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E-COMMERCE:

Stepping Up Your Digital Game

SEPTEMBER 2020

NRLA
Northeastern Retail
Lumber Association



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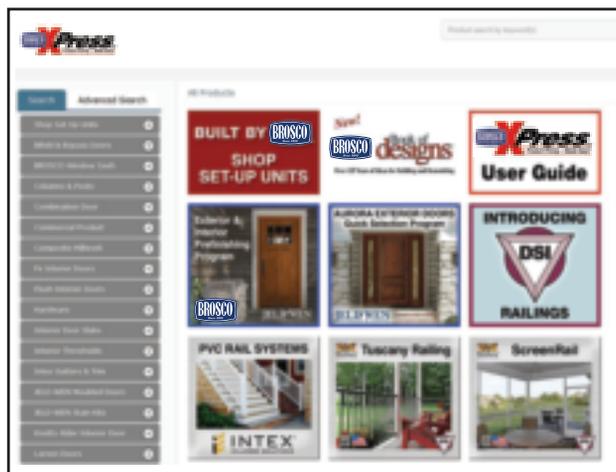
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Lumber Co-operator Mission Statement:

Lumber Co-operator is committed to broadening awareness of critical issues shaping the lumber and building material industry. We promise to equip our readers with the necessary tools to compete in an ever-changing business environment.

Contact the *Lumber Co-operator* at 800-292-6752 or 518-286-1010.



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Periodicals postage paid at Rensselaer, N.Y. and additional mailing offices. Copyright ©2020 by the Northeastern Retail Lumber Association, Inc. Materials may not be reproduced without written permission. Lumber Co-operator (ISSN-0024-7294) is published seven times a year by NRLA Enterprises, Inc., 585 North Greenbush Road, Rensselaer, N.Y. 12144-9453. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Lumber Co-operator, 585 North Greenbush Road, Rensselaer, N.Y. 12144-9453 or email publications@nrsla.org.



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Rita Ferris, NRLA President

Have you ever noticed how certain news phrases go in cycles? One minute you hear a phrase you've never heard before like, "square root shaped recovery," then you notice you've heard it eight times in a week, and the next thing you know, you're saying it too!

This has been the case for me with the term "social inflation." In case you haven't heard of it yet, social inflation is one of the leading causes of rising insurance rates. Now before you turn this page, please hang on for a minute because whether or not you own a business, "social inflation" is impacting you!

Specifically, social inflation raises insurance prices through more generous verdicts, broader interpretations of negligence or liability, and even state legislatures passing laws with retroactive insurance mandates. Examples of these laws are affirmatively presuming that essential workers contracting COVID-19 became ill at work and are eligible for workers' compensation, or laws mandating business interruption insurance pay for all business lost due to COVID-19.

As you can imagine, these factors drastically drive up insurance payouts. Add to this the increased volume of lawsuits, and pretty soon the insurance world is yelling, "Houston, we have a problem!"

So, what are consumers and businesses to do? Begin with a careful review of your personal car, apartment, or home insurance, to make sure you have enough coverage, so you are not personally liable if a large claim is filed against you. The likelihood of this happening is increasing.

Along these lines, businesses should carefully review all lines of insurance—especially your reinsurance limit. There is a good chance your reinsurance limit will not be as generous as it was a year or two ago, and your cost will be the same for less coverage. This is due to the increasing number of claims and large awards triggering reinsurance payments.

Also, make sure you have purchased the right type of insurance for your business. With more people staying at home and more business conducted online, e-commerce insurance should be thoroughly and carefully examined. Criminals preying on businesses today are much more sophisticated than those of the past. One insurance company shared a story with me about a large retailer (not in this industry) who was hacked. The retailer's IT and staff noticed they were under attack and quickly worked to copy their information to another server to preserve it. The hacker followed the IT staff's moves and as fast as a line of data was copied, the hacker deleted it. Sadly, the company lost all of its records, and the FBI was not able to track the criminals down. The first line of defense is to make the criminals' job difficult; the second is to make sure you are insured in case they are successful in spite of your efforts.

