facilities. There are no "work from home" evenings or weekends either. 100% means 100%. That is professional monitoring... anything else is simply not.

I certify with my signature on this letter that Rapid Response is absolutely committed to In-Facility Monitoring and monitoring support services. It is a commitment to the safety of your customers and to the continued success of your business. And it is a commitment to the integrity of our industry.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Atkins

Jeffrey Atkins
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Commitment Letter

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EDITORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Be on the lookout for great future info from Mitch Reitman, Audrey Pierson, Jim Wooster and many more contributors sharing their perspectives on the industry.

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Editorial: Copy is due the 10th of the month preceding publication. Advertising: Space reservations due the 10th and copy due the 15th of the month preceding publication.

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TOP RIGHT DRAWER

Top Right Drawer, continued from page 1

From a dealer perspective, Compass will seamlessly integrate into their sales organization's data source providing a user-friendly dashboard for measuring and rewarding top performers, tracking key initiatives, and fostering healthy competition. An innovative feature of the Compass platform for the user is the ability to hold, spend, or take the rewards they earn to market. In short, (Smart) will leverage our team's deep industry experience to focus on direct sales, call center sales and homeowners' data.

A crucial figure in the alpha launch of Compass is Thomas Crowley, who leads our strategic and product management efforts. "Alpha" is tech talk for a phase in a product's development, in which companies can refine their products with a small group of early adopters (aka "alpha testers") before fully releasing it to the market. Our Compass alpha testers have validated that our unique approach streamlines their data management processes and helps them and their sales reps perform better. Compass enables users to automatically aggregate multiple data sources, identify and weigh the most important actions to their business, and introduce their reps to digital rewards. Overall, the Compass platform significantly reduces manual, administrative work for users and gamifies sales.

As I reflect on the impact (Smart) will have via its blockchain-based products, like Compass, it's important to note what Blockchain is: a decentralized and transparent digital ledger that ensures the security, transparency, and traceability of transactions. At (Smart), we are leveraging this technology to ensure that reps are rewarded fairly, track performance via smart contracts, and enable sales rep to own their performance history.

Looking ahead, with the full launch of Compass to the market and plans to disrupt the solar lending space through innovative lending solutions, (Smart) has an exciting roadmap. My journey from rubber buttons to blockchain-based empowerment exemplifies the transformative nature of the smart home industry. I, along with Thomas and our team at (Smart), look forward to the challenge and opportunity to drive innovation and shape the future of the Smart Home industry.

Tom Few serves as President and CEO of (Smart), a provider of decentralized initiative and blockchain technology allowing consumers their own data ownership. Tom previously served as the Vice President of Business Development for Vivint, the largest Smart Home company in North America, where helped pioneer Vivint's Solar Business, Multifamily Business, Strategic Partner and reseller initiatives as well as its Smart Insurance Business. The last initiative was leveraging Vivint's robust platform and user data which was licensed to provide insurance (P&C) services in all 50 states. Preceding his days at Vivint, Tom served as President of Meridian Business Solutions, Inc (largely M&A and consulting services) and Executive Vice President of Criticom International, the largest wholesale monitoring and finance company in the Security, Fire and SmartHome industry at that time.



Seven Actions Alarm Companies Can Take to Increase Their Value

By Jim Wooster

The team from Alarm Financial Services has been involved in hundreds of acquisitions over decades in the electronic security industry. As buyer, seller, lender and advisor, we have seen all aspects and all angles of the process, most of the time with our own money at stake.

In contrast, for the owner of a security and life safety company, the sale of a business may occur only once in a career. There may be only one chance to get it right. So, purposeful preparation ahead of a company sale is essential to increase the value and ensure a smooth process. What, then, should a company owner focus on? AFS identifies seven actions you can take to maximize the

value of your company and avoid the all too common misfortune of leave money on the table.

In no particular order:

1. Clean Up Customer Contracts – First, consult an industry attorney to make sure the versions you are using currently and over the years conform to industry standards. Then clean up missing, ineligible, un-signed, non-assignable contracts.

