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the **ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTOR**

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Volume IX



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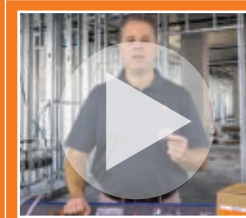


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# BIG DATA DISTRESS

by **Tom Naber**

**B**IG DATA. WE'VE SPENT countless hours this past decade debating and discussing this subject, but we're still wrestling with many of the same questions today. We have all of this information. Now what? What do we do with it?

If you feel like you're having an ongoing existential data crisis, you're not alone. There are plenty of others scratching their heads and asking, "But what does it all really mean?"

NAED Research and Data Analyst Erin Prinster advises that the first step is ensuring you have a proper foundation (i.e., determining whether your data is of good quality). In February, her guest column in *tED* covered the cost of bad data and offered tips for improving data quality. If you haven't read it, I encourage you to do so.

The overwhelming amount of data (and sources) might make you want to stick your head in the sand. But addressing this issue now will save you a lot of time, money, and frustration later. As Erin wrote in a December 2019 NAED blog post about harnessing data, "If you don't think you have time now, do you really think you will have it later? If data isn't a priority, what is?"

Some distributors I talk with have a pretty good grasp of their company's internal data but know they can't operate in a vacuum—so we have resources to help. NAED's Market Data Program is a comprehensive, living,



breathing data tool that provides monthly data on market share and market trends. With it, you can compare your data with aggregate market data by geographic region, customer segment, and product category. The program also provides benchmarking capabilities so you can compare market data with your sales and marketing campaigns to determine effectiveness.

Another complicated job can be interpreting your data correctly. We can make smarter, safer decisions if we understand what the data is telling us. Investing in the people and systems specifically for analytics and data science is key.

When it comes to managing or interpreting your business data, we can get you started. We can also direct you to some of the vetted partners who have the software and systems that allow you to drill down on your critical business data. To learn more, contact the Member Engagement Team at 888-791-2512 or memberengagement@naed.org. ■

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## AWARDS



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# THE VALUE OF WOMEN IN THE INDUSTRY

by guest columnist **Melissa Bucher**

**I**N JUNE I WILL BE ATTENDING MY SIXTH WOMEN IN Industry Forum. I look forward to this conference every year. Last year we had a record number of attendees at the event in Nashville, Tenn., and we expect this year will be just as big, if not bigger. The event brings in women from across the United States, in multiple roles and at all levels of their career. The event has a strong following, and I believe it's because we have created a strong community that provides inspiration and education regardless of whether you are brand new to the industry or a 20-plus-year veteran.

The Women in Industry Forum provides an opportunity for women to learn from one another and collaborate on challenges in the industry. Across the industry, no matter if you are a manufacturer or distributor, there are times when we are facing the same challenges. The conversations can be very powerful, like the new mom who came up to me and said that she feels like she is failing at being a mom and in her job. Being able to help walk her through the challenges and then build up her confidence helps our industry be better. I have met women at this conference who have become mentors, allies, and mentees over the years. Our community helps us be better leaders and make our companies better.

When I leave a Women in Industry Forum, I leave refreshed, full of new ideas, and ready to go take on any new challenge. Whether it's the speakers, the environment, or just being surrounded by so many talented women, this event can really be an inspiration. When people are inspired, they are likely to inspire others, ensuring that the Forum's message isn't just heard at the conference but is spread throughout our industry.

Last year we introduced a slightly different format,



which allowed attendees to choose their own track and learn about the topics that are important to them. Attendees were able to participate in four different educational sessions of their choice. When choosing the topics for the educational sessions and the conference in general, our goal was to offer subjects that would ensure that attendees got something out of the event, regardless of their role or level of experience. This format was so successful that we are giving the 2020 attendees the same opportunity to choose their track.

The 2020 Women in Industry Forum will be held June 23–25 in San Antonio. This year's theme is #WIIOWNIT, and we have an agenda full of amazing speakers. We will kick off the conference with the 2020 Trailblazer Award, which recognizes a woman who has had a positive impact on the electrical distribution industry. Register now, as this year's conference is one you will not want to miss. See you in San Antonio! ■

*Bucher is a district sales vice president at Eaton. She can be reached at [melissabucher@eaton.com](mailto:melissabucher@eaton.com).*



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CURRENT

/ MARKET OUTLOOK

# A YEAR OF PLENTY?

by Ken Simonson



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**W**HAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES. AT the start of 2019, many people assumed the economy’s winning streak was about to end. The stock market had tumbled at the end of 2018. Trade tensions kept rising. Much of the federal government shut down for 35 days as the president locked horns with a now Democratic House of Representatives. Some people believed the length of the expansion alone meant a downturn was imminent.

Instead, the economy is still growing and adding jobs, albeit at a slower pace than in the past several years. The first steps have been taken toward unwinding the damage of the previous years’ trade policy blunders. The stock market keeps setting new records.

There is broad consensus among economists and business executives that the U.S. economy will continue growing modestly in 2020. For instance, a survey the National Association for Business Economics released on Jan. 27 reported that two-thirds of the 94 corporate economists who responded expected inflation-adjusted gross domestic product, or real GDP, to increase by 1.1% to 2% from the fourth quarter of 2019 to the fourth quarter of 2020. Only 2% expect growth of 1% or less, and none expects real GDP to decline. (The remaining 31% expect real GDP to increase by more than 2%.)

Similarly, the Federal Reserve reported on Jan. 15 in the latest *Beige Book* that “Expectations for the near-term outlook remained modestly favorable across the nation.” (The *Beige Book* is a summary of informal soundings of business activity and expectations that the 12 regional Federal Reserve Banks conduct every six to eight weeks.)



INDUSTRY INFO

**NAED Market Condition reports look at the status of four markets important to electrical distribution.**

[NAED.org/Research](http://NAED.org/Research)

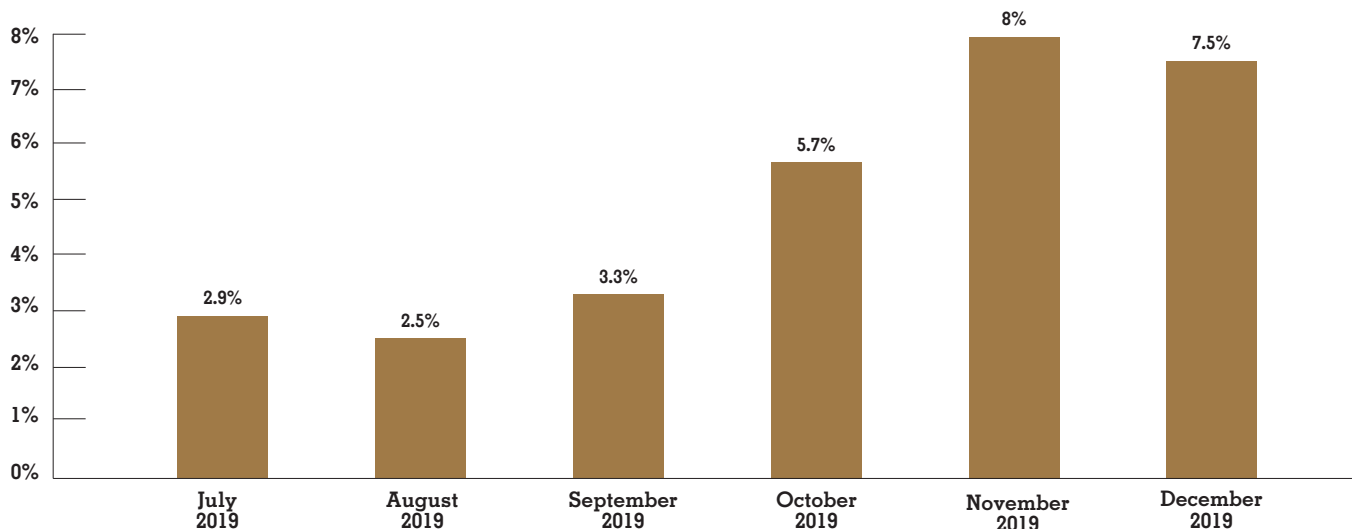
**Housing**

The housing market appears poised for an especially strong year. The federal government reported on Jan. 17 that housing starts in December soared 17% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.61 million units, the highest level in 13 years. (Seasonal adjustment accounts for normal variation due to regularly recurring patterns—weather, holidays, etc.—to make underlying trends more apparent. Multiplying the seasonally adjusted figure by 12 produces an annual rate that facilitates comparison with previous full years.) The gains appeared among both single-family starts, which climbed 11% to a 12-year high of 1.06 million units, and multifamily starts, which jumped to a 33-year high of 553,000 units. Furthermore, the increases were spread across all four Census regions.

Such lofty increases may not be sustainable, and the preliminary estimates for housing starts are often substantially revised—up or down. But starts are likely to remain well above levels of the past decade. On the single-family

**QUARTERLY PRODUCT REPORT: SAME-BRANCH SALES**

**ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION CHANNEL, PERCENT CHANGE VS. ONE YEAR AGO—ROLLING THREE-MONTH DOLLAR BASIS**



**Calculation of total out-the-door sales percent changes within a unified panel of full-line electrical distributor branches. Using same-branch sales as an indicator, over the past six months, electrical product sales have declined by 5% over the same time period last year.**

Vista Information Services sales tracking information is based on estimated sales from a representative sample of full-line electrical distributors located throughout the United States. For more information on Vista, call 512-278-5800, email [epicorindustryanalytics@epicor.com](mailto:epicorindustryanalytics@epicor.com), or visit [epicor.com/en-us/business-need/sales-and-marketing/vista-information-services/](http://epicor.com/en-us/business-need/sales-and-marketing/vista-information-services/).



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side, homebuilders report high confidence. The National Association of Home Builders' *Housing Market Index*, a measure of builders' views of customer sentiment, hit a 20-year high in November and December. Meanwhile, the number of multifamily permits has outrun starts by a substantial margin, suggesting developers will break ground on many more units in the coming months.

Interest rates for 15- and 30-year fixed-rate mortgages have stayed nearly a full percentage point below year-ago levels for months. That is enabling thousands more households to qualify for a mortgage or to change homes

without giving up the low monthly payments they were accustomed to.

An increase in home sales would likely spur more business for electrical distributors that serve the residential renovations and remodeling market as well, since a high percentage of both professional and do-it-yourself home improvements occur in preparation for putting a house on the market or once a new owner is ready to make changes. Low interest rates also facilitate these projects by allowing homeowners to refinance or take out home equity lines of credit.

### Construction and Renovation

Prospects appear positive for electrical distributors serving nonresidential construction and renovation markets too. In a survey the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC) released on Dec. 18, contractors reported optimism that the dollar value of projects available to bid on would expand in all 12 nonresidential categories covered by the survey, as well as multifamily residential construction. Levels of optimism

were similarly high in three of the four Census regions. In contrast, respondents in the Northeast were more bearish than the national average regarding every segment.

The 956 respondents to the survey were especially upbeat about water and sewer construction: The percentage of respondents expecting that market to expand in 2020 exceeded the percentage expecting it to shrink by 25%. This net positive reading amounted to a strong 20 points for four other segments: highways, other transportation, primary and secondary schools, and hospitals.

There was also considerable optimism, as shown by a net positive reading of 17, regarding power construction and projects for federal agencies, such as the General Services Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Naval Facilities and Engineering Command. Respondents rated the outlook for higher education construction almost as highly, with a net reading of 16.

They gave somewhat lower, but still solidly positive, marks to multifamily residential and manufacturing projects, with a net reading of 11 each. Public building and retail/warehousing/lodging construction both received net readings of 10. The lowest ranking (a net reading of eight) was for private office construction.

### Workforce Woes

The biggest worry for both homebuilders and general contractors is finding enough workers—a concern widely shared by electrical distributors as well. Four out of five respondents to the AGC survey reported that they had difficulty filling positions

last year, and nearly two-thirds said they expect the problem to be as hard or harder this year.

That concern appears to be supported by the number of job openings and the small number of unemployed jobseekers. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported on Jan. 17 that job openings in construction in late November had declined from a year ago but nevertheless were at the second-highest November level in the 19-year history of the series. A week earlier, the agency reported that the total nonfarm unemployment rate in December had remained at a 50-year low of 3.5% for the third time in the past four months. In addition, the number of unemployed workers with recent construction experience was at the lowest-ever total for December, in a series dating back to 2000. With so few workers available—experienced or otherwise—it is no wonder that job openings in construction have soared.

One consequence of the worker shortage is that projects are taking longer. In the AGC survey, 40% of respondents reported that projects took longer than anticipated, and 23% said they are now putting longer completion times into bids or contracts.

Nevertheless, the industry has managed to add workers at a faster clip than the overall nonfarm sector. Construction employment increased by 2% in 2019, compared with 1.5% overall. Thus, electrical distributors can expect at least some growth in construction demand.

### Soft Spots

While the economy as a whole appears headed for modest growth, there are some soft spots, especially retailing and manufacturing. Market data firm Coresight Research reported that retail chains announced a record 9,300-plus store closings in 2019. The bad news continued into early 2020, as Pier 1 Imports said it would close 250 stores, Macy's said it would shutter 29 locations, and



**Four out of five respondents to the AGC survey reported that they had difficulty filling positions last year, and nearly two-thirds said they expect the problem to be as hard or harder this year.**

several large chains reported a year-over-year decrease in sales at stores open more than a year.

Manufacturers have yet to receive relief from the tariffs imposed in 2017 to 2019, although the likelihood of still more tariffs appears to have been put to rest for now by passage of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement and a limited agreement with

China. But the sector has not started to recover from the drop in output, orders, and employment that showed up in much of 2019. The yearlong halt in deliveries of Boeing's 737 Max jet has been a huge negative for the entire airliner supply chain. And the auto industry is expecting a year of flat or declining sales after beating sales expectations in 2019.

Therefore, most electrical distributors can expect at least modest growth in demand this year. The best prospects appear to be related to housing, while retail and manufacturing will be problem areas. ■

**Simonson** is chief economist for the Associated General Contractors of America. Reach him at [solomonsimonson@gmail.com](mailto:solomonsimonson@gmail.com).

## CURRENT / DISTRIBUTOR'S VOICE

# Real People, Real Mistakes

Take the time to really see others in this business of relationships.

IT TOOK ME A WHILE TO find the words to write this month's column. The industry lost a good man last fall: A reigning Bridgeport Salesperson of the Year. One of *tED* magazine's 2019 30 Under 35 honorees. A person whose name and legacy will forever be imprinted upon the hearts of many distributors in Chicagoland. A person I have always called a friend.

It can be easy to forget, in this fast-paced industry, that we are dealing with real people. While we often must share the blame and frustrations of a job gone wrong, the way we act and represent ourselves and our companies should always be something to stay cognizant of. While the person across the table from you or on the other end of the phone might have been

in the wrong, that person is still someone's child, sibling, spouse or partner, or parent—and someone who sometimes spends more time dealing with you every day than his or her own family.

I do not buy my cable from some faceless entity; I buy it through a sales representative, the same rep who helps me set up at trade shows, picks up the tab for our BBQs, runs my counter days, and helps me land those bigger projects. He asks me about my kids; he knows what teams I cheer for—and which ones I despise. His agency has helped train our staff and clients, and they also often cost me endless hours of frustration.