I know this isn't really news you were hoping to hear, but consider this: Forewarned is forearmed. You know how social inflation is impacting your business and personal life, and you can plan for it. You won't be totally surprised by a lawsuit that you might have considered "impossible" before. And no one is 100% guaranteed to be safe from a crime. It's all about minimizing your chances of being a victim. Now that you have this on your radar, I am sure you will minimize yours.

If you have any insurance questions, NRLA works with great partners that can help you. We have been partners with Acadia Insurance and Eastern Insurance, which serve all of New England and most of New York, for more than a decade. Effective October 1, the Eastern Building Material Dealers Association (EBMDA) will endorse Federated Insurance. They are another great partner having deep knowledge of our industry's needs.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you,

Rita

WHEN SOCIAL DISTANCING ENDS...



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Lorraine Miner
NRLA Chair, Miner's Inc.

On the subject of e-commerce within my own business, we have staff dedicated to handle this, so therefore, I'm not too involved in it. My experience with e-commerce is more on a personal level. In the past, I typically would only buy online when I couldn't find something in my local store. For me, I'd rather support the brick-and-mortar stores in my community rather than shop online.

Unfortunately, supporting my local small businesses has become increasingly challenging. As we all are quite aware by now, COVID-19 has reared its ugly head and changed how we do everything. Buying online has become something that happens on a regular basis. There has been no way for me to visit most of the stores I would normally, other than pharmacies and grocery stores. If there is something we need other than that, the only choice is to use the internet and buy online.

But the changes we're facing go beyond e-commerce. Our grandson, for example, uses FaceTime to spend time with friends. They'll hold their phones up in the air as they roll down hills outside, and just play and interact that way. But sadly, there's no real human contact. I'm afraid that over time, if this continues, our youth will not know how to interact or converse face-to-face with each other. With such focus on the internet,

it worries me that we're in for a world of confusion and continued distancing.

Now enter Hurricane Isaias! Connecticut was hit pretty hard. We happened to be out and heading home when the winds started—it was freaky.

On the road we live on, we drove over a downed power line, stopping to move limbs out of the way twice, and passed under a huge tree that was leaning over the road on the power lines just before our driveway. It was both scary and yet an adventure. We made it home safely and managed to still have power for a little bit before it ended up going out and our generator had to kick in. A few hours later the cable and internet also went out—what a bother. At this point we couldn't get out on our road, and we had no internet services available, so no shopping online ... we were lost. Who would have thought? I couldn't look up anything I normally would have, I couldn't communicate with business associates, and I couldn't even transfer funds for payroll! I guess I have more involvement with e-commerce than I thought. Although, throughout all of this mess, the phone landline still worked—it always does.

Well, we've all been having quite the time of difficulties, haven't we? I wonder, what will we be tested with next!?

Lorraine

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Frank Saluti, NYLE President
Shepley Wood Products

"The more you know about the past, the better prepared you are for the future."

—Theodore Roosevelt

This quote holds true on many fronts. As we continue to navigate through the COVID era, trying to reach a state of normalcy, we must keep in mind the course of events that got us here. We must learn from what happened in early March, which crippled many of our businesses.

As we slowly start to introduce staff back into our facilities, we need to keep in mind that this may not be as easy for some. Many are still leery about exposing themselves and potentially their families to infection. Some are eager to get back at it and begin to reestablish business that was lost over the last few months. Either way we need to proceed with caution. We need to take every precaution to not only protect our employees but our customers as well. Limiting the number of customers into your stores/warehouses at one time is a good practice to adopt. Although this has the potential to frustrate some, as builders are just as eager to get back to work as we are and are always under the gun of their next deadline. In these scenarios, we need to remind them that the protocols we choose to put in place are not only there for the employee's protection, but theirs as well, and together we will get through this.

Now that we are on a "downward trend," at least for the time being, I am beginning to see jobsites becoming "a little loose" when it comes to Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Being married to a registered nurse, there is nowhere that my wife and I go without a mask in hand, and the jobsites and facilities we visit should be no different. As building begins to get back into a "routine," I fear that some will rush back into the old normal, which has the potential to put us right back in the situation we found ourselves in this March. Speaking with friends and family in Florida, it seems that society attempted to resume life right where they had left off at the beginning of this. Now almost four months later, they have returned to "Phase 1" of social distancing and shut-downs. We must crawl before we walk, and walk before we run. As I stated in my last article, we are in control of the situations we choose to put ourselves in. It is imperative that we emphasize to our peers how important taking the proper precaution is.