2. Address Accounts Receivable – Are you on top of collections efforts? Customer accounts that are significantly past due (over 90-days or maybe even 60-days late) will be thrown out of a deal. In some cases, we have seen poor record keeping and bookkeeping practices make the AR look worse than it actually is.

3. Measure Attrition – For as important a measure as attrition is for recurring revenue companies, it is surprising how few alarm companies actually measure it each month. And don't just analyze the rate of attrition, capture the reasons why customers cancel. You can't manage what you don't measure.

4. Get Familiar with Your Financial Statements and Key Metrics – We often see alarm company owners provide a narrative about how they run their business, what the customer base looks like and what kind of products and services they sell. But they are unable to provide the numbers behind that story. Attrition Rate, Creation Costs, ARPU, RMR, EBITDA, COGS. Buyers want to see numbers.



5. Show Me the Money – One of the biggest laments from sellers is that buyers are only interested in their RMR (Recurring Monthly Revenue) and don't consider non-recurring revenue in the purchase price calculation. This will happen unless the seller specifically documents where the buyer will earn profit when it acquires the business. You have a profitable access control division which doesn't have a lot of RMR? Document those profits (or better yet turn the revenue into RMR).

6. Assemble Your Team – Key advisors include an alarm industry specific accountant, attorney, broker and especially a tax advisor/estate planner. Too often, sellers are not aware of the tax consequences of a company sale and fail to do proper tax and estate planning, undermining the hard work that went into building a successful business.

7. Review Central Station Reports – Identify Late to Test accounts, runaways and trouble signals. Make sure contact lists are up to date and communication paths (cell, radio, receiver lines) are transferable.

Of course, there are many more actions alarm company owners can take to improve the value of their business, and the tasks may seem overwhelming in addition to the day-to-day demands of running a business. So, start with one task, but start now! Even if you are not ready to sell today, your company will realize greater efficiencies and profit in the meantime.

Jim Wooster, Jr is President of Alarm Financial Services, Inc. the industry's oldest financing company. AFS assists companies prepare for a sale through its Pre-Sale Due Diligence Services. More information at www.alarmfinancialservices.com.



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From Battlefield to Security Field: Why the Security Industry Should Look to Veterans

Editor's Note: Syncomm Management Group is proud to introduce AllegiantVETS to the Electronic Security Industry. AllegiantVETS started in 2010 to honor the men and woman who have served and sacrificed for our freedoms, and to support them in their ongoing transition back to civilian life. AllegiantVETS' mission is to provide opportunities for the community to honor, invest, and connect.

By Marcus Haney

In the nuanced transition from military life to civilian existence, veterans offer a unique set of skills and experiences that are particularly valuable to the security industry. Understanding why companies in this sector should actively recruit veterans is crucial, as these individuals are not just suitable for security roles; they are ideally suited to meet and exceed the demands of the industry.

Veterans come equipped with a range of skills directly transferable to the security sector. Their expertise in defense tactics, threat assessment, and risk management is honed through rigorous military training, making them a valuable asset from day one. Additionally, many veterans hold security clearances, an invaluable advantage that enables them to handle sensitive information and situations without the added time or expense typically required for clearance processing.

The leadership and teamwork skills veterans develop in the military are unparalleled. They're seasoned in leading and working effectively within cohesive units, a trait that translates into their ability to manage and collaborate within security teams. This capacity for leadership and teamwork is a significant boon for security companies looking to enhance their team dynamics and operational efficiency.

Veterans are accustomed to performing under pressure, a quality that is immensely beneficial in the security industry. Their ability to make quick, sound decisions in high-stress situations ensures that security operations are handled with poise and professionalism. This trait is particularly vital in emergency response scenarios, where calm and efficient action can make all the difference.