Nothing is perfect, just as no one is perfect. Sometimes people have a bad day or are



going through a rough patch in their life. We are all in this together and we are all real people. I have always found you get more done with a partner than someone willing to say "yes" just to make you go away.

If you expect others to share in your frustrations, make sure they can also share in your accolades. Sometimes a simple "thank you" or "good job" might be the tipping point in someone's day. I'm not suggesting everything is candy canes and unicorns, but every now and then, try to keep someone on your side. It's always

helpful to have more friends than enemies.

Ryan Kindle was a great salesman. He excelled at customer service yet was a terrible bluff at poker. He was a great Little League coach but a horrible fisherman. His good nature often made him the butt of many jokes, always taken in stride. Perhaps a few more words of encouragement could have made the difference in his life. ■

**Kevin Reed** is director of purchasing and warehouse operations at Paramount EO, Chicago. He can be reached at [info@paramount-eo.com](mailto:info@paramount-eo.com).



An attention-getting LED installation lights up the roofline of the Saint Paul Hotel.

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE SAINT PAUL HOTEL/VIKING ELECTRIC

## A DYNAMIC DESTINATION

An aesthetic LED application by Viking Electric helps Minnesota's iconic Saint Paul Hotel maintain its place as the vibrant heart of the city's downtown district.

by Susan Bloom

**T**HREE DECADES AFTER UNDERGOING A COMPLETE refurbishment, the Saint Paul Hotel in St. Paul, Minn., was once again ready to make a bold statement to attract attention to the hotel and highlight its long-standing tradition of excellence in the area. Thanks to support from Viking Electric and Acclaim Lighting, an aesthetic application installed around the hotel's roofline in late 2018 succeeded in ensuring that the iconic establishment remained one of the city's most celebrated destinations.

"The Saint Paul Hotel is a prominent gathering point and a place where important things happen in downtown St. Paul," explained Ken Wieber, director of property operations at the Saint Paul Hotel. "After completing a roof remodel in the summer of 2018, we wanted to do something

even more to help maintain the name, reputation, and pride that the people of Minnesota and St. Paul have in their namesake hotel."

Contacted by Wieber in spring 2018 for her ideas concerning an aesthetic lighting installation for the hotel, Kathy Foldesi, account manager at Viking Electric in Minneapolis, began researching suitable options. After considering several, the team ultimately selected LED products from Acclaim Lighting.

"We used 160 of the 15W Acclaim direct-view dot fixtures mounted 5' apart along the roofline," Foldesi said. "The lights run through all colors of the spectrum and can be remotely programmed to commemorate any holiday or special event. The system is easy to program and change from one color to another."

The fixtures were installed by local contractor Aid Electric, and Foldesi said that the lighting has been a welcome and exciting new attraction in the downtown area.

“The hotel has different color scenes it runs through for each holiday and to commemorate other special events and milestones, such as key sporting events going on in town, Breast Cancer Awareness Month in October, etc.,” Foldesi said.

For his part, Wieber was thrilled with the responsiveness and expertise of his longtime distributor partner. “At the start of this project, I called Kathy; she and the rep came right down and showed us a new system, and we had our president evaluate them as well,” recalled Wieber. “Just from looking at the three Acclaim samples that I duct-taped to the roof on a 2x4, I saw that this system was going to be great: great color, great whiteness, and great brightness that really filled the bill.”

Since completing the project on time and on budget, “We’ve heard a lot of positive feedback concerning this installation; now there’s always fun lighting on top of the building and it’s very attention getting,” explained Foldesi. “We’re so proud to have been a part of this aesthetic project. We hope it will inspire other building owners to consider their outdoor lighting as a way to spotlight their properties and add to their neighborhood’s beautification and streetscape.”

“Now we can take our beautiful hotel and turn on all the lights,” Wieber said of his facility’s elegant upgrade. “Our lighting looks great and we can opt for white lights or switch them out with any colors, pattern, or design we want. Thanks to this project, it’s exciting times for us at the Saint Paul Hotel.” ■

*Bloom is a 25-year veteran of the lighting and electrical products industry. Reach her at [susan.bloom.chester@gmail.com](mailto:susan.bloom.chester@gmail.com).*

## CONTRACTOR



To better help electrical distributors respond to the needs of electrical contractors, “Contractor Q&A” features remarks from real contractors from around the country. Responding are Dennis Burke, owner and CEO of Mr. Electric of Southeast New Hampshire in Rollinsford, N.H., and Leon Ghezzi, owner of Ghezzi Electric in Syracuse, N.Y. This month we asked:

### IN WHAT WAYS COULD YOUR DISTRIBUTOR PARTNERS IMPROVE THEIR LEVELS OF SERVICE?

**Burke:** I would love a way that we could seamlessly use our bidding software to go from a big package to order our material, which would make it easier for us to bid on projects. I’m not sure how they would accomplish it, but there are universal part numbers, so when you do a lighting package and part of my materials is 600’ of 2” EMT, I would like that quote turned into an order. It would be a lot of work on their part, but it would be fantastic for us. They have apps where I can place orders, but I would like to extend it to my software so I don’t have to duplicate the paperwork.

I would also like to see something similar to a bid room where contractors look for work. For example, if I wanted quotes for light fixtures or other material, I could post what I’m looking for and distributors could look at it and send us their prices. That would open up competition and make it easier for distributors to locate customers.

**Ghezzi:** Local distributors seem to have different lines of pricing for different contractors. I want to get the best price for what I’m buying. I had to purchase a 200A exterior panel and [a big distributor] wanted to charge me \$300 for something I could buy online for \$150. I can understand somebody getting a discount if large quantities of an item are bought, but there should be a standard base price.

About 10 years ago, local distributors began to stock fewer items on their shelves. When they don’t have a part I need, they bring it in from another store or a warehouse and the delay can be one or two days or a week. They have a lot of the standard items, but if you need a specialized item, there could be a problem. Distributors need to increase their inventories locally. ■

Send your questions to “tED” Editor Misty Byers at [mbyers@naed.org](mailto:mbyers@naed.org).

# INVESTORS CHOOSE OPTIMISM

Despite uncertainty about trade talks, the *tED* Stock Index closes 2019 solidly in the black.

**A**LTHOUGH THERE WAS UNCERTAINTY THROUGHOUT the period about the durability of the trade talks between the United States and China, the *tED* Stock Index closed 2019 solidly in the black for our trading session, which ran from Oct. 31 through Dec. 31. The index jumped 150.18 points (or 7.43%) and closed at 2,170.16. Advancing issues easily topped declining issues at a 24-to-five count. Highlights of the session include:

- The Federal Reserve reported that manufacturing production fell .6% in October, largely attributed to a strike at General Motors.

- The Labor Department said that producer prices—measuring prices before they reach the consumer—increased .4% in October, the largest rise in six months.

- The Labor Department also reported that employers added 266,000 jobs, far surpassing the 184,000 expected and the largest increase in 10 months.

- The Conference Board reported that its consumer confidence index slipped to 125.5 in November from a 126.1 reading in October.

- Private payroll processor ADP noted that U.S. companies added 67,000 jobs in November, roughly half the gain of the month before. However, the November jobs report contradicted that trend and November's growth defied estimates.

- As December ended, the Nasdaq closed above 9,000 for the first time.

"People are perhaps just checking out for the rest of the year and taking some profits on positions because there are a lot of things that are up meaningfully," said Ben Phillips, chief investment officer at EventShares. "If the trade deal really gets done, that's improvement in sentiment, which drives markets and CEO confidence, and then you still have very easy money out there and the Fed doesn't plan

on changing that. All those things combined suggest that equities should rise in the next 12 months, though maybe not as strong as 2019."

## *tED* Index Highlights

- **Top dollar gainer.** Rockwell Automation (ROK) soared 30.68 points (or 17.84%) following its strong quarterly results and outlook. For its fiscal fourth quarter,

ROK posted earnings of \$2.01 per share vs. \$2.11 in the year-ago quarter. Revenues were \$1.73 billion. These results topped estimates from analysts, who expected \$1.92 per share. Revenues were 4.4% better than expected. The company cited negotiations with vendors and select price increases to counteract the impact of tariffs. ROK ended at 202.67 and was the top dollar gainer.

- **Top percentage loser.** Despite beating estimates on third-quarter earnings, Owen & Minor (OMI) fell 1.56 points (or 23.18%). OMI posted earnings of \$0.22 per share vs. last year's \$.32 per share. Analysts were expecting \$.19 per share. Revenues of \$2.40 billion were

1.6% below estimates. Moody's Investment Service cut its rating on OMI to a negative outlook. The top percentage loser, OMI closed at 5.17.

- **Top percentage gainer.** WESCO (WCC) jumped 9.24 points (or 18.24%) after floating an offer to acquire index component Anixter for \$3 billion (or \$90 per share). The offer came a day after Anixter announced it had agreed to a bid from private equity firm Clayton, Dubilier & Rice. WCC then upped its bid to \$93.50 per share. Ending at 59.39, WCC was the top percentage gainer. ■



**tEDmag.com is the industry's source for information, including the financial and economic news important to the channel.**

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*Information and chart on the opposite page are provided by Trade Trends. For more information, call 509-280-3896.*

## *tED* STOCK INDEX: TOP GAINERS & LOSERS

Top dollar gainer	Rockwell Automation	\$30.68
Top dollar loser	Cree	-\$1.58
Top percentage gainer	WESCO International	18.42%
Top percentage loser	Owens & Minor	-23.18%

## MARKET RECAP

Advancers	24
Decliners	5
Unchanged	0

**tED STOCK INDEX**

Exchange	Ticker symbol	Company name	\$ Price 12/31/19	\$ Price 10/31/19	\$ Net change	Percent change	52-week \$ high	52-week \$ low
NYSE	MMM	3M	176.42	164.99	11.43	6.93	219.75	150.58
NYSE	ABB	ABB	24.09	20.99	3.10	14.77	24.21	17.71
NYSE	AYI	Acuity Brands	138.00	124.79	13.21	10.59	147.44	105.95
NYSE	AXE	Anixter International	92.10	82.75	9.35	11.30	93.95	52.58
NYSE	AIT	Applied Industrial Technologies	66.69	59.84	6.85	11.45	68.21	49.45
NYSE	ATKR	Atkore International Group	40.46	34.70	5.76	16.60	42.67	19.30
NYSE	BDC	Belden	55.00	51.28	3.72	7.25	64.33	40.67
NASD	CREE	Cree	46.15	47.73	-1.58	-3.31	69.21	39.63
NYSE	DHR	Danaher	153.48	137.82	15.66	11.36	154.00	96.44
NYSE	ETN	Eaton	94.72	87.11	7.61	8.74	95.48	66.22
NYSE	EMR	Emerson Electric	76.26	70.15	6.11	8.71	77.24	55.98
NASD	WIRE	Encore Wire	57.40	56.20	1.20	2.14	62.08	48.48
OTC	HMDPF	Hammond Power Solutions	6.07	6.21	-0.14	-2.25	6.33	4.37
NYSE	HON	Honeywell International	177.00	172.73	4.27	2.47	183.12	129.07
NASD	HWCC	Houston Wire & Cable	4.41	4.25	0.16	3.76	6.59	3.55
NYSE	HUBB	Hubbell	147.82	141.70	6.12	4.32	149.31	96.08
NASD	LFUS	Littelfuse	191.30	175.57	15.73	8.96	206.00	149.80
NASD	LYTS	LSI Industries	6.05	5.19	0.86	16.57	6.46	2.48
OTC	OSAGF	OSRAM Licht	48.76	43.84	4.92	11.22	49.11	29.00
NYSE	OMI	Owens & Minor	5.17	6.73	-1.56	-23.18	8.43	2.43
OTC	PCRFY	Panasonic	9.41	8.46	0.95	11.23	9.91	7.46
NASD	PKOH	Park-Ohio Holdings	33.65	30.76	2.89	9.40	38.77	25.74
NYSE	ROK	Rockwell Automation	202.67	171.99	30.68	17.84	207.11	143.91
OTC	SMAWF	Siemens	130.10	114.20	15.90	13.92	132.35	93.70
NYSE	TXT	Textron	44.60	46.09	-1.49	-3.23	58.00	42.30
OTC	TOSYY	Toshiba	16.90	16.97	-0.07	-0.41	18.00	13.83
NYSE	WSO	Watsco	180.15	176.30	3.85	2.18	183.00	136.35
NYSE	WCC	WESCO International	59.39	50.15	9.24	18.42	61.02	42.03
NYSE	GWW	W.W. Grainger	338.52	308.84	29.68	9.61	340.57	255.09

**INDEX WATCH**

Index	\$ Price 12/31/19	\$ Price 10/31/19	\$ Net change	% Change
tED Stock Index	2,170.16	2,019.98	150.18	7.43
Dow Jones Industrial Average	28,538.44	27,046.23	1,492.21	5.52
S&P 500 Index	3,230.78	3,037.56	193.22	6.36
Nasdaq Composite	8,972.60	8,292.36	680.24	8.20

## GIVING BACK

**Gexpro, Rexel Partner with LEDVANCE to Donate More Than \$3,500 to Local Food Banks**

Gexpro and Rexel partnered with Sylvania for a “Share the Light” promotion to donate to local food banks this past holiday season. From Sept. 16 to Nov. 1, a portion of all sales of LEDVANCE and Sylvania products were donated. More than \$3,500 was raised for three food banks in the Chicago, Cleveland, and St. Louis areas.

**Standard Electric Announces Donation to Feeding America**

After committing to donating a 100th of a percent of sales over 100 days in honor of celebrating its 100th anniversary, Standard Electric Supply, Milwaukee, donated almost \$25,000 to Feeding America in the communities where its offices are located.

## JOBS WELL DONE

**French Gerleman Receives Two Prestigious Industry Awards**

French Gerleman was recently honored with two industry awards: the

Bradley Cup and the MOSEIA (Missouri Solar Energy Industries Association) Partner of the Year Award.

The Bradley Cup bears the name of Allen-Bradley founder Lynde Bradley and is awarded to the distributor that has achieved the highest composite score across a group of metrics in sales and operational excellence during the Rockwell fiscal year. French Gerleman was named from among distributors across North America.

The MOSEIA Partner of the Year Award recognizes companies or individuals who have gone above and beyond to support the solar industry in Missouri. French Gerleman supported MOSEIA by coordinating vendor training through seminars and webinars throughout the year and hosting the MOSEIA Annual Conference at its St. Louis headquarters.

**The Hubbell Foundation Recognized by Make-A-Wish**

The Hubbell Foundation was named Corporate Philanthropist of the Year by Make-A-Wish South Carolina. ■

✉ Got an event or news item to share in “tED”? Send it to [mbyers@naed.org](mailto:mbyers@naed.org).



From left: Liz Mazur, manager of corporate relations at the Greater Cleveland Food Bank; Carolyn Sippy, midwest region supplier relations manager, Rexel; Ken Heida, Cleveland interim branch manager, Rexel



## INDUSTRY NEWS

Around the Globe

► **CES Opens in Greer, S.C.**  
Dallas-headquartered City Electric Supply recently opened its first location in Greer, S.C.