I ended the last article hoping that by now we would have found a new normal. Although I believe we still have a long way to go, we are on the right track. Please be diligent, safe, and healthy.

FX Saluti



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Photo (L to R): John Moses, Bob Moses, Brian Moses, Shelly Moses, and Elizabeth Moses.

Britton Lumber Named 2020 Vermont Family Business of the Year

The Small Business Association of Vermont named Britton Lumber Company as its 2020 Vermont Family-Owned Business of the Year. Britton Lumber is owned by the Moses family and operates out of Fairlee, Vt., with other locations in Bath, N.H. and Gray, Maine.



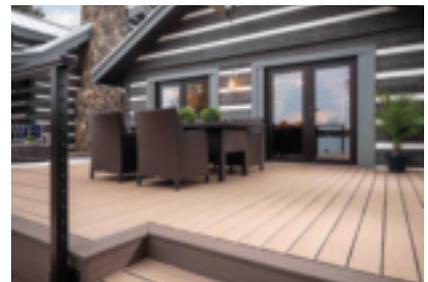
Shepley Wood Products and Barnstable Brewing Partner to Create "Civic Rent," a Beer for a Good Cause

Shepley Wood Products and Barnstable Brewing have partnered to create "Civic Rent," a beer that goes beyond great brewing to raise funds for Cape Codders who have been impacted by the COVID-19 crisis. Their goal is simple—bring their community together and pay it forward to their neighbors with every pint. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of Civic Rent will benefit the Workforce Housing Relief Fund, established by Housing Assistance Corporation (HAC) in response to the COVID-19 crisis. For the latest updates on Civic Rent, visit shepleywood.com/civic-rent.



Do it Best Corp. Buys into Acquisitions

Do it Best Corp. is taking a more aggressive approach to growth through acquisition. The Fort Wayne, Ind.-based co-op announced a joint venture with one of its members: Nation's Best Holdings, a 10-unit retailer with a variety of brands and a thirst for growth. The investment in Nation's Best Holdings aligns Do it Best with a retailer committed to building a nationwide network of independent stores.



MoistureShield Partners with Sherwood Lumber in the Northeast

MoistureShield, a division of Oldcastle APG, a CRH Company, has partnered with Sherwood Lumber. Sherwood Lumber will distribute the full line of MoistureShield products throughout the Northeast from its Palmer, Mass., Elizabeth, N.J., and Holtsville, N.Y., locations. The coverage area includes all of New England, Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey.

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CAMO Receives 2020 Golden Hammer Award

CAMO LEVER, part of the CAMO family of innovative products to help build a better deck, has received a Golden Hammer Award from HBS Dealer magazine for its innovative time- and labor-saving design. When used with other CAMO innovations, CAMO LEVER speeds deck installations up to 5X times faster than traditional methods.

LEVER was recognized for its ease of use, locking in place with one turn of the handle, and versatility as it can go from job-to-job. It also allows one- or two-person installation—an added benefit for keeping workers safe on socially distanced jobsites.

Learn more about CAMO LEVER at camofasteners.com and visit HBS Dealer's list of Golden Hammer winners at hbsdealer.com/golden-hammer-strikes-2020.



MoistureShield
ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY
COMPOSITE DECKING

BlueLinX
America's Building Products Distributor

MoistureShield Expands Distribution in Minnesota with BlueLinX

MoistureShield, a division of Oldcastle APG, a CRH Company, has expanded in Minnesota with BlueLinX Corporation based in Marietta, Ga. BlueLinX's facility in Minneapolis now offers the full line of MoistureShield composite decking products to its dealers throughout the state, known as the "upper Midwest region."

"We're excited to expand our reach in Minnesota with BlueLinX," said Matthew Bruce, VP of sales, MoistureShield. "MoistureShield provides BlueLinX customers with moisture-resistant products that enhance their outdoor spaces and the thousands of docks and boat slips throughout the lake areas."

Learn more at moistureshield.com.