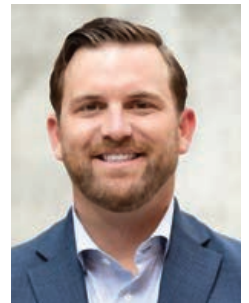
The training veterans receive in various security protocols and strategies aligns closely with the requirements of civilian security

roles. Their familiarity with enforcing and adhering to strict security protocols means they can integrate smoothly into existing security operations, ensuring compliance and enhancing safety measures. Moreover, the physical and mental preparedness of veterans aligns with the demands of many security roles. Their physical fitness and mental resilience, developed through facing and overcoming various challenges, equip them to adapt to different environments and situations – a critical ability for security professionals who may work in diverse settings.

Ethical conduct and a strong sense of duty are hallmarks of military service, traits that are highly valued in the security industry. Veterans' adherence to a strict code of conduct and their ingrained sense of honor and integrity instill a level of trust and reliability in them, making them ideal candidates for positions where ethical behavior, confidentiality, and a strong moral compass are paramount. In conclusion, companies in the security industry stand to gain significantly by actively recruiting veterans. These individuals bring a unique blend of discipline, experience, and integrity, along with valuable security clearances.

By hiring veterans, security companies not only enhance their operational capabilities but also demonstrate a commitment to supporting those who have served, acknowledging the skills and sacrifices of these individuals by providing them with rewarding post-service career opportunities.

Marcus Haney is the CEO of AllegiantVETS and a battle-tested Marine turned visionary leader behind its' cause, championing the transition of service members into trailblazing careers. His dynamic approach is shaped by resilience and a deep commitment to his fellow veterans and fuels their mission to empower and transform lives through unparalleled support and opportunities.





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From The Editor: Jerry Lenander Associate with Associations

When I joined the staff of the Security Industry Association (SIA) in 1989 I became aware of the advantages of associations. The electronic security industry is blessed with associations that address standards, education, workforce development and networking in all segments.

Our magazines, THE SENTRY, THE SENTINEL, and THE WATCHMAN are affiliated with the Global Electronic Security Forum, a means to bring together all associations to address common issues and concerns. The Forum will make its debut at ISC West in Las Vegas April 9-12, 2024. We will network at ISC's Got Talent at the ROCKHOUSE at the Venetian and then at our Forum booth on the tradeshow floor with more than 20 associations.


FREE registration for the cocktail reception hosted by our sponsors can be found at www.snonline.com along with FREE ISC West registration.

We look forward to working with associations at the regional, state, national, and global level and serve as a platform to share information. In reality, and in the best of worlds, associations work together to address their most formidable needs.

Will Rogers said: "A man only learns in two ways, one by reading, and the other by association with smarter people."

My hope is you will learn from reading THE SENTRY, THE SENTINEL, and THE WATCHMAN every month in print or digitally, and that through your participation will associate with smarter people.

Jerry Lenander has served the Electronic Security Industry for over 30 Years including roles as Executive Director for various state associations and non-profit organizations, most notably his time at CAA, in which he was inducted to the Security Sales & Integration Hall of Fame in 2020. He can be reached by e-mail at jerry@snonline.com

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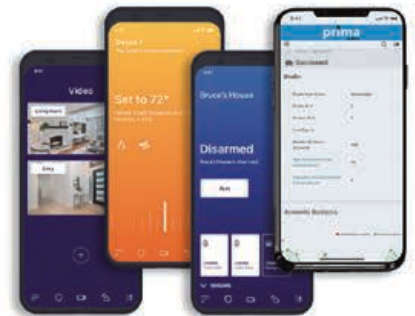
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PRODUCT SERVICE NEWS