► **Crawford's NOLA Move**  
Crawford Electric Supply, a Houston-headquartered Sonepar Company, moved its New Orleans branch to the heart of Old Jefferson—less than 10 miles from the New Orleans Central Business District.

► **IES Opens Fifth Location**  
Independent Electric Supply, headquartered in Somerville, Mass., has opened a branch in Peabody, Mass. It's the company's fifth location.

► **WESCO to Acquire Anixter**  
WESCO and Anixter announced that their boards of directors have unanimously approved a definitive merger agreement under which WESCO will acquire Anixter. The companies anticipate completing the transaction during the second or third quarter of 2020.

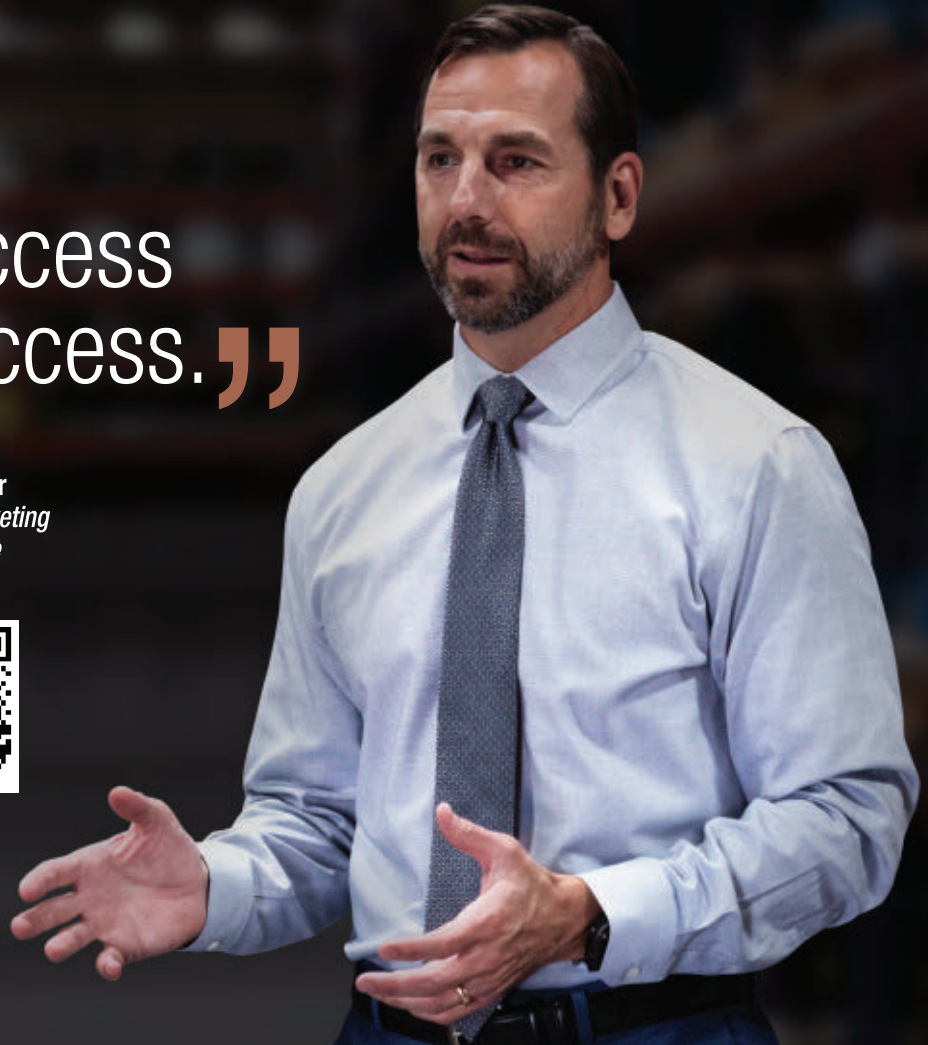
► **AD, SafetyNetwork Merge**  
AD and SafetyNetwork are pursuing a possible merger in the spring. The partnership would bring together two organizations to create AD's only safety-dedicated division focused on the growth of independent distributors that specialize in the safety market.

For up-to-date industry news and information, go to [tEDmag.com](http://tEDmag.com).



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*VP Sales & Marketing*  
*Encore Wire*



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**B U S I N E S S**

/ MARKET FOCUS

# GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE

*by Jan Niehaus*

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**T**HE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE SPENDS \$50 billion a year, procuring everything from ballpoint pens to stealth bombers, gloves to guided missiles. After more than 20 years with Dallas-based City Electric Supply (CES), Regional Manager Pascal Vannienwenhove recognizes business potential when he sees it. While most businesspeople steer as clear of government as possible, Vannienwenhove saw opportunity: Other suppliers were winning government business that CES couldn't even bid because CES didn't have a GSA (General Services Administration) contract. Vannienwenhove told his management, "If you don't mind, I'm going to tackle this." CES leadership gave him the green light.

In 2016, CES's tiny GSA group, today a five-member

team, got busy applying for one of the coveted GSA contracts. In hindsight, Vannienwenhove thinks that he might not have pursued the GSA number had he known it would take 18 months. "The vetting to get the federal GSA number was involved. It was difficult to achieve," he said, understating the challenge.

It might not have taken quite that long had CES concluded its quest with a materials-only contract, its original goal. But the GSA asked CES to serve as a turnkey supplier, providing materials and also the labor to complete projects. Vannienwenhove conjectures that the GSA already had an ample coterie of materials suppliers. Also, doesn't every purchaser want to streamline its supply chain and reduce paperwork? "The GSA wants to deal with one—and only one—purchase order on a job," reported Vannienwenhove.

Vannienwenhove recognizes the unique nature of his company's relationship with the federal government. "I don't know of any other electrical wholesaler that is doing this, supplying both materials and labor to government agencies," he said.

### Gates Open

Since securing its GSA number nearly two years ago, CES has won multiple military contracts (some for materials only, some for turnkey projects that CES owns) while employing its own electrical contractor customers as subs to execute the projects, further strengthening key contractor relationships.

"We've sold the U.S. military everything from gloves to motor controls with very intricate parts and pieces.

### INDUSTRY INFO

**NAED's Market Data Program provides distributor members with market share reports by customer segment and product category.**

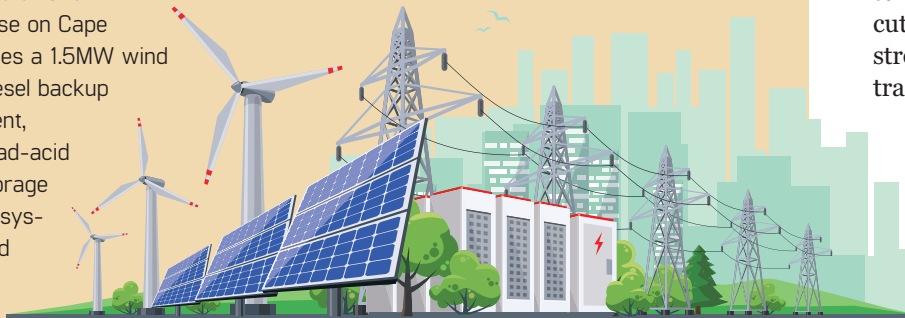
[LEARNMORE.naed.org/market-data](http://LEARNMORE.naed.org/market-data)

## ENERGY SECURITY

"The Department of Defense is responsible for providing the military forces needed to deter war and protect the security of our country." This is the official mission statement of the DOD. Accomplishing this mission requires an enormous amount of energy: 707.9 trillion BTUs in FY2017, costing \$11.9 billion, according to the 2019 *Department of Defense Energy Management: Background and Issues for Congress* report.

Given the nation's aging grid, terrorist threats to the grid, and more weather-related disasters, every branch of the military has implemented initiatives to reduce energy consumption and secure a reliable supply; for example:

- At Edwards Air Force Base near Los Angeles, 368 military family homes are rooftop solar equipped.
- Navy destroyers run on gas-electric hybrid engines, reducing the number of dangerous refueling stops.
- As long ago as 2009, Marines in Afghanistan were carrying electricity-generating backpacks and solar panels to power batteries for communications, GPS, and night-vision goggles.
- The Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, and National Guard all operate microgrids, 95% of which incorporate solar, according to Microgrid Media.
- The Marine Corps Air Station Miramar microgrid in San Diego includes 1.3MW of solar PV, 3.2MW of landfill gas, a 6.45MW diesel and natural gas plant, and EV charging.
- The microgrid at Otis Air National Guard Base on Cape Cod (Mass.) includes a 1.5MW wind turbine; 1.6MW diesel backup generator; intelligent, 1.6MW/1.2MWh lead-acid battery energy storage and management system; and microgrid controller. —J.N.



We've done a lot of work with the Air Force, often larger-scale jobs. We do a good bit of work with the Marines, too, usually small stuff," explained Vannienwenhove.

Safety gloves are typically considered a small item, but an order for a thousand pairs of gloves headed to Afghanistan is no small deal. CES also sold the Army Corps of Engineers panelboards for Afghanistan operations. Vannienwenhove described another materials-only sale for close to \$500,000 worth of gear for a dam project to the Bureau of Reclamation in the U.S. Department of the Interior: "The Bureau of Reclamation works with the military and other agencies too," he noted. "The agency told us that they had been looking for two years for someone to do the job. There are not many supply houses

that have the ability to price three different gear lines."

In collaboration with one of its contractor customers, CES supplied PLCs to the Air Force for an arsenal in Alabama. "They required the PLCs for their assembly lines. They never tell us the specifics of their projects. We talked with one of our better electrical contractors [and] asked them to give us a price so we could do a turnkey project. We supplied the necessary parts, and the electricians did the programming," he explained.

Some of the government personnel who reach out to CES for pricing aren't well versed in electrical products. According to Vannienwenhove, "We get a list of articles and see that some of the things they're asking for don't really go together. So we call them and ask questions.

Then they ask us, 'What would you recommend?' Or they ask us to talk with the engineer on the project to clarify what's needed. We offer our recommendations and explain the reasons why. Usually, they send out a new bid list with the products that we recommended."

One request from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers expanded the company's already deep well of product knowledge. "After the hurricane in Puerto Rico, the Corps needed some pole line hardware. It was a little out of our wheelhouse, but we did the research and sold them the special crimps that they needed for the overhead wires. We also sold them a product I'd never seen before—a foam product that comes in two 1-gallon buckets. You mix them together for 30 seconds and pour the material at



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the base of a telephone pole. The foam swells up and dries within 90 seconds. Five minutes later, a technician can climb the pole and start pulling wire,” Vannienwenhove explained.

The Marines, Coast Guard, and Army (plus the Smithsonian, NASA, and other agencies) seek CES expertise on lighting retrofit and upgrade projects. “LED purchases have really increased. They are looking to save on electricity. It’s a huge step for some of them because a lot of the fixtures are obsolete,” Vannienwenhove said.

The military’s energy-saving goals extend beyond LEDs, as Vannienwenhove explained: “We’re seeing more products to save electricity and

more requests and more sales: programmable timers for light harvesting, receptacles with power sensors so there’s no ghost energy, motion sensors, etc. We’ve received requests for parking lot lighting with controls that cut the light by 50% during the hours when no one should be there. They have cameras that work in lower light for security guards, so they don’t need to light up the parking lot like a ball field.”

One bright light that’s highly desirable, though, is solar energy. “We’ve had some requests for solar in the past, but we weren’t able to respond. Our renewables department has grown dramatically since it was set

up a year and a half ago. The company recently turned renewables into a company-wide, nationwide offering. Now we can respond to GSA and military requests for renewable energy,” said Vannienwenhove.

CES anticipates a sizeable boost in renewable energy sales since the Department of Defense is the nation’s largest consumer of energy and one of the main drivers of microgrid development in the world. ■

*Niehaus, LEED GA, is an instructional designer and writer and the president and founder of Communication by Design (communicationbydesign.net). Reach her at Jan@CommunicationByDesign.net.*



### Contractor’s Thoughts

by Irwin Rapoport



## BASE RELATIONS

**Made in USA products are a must for contractors working at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois.**

**PYRAMID ELECTRICAL** Contractors in Fairview Heights, Ill., has been installing electrical systems for the administrative buildings and other structures at Scott Air Force Base in St. Clair County, Ill., since the late 1980s.

“We rarely get anything handed to us,” said Mike Kemper, project manager and partner. “It’s all very competitive.” Among the challenges of working at the base, he noted, are access and the time required for military authorities to react to job-related issues. “It can take quite some time to work through the process,” said Kemper.

A key sourcing requirement since approximately 2017 is that all products used must be manufactured in the United States, which can create longer lead times

and, in many cases, are more expensive. “When you bid on a project, you need to take that into account and include the costs because you will not be compensated by the government if you don’t,” said Kemper. “Lead times could be two to four weeks.”

The federal government recognizes the cost of using domestically manufactured parts, and save for certain projects where some manufacturers are specified, various manufacturers can be used as long as they meet specifications for military structures. “It’s all about competition and being fair to everybody,” said Kemper. “But they also want us to install parts that perform and will last.”

Three years ago Pyramid completed a \$14 million contract to install a state-of-the-

art system for a defense information project. “The Air Force provided us with the space we needed to do our work efficiently and to store our materials on-site,” said Kemper.

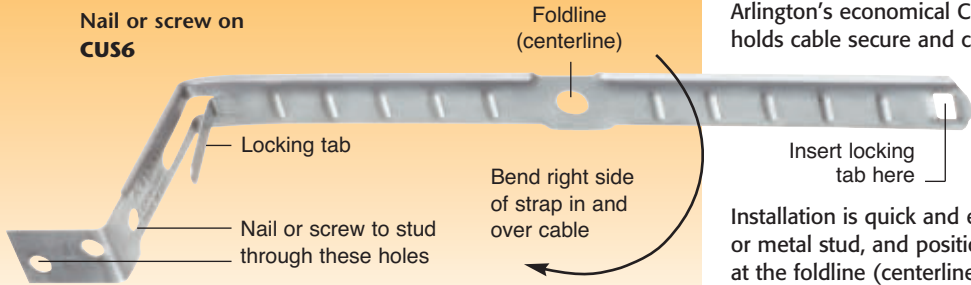
Electrical distributors, noted Kemper, could stock more material made in the United States. “Sometimes it’s a problem for us,” he said. “Some of them are more equipped with the material we need so we can get it sooner. They know better than we do which parts are manufactured at home. We don’t typically order everything up front so it’s helpful when distributors plan accordingly.” ■

*Rapoport is a Montreal-based freelance writer. He can be reached at rapoport.irwin@gmail.com.*

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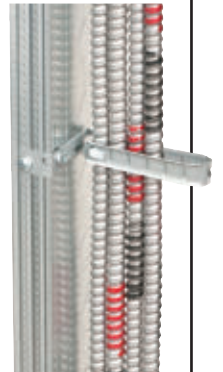
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LPCG50S	LPCG50SS	1/2"	.200 to .485
LPCG507S	LPCG507SS	1/2"	.385 to .600
LPCG753S*	LPCG753SS*	3/4"	.100 to .360
LPCG754S	LPCG754SS	3/4"	.200 to .485
LPCG757S	LPCG757SS	3/4"	Grommet A .385 to .600 Grommet B .600 to .750

\* UL listing not applicable for cords under .200" dia.  
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# DATA DISASTER

**Due diligence helps ensure that in the event of ransomware, the insurance company is going to pay.**

*by Carolyn Heinze*

**I**T USED TO BE THAT THE BIG QUESTION FOLLOWING A RANSOMWARE attack was whether to pay or not to pay. If the company had solid backups and could restore the data that hackers had encrypted, it wasn't necessary to shell out for the decryption key. But these days attackers are more sophisticated, requiring businesses to act on a number of different levels to protect themselves.