Hancock Pledges to Donate 100% of Building Materials to Habitat Home in Saco, Maine

Hancock Lumber announced it will be donating 100% of the building materials for a Habitat for Humanity York County (HFHYC) upcoming home to be built in Saco! Since Saco is home to its newest location, which opened on Aug. 31, the company could not be more excited to be partnering with Habitat's York County chapter to construct a new home for a deserving family.

"Team Hancock considers this to be one of our signature community projects in 2020 and is extremely proud to help such an important organization," Hancock Lumber's COO, Mark Hopkins, shared. "With our new Saco location and doubling our York County presence, it's the perfect time to partner with HFHYC to help them break ground on a new home that will be built just a few miles from our newest location."

Amy Nucci, executive director of HFHYC, shared her excitement: "Without Hancock Lumber's generous gift, it might not be possible to break ground on a new home this year. We've worked so hard with the City of Saco to acquire this land and are very excited to be building in Saco. Hancock's commitment to donate all of the building materials for this home represents their authentic commitment to community—we are so appreciative of their support."

BlueLinX Announces Distribution of LP SmartSide Products in the Northeast

BlueLinX Holdings Inc. announced a new distribution agreement with LP Building Solutions (LP) in Northeast U.S. markets. BlueLinX will now distribute LP SmartSide and LP SmartSide ExpertFinish Trim & Siding from its Bellingham, Mass.; Buffalo, N.Y.; Burlington, Vt.; Denville, N.J.; Long Island, N.Y.; Pittsburgh.; and Portland, Maine, facilities. "Our agreement with LP to provide SmartSide and ExpertFinish Trim & Siding expands our siding offering to our customers, giving them innovative products, building solutions, and excellent sales support," said BlueLinX Regional Vice President Tom Ciarletta.

ON THE MOVE

Manufacturers Reserve Supply Promotes Tina Breen to Vice President, Sales & Marketing



Manufacturers Reserve Supply (MRS) has promoted **Tina Breen** to vice president, sales & marketing. Breen has been instrumental in successfully launching several significant initiatives since joining MRS 13 years ago. Under her leadership, the company has experienced record-breaking years in sales.

Breen has spearheaded the introduction of several product lines, redesigned the management structure, instituted several technology systems to improve tracking and analysis, and helped formulate and implement the company's COVID response, which led to substantial company growth. Her responsibilities call for the continued guidance of MRS' organizational development, setting strategic direction for the company, and providing leadership in a number of change-management areas. In addition, Breen will focus on infusing a purpose-driven culture into the company.

Orgill Adds to Its Leadership Team



As part of its continued commitment to enhancing technology and its role in the company, Orgill has hired **Marc Hamer** to fill the newly created role of executive vice president, chief digital and information officer. In this new role, Hamer will lead the

digital and data strategy, information systems, information security, and all technology teams across Orgill's distribution business, Tyndale Advisors, and Central Network Retail Group.

Hamer joins Orgill with a wealth of experience and proven background modernizing legacy technologies and IT organizations in both distribution and retail.

"We're excited to have Marc lead our highly capable team of technology professionals at Orgill who have done an outstanding job, especially as we've moved to a remote work environment," said Boyden Moore, Orgill's president and CEO. "Marc will lead the continued collaboration and integration of our technology teams and the continued innovation of our systems. We have some exciting ideas on technology's role in the execution of our mission to help our customers be successful."

Do it Best Corp. Announces Team Hires and Promotions

Do it Best Corp. is pleased to announce the following additions to its world headquarters team in Fort Wayne, Ind.

Christopher Heffley as a senior software developer, **Kiana Lopez** as a web designer, **Stephanie Lyons** as an electrical associate merchandise manager, **Chris Broadasky** as an information

security intern, **Beth Dreher** as a category management director, **Josh Kennedy** as an infrastructure intern, **Amanda Mulkey** as an advertising services representative, **Lauren Ohnesorge** as a data analyst, **Alec Stopher** as an infrastructure intern, and **Bailey Whitehill** as an application developer.