SNAP ONE announced the launch of Control4 Connect & Control4 Assist – the new software and support offerings that improve end-user experiences while empowering U.S.-based Control4 dealers to provide superior customer service, increase profitability through recurring revenue, and encourage positive long-term client relationships. Snap One spent more than a year developing the Control4 Connect & Control4 Assist offerings in close collaboration with 23 integrators, while also leveraging experience from thousands of Parasol customers and more than 100,000 4Sight subscribers, to ensure the services meet the needs of integrators and customers, are easy to use, and deliver in-demand experiences and enhancements. “The homes and businesses of today rely on a wide range of networked systems and devices to operate. This makes software updates and system monitoring critical to ensure reliability, confidence and continued use,” John Heyman, Snap One CEO emphasized. “As such, the traditional business model of the CI integrator must evolve into an ongoing partnership with their customers. We believe that the customer understands the importance of working with professional integrators to keep their investment current – and that they’re willing to pay to ensure their systems are maintained and optimized.” According to Heyman, the evolution of the industry is inevitable as it moves from hardware centric to one more grounded in software and new software integrations.

OPENEYE announced their new Operational Analytics for OpenEye Web Services (OWS). Powered by Wobot AI, Operational



Analytics in OWS allows users to detect, analyze, and report on crucial business operation events. Users are also offered streamlined operations, improved customer service, and an increase in safety with powerful video analytics which detect complex behaviors of customers, staff, vehicles, and objects. OpenEye’s AI-powered technology

delivers important information at a glance while alerting users when critical operational events take place, such as those tied to

customer experience or functional processes. Smart merchandising, safety, engagement, speed of service, and more can be optimized with Operational Analytics in OpenEye Web Services.

MOTOROLA SOLUTIONS has acquired **IPVIDEO**, the creator of the HALO Smart Sensor, an all-in-one intelligent sensor that detects real-time health and safety threats. “With its powerful sensor capabilities, HALO extends our end-to-end physical security offering by integrating a non-video threat

detection product into our safety and security ecosystem,” said Mahesh Saptharishi, executive vice president and chief technology officer, Motorola Solutions. “We see this as an opportunity to introduce additional detection solutions that help our customers protect people, property and places.” This acquisition reinforces Motorola Solutions’ commitment to improving safety and security by offering a cost-effective sensor that is easy to deploy and operate for enterprises of all sizes. Motorola Solutions and IPVideo will continue to deliver security solutions that help create safer schools, safer hospitals, safer hotels and safer businesses.

BOON EDAM announced several enhancements to company leadership following the internal merger of the company’s commercial and manufacturing teams. The new Executive Team for the Americas was included in their announcement and reflects Boon Edam’s growth in the changing market climate, as well as the company’s commitment to nurturing talent and fostering innovation in its working environment. “Security entrances have rapidly become a new security imperative across virtually every vertical,” said Patrick Nora, President and Managing Director, Boon Edam USA. “The creation of these new leadership positions reflects the way in which we are driving the evolving market, while also enabling us to create opportunities to better service our existing and new customers.” Visit the News section of Syncomm Management Group’s website www.snnonline.com/news for full information on Executive Team for Americas.

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Melvin Bradley (Brad) Kamcheff, a 35-year employee of **AIPHONE CORP.** passed away unexpectedly on December 26th, 2023, at his home in Kirkland, WA. He was 54 years old. Kimcheff most notably led the company’s marketing team and was instrumental in developing the company’s strategic marketing plan. In 2019, after involvement in several other departments with the company, Brad was promoted to the marketing manager position. During his time as the Marketing Manager, he was responsible for developing the company’s corporate marketing and communications strategy. When Aiphone decided to launch an access control line, the AC Series, Kimcheff was instrumental in the Research and Development of how Aiphone could best bring this product line to market. He is survived by his wife Karen and two children, Wren and Krista.



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Cheers to new beginnings and successful transactions! As we embrace the New Year, Davis Mergers and Acquisitions Group extends heartfelt wishes for a journey marked by growth and prosperity. May your business endeavors flourish, and may success align with your every vision.

Happy New Year!

Do you own a security business and are considering a sale? It takes foresight, strategy and the right representation. Now is the time to get prepared! We can help you, as we have for many others, develop a game plan so when the time is right, you're worth maximum dollars. We call it 'seller ready.'