"There are many, many different versions of ransomware, and at this point, it is no longer about just trying to prevent it," said Will Foret, president of the IT services firm Spot Migration, adding that the latest versions of ransomware

actually use the operating system (OS) against itself. Instead of traditional malware, malicious parties apply fileless malware to launch an attack. "[The OS uses] its own commands to encrypt its own files," he explained.

For this reason, Foret urges organizations to implement advanced endpoint protection (AEP), which protects systems from a number of different threats, including fileless exploits. Using AI, AEP can apply either machine learning or deep learning. "Deep learning is next-generation AI and seems to be the most effective," Foret said.

Another development is how ransomware attackers are treating data, according to Charles Henson, managing partner at Nashville Computer, also an IT services firm. Attackers not only encrypt an organization's data, but also can identify data of value and hold onto it, threatening to make it public if the ransom isn't paid. "They're using ransomware today as blackmail, even if you have good backups in place," he said.

## Avoiding Victimhood

To protect against attacks, Henson urges companies to invest in an enterprise-level firewall featuring data loss protection. "It looks for data that's leaving the network, so if a hacker gains access to the company's computers, any sort of data that would be [stolen] for financial gain would be stripped from leaving the network at the firewall level," he explained.

While backups are a good weapon against ransomware, Foret pointed out that today's exploits also attack backup systems. To counter this, he recommends that organizations have a business continuity and disaster recovery plan in place and that backups should be on a different OS from the company's standard OS because "that exploit is going to be on that OS across the board," he

said. Foret added that backups should be regularly monitored for data volume and to ensure that they have not been manipulated or changed outright. "In one case, we had a company that was hacked. For nine months the hackers were in the system and had actually changed the backups to only back up a drive or a directory," he recounted. "The backups were 'successful,' but the amount of data was nothing." This confirmed that when the ransomware was launched, the organization would have to pay for their data to be unencrypted since their backups were of no use.

### More Preventative Measures

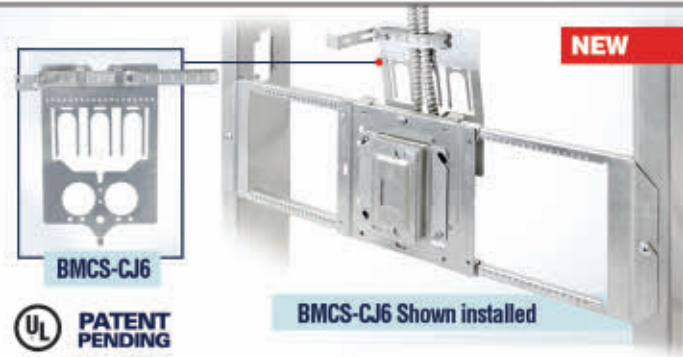
Wiseway Supply, Florence, Ky., has implemented PhishingBox, a cybersecurity system that tests for vulnerabilities and provides training on how to avoid falling victim to attacks. President John Cain noted that a number of years ago, the organization moved its IT operations to the cloud, which adds another layer of security. "It's the business they're in; that's their core competency, and they're better at it than we are," he said.

Cain also believes it's wise to invest in cyber liability insurance. "I used to think that nobody would be interested in my data; I just sell electrical supplies," he said. "But they're interested in shutting me down for ransom, and once I realized that, I couldn't get insurance quick enough." He noted that while insurance can't prevent or even protect against an attack, it can serve to make an organization's recovery a little smoother, and it is still relatively inexpensive for what it offers.

Henson noted that in the event of a ransomware attack, the infected machine should be unplugged from the network, but not shut off—an action that could put the company at odds with the insurer. "A lot of times the insurance companies want to know what happened, and if you just go and turn the computer off they can't do their forensics on it," he said. The steps to follow during an attack should be determined well ahead of time, and cyber liability insurance policy holders need to abide by their contract stipulations.

While the right technology and processes contribute to fighting ransomware, user education remains the most powerful method of prevention. "The No. 1 thing that [businesses] need to do is educate their employees on what they should not be clicking on and what they should not be responding to," Henson said. "AEP and breach detection software are great in stopping some of it, but it doesn't stop 100% of it. IT pros can do everything in their power [to try to stop it], but if users make a mistake, then they can click on an infection." ■

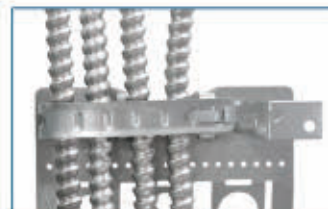
*Heinze is a freelance writer and editor. She can be reached at [carolynheinze@free.fr](mailto:carolynheinze@free.fr).*



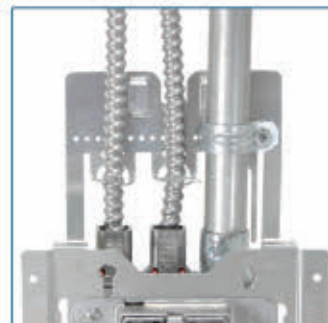
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SELLING

/ SALES SPOTLIGHT

# INFORMATION OF VALUE

*by Kara Bowlin*

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**S**ELLING ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES isn't easy. Salespeople are competing against not only the electrical distributor down the road, but also the ubiquitous e-commerce giants. Margins are slim, demands are many, and the rise of technology has changed acceptable work hours from 9 to 5 to 24/7. Oh, and most electrical distributors offer similar—if not the exact same—products as their competitors.

To combat this, distributors must add value. But the ways to add value vary from distributor to distributor and even from salesperson to salesperson. Unsurprisingly, “value” is a term that generates strong opinions from sales experts and end-users alike.

**Defining Value**

Eric Gagnon, director at the Business Marketing Institute, understands the importance of selling value to a customer. “Nobody ever wants the drill. They want the hole that the drill delivers. That’s the old cliché,” he said. “Salespeople have to focus on a solution that’s delivered and help customers understand the value. Salespeople have to lead customers on a path of discovery to find the value—and they have to articulate it.”

Gagnon suggests that salespeople work with the client to get clear on what the customer is trying to solve.

Dan Williams, vice president of operations with Dallas-based City Electric Supply, oversees the company’s southwest division from Phoenix. He noted that all distributors have access to very similar products with a similar cost scale. “I wouldn’t say that any distributor has more of an advantage on cost on an item than another distributor does,” he said. “So the only thing distributors can do to differentiate themselves from one another is the service that they provide. Value-added services are what we can bring to the table that another distributor doesn’t.”

Williams agreed with Gagnon that the first step to providing value is to understand what is actually valuable to each customer. “We tell our salespeople to listen to the customer and to find out what their needs are: when they need

the product, how they want the product to be delivered, etc.,” he explained.

Williams recommended that salespeople should quickly adapt to the needs of their customers. “We’re not very red tape oriented,” he explained. “If a customer needs a late-night or early-morning delivery, we can accommodate that. A lot of our competitors are very rigid with their delivery schedules. That’s an example of how our company can provide value and service to a customer. We’re able to jump through hoops to get the job done.”

Gagnon mentioned that many distributors also offer services like preassembly, prepackaging, and on-site services that may save time or money for a contractor purchasing the product. He recommends that salespeople ask the right questions to get customers to articulate their needs. “The customer will start to justify the value logically,” he explained. “They’ll realize that it saves time and money and the evidence of the value will shift from soft to a hard value and the customer will justify the value themselves.”

Gagnon added that the value offered to a customer must be enough to justify a change. “So if they’re buying product X today and you’re trying to shift them to product Y, is there enough value difference? That’s going to be a game in the eye of the customer—if there is enough value for them to make that change,” he said.

**Selling Expertise**

Williams pointed to a distributor salesperson’s knowledge and subject expertise as a valuable asset, especially when compared with faceless, e-commerce entities.

“It’s up to us to know the products that we sell, listen to the needs of our customers, and then match them up with what works best for them,” he said. “And we work in conjunction with our manufacturer, agents, and direct manufacturer or salespeople to make that happen.”

Williams noted that his salespeople can have confidence in what they are selling, and therefore provide a reason for customers to trust his com-



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**REP ROUNDUP**



■ **Fruen’s Sales** now reps Ronk Electrical’s products in the northern midwest market, making it the fourth agency to rep Ronk in the midwest and south-central U.S. market.

■ **Lighting Dynamics** now reps Hubbell Lighting in the Columbus and central Ohio markets.

■ **Encore Wire** has merged its Texas-based rep agencies, **McCreary Sales** and **SMTM**. McCreary Sales now includes east and central Texas in addition to north and west Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma; the employees of SMTM have transitioned to McCreary Sales.

pany. “When something goes wrong, the first person that the customer will go to is the distributor,” he explained. “We have to tackle the problem that comes up if we sell inferior product, so our goal is to sell quality products all the time.”

Training and learning opportunities also help a distributor salesperson become a more valuable partner to an end-user. City Electric, for example, offers its salespeople frequent training to be comfortable with the products. “We do at least quarterly training with our sales staff, and then we also have our manufacturers’ agents come into our branches on a regular basis to do

product demonstrations, show and tells, and things like that,” Williams said. “Then we’ll take it one step further to do customer sales calls with our agent partners and manufacturers to talk about the products.”

While expertise plays a large role in selling value, it is just one aspect of the importance of a human touch in selling. “This is a relationship business and it always will be,” continued Williams. “Even though there is business shifting to online purchasing, there always needs to be personal interaction. That’s what makes the wheels go round. We build confidence and relationships with our customers.”

Gagnon agreed that the human connection offers real value. “Nobody wants to make a mistake on their own,” he said. “They want guidance and support to solve the problem. That customer service piece has a huge amount of value.”

By listening to their customer, providing knowledge and guidance to find a solution, and getting the job done, distributor salespeople can prove their value in the supply chain and increase sales. ■

*Bowlin is a St. Louis-based freelance writer and publicist. She can be reached at karabowlin@gmail.com.*

SELLING / ON THE BOOKSHELF

## DARE TO LEAD

**THE ELECTRICAL DISTRIBUTION** industry is faced with seemingly intractable challenges and an insatiable demand for innovation. In that context, how does one cultivate braver, more daring leaders and, more importantly, embed the value of courage in a company’s culture?

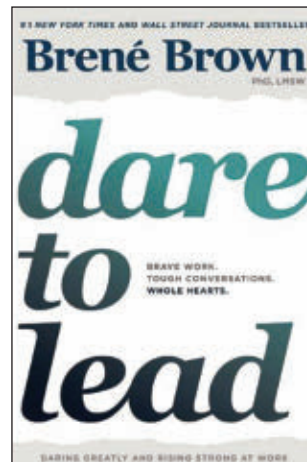
In *Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts.*, Brené Brown provides three key lessons to help inspire courageous, exemplary leaders:

**1. Courage and vulnerability always go together.** Even the toughest of leaders admit that acts of courage are always accompanied by the feeling of vulnerability. The

truth is, whenever we choose courage, we also choose vulnerability.

**2. Define what “done” means.** As Brown writes, “Daring leaders take the time to explain why, tie tasks to priorities and the overall mission, and offer color and context when making a request. Clear is kind. Unclear is unkind.”

**3. Connect with your team.** Brown writes that care and connection are absolute requirements for wholehearted, productive relationships. As she explains, having the courage to build authentic connections with team members encourages them to bring their whole selves to work. That means exercising



empathy when someone on the team admits they are struggling, despite the discomfort of having vulnerable conversations.

But the book isn’t just about leadership in organizations; it is also about being a leader in life and showing up, day after day,

for yourself. Notes Brown, “Courage is contagious. To scale daring leadership and build courage in teams and organizations, we must cultivate a culture in which brave work, tough conversations, and whole hearts are the expectation.”

In *Dare to Lead*, Brown has created an absorbingly actionable handbook on creating an environment for better work and a more fulfilled workforce. ■

*Dan Nitowsky has 25-plus years of industry experience, with leadership positions in both the distribution and manufacturing sectors. He also served on the Board of Directors for NAED and the Electrical League of Ohio. Reach him at dnitowsky@hotmail.com.*



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**ENHANCED  
CONTENT**



## WINNING WAYS

A look into the challenges, key takeaways, and results of a 2019 Best of the Best winning entry.

by Carol Katarsky

**C**RESCENT ELECTRIC SUPPLY, East Dubuque, Ill., needed a marketing campaign to promote not only solar products from its key vendors, but also its own value-added solutions related to those products in a specific geographic area. Crescent decided on an integrated campaign, using both print and digital tactics to reach out to customers in the company's Salt Lake City district.

### The Task

Crescent's campaign needed to reach both current and prospective customers in the region and provide attention-grabbing, informative content on its line of solar products and related services. The company opted for a multichannel campaign that allowed multiple touch points and methods of connecting with the audience.

"Our goal for our solar campaign was to create general brand awareness, as well as grow and expand our business in the solar market," said Debra McCashin, director of energy solutions. "Our biggest challenge was measuring results, due to the length of the sales cycle."

The marketing team decided on a six-week campaign to promote specifically chosen solar products and related value-added services. Print and digital options were used to in-

crease the level of communication, stay fresh in customers' (and prospective customers') minds, and provide messaging consistency. Printed pieces within the campaign were mailed on Mondays and followed by relevant emails sent every Thursday to a targeted list, and extra postcards were created for account managers to leave behind at their customer visits.

### Why It Worked

"The most important part of this campaign was making sure we had the right content in place to grab our audience's attention," McCashin said. "Simplicity and consistency were key components that made this campaign successful. Our messaging was simple yet grabbed the audience's attention."

She added that integrated promotional campaigns (IPCs) are successful when companies both have chosen the right tactics and have buy-in from the local management team. "One without the other will not result in a successful campaign," she added.

The company hoped to gain market awareness within its customer base and establish a brand name and footprint. The marketing team believes the two-prong campaign was successful in achieving that goal. Crescent got its message out to targeted regional customers and received several inquiries. That led to multiple new

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2019 WINNING ENTRIES

## Integrated Promotional Campaign

Five companies took home an award in 2019 for their Integrated Promotional Campaigns—a category that awards efforts utilizing three to eight complementary components used to promote the same product or service using a unified, consistent theme or creative execution.



Ledalite by Signify



Crescent Electric Supply



Werner Electric-Minnesota



Summit Electric Supply



Hubbell Wiring Device-Kellems

B2B for Signify North America, which also took home an award for an IPC effort. “B2B marketing is notoriously stale and heavy on technical information. Have fun, be unique, and tell a story. We are communicating with people, not occupations.”

Singer added that “High-quality, sleek photography and a memorable message can help your [product] stand out in the crowd. Integration is the keyword here. Campaigns should mimic a wagon wheel with spokes reaching out through various touch points, delivering a central message in different ways to a very specific target. And don’t thumb your nose at direct mail. Statistics show it is still one of the best ways to get a product in front of your customer directly with a solid ROI.