Further, Do it Best Corp. proudly recognizes these promotions within the corporate office team: **Shannon Bearman** as an IT project manager, **Morgan Black** as a business analyst, **Jerad Burley** as a senior software developer, **Tony Casiano** as a senior enterprise scrum master, **Jason Cluts** as a senior enterprise admin, **Jeremy Crider** as a senior systems engineer, **Rachel Evans** as a category management planner, **Sam Faulkner** as a business analyst, **David Isaacs** as a senior systems engineer, **Nicole Kessler** as a paint supplies merchandise manager, **Howard O'Neal** as a product sales manager—Spruce, **Pete Partin** as an EDI communications specialist, **Andy Pinkerton** as a senior software developer, **Nabila Safdar** as a senior scrum master, **Brian Scott** as a senior IT security analyst, **Hope Shaver** as a senior software engineer, **Ricky Stevens** as a senior software developer, **Ryan Stopher** as a hand tools merchandise manager, **Stacey Thomas** as an associate building materials trader, **Jessica Waggoner** as a merchandising systems and pricing manager, and **Donnevin Wolfe** as a sales support coordinator.

MaterialsXchange Adds to its Leadership Team

MaterialsXchange, the Chicago-based B2B e-commerce platform for commodity raw materials, has expanded its leadership team by adding industry veteran **Paul Dean** to its organization. Dean will serve as the director of business development.

Dean has 30-plus years of experience, holding leadership roles in LBM distribution, computer software, as CEO of Progressive Affiliated Lumbermen, and most recently serving as executive vice president of LBM Advantage.

In Memoriam

Reginald Norman Pollard, 91, passed away on Aug. 5. He was the founder of Pollard Windows & Doors in Burlington, Ont.

Ronald "Ron" E. Bedard, 89, of Pelham, N.H., passed away on June 28. Ron was a lifelong resident of Pelham, dedicated member of St. Patrick Parish, army veteran and proud business owner of Pelham Building Supply.

Bob McNamara Sr., a life-long resident of Lexington, also of Gloucester, Lincoln, N.H., and Marco Island, FL, passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family on June 25. McNamara was the owner of Arlington Coal and Lumber, the family business now in its 4th generation.

Qualified Remodeler's 2020 Remodelers' Choice Awards

Encompassing the most requested products featured in Qualified Remodeler magazine between April 2019 and June 2020, the Remodelers' Choice 100 is a reliable indicator of upcoming product trends and building solutions for the remodeling industry. The following members' products have been named as the 2020 Remodelers' Choice 100 Most Requested Products.



Oldcastle APG • Porcelain Veneer Addition Mirage Porcelain Veneers

Emulating the rustic appearance and texture of distressed wood with clean lines, Noon is offered in four earth-inspired colors: Daylight, Ember, Honey, and Charcoal. Crafted by Italian artisans to set a new standard for modern masonry design, the veneers offer an impenetrable surface with an ultra-low absorption rate, outstanding durability, and superior colorfastness without any treatments or sealers required.

Visit echelonmasonry.com/porcelain-veneers for more information.



CAMO • Grooved Decking Clips STARTER Clips

CAMO STARTER Clips are designed to eliminate face-fastening the first and last board on any grooved decking installation. Simply line up the clip with the back edge of the joist and center of the cross-joist and fasten, then tilt the grooved deck board into the clip. Each package covers 30 linear feet and contains 25 clips and 25 screws made with 304 stainless steel for enhanced corrosion resistance.

Visit camofasteners.com for more information.



Tando • Painted Wood Appearance Cape Cod Perfection

Cape Cod Perfection shake emulates natural painted cedar and features an architecturally accurate 5" exposure with crisp edges and a realistic wood texture. Available in five colors, Cape Cod Perfection features the fashionable colors Mariner Blue, Classic White, Ashwood Gray, Slate Gray, and Wheat to complement a variety of architectural styles.

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TandoStone • Lighter Stone Colors Stacked Stone and Creek Ledgestone