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Tim Creenan of New York-based Amherst Alarm Elected Chairman of SIAC

Tim Creenan, founder and Vice President of Amherst Alarm and a long-time leader in the field of electronic security, has been elected chairman of the Security Industry Alarm Coalition (SIAC). SIAC is comprised of four major North American security associations—Canadian Security Association (CANASA), Security Industry Association (SIA), The Monitoring Association (TMA), and the Electronic Security Association (ESA). Tim serves as the ESA representative on the board.

SIAC represents one voice for the electronic security industry on alarm management issues by communicating solutions and enhancing relationships with law enforcement. “Tim’s unanimous selection reflects his commitment to SIAC’s mission and breadth of experience and leadership in our industry,” said outgoing chairman Kirk MacDowell. “As treasurer, Tim demonstrated exceptional leadership as the finance chair steering the financial ship with precision and securing a solid foundation for the future.”

“Working with Kirk and our other board members has been a privilege,” said Creenan. “We will continue to move forward on our path of grooming the next generation of experts on our law enforcement liaison team and enhancing the fundraising efforts to support SIAC’s important mission.

“While SIAC has had a great deal of success promoting the Model Alarm Ordinance in communities throughout the country, there are still many opportunities as we help promote the TMA AVS-01 standard, ASAP-to-PSAP and other technology to reduce unnecessary dispatches,” said Stan Martin, SIAC Executive Director.

Tim started in the electronic security field in 1975 working for a large locally owned security firm. Tim earned a degree in electronic

engineering at State University College at Buffalo. In 1984 Tim and his wife founded Amherst Alarm, Inc., which today has more than sixty-five employees serving the Western New York market. Amherst Alarm is the recipient of the prestigious Police Dispatch Page | 2 Quality Award (PDQ). In March 2023, Amherst Alarm became part of the PyeBarker Fire Safety family of companies.



Tim’s involvement in the industry associations began with the Western New York Electronic Security Association, where he served as Secretary, President and Past President. He has also served the New York State Electronic Security Association, as Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President, and President- during two different terms. He is currently Chair of the association’s Legislative Committee and was instrumental in leading the association’s efforts in reforming the enforcement policies of New York State’s alarm installer license. On the national level, he has served as chairman of the Election Committee of the Electronic Security Association, the Government Relations Committee, Governance Task Force and



as member of the Board of Directors as the New York State Electronic Security Association representative. And is a past Board member of the Electronic Security Association. He is also involved in SIAC – Security Industry Alarm Coalition as a member of the board of directors as Treasurer.

In 2018, Tim was inducted into the Security Sales & Integration’s Hall of Fame. Tim’s concern for the industry and public has kept him focused on reducing false alarms. This has led to Amherst Alarm’s certification in and his personal involvement in the Installation Quality (IQ) Board program, where he served as Treasurer, Chairperson and is currently a board member.

ONVIF to take over standardizing descriptive data generated by IoT devices from OSSA

ONVIF announced an agreement with the **Open Security & Safety Alliance (OSSA)** to take over development of data ontology and metadata specifications. The initiative will continue under a new ONVIF metadata working group. The new ONVIF metadata working group is focused on developing standardized ways of richly describing the context in which objects of interest appear in captured video. This work enables the physical security industry to easily share and make use of data generated by analytics applications running on IoT devices, like cameras, for security and analytical purposes. “ONVIF is excited to build on this platform to ensure descriptive and detailed data that is generated by ONVIF conformant products can be used across surveillance systems and elsewhere,” said Leo Levit, Chairman, ONVIF Steering Committee. “We encourage ONVIF Full and Contributing members and their registered affiliates to join the new metadata working group and contribute to this initiative.”

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ISC Security Events Announces Open Registration for the 2024 ISC West Expo

ISC West, in collaboration with its premier sponsor the Security Industry Association (SIA), has announced that registration for ISC West 2024, is now open. The international expo will be held at the Venetian Expo in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 9- 12. “This year, we are excited to bring ISC West attendees an extensive list of offerings where they can discover the latest security innovations, cultivate professional relationships, and learn from industry experts,” said ISC Event Vice President Mary Beth Shaughnessy. “As North America’s flagship destination for today’s cutting-edge security insights – with an emphasis on our environmental impact – we are thrilled to open registration and look forward to delivering an enriching and memorable experience for all who join us in April.”