“Find more ways to interface with your target’s community,” she continued. “Is your customer likely to belong to a certain industry association? What events is the association hosting? Does it

have a newsletter or website that allows some banner ads? Numerous smaller activities will create more of an impact on a micro-target group.” ■

*Katarsky is a freelance business writer based in Philadelphia. She can be reached at [ckatarsky@gmail.com](mailto:ckatarsky@gmail.com).*

accounts being added to the company’s Salt Lake City portfolio. The new accounts generated multiple opportunities for Crescent to potentially gain from and also created partnerships that are still in place today. This campaign resulted in more than \$1 million of new solar business in the district.

### A Supplier’s Approach: Signify North America

“My team and I have found that the most effective IPCs are a delicious concoction of micro-targeting activities with strong visuals and creative, attention-grabbing messaging,” said Cathleen Singer, marcom manager—

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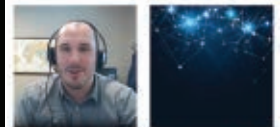
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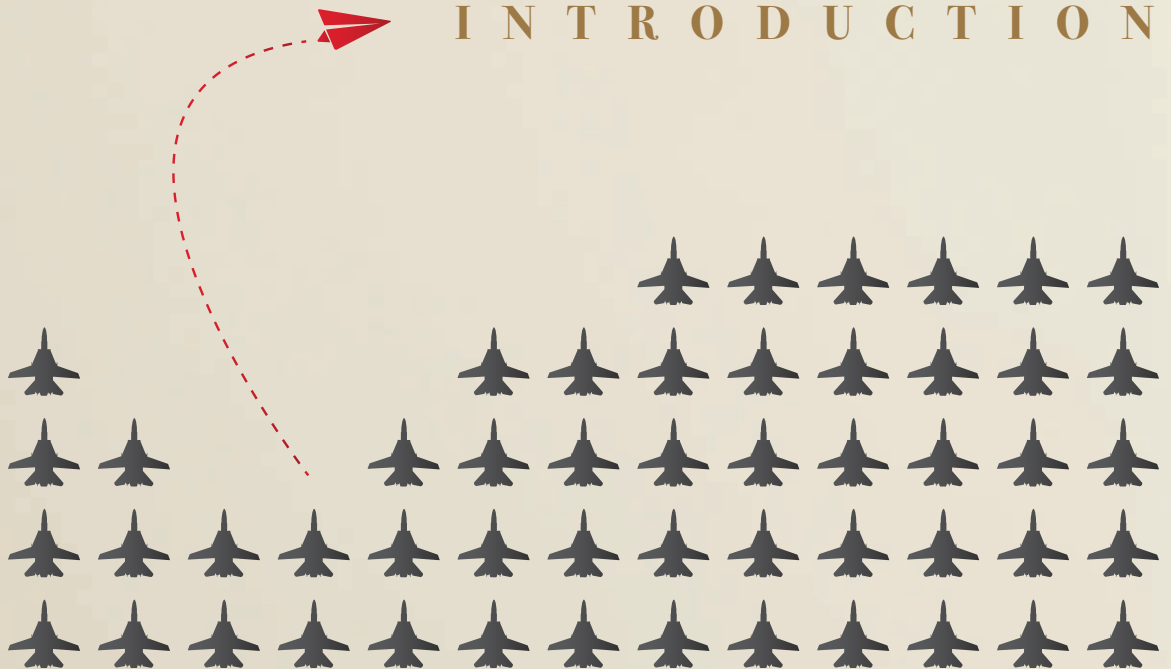
How Do You  
**DEFINE**  
**LEADERSHIP**  
In The  
**INDUSTRY?**



Volume IX

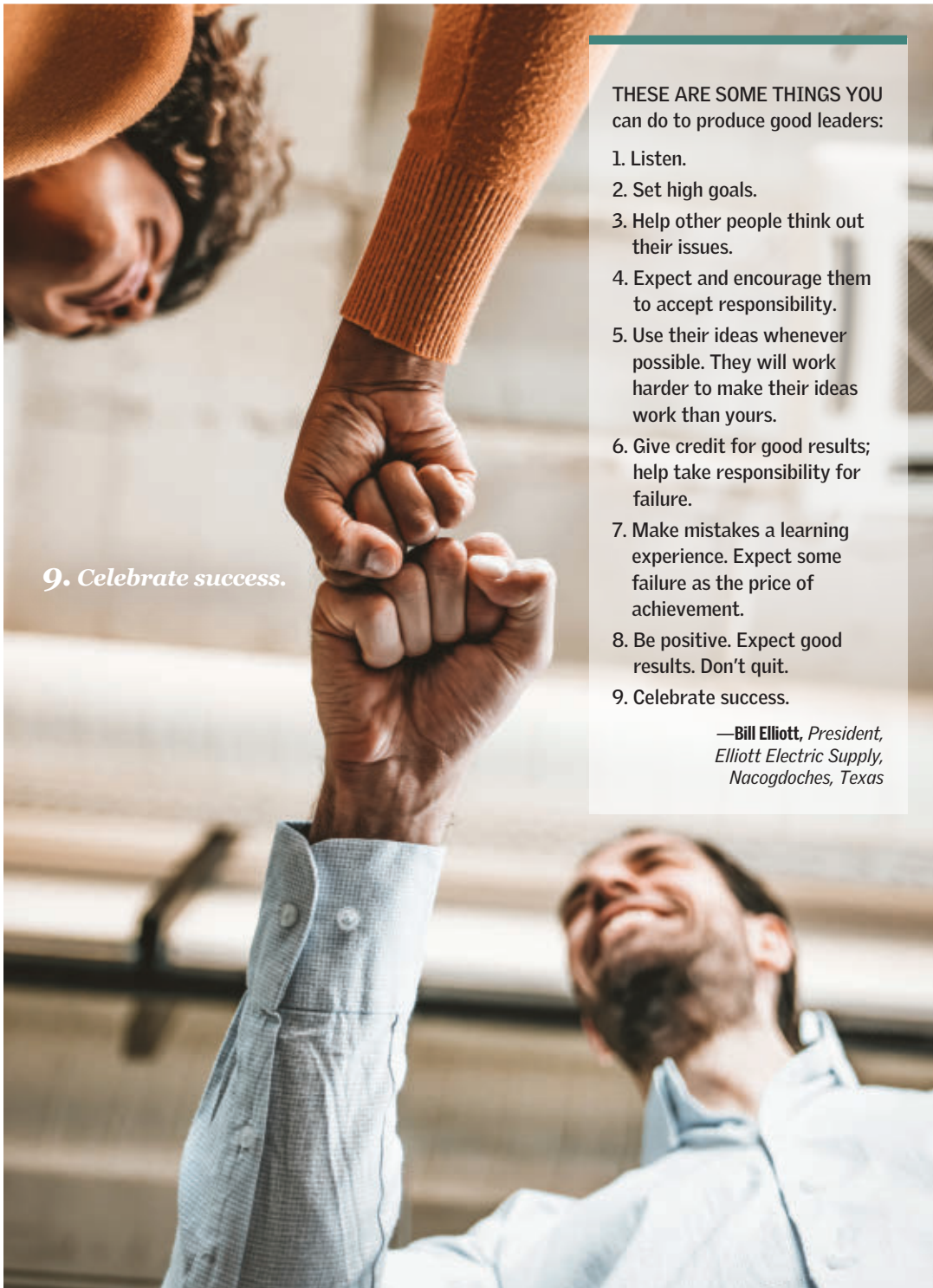


## I N T R O D U C T I O N



GROWTH IN THE INDUSTRY, PERSONALLY AS WELL AS professionally, happens when people turn to their peers for guidance—and that is the idea behind *tED*'s Electrical Distribution Handbook series. The first eight volumes of the Electrical Distribution Handbook were filled with articles and advice authored by professionals from across the industry. This month, the tradition continues with Volume IX: *How Do You Define Leadership in the Industry?*

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*9. Celebrate success.*

THESE ARE SOME THINGS YOU can do to produce good leaders:

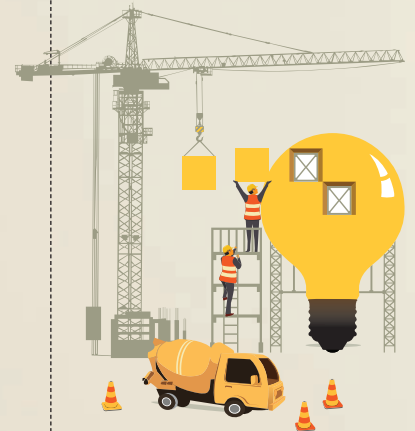
1. Listen.
2. Set high goals.
3. Help other people think out their issues.
4. Expect and encourage them to accept responsibility.
5. Use their ideas whenever possible. They will work harder to make their ideas work than yours.
6. Give credit for good results; help take responsibility for failure.
7. Make mistakes a learning experience. Expect some failure as the price of achievement.
8. Be positive. Expect good results. Don't quit.
9. Celebrate success.

—Bill Elliott, *President, Elliott Electric Supply, Nacogdoches, Texas*



**T** rue leadership is like being a conductor of an orchestra. The conductor's primary objectives are to set the tempo, execute planned movements, maintain unity, listen critically, respond to variations, and help everyone get to the end of the piece together. The conductor is not expected to be a master of all the instruments, nor is he or she expected to play anything. The performers trust the conductor because of his or her experience and because they know, in that position, the conductor must live and breathe for the orchestra, endeavoring to get the most out of them. — **CORY MORRIS**, Automation Manager, Graybar Canada, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia

## INSPIRE



**Leadership is about inspiring, mentoring, and assisting others to achieve more than they ever imagined was possible.**

— **Tammy Miller**, CEO, Border States Electric, Fargo, N.D.



→ LEADERSHIP IS the ability to motivate positive change and move a team toward accomplishing success in their goals. Effective leadership encompasses quick and rational decision-making, along with knowing your team members'

greatest strengths. To lead, you have to realize what characteristics produce the most success in others and be willing to place people where those traits can thrive.

Facilitating growth and achievement in others is

essential for effective leadership. The best way to create success and fulfillment in your own career is through developing and empowering your team.

— **Tyler Bitz**, Operations Supervisor, Border States Electric, Minot, N.D.



“They don’t rest on their laurels, but constantly look for the next challenge, the next opportunity to improve.”

**G**reat leaders possess a strong work ethic, have a passion for the role, and lead by example. They don’t rest on their laurels, but constantly look for the next challenge, the next opportunity to improve. They lack arrogance, are focused on their customers and their teams, are good listeners, and are willing to change course if needed.

Great leaders also stay true to their vision

and persevere. They understand that following the herd is not a strategy. They act in an ethical manner and inspire trust and confidence.

Finally, great leaders don’t stagnate. They never stop learning. They are forward-looking and adaptable. They see and anticipate changes and seek to understand them and strive to meet the challenges the future brings. —**DESIREE GRACE**, Director of Channel Accounts and Programs, Panduit, Moline, Ill.

**CLEAR | VISION**

Leadership comes down to vision and the ability to communicate that vision to a diverse team. This clear and concise communication is the key to effective leadership. It’s much easier to lead a team of people who feel involved in something larger than their own individual jobs and are united by a common goal well described by their team leader. Leadership should also bring validation on an individual and team level to foster and promote growth. —**Mark Borreggine**, Data and Communications Specialist, Cooper Electric, Syracuse, N.Y.



**LEADERS SHOULD HAVE A** well-defined goal established for their organizations, their teams, and themselves, and they should communicate this goal clearly and often. That said, leaders should always keep in mind that actions speak louder than words.

In addition to the typical "health" goals of an organization—including finances, efficiency, etc.—leaders should make sure the culture is in check. Leaders should be coaches—encouraging and trusting their team to perform independently and efficiently. Creating a workplace where people feel valued and fulfilled will in turn make employees more motivated and better performers.

Additionally, leaders should lead by example and keep their emotions in check, especially during times of adversity.

Last, I believe great leaders work to build the next set of leaders. They should not feel in competition with those around them, but as though they are building the strongest team possible. They should build their team, mentor each member of the team, advocate for them, and help them be successful.

—Stephanie Ellis, *Marketing Manager, Robroy Industries, Gilmer, Texas*



GUIDANCE



**Leadership is leading by example. Leaders should never ask someone to do something they wouldn't do themselves. Leadership is never being afraid to guide others to be as good as or better than you.**

—**Tiffany Coffie**, Utility Out/Inside Sales, Electric Supply of Tampa, Tampa, Fla.



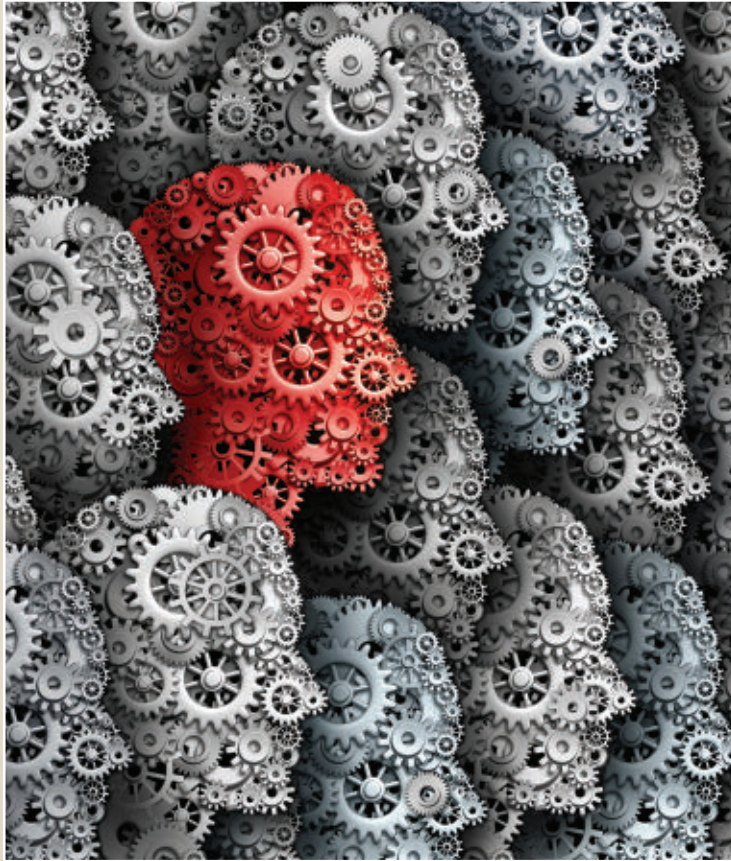
**W**e have benefited from a long-standing relationship with Steve McClatchy, a well-known author/consultant, and have incorporated his definition of leadership into our culture. Simply stated, leadership is improvement. That's it. If someone is involved in moving something forward and making things better, they are leaders. What makes this definition so compelling is that leadership can be found everywhere. We believe you don't need a title to lead. —**GEORGE VORWICK**, President and CEO, United Electric Supply, Wilmington, Del.