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COMPANY	TOP 100 AWARD TITLE	PRODUCT NAME
Atlantis Rail	LED Light Bar	MicroStar LED
Boral Roofing	New Suite of Hues	Vista Roofing Collection
Boral Building Products	Darkest Color Yet	Versetta Stone Siding Panels
DAP	Heavy-Duty Adhesive	Tank Bond Heavy Duty Advance Epoxy
EMTEK	Sliding Barn Door	Flat Track Sliding Barn Door Hardware
Feeney Inc.	Stationary Awnings	Stationary Awnings
IKO	Roof-Sealing Solutions	GoldSeam and EdgeSeal
James Hardie	Waterproof Backer Board	HardieBacker Cement Board
James Hardie	Look of Cedar Shingles	Artisan Shingle
JELD-WEN	Folding Wall System	F-2500 Folding Patio Door System
Johns Manville	Blow-In Fiberglass Insulation	Spider Plus Blow-in Fiberglass Insulation
Kleer Lumber	Enhanced PVC Beadboard	PVC Beadboard
Marvin	Panoramic Glass Alcove	Skycove
Masonite	Exterior Wood Door Seal	AquaSeal
Owens Corning	Flexible Blanket Insulation	EcoTouch PINK Fiberglass Insulation
Pella	Integrated Window Screen	Integrated Rolscreen
Ply Gem Roofing	Roof-Offering Expansion	Engineered Slate and Cedar Colors
Simpson Door Company	Oversized Wood Doors	Monster Doors
TimberTech	Scalloped-Board Decking	Edge
Velux	Curved Glass Skylights	CurveTech and Roof Access Skylights
Weather Shield Windows & Doors	Oversized Direct Set Windows	Oversized Direct Set Windows
Windsor Windows & Doors	Replacement Pocket Windows	Revive Pocket Windows



◀ CAMO Launches EDGEXMETAL Clips

The CAMO EDGEXMETAL Clip is a revolutionary way to fasten any grooved deck board on metal substructure that installs easily by hand or up to 5X faster with the award-winning CAMO DRIVE stand-up tool, both using the contractor's drill. Using EDGEXMETAL with CAMO's family of innovative products can speed deck installations on metal framing without damaging the boards. Lay rows of boards and EDGEXMETAL Clips down, lock them in place with two to four CAMO LEVER board bending and locking tools and fasten while standing up with DRIVE. The finished result is a fastener-free deck surface secured by a clip that conceals the joist and provides a strong hold that's going to last. Learn more at camofasteners.com/products/clips/edge-x-metal.

▶ NextGen Exterior Gesso Primed Mahogany Trim Boards by A&B Wood

NextGen Mahogany is a cost-effective, 100% plantation-grown genuine mahogany from Indonesia. Only heartwood is used in the finger-jointed blanks, which produces an exceptionally stable product, with excellent decay and rot resistance. With a smooth two-coat exterior Gesso primer, NextGen Mahogany is perfect for all interior and exterior (above-ground) applications. The company offers a standard 15-year limited warranty when properly installed. For more information, call 203-888-6017.



NextGen MAHOGANY



◀ CertainTeed's New STONEfaçade

STONEfaçade from CertainTeed is a stylish, easy-to-install product that faithfully replicates the look and feel of real stone with screw-in-place installation (no mortar necessary). Suitable for indoor and outdoor applications, this stone veneer product features the industry's first fully integrated 3/8" rainscreen, for outstanding moisture management and home protection. STONEfaçade features beveled perimeter edges for a more attractive appearance and comes in a variety of low-maintenance, nature-inspired colors. The product comes in 8"x10", 8"x14", and 8"x24" panels for a wide variety of configurations and features a 20-year limited warranty. For more information, go to certainteed.com.



◀ DAP Extreme Stretch Elastomeric Sealant Now Available in 13 Colors

DAP Extreme Stretch is a high-performance acrylic urethane sealant designed to fill gaps up to 3" wide and stretch up to 600% for a crackproof, elastomeric finish. Now available at a variety of local home improvement retailers, DAP's expanded Extreme Stretch product line includes 13 colors: white, clear, almond, tan, limestone, wood tone, dark brown, gray, slate gray, iron stone, redwood, pine green, and black. For more information, visit extremestretch.dap.com.

▶ Feeney, Inc. Introduces DesignRail Express Program

The DesignRail Express Program enables customers with residential railing projects of 200 linear feet or less to order a custom DesignRail system that ships within five to seven business days. "We understand that many of our customers are looking for a customized railing solution but don't want to wait three to six weeks to receive their railing," said Andrew Toimil, chief product officer for Feeney. "So our team went to work to create a solution that would provide the same beauty and performance as our DesignRail Create Your Own program, but with a significantly faster turnaround time." To learn more, visit feeneyinc.com.