Don Erickson, CEO of SIA added “SIA is proud to be the premier sponsor of ISC West. Each year at this can’t-miss show, attendees

can see an impressive array of cutting-edge technologies, unlock premier education and hear from the industry’s leading experts.” This year’s event will focus on sustainability. ISC West is on a

multi-year journey to zero-waste, prioritizing environmental stewardship with the goal to divert 90% or more of event material waste away from landfills. We look forward to working with our exhibitors and attendees to minimize the event’s environmental impact and contribute to a sustainable future. There’s

more to come on this front, and over the coming months, you will hear more about the steps ISC West is taking to deliver an environmentally responsible and sustainable event and how you can help.”

Further information about education, programming, and premier speakers will be announced soon. For the most up-to-date information or any additional questions, please visit www.iscwest.com.



See page 26:

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By Tony Smith

Climate Change Ramifications for the Industry

The war is on between climate change advocates and Public Utilities. California, the most progressive state in the fight to battle climate change has put the brakes on its energizing efforts for rooftop solar. The Governors appointed five-man commission for Public Utility regulation has severely reduced the utility requirement for solar incentives. The Governor says he is still committed to a regulation that requires all new cars sold in California in 2035 be fully electric or Hybrid Electric. He has also supported the extension of the Diablo Canyon Nuclear Plant permit as part of the transition to a fossil free environment. As in so many things the problem is in the details.

Let's look at some of those not so little details. We are in a transition from fossil fuels to new power sources, such as solar, wind, and geothermal power. There have been and will continue to be many bumps in that road. There will never be enough rooftop solar to accomplish the transition in its entirety. We must find other ways to create and deliver new sources of energy from these other technologies.

Bulk solar power from major plants in the desert is a possible solution. Some time ago this was considered the Holy Grail of solving the problem, but then we discovered that the construction activity had the problem of destroying the carbon sequestration natural to the desert. Not to mention, the destruction of habitat for desert critters and surrounding indigenous plant life.

Seldom mentioned is the fact that wherever power is generated, it must be transported to an area of need, and that there will be a loss of some of that power in the transmission. The basis of your monthly utility bill is the transportation and maintenance of this power grid. Power grids not only transport the power, but they also clean it of the many aberrations that would interfere with the smooth delivery of the power. Much of that cleansing can occur whether the power is being transported a thousand miles or is tying together small communities or neighborhoods. Increasing the use of mini grids to supplement the longer haul version will decrease blackout issues and add cyber protection to the system.

Looking forward, there are many possible alternatives to be considered. The US has made a number of commitments at various international conferences, including the one just concluded in San Francisco, this past December.

One important consideration would be for our public utility and oil companies to end the war that they are fighting to retain fossil fuels and participate in the transition. This is perhaps a bit Pollyannish, but Arco Solar did try to move the needle in that direction in the 1980's and 90's.

Rooftop solar is the bedrock for this move to non-fossil fuel generation. There are many areas that are rooftop compatible but look like something else. Fallow fields, canal covers, roofs for parking lots are but a few. Offshore wind turbines can be more efficient because of the wind reliability in those locations and the lessening of their environmental impact.

Auto and truck generated Carbon Dioxide comprise about 40% of California's emissions problem. Many of us in CA have decided to become part of the solution by acquiring fully electric or Hybrid vehicles. Now we face the issue of "range anxiety" due to the slow construction of EV fueling stations, coupled with a limited range of 200-300 miles per fill up. This is a transition issue. Construction of new refueling options has increased and improved technologies will increase vehicle range. Toyota is promising a 750-mile range with their new solid-state battery and there are rumors of a 1000 mi. version in development. Coupled with battery walls and new switching technology, we will be able to use our car batteries to power our house when the sun is not shining.