→ LEADERSHIP within electrical distribution means leading our industry to where it's going, while not forgetting from where we have come. Our business has a proud heritage, and the future is bright as everything from vehicles to

lawnmowers turns electric and requires our products and services to meet the demands. Our leaders will be asked to lead not only our industry, but also our culture as we decentralize and reduce our carbon footprint. Our leaders and

business will be faced with new challenges, and it's up to industry leaders to attract top talent to lead us into this brave new electric world. —**Nick Grimstad**, Area Sales Manager, Square D By Schneider Electric, Los Angeles





**L**eadership is the willingness to lead by example, support your employees/coworkers, and give exposure/credit to those who are excelling. If you are able to do these three things, you create a great work environment for everyone to thrive. Your employees/coworkers learn what is expected of them, know they have help, and are willing to share their new ideas to grow the company. —**PATRICIA LOGSDON**, *Distributor Sales Engineer, Siemens, Westminster, Calif.*

## SHADOW



**A leader is a person you will follow to a place you wouldn't go by yourself.**

—**Ryan Hogan**, *Channel Marketing Operations Leader/Electrical Distribution, Lutron, Coopersburg, Pa.*



→ I BELIEVE A good leader focuses on improving the organization. This requires someone to be strategic-minded and forward-thinking, someone who takes initiative and is flexible. I also believe that good leaders are invested

in the success of their teams (not themselves), are okay with being vulnerable, and see constructive feedback as an opportunity to grow. They are approachable while being calm and mindful in their response to chal-

lenges. They inspire people to bring their best selves to work and to be passionate about driving the organization forward. —**Lindsey Cropper**, *Manager, Talent Acquisition, United Electric Supply, New Castle, Del.*



Most importantly, they treated everyone with the same level of respect as they would the CEO, even if they were the CEO.

I have had the privilege of working with many leaders in my career and not one of them had the exact same set of characteristics. One commonality, though, was how they stayed grounded and promoted a culture others wanted to be a part of every day.

These leaders always remembered where they started and the people who helped them along the way. They were never too proud to

get their hands dirty, even if it meant working in the warehouse or on the shop floor they left behind years before. They were not above executing so-called “menial work” if it helped the

team get the job done. Most importantly, they treated everyone with the same level of respect as they would the CEO, even if they were the CEO. —**ANDREA DVORAN**, Senior Sales Rep—EPC, Eaton Crouse-Hinds, Houston

PATIENCE | PAYS

Dwight Eisenhower said it best: “You do not lead by hitting people over the head. Any damned fool can do that, but it’s called assault, not leadership. Leadership is persuasion, conciliation, education, and patience. It’s long, slow, tough work, but it’s the only type of leadership that I know.” —**Bill Durkee**, President, Walters Wholesale Electric, Signal Hill, Calif.





I WOULD DEFINE MY IDEA OF "leadership" in multiple ways, as we all have our own styles—and I need to have many styles, as each influences my teams differently. I have grown to have close working relationships with my team where we have trust and respect. I have taken the time to engage with my teams, establish goals, help them and point them in the right direction for training, and set the tone with each individual so they see I share the same passion to motivate them to achieve their personal goals. I believe that if I invest a great teamwork culture into each of my team members, we can achieve great things together and accomplish any obstacles together—and that we are truly better together.

I have a tremendous amount of respect for the leaders who have coached, mentored, and believed in me to become what I am today. They continue to inspire me each day to be better for my team and our business.

—Sarah Hargrave, Warehouse Manager, Border States Electric, Fargo, N.D.



## NETWORK



*As immediate past president of the Electrical Association of Philadelphia (EAP), I am honored to work with many leaders in the electrical industry in Philadelphia. Successful leaders give back, network, and create friendships despite competition.*

—**Brigid Falasca**, Senior OEM Sales Engineer, Eaton Electrical, Philadelphia



**E**mpathy, courage, and humility are the leadership qualities I value most. Vulnerability is also important, as it demonstrates to others you are open to new ideas and encourages creativity. Leadership is a journey. Today I am a better leader than yesterday, and tomorrow is another opportunity to learn, grow, and evolve. —**TAMMY LIVERS**, Senior Vice President of Key Accounts and Digital Marketing, Sonepar USA, Charleston, S.C.

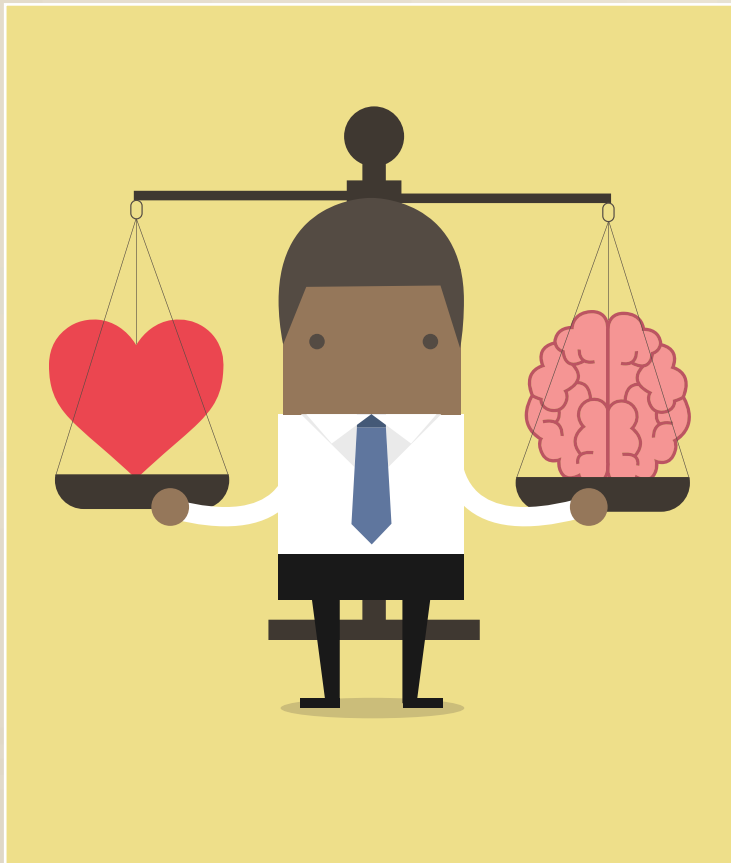
→ LEADERSHIP IS the desire and capability to bring people together with an overall goal and objective to which those people have the same desire to become an active contributor. Successful leaders enlist trust and respect while main-

taining approachability. They set an example with actions, proving words have strong merit.

Some leaders are born, while others develop—but the core remains the same: Great leaders know not only their worth, but also

the value of those who surround them and use those assets to build a successful team. Ethics, integrity, and values create the “vibe to attract the tribe.” —**Sarah Eastman**, Vice President, Marketing, EIKO, Shawnee, Kan.





**I** strive to learn from and emulate the best qualities I see in the leaders a couple steps ahead of me. They take on an attitude of servant leadership and demonstrate emotional intelligence, integrity, good judgment, strong listening skills, strategic vision, curiosity, and perseverance. These attributes, combined with a variety of skill sets to manage associates and other groups, drive the success of a company. —DEVON WAHL, Marketing Manager, Acuity Brands, Conyers, Ga.

## IMPACT



**Leadership is being able to have a positive impact on people and inspiring them to have positive impacts on others. Leadership is taking the time to really listen, being vulnerable, and building trust. It's staying humble, creating a culture of learning, and making one another better.**

—Melissa Bucher, District Sales Vice President, Eaton, Lenexa, Kan.

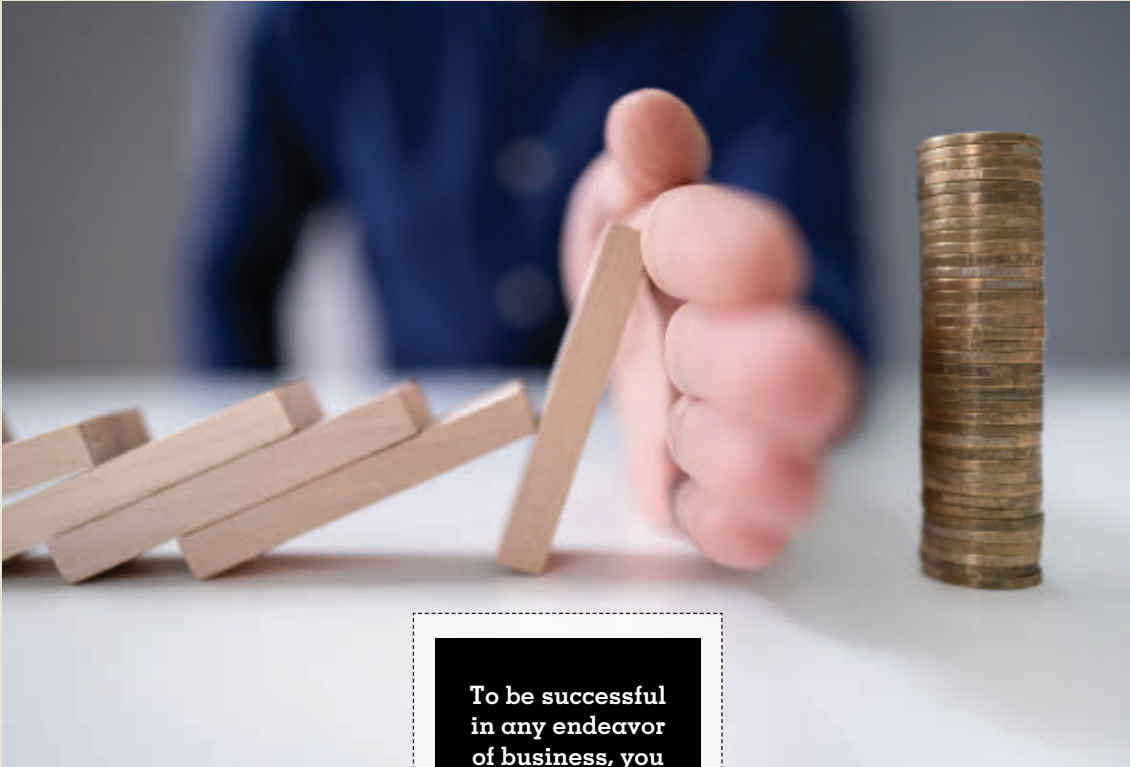


→ THE BEST LEADERS come from the humblest of origins. Great leaders are people who started small, worked their way up, earned the respect of their peers, and were leaders long before they were in management

roles. Even when they earn a leadership opportunity, there is a certain virtuosity to their craft.

A great leader is always trying to be a better leader by learning to be a better listener, better organizer, better

influencer, better negotiator, and, most importantly, by pushing the envelope on what the people around them can achieve. —Rock Kuchenmeister, General Manager, K/E Electric Supply, Mt. Clemens, Mich.



To be successful in any endeavor of business, you need to learn how to be led; then, and only then, can you lead.

**L**eadership is learning how to support individually or organizationally. It is adapting to get the most out of your team or organization and understanding that all employees have their own unique talents they bring to the business—and that you must learn how to build on those talents. Empathy and compassion play a large role in the success of being a leader as well. Laughter

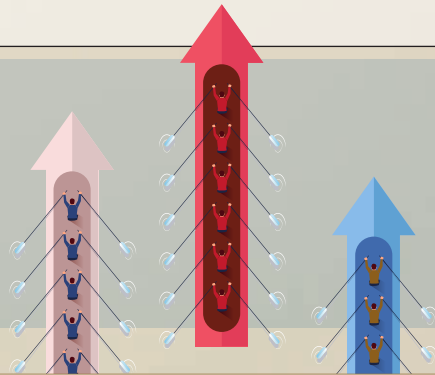
and sternness are a must, as they balance the flow of business. As a leader you must adopt a principle of “I know nothing”—because if you knew it all, you would not need those

whom you surrounded yourself with and their expertise. To be successful in any endeavor of business, you need to learn how to be led; then, and only then, can you lead. —**KITTY MILLS**, Branch Manager, Rexel USA, Casper, Wyo.

BUSINESS | COACH

I equate successful business leadership with great athletic coaching. A coach's job entails setting a game plan in an ever-changing environment and adjusting tactics to succeed based on that changing competitive and market landscape. Develop a plan, empower resources to execute, and be engaged to monitor for needed adjustments.

—**G. R. Schrottenboer**, CEO, NSi Industries, Huntersville, N.C.





I DEFINE LEADERSHIP AS THE ability to encourage and support growth and innovation within the industry and individuals. It is a desire to make an impact on a person or organization, not for credit or personal gain, but for the fulfillment of being a part of making something better. It's a balancing act of being a cheerleader, an advocate, and a critic. A leader is someone who inspires aspirations in others. The best leaders that I've encountered in my career have had the skill to lift me up and support me while also challenging me and pushing me to grow. They have made me want to work harder to continue to earn the confidence they have in me. If someone embodies those attributes, they leave a lasting impression on the people they encounter daily, the strength of their organization, and the betterment of the industry.

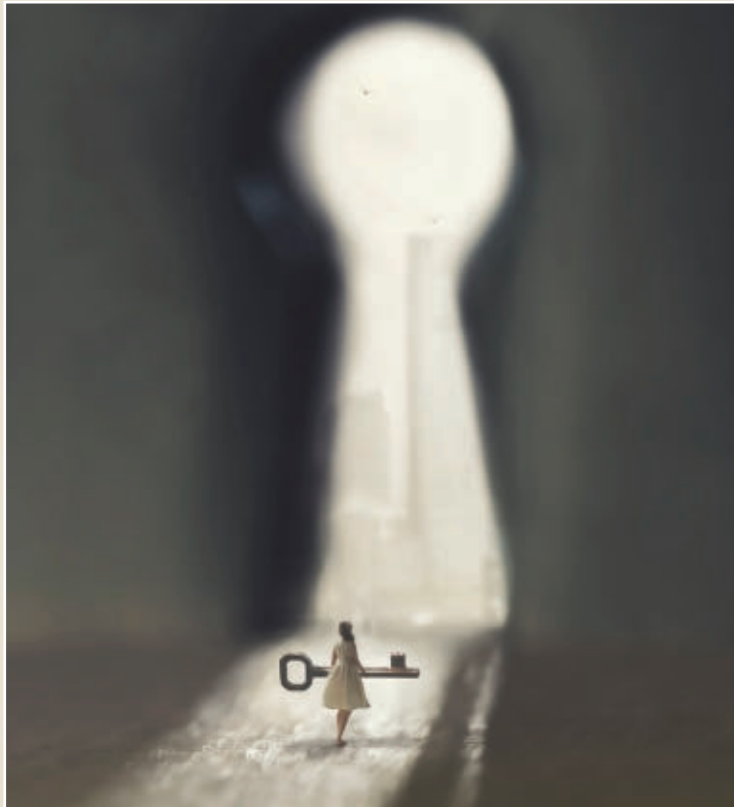
—Katie Moranville, *Manager, Customer Service, Graybar, Oklahoma City*

ASSIST



*To me leadership is a verb. It requires action. Great leaders help their employees discover potential that they did not know they had. Leading in this industry is about action. It's the ability to lead by example and remove any roadblocks that keep your team from succeeding.*

—**Jacob Boyd**, District Sales Manager, Eaton, Chicago



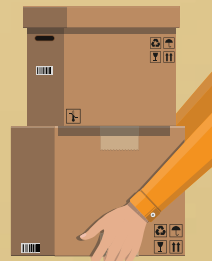
**L**eadership is having vision and purpose. It is leading by example, getting your hands dirty, and never taking credit for someone else's work. Good leaders are honest, have integrity and confidence, inspire others with their commitment and passion, are good communicators, and have excellent decision-making capabilities. They hold themselves accountable, they delegate and empower, and they inspire creativity and innovation. They are empathetic and demonstrate high levels of emotional intelligence and humility. —**BURT SCHRAGA**, Chairman, Bell Electrical Supply, Santa Clara, Calif.