◀ "My Tando Home Creator" Integrates Google Technology to Speed Home Visualization

My Tando Home Creator's new user experience offers improved usability, increased performance, the QuickView tool for faster and easier visualization, along with professional design services including a new 3D measurement tool. "The upgrade to My Tando Home Creator is very timely. Our new technology will empower consumers to envision exactly how Tando products will look on their home in the safety and security of their home and without visitors," said Ralph Bruno, CEO, Derby Building Products. To learn more, visit tandobp.com/en/inspiration/my-tando-home-creator.



COVID-19 E-COMMERCE TRENDS

Stand to Benefit the Building Products Industry

By Steven Kleber

Even before COVID-19 hit our shores, much of American commerce has been trending toward digital purchases. According to recent U.S. Department of Commerce quarterly e-commerce figures, consumers spent \$602 billion online with U.S. merchants in 2019, up 15% from 2018. Much of that can be attributed to the success of online grocery retailers such as Walmart and Amazon, as well as shoppers choosing to make other retail purchases online rather than in a brick-and-mortar store.

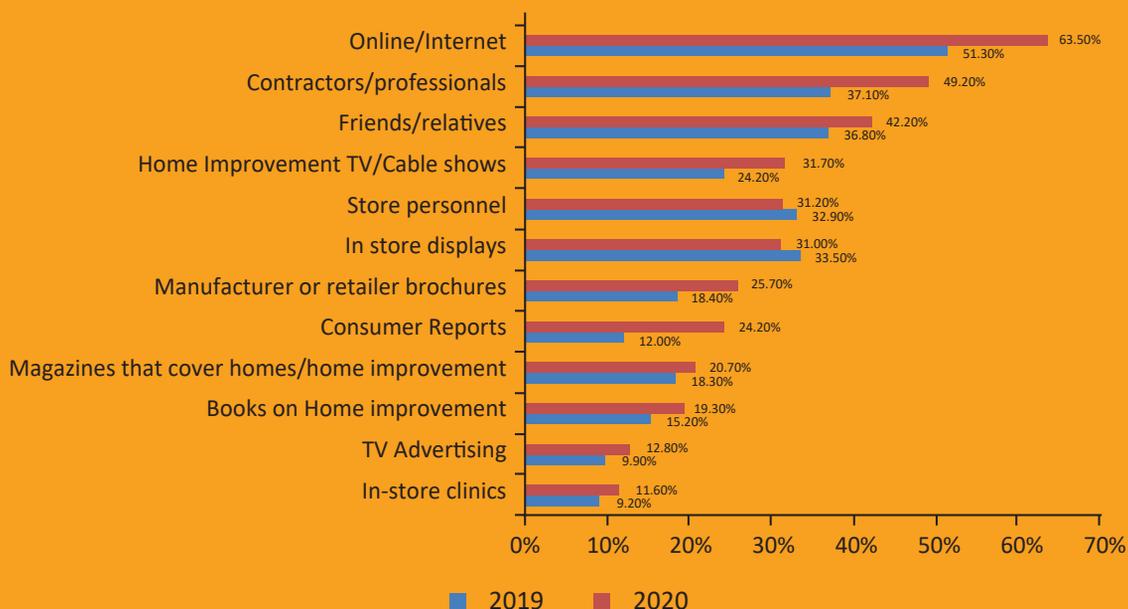
Early 2020 economic figures show that COVID-19 is not only hyper-accelerating e-commerce trends, but is irrevocably changing the way people shop and research purchases in ways that will be felt for decades. According to Consumer Specialists, a research firm specializing in the home improvement market, preliminary U.S. Census Bureau figures show that online retail (as a percentage of total U.S. retail sales) exploded from 12% to 18% between January and May 2020.

Building product and home improvement manufacturers—which traditionally rely on point-of-purchase sales—can't afford to ignore this sea change toward digital.

As purchasing decisions are happening sooner—and more often in the digital realm—building product manufacturers stand to benefit greatly by stepping up their digital game.