Those who claim there is no climate emergency and that fossil fuels will be necessary for decades and decades to come have become the Luddites' of our generation. The secret to a successful transition to a non-fossil fueled environment will be how we manage the effort without losing sight of our goal.

Tony Smith is a Past President of the California Alarm Association, and former Board member of ESA (NBFAA). He is the Founder-President and CEO of Security Funding Associates, a leading industry financial services firm. They are focused on financing for small-medium sized alarm companies. He may be reached at (626) 795-9199 or tsmith@securityfundingsolutions.com



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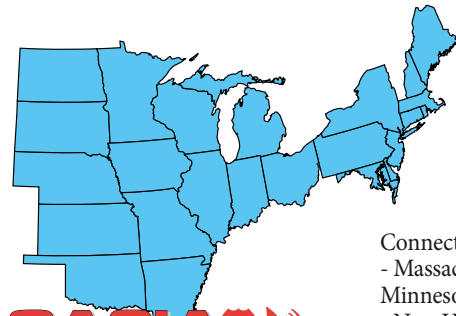


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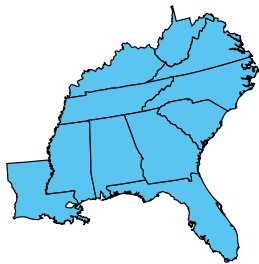
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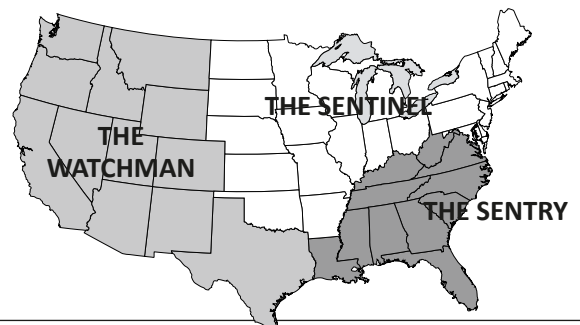
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Everyone Sells. Be Sure They Know It.

By: Audrey Pierson

It is easy to assume that only your salespeople sell for your company. A savvy owner or manager who ensures their sales team receives regular training and coaching, putting them ahead of much of the competition, can still overlook the rest of their employees. Every one of them has a hand in selling the company's systems and services, and that means they can either increase sales or miss sales opportunities.

Everyone working in the company, in any position, must be trained in what the company offers, how to recognize when someone can benefit from their services, and how to create the

opportunity for a sale. While direct selling roles are the purview of the sales team, every employee plays a part in increasing opportunities for upgrades, additional services, referrals, and service. Don't miss out on the chance to increase sales by overlooking employees who 'don't sell'. Teach them how to recognize sales openings and finesse those openings into leads. Incentivize them with a program to reward lead generation. A modest reward program can generate significantly more than its cost and create a real team effort to increase sales within the company.

Ensure that all employees understand the company's goals. Too often employees' knowledge of the company is confined to their own department and that limits their ability to fully contribute. When everyone understands how their position in the company affects everyone else, and how their individual contributions matter, they are more likely to take the initiative to best serve the customer.

In addition to Sales and Marketing, the Customer Service group is filled with salespeople. Exceptional customer service leads to repeat business and referrals as satisfied customers are likely to recommend the company to others. This team includes those handling service calls, scheduling, answering billing questions, and assisting customers to resolve problems. Many times, the solution to an issue is upgrades or additions to equipment or adding services making the system easier to use. Teach employees to include these options in their conversations to help customers, not sell them.

Some of the best salespeople are technicians. Training them in best practices is critical because they are with customers every day. They are problem solvers whose goal is to make things work. Helping a customer find the best way to solve a problem should never include disparaging remarks about the salesperson but can sometimes be unintentional. Avoid this pitfall by training teams to work together for the success of the company. Facilitate interaction and team building between the various departments and teach everyone how to talk to customers (a learned skill) so the best interests of the customer are always foremost.