→ TRUE LEADERSHIP is owning the responsibility and then getting it done through the people—the talent—that you can influence. Leaders evolve to not think of “me” but the “we.” They set a course and inspire others to

follow—or sometimes lead themselves—and they share the challenges as a collective. We have to hire, train, and develop people to be leaders regardless of their job titles. We have leaders who drive our delivery

trucks, stock our warehouses, serve our customers, and sell our products. Leadership is about excellence, ownership, and influence.

—**Janie Brown**, Training Manager, City Electric Supply, Dallas





**S**trong leaders foster an environment of employee empowerment. The best leaders inspire and allow their teams to take responsibility and accountability rather than forcing it upon them. Great leaders create a clear strategy and allow their employees to create and execute the tactics necessary to achieve the goals. —**KEN WALMA**, Vice President and General Manager, Business Segments and Customer Experience, Cooper Lighting Solutions, Peachtree City, Ga.

## PARTNERSHIP



*Great leaders have a clear vision, the ability to articulate it, and the ability to inspire others to rally behind them in pursuit of that vision. Great leaders are good partners with suppliers, customers, and employees and are inspiring yet down to earth, approachable, and willing to listen. Lastly, great leaders lead by example.*

—**KJ Van**, Coach & Mentor, KJ Company, Chicago



→ LEADERSHIP IS providing access for employees to have firsthand experiences that allow them to learn and develop, along with being the ultimate role model. I see the first accomplished via new projects or responsibilities that

may be outside someone's comfort zone. More strategically, it is asking the right questions that drive people to find answers that will bring them to a conclusion for themselves rather than telling them directly. The ultimate role model is

someone who leads by example. Characteristics like work ethic, accountability, and trustworthiness are the foundation of a great leader. —**Doug Knebelberger**, Vice President of Marketing, Light Efficient Design, Cary, Ill.



There are many important traits necessary to become a leader, but the most important are compassion and composure.

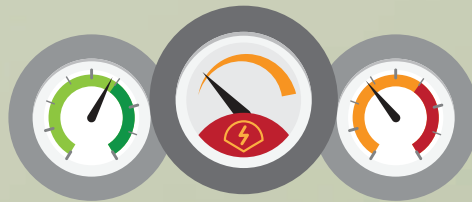
**L**eadership is not defined by a title. Becoming a leader has just as much to do with your treatment of others as it does your ambition and the effort you put forth. My grandfather always taught me that leaders need followers. Followers have to know that their leader is worthy. They need someone who will work alongside them and elevate them, who puts his or her fol-

lowers' personal needs before their practical needs, who treats them with the respect they deserve, and who they will follow because respect has been earned. There are many important traits necessary to become a leader,

but the most important are compassion and composure. —**SCOTT GERMERAAD**, Lighting & Design Sales Manager, Springfield Electric Supply, Springfield, Ill.

MAXIMUM | **EFFORT**

Leadership in the industry means to be constantly evolving while upholding customer service excellence within the electrical distribution industry. Leadership is an action maximized by the efforts of an entire organization as a whole, not by title or ranking within a company. —**Kayla Akin**, Project Manager, Border States Electric, Greeley, Colo.





**BEING A LEADER IN THIS** mature industry is different from even a few years ago. An important element of leadership is to recognize that longevity can sometimes cause complacency. Whether an individual or a company, we need to forego the "we've always done it that way" attitude to embrace innovation and new processes. We need to look at our work with a fresh perspective.

As a leader, listening is the most important part of the job. Without this skill, you can't understand customer challenges, develop the right solution, or work toward the expected outcome. But listening isn't just for external purposes. It's extremely important to listen internally. Our teams have the insight and expertise that allow us to create successful outcomes. A leader needs to rely on the input of others.

Before all of this, however, a good leader will have a vision and share it—throughout the chain. Clear convictions and a shared purpose are critical to success.

I'm enthusiastic about our future in the electrical industry, and I know the rest of the leaders at Schaedler Yesco are too.

—**Greg Schaedler**, Vice President, Schaedler Yesco Distribution, Harrisburg, Pa.



## ENCOURAGE



*Leadership is the ability to facilitate and encourage positive action and attitude via example. The greatest leaders I have witnessed in this industry are those who bring you up working beside them toward a common goal rather than under them. They excite you to collaborate and achieve success together.*

—**Rhianna Verstuyft**, Senior Sales Engineer, Eaton, City of Industry, Calif.



**L**eadership is looking at all options and, through due diligence, making the right choice—and not always the most convenient one. Making no choice is not an option. Not every choice leads to the right decision; a leader should take time to learn from his or her mistake and take immediate ownership of that choice. Humility allows you an opportunity to gain wisdom and is extremely important toward becoming a truly great leader.

—**MIKI NADEAU SR.**, Channel Manager, NA, nVent, Pawleys Island, S.C.

→ LEADERSHIP IS about accountability. We are faced as an industry with many challenges that are both within and out of our control. Being a leader is someone who steps up to the difficult situations and works as a

team to resolve it. In my experience, the most challenging situations are those where you have only three choices: ignore it, accept it, or work to change it. I have found that reacting to the latter will make you a better

leader and build stronger relationships that your customers can depend on.

—**Jennifer Johnson**, Senior Sales Engineer, Eaton, Boise, Idaho



# MONITORING THE FUTURE

The need for metering capabilities integrated in power distribution equipment is driving product innovation.

by Kara Bowlin

**H**UMANS HAVE SOUGHT TO harness and understand power since the beginning of time—and that basic desire remains with power metering and monitoring products. End-users seek to optimize power, cut costs, and avoid downtime as much as possible—and they are looking to information and data to help achieve those goals.

“End-users are challenged in minimizing unplanned downtime and disruptions in production, and the impact those disruptions have on a company’s bottom line,” explained Michael Watson, product application specialist for Fluke (fluke.com) “As a result, there is an increasing need to measure and monitor electrical power and energy; this includes consumption, generation, and quality. Users are trying to get control of their consumption and reduce it wherever possible, with some reducing their reliance on traditional utility power by having local power generation from solar and wind, which requires both metering and monitoring.”

Lyle Sprinkle, director of meters, relays, and IoT software solutions at Eaton (eaton.com), emphasized that metering is changing with the IIoT. “Digitization is driven by sensors collecting and analyzing more data. Metering is becoming another sensor for the IIoT that provides cus-

tomers with critical power monitoring and enables a better understanding of energy consumption. [With it] organizations can better manage their energy habits and have more reliable power operations, making it easier to comply with evolving energy codes and regulations.”

Watson noted that condition monitoring via tools, sensors, and software is gaining traction in the mar-

ketplace. “This includes monitoring via power, vibration, temperature, ultrasonic infrared thermography, oil analysis, and more.

“The falling costs of sensors is increasing the possibility of more comprehensive monitoring for some quantities,” he continued.

“Many of these systems integrate to the cloud and allow sensors to be added to create more complete IoT sensors. Accurate asset condition data remains a linchpin to successful IoT systems, even advanced systems that are integrated with AI and machine learning.”

Sprinkle agreed that customers are often looking for power monitoring and circuit loading and they want to understand their energy consumption and have the ability to report on those things. “In many cases, it is being driven by new regulations in the marketplace either around greenhouse

gases or energy usage. There is a variety of local, state, and national regulations coming to the marketplace that are driving a lot of the change in the industry.”

Watson believes that these monitoring products and software will continue to gain popularity in the next five to 10 years. “Furthermore,” he explained, “as condition monitoring for predictive maintenance becomes more widespread across industries, companies will work to integrate their data systems into a unified IIoT platform.” He added that power monitoring will see increased utilization as data-driven decision assistants. “Improved predictive maintenance models will enhance the value of power monitoring and other condition monitoring devices,” he said.

The IIoT has undoubtedly had a huge impact on metering and monitoring capabilities, and manufacturers continue to innovate to increase connection to provide more data.

“Data from the Fluke power monitor and other condition monitoring devices can be integrated into the cloud and IIoT systems via Fluke Connect and an enterprise asset management or computerized maintenance management system,” said Watson. “The number of connected devices is expected to be in the billions during this decade and IIoT systems are expected to become the mainstream in companies’ maintenance operations.”

Sprinkle pointed to a real-life example of how the IIoT solution has benefited one of Eaton’s own warehouses. “We encountered a day where we walked in on Monday morning and the equipment was not on. Nobody understood why the equipment was offline. But because we had it Internet enabled, it was feeding data back into the cloud software and we were able to go back in time to see that there were power anomalies from the external utility power network. Because the machine was reporting, it was easy for



*As condition monitoring for predictive maintenance becomes more widespread across industries, companies will work to integrate their data systems into a unified IIoT platform.*

—MICHAEL WATSON,  
Fluke

us to go back and access this information. We were able to tighten up some of our reporting and in the future these kinds of events won't affect our equipment and plant in the same way. We can potentially protect our own equipment and reduce risk to our ongoing operations."

### Distribution's Role

Sprinkle noted that electrical distributors play an important role in ensuring a facility has the communication infrastructure needed to tap into the IIoT's fullest potential.

"Planning for communications of metering data is critical for new con-

struction, not only connecting it, but also communicating and transmitting it," he said. "It's more complex to add communications to the electrical infrastructure of the building after the fact. Once the building is powered up, it's more costly and more difficult."

In addition to helping to lay the groundwork for their customers' success, Sprinkle recommends that distributors ensure they are up to date on the latest products and capabilities provided by global manufacturers.

Additionally, Watson recommends that distributor salespeople become effective partners in providing a solution by truly understanding end-user

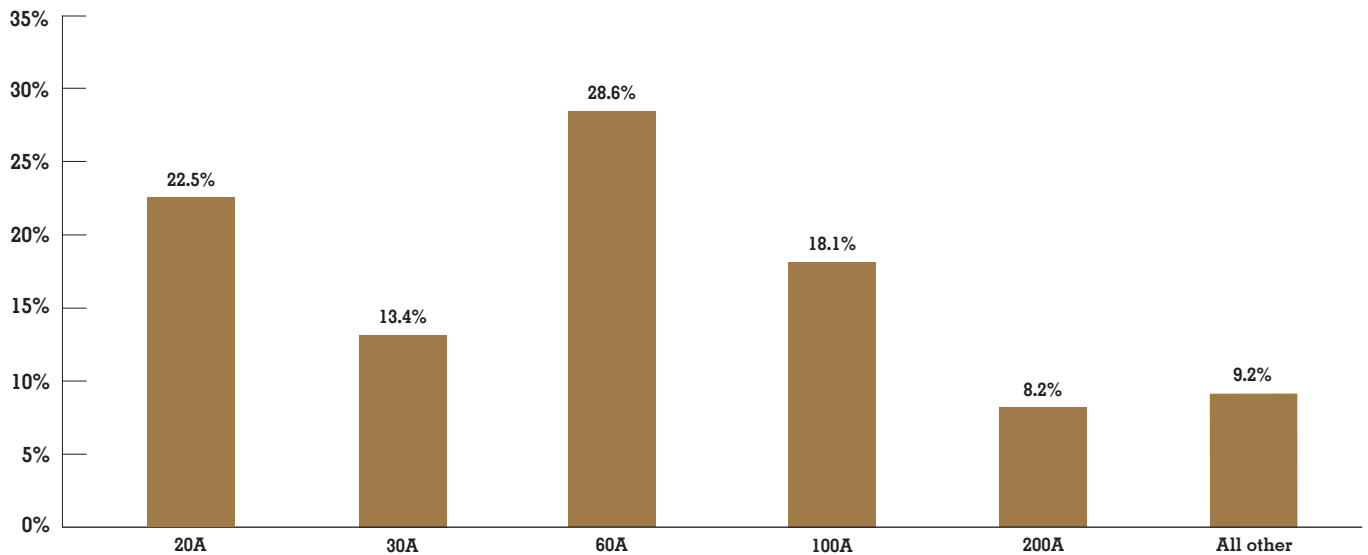
pain points and outcomes needed to improve their bottom lines.

"Power monitoring is a tool used in predictive maintenance and as part of a larger IIoT technology solution. Here's an analogy: The end-user does not just want to buy a shovel; he or she seeks a more complete outcome: digging a hole, planting a tree, and improving the environment. The distributor needs to understand the complete solution for the end-user, not just the product offering." ■

*Bowlin is a St. Louis-based freelance writer and publicist. She can be reached at karabowlin@gmail.com.*

## EXPLOSION-PROOF & HAZARDOUS LOCATION DEVICES BY AMPERAGE

12-MONTH DOLLAR SHARE ENDING DECEMBER 2019



## EXPLOSION-PROOF & HAZARDOUS LOCATION DEVICES—SHARE CHANGE BY AMPERAGE 12-MONTH DOLLAR SHARE ENDING DECEMBER 2019 VS. ONE YEAR AGO

20A	.9
30A	1.4
60A	-1.5
100A	2.8
200A	-4.4
All other	.8

Epicor's Industry Data Analytics tracking information is based on sales from a representative sample of full-line electrical distributors located throughout the United States. For more information, call 512-278-5800, email [epicorindustryanalytics@epicor.com](mailto:epicorindustryanalytics@epicor.com), or visit [www.epicor.com/en-us/business-need/sales-and-marketing/vista-information-services/](http://www.epicor.com/en-us/business-need/sales-and-marketing/vista-information-services/).

## Distributor Doings

IAC Supply Solutions, Memphis, Tenn., has hired **Jeff Allison** as its vice president of construction business. He brings with him 30 years of leadership experience, serving in multiple leadership positions at Johnson Controls.

IAC also transitioned **Steve Delk** to vice president of the industrial supply business. With IAC for 27 years, he held multiple other leadership positions, including director of its industrial supply division and vice president of construction sales.

*Parrish-Hare*, Irving, Texas, promoted **Greg Johnson** to the role of general manager for all of its locations, PHE-Services, and Power-House. A 37-year industry veteran, he has been with Parrish-Hare for seven years.



Patrick Davis

*Summit Electric*, Albuquerque, N.M., appointed **Patrick Davis** to the role of president and CEO. He brings with him more than 25 years of industry experience, most recently serving as the north-east region president at Rexel USA.

Also at Summit, **Mike Richardson** was named vice president of supplier collaboration. He brings with him 20 years of distribution experience,

including 11 years in executive leadership positions.

*Turtle & Hughes*, Linden, N.J., has named **Dan Fongaro** as director of internal audit. He spent his entire career at Verizon Communications, most recently as senior manager, risk management.

The distributor also named **Scott West** as president of Turtle &

*Hughes Integrated Supply (THIS)*. He joined THIS in September 2018 as vice president, business development. Prior to joining THIS, he was senior vice president of Synovos.

*United Electric Supply*, New Castle, Del., named **Jordan (Jordy) Bauer** as district sales manager of its Maryland office. He comes to the company with 11 years of experience in outside sales and sales management.