All employees are brand ambassadors. Make sure they understand how they represent the company in every interaction whether in person, on the phone, or in email or text.

As Henry Ford, the esteemed founder of Ford Motor Company, once said: "If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself."

Audrey is a 35-year veteran of the electronic security industry who advises, trains, and coaches security sales teams and alarm dealers to achieve success. Her *Security Sales Academy* delivers online training and live coaching to participants to expand their skills, gain self-confidence, and increase sales. She operates the *Virtual Security Sales Manager* program, assisting companies with sales supervision for one-to-many sales reps without incurring the expense of a full-time manager. Audrey also presents the *Security Industry QuickStart* program, providing new hires with the A-Zs of our industry. Audrey can be reached at www.audreypierson.com, 831-277-7447, or audrey@audreypierson.com.



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Avoiding Tax Penalties on Out-of-State Installations

By Mitch Reitman

A trade journal, which will remain nameless to protect the well intentioned, recently published an article about taxability of alarm and security services provided in states in which the Company does not have a physical presence. While the author is correct, it is a good example of a professional who knows a topic but doesn't have a thorough understanding of our industry. The article discusses the implications of the recent Supreme Court Case, South Dakota vs. Wayfair (the Wayfair decision). You may be familiar with Wayfair.com, it is a mail order e-commerce company that sells ready to assemble furniture, towels, and things for your home.

The State of South Dakota required Wayfair to collect and remit sales taxes, despite the fact that Wayfair had no physical presence in the State. It is important to note that the items that Wayfair was selling were already taxable in South Dakota, the issue was that Wayfair wasn't collecting the tax from its customers. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of South Dakota stating that the physical presence rule creates cross-border

"distortions" because it discourages out-of-state sellers from having an in-state physical presence and encourages customers to buy from out-of-state vendors.

So, what does that mean to a security company? With the exception of the sale of equipment online in a DIY scenario, security companies typically physically install parts and equipment at the customers location. The fact that a technician (sub-contractor or employee) is actually in the state at the customer's location and installing the equipment gives your company a presence in the state. Monitoring is a bit different, some states tax monitoring, others don't. If monitoring isn't taxable in the state, Wayfair doesn't make it taxable. If monitoring is taxable in the state, and your company has no presence (i.e. the equipment just installed itself and you never have to make a service call) you may be able to make an argument that you aren't required to collect and remit the tax. If the State requires you to collect and remit the tax, Wayfair does affirm this requirement. Keep in mind though, that the service is still taxable, and, if you don't collect and remit the tax, your customer would still be responsible for it. The other factor is that most states' licensing regulations require that the licensee have a physical presence in the state (whether you have an office or not). If your alarm license requires a physical presence, then you have a physical presence, and you have to collect and remit sales and use tax if the underlying goods and services are taxable.

Don't go into a new state without being thoroughly aware of that state's, sales, use, ad valorem, employment, franchise, gross receipts, income, and other taxes. Most state taxing authorities maintain audit and enforcement offices in other states to collect taxes from out of state companies. Many state tax codes allow the local taxing authority to enforce a lien for taxes levied in another state. There have been a few cases in which companies selling "free" alarm, camera, and automation systems, for \$65 a month on 72 month "monitoring agreements" have been challenged and lost. The result is that the state recharacterizes a huge chunk of the "monitoring fee" as an installment sale and levies sales and use tax on the alarm company. This is why it takes us hours to research sales tax for our clients entering new states. State tax codes are often vague (for example Texas taxes burglar alarm monitoring but not fire alarm monitoring), and case law can supersede tax codes.

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Mitch Reitman is the Managing Principal of Reitman Consulting Group, Inc. and is a member of the Security Sales & Integration Hall of Fame. He has served on the board of the Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association and is active in several other local and national Associations in the Security and Fire Alarm industries. He can be reached at MRreitman@Reitman.us or 817-698-9999



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LITTLE NOTES



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