*Van Meter*, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, named two new members to its construction services team in Kansas City, Kan.:

**Clarence "Skeet" Spangler** joined the company as EPC business development manager. With more than 31 years in the industry, he previously served at Summit Electric, Nexans AmerCable, and Anixter.

**Steve Worden** also joined the construction services team as a contractor account manager. Prior to joining Van Meter, he served in sales leadership roles at ABB Electrification, Thomas & Betts, and Southwire.

*Werner Electric Supply*, Appleton, Wis., promoted **Craig Wiedemeier** to the company's new role of COO. He has been with Werner for more than seven years, most recently as vice president of operations.

*WESCO*, Pittsburgh, has appointed **Nelson Squires** as senior vice president and COO. He served as the company's group vice president and general manager of WESCO Canada/International/WIS since 2018 and as group vice president and general manager of WESCO Canada since 2015. Prior to 2015, with Air Products and Chemicals, Inc., he was vice president and general manager of the North America Merchant Gases business and president of Air Products Canada.

WESCO also recently appointed **Laura Thompson** to its board of directors. She has more than 35 years of international business and finance

experience, most recently serving as executive vice president of Goodyear Tire & Rubber.

**Eric Roush** was named vice president, Supply Chain, at *Winsupply*, Dayton, Ohio, where he previously served as director of sourcing services. Prior to joining Winsupply in 2013, he held a variety of positions in both the public and private sector, including eight years in management with Ferrellgas.

## Manufacturer Moves

**Rick Fulsom Jr.** joined *Alan Wire* as an area sales manager. He brings with him more than 25 years of electrical industry experience, serving 20 years as an electrical sales rep at R.F. Fulsom Company.

*Atlas Lighting Products* recently hired **Jason Goodwin** as regional sales manager of the Southeast region. He brings with him more than 18 years of distribution sales experience, most recently serving at ATG.

**Carlos Pedroza** was named regional sales manager of the South Central region at Atlas. He has more than 15 years of industry experience, serving with Universal Lighting, Cooper B-Line, and WESCO.

Additionally, **Rishil Shah** was appointed as a marketing analyst at Atlas. He has held varied roles in sales, marketing, and analytics.

Also at Atlas, **Dale Sharp** was named purchasing manager. She has held varied roles in purchasing, procurement, and sourcing over the past 20-plus years.

Lastly, **Mike Sills** was named regional sales manager of Atlas's Midwest region. He has more than 30 years of experience in the electrical distribution industry, serving at Bussmann, Crouse-Hinds, Eaton, Emerson Automation, and WESCO.

*CANTEX* appointed **Dave Milius** to the role of vice president of sales and

*Continued on page 10*



## Clarence Martin

**C**larence Martin, 80, CEO and CFO at State Electric Supply in Huntington, W.Va., and 2012-2013 NAED chair, died Jan. 8.

Born on Feb. 19, 1939, in Milton, W.Va., Clarence graduated in 1957 from Barboursville High School, where he played basketball and football and ran track. Before his senior year of high school, he enlisted in the West Virginia Air National Guard, receiving basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio.

With a football scholarship, he attended Marshall College (at that time), in 1957-1958. During his sophomore year at Marshall, he realized that he did not have the funds to continue college, and in February 1959, with the military training he had

obtained, he received his release from the West Virginia Air National Guard and enlisted in the U.S. Army. He was stationed in Germany for two years, serving as a finance specialist assigned to support Seventh Army.

After his discharge in 1961, Clarence was hired by Raytheon in Boston. Later that year he returned to West Virginia and took a job with Roman Clap-wood, a wholesale distributor in Huntington. In 1963, he went to work at International Nickel (Inco Alloys at that time) and once again enrolled at Marshall and started working toward his degree in finance and accounting.

Clarence graduated from Marshall in 1967 with a Bachelor in Business Administration in accounting and later returned to earn

his MBA. He did additional postgraduate work toward a doctorate at Ohio State University and the University of Kentucky. Meanwhile, his employment at Inco Alloys continued until 1969. While there he held jobs in the accounting department as an auditor, assistant controller, plant accountant, and assistant to the executive vice president and division president.

From 1968 to 1969, Clarence also taught part-time at Marshall. After leaving Inco he started his first full-time teaching job with the Marshall branch at Logan, W.Va. (now Southern West Virginia Community College). He then went to the University of Kentucky, where he worked full-time until 1972, when he met Art Weisberg and came to State Electric Supply. He continued to teach part-time at the University of Kentucky Ashland Community College for three years.

Clarence was hired as controller at State Electric in 1972, became CFO in 1977, and was named CEO in 1994. While he was there, State Electric grew from two branches and 41 employees to 44 branches across seven states and nearly 800 employees. He became a partner in the business in 1988 and one of its successors.

Clarence was the executive vice president of Arthur's Enterprises, which was formed in 1986 to provide organizational structure for the continued growth of State Electric. Clarence served as a board member for Huntington Federal for more than two decades and, in addition to his time as NAED chair, he served as chair of its Government Affairs Committee and was on the NAED Legislative Committee in the 1990s.

In 2012 Clarence was inducted into the Marshall University Business Hall of Fame. The award is given annually to business leaders who have an outstanding record of achievement in their fields and have dedicated themselves to excellence. In 2006 he was inducted into the City of Huntington Wall of Fame, which recognizes those who have made significant contributions to the greater Huntington area.

Among those he leaves behind are his wife, Sharon, to whom he was married in 1978; four sons; one stepson; a "special sixth son"; 10 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.—*tED*

*Continued from page 58*  
marketing. With more than 24 years of sales leadership experience, he has held multiple leadership roles at Signify, most recently serving as vice president of national distribution.

*Focal Point* recently made the following changes:

**Ali Qureshi** was named senior product manager—downlights and cylinders. He brings more than a decade of experience in product management, primarily in the lighting industry.

**Miya Russell** joined as channel development manager. She has a background in architecture and more than a decade of experience with a variety of manufacturers.

**Shavonna Warren** accepted the role of associate product manager. She brings with her extensive experience in product management.

*Fulham Industries* named **Stephen Flemings** as OEM account development manager. Prior to joining the company, he was an account executive at Harvard Engineering.

**Todd Hughes** was named Fulham's new OEM regional sales manager for the Northwest United States and Canada. He brings with

him more than 20 years of account management experience in the lighting industry.

Also, **Edwin Reyes** was named director of OEM sales and business development. He has been with Fulham for more than 14 years, most recently serving as product manager for LED drivers and modules.

*G&G Industrial Lighting* hired **Ben Jamison** as director of business development. He most recently served as vice president of sales and marketing for Crystal IS. Prior to that, he held the role of vice president of sales for other electronics and lighting ventures such as Savant Systems, VizionWare, and Runco International.

**Chris Chickanosky** was appointed as CEO of *Halco Lighting*. He brings with him more than 20 years of industry experience, including leadership positions at GE Supply, Gexpro, and Rexel USA, where he most recently served as vice president of strategic marketing.

*Keystone Technologies* announced the promotion of **Brian Kennedy** to territory manager, distribution channel. He has 17 years of industry experience and has been with Keystone for more than two years as a regional sales manager for the OEM channel.

**Bill Cheetham**, vice president of U.S. distribution sales at *Leviton*, will retire on Dec. 30, 2020. He joined the company in 1973, progressing to his current position in 2010.

**Stuart Serota** will succeed Cheetham in this role. Serota has been with Leviton for more than 25 years, starting as an account representative in 1993.

After 25 years at *Siemens*, **Steve Korb**, vice president of construction sales at Siemens Smart Infrastructure USA (SSI), will retire at the end of March.

**Steve Sykes** will lead the con-

struction sales teams at SSI. Prior to joining Siemens, he was the director of business development and national sales manager for Energy Sales. He also served more than 26 years at Schneider Electric, holding various leadership positions.

**Chris York**, former head of the systems business within Siemens's low-voltage products business unit, will head the Channel Organization within SSI. During his more than 25 years with the company, he has held various sales and marketing roles.

**Salma Siddiqui** joined *Standard Stanpro* as a regional sales manager. She has served in the electrical industry for 10 years and has more than 20 years of experience in sales.

*Universal Lighting Technologies (ULT)* added **Jeff Beck** as director of OEM sales for the Midwest United States and Eastern Canada regions. He brings with him more than a decade of experience in LED lighting component and controls sales.

ULT also named **Mark Hobart** as the regional sales manager in its southeastern territory. He brings more than two decades of lighting experience to the company from a variety of leadership roles.

Lastly, **Robert Pickral** was named director of IoT and end-user sales at ULT. He brings with him more than two decades of IoT experience.

**Drew Amos** was hired as regional sales manager for WAGO's Southern California division. His sales background includes serving as territory manager at Ecolab and most recently as regional sales manager at Moxa Americas.

Meanwhile, **Barry Nelson** joined WAGO as the company's public relations coordinator. He has an extensive media background. ■



## A JOB WELL DONE



**Tammy Miller**

**Tammy Miller**, CEO and board chair of *Border States Electric (BSE)*, Fargo, N.D., announced that she will retire from BSE on March 31. She will assume new responsibilities as the COO for the State of North Dakota on April 1.



Send your people news items to [mbyers@naed.org](mailto:mbyers@naed.org).

## William Schnirring

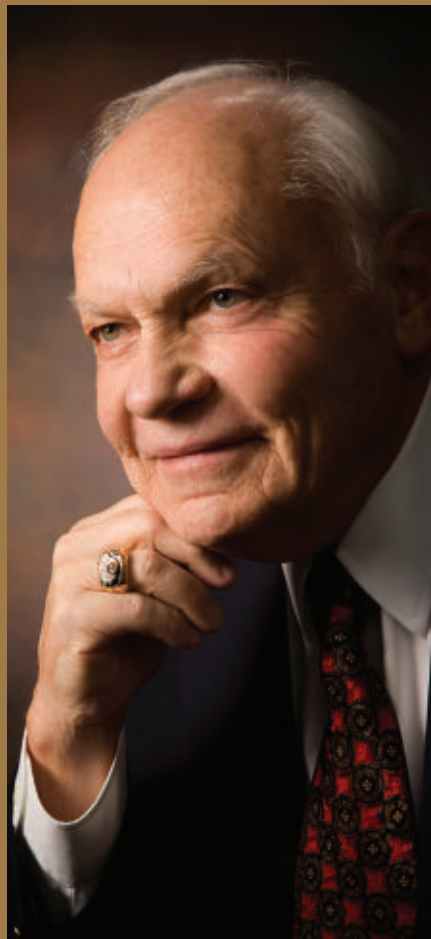
**W**illiam Schnirring, 90, chairman emeritus and former president and CEO of Springfield Electric Supply, Springfield, Ill., and 1979-1980 NAED chair, died Jan. 26.

Born March 1, 1929, Bill graduated from Springfield High School in 1946. He attended the University of Illinois and graduated with a bachelor's degree in business in 1950. Following his graduation, he served as a first lieutenant in the United States Army during the Korean Conflict from 1951 to 1952 and was stationed in Thule, Greenland.

Bill's formal career with Springfield Electric Supply began in 1952 when he joined the family-owned business, started by his father, William Robert Schnirring. Bill served the electrical distribution industry in several key roles over the years, culminating with a term as NAED chair. Bill was later recognized as a recipient of one of the industry's highest national individual honors, the Arthur W. Hooper Achievement Award.

Well known for his development work to benefit many of Springfield's civic and charitable organizations, Bill was recognized nationally in 1989 as an Outstanding Volunteer Fundraiser and again in 1994 as an Outstanding Philanthropist by the National Society of Fundraising Executives. In 1998, he was honored by being the recipient of the Sertoma "Service to Mankind" Award.

Bill truly made a difference in his communities—giving of his time and money (many times anonymously). He encouraged Springfield Electric associates to participate in their local United Way campaigns as well as other giving of time, talent, and do-



nations. Because of his philanthropic ideals, the company continues to support associate involvement in its communities and the United Way in a multitude of ways.

His past business and industry work includes service on the boards of First National Bank (U.S. Bank) and the Springfield Credit Bureau and serving as board chair of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce and the Industrial Development Council of Springfield and Sangamon County. He served on the Illinois State Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and helped craft recommendations for legislative and administrative action as a participant in a White House small business conference.

Bill served many civic, service, and educational organizations as well. His roles included a trustee

of Blackburn College, American Business Club director, board member and campaign chairman of the United Way of Central Illinois, board member and capital campaign chairman for Contact Ministries, board member of the Vachel Lindsay Home Association, member of the Dean's Business Advisory Council at the University of Illinois at Champaign, and a member of the Chancellor's Advisory Council at the University of Illinois-Springfield.

Bill helped to foster the development and growth of small businesses in central Illinois by serving as a counselor for the Springfield chapter of SCORE. He was also a member of the Springfield Parks Foundation, Springfield Art Association, Illini Country Club, Sangamo Club, Memorial Medical Center Foundation, and Memorial Medical Center Board, serving as chairman for both Memorial boards. He was an Elder at Westminster Presbyterian Church; a member of the Scottish Rite, Red Cross of Constantine, and Royal Order of the Jesters; and a past Potentate of the Ansar Shrine.

His honors include the Copley Press First Citizen of Springfield Award (received in 1989) and the Lincoln Academy of Illinois Order of Lincoln—the State of Illinois's highest award—in 2012. Bill was inducted into the Springfield High School Hall of Fame in 2013. The auditorium at Springfield High School is named in honor of Bill and his wife, Mary, for their support of the school throughout the years.

Bill met his future wife, Mary Traylor Schnirring, in the third grade while attending Hay-Edwards Elementary School. They were married in 1950; she preceded him in death on Jan. 12, 2020.

Among those he leaves behind are two daughters, four grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren, as well as one sister, two nephews, and one niece.—*TED*



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***“You’ll have a hard time leading someone if you can’t put yourself in their shoes or understand their motives or reasoning.”***

—MATT ZIRNHELT, lighting design/quotations and project manager, Dakota Supply Group

**W**hile Matt admits his position at Dakota Supply Group isn’t a typical leadership role—he’s not managing people on a daily basis—he has found that there are a lot of opportunities to be a leader. “I’ve been fortunate to hold multiple positions in our branch and that firsthand knowledge has allowed me to step up and train other individuals,” he noted.

**How would you define your leadership style?** “Lead by example.” I take pride in my work and know that others whom I work with do the same. I believe in teaching moments, even if it’s learning what not to do!

**What do you like most about leading others?** My favorite part of leadership is being someone others can look to for help or guidance. I’m always willing to take time to help someone tackle a problem or address a concern.

**What is a significant lesson you have learned about leadership?** Delegation—not passing off work onto others, but rather trusting your team to be capable and competent, completing a task with the same quality that you would. If you’ve trained people well, you will have that trust in them, which will allow you to get other tasks done.

#### MATT BY THE NUMBERS

**2/** Matt is dad to two daughters, Violet (12) and Rosemary (6).

**4/** Matt has been on a bowling team with six of his friends for four years. His pin average is 170.

**600/** Every year Matt sets up a 12-ribbon, 600-pixel Christmas tree that is displayed at his local Lions Club’s Christmas in the Park light show.

**2,250/** Before beginning his career in electrical distribution, Matt worked in wind turbine blade manufacturing and had a hand in producing more than 2,250 blades (that’s about 750 sets!).

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