Sources Used To Gather Information

Base: 545 those planning a project in next 2 years



AN OPPORTUNITY FOR HOME IMPROVEMENT

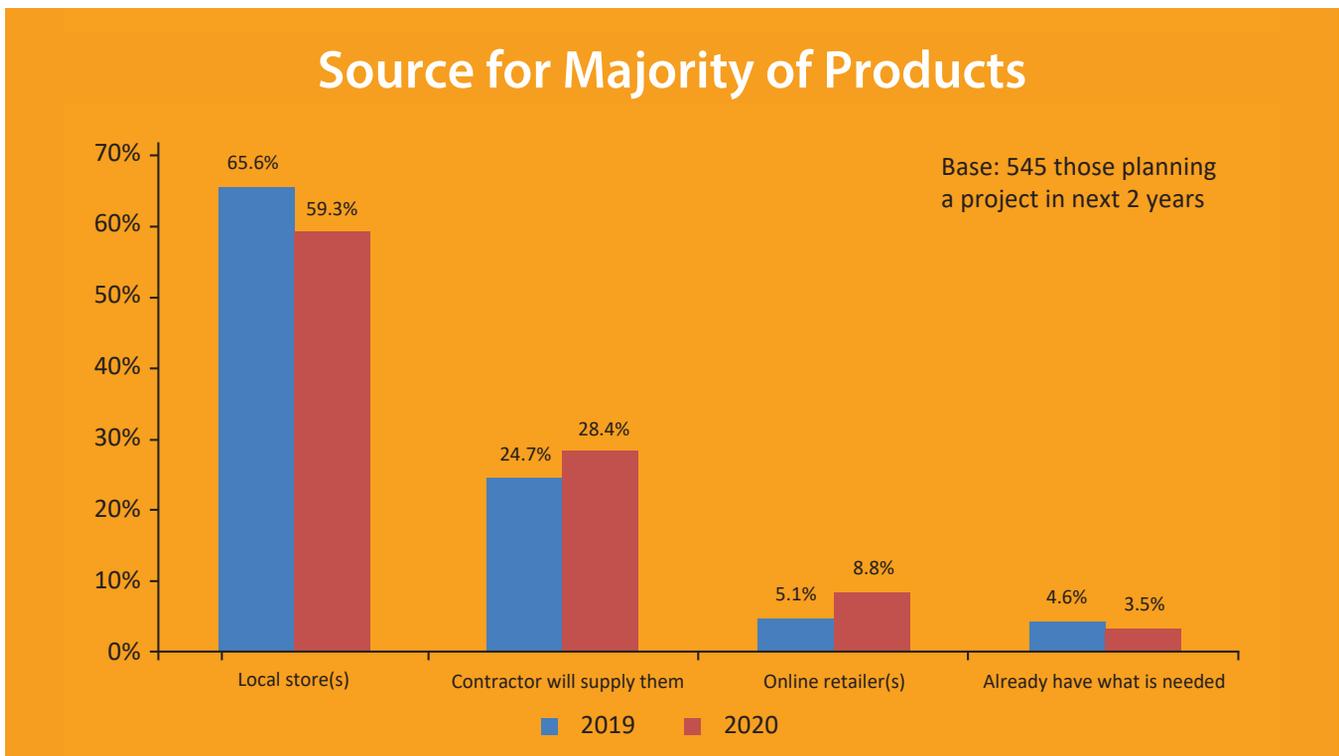
Despite a 10.5% decline in total U.S. retail sales this year due to COVID-19 shutting down many parts of the U.S. economy, home improvement sales have continued to hold strong. In fact, according to Consumer Specialists, preliminary Census 2020 retail sales figures (adjusted for seasonality) show that home improvement sales YTD through May actually rose 6.3%.

What this data demonstrates is that—in the midst of an economic downturn that has caused record unemployment and financial instability—home improvement maintains a strong place in the U.S. economy. And it has even gained market share, as more people work from home and shelter-in-place. While concerns

over convenience and social distancing continue to guide purchasing decisions, there is a huge opportunity for building product manufacturers to profit by recalibrating their approach to e-commerce.

In an economy where retailers can quickly move customers through the sales funnel with a couple of clicks or keystrokes, a question that begs to be answered is, “Are building product manufacturers leaving money on the table by relying on point-of-contact sales?”

Perhaps a more important question then would be, “Is your company doing everything it can do to thrive in a digital environment and convert customers digitally?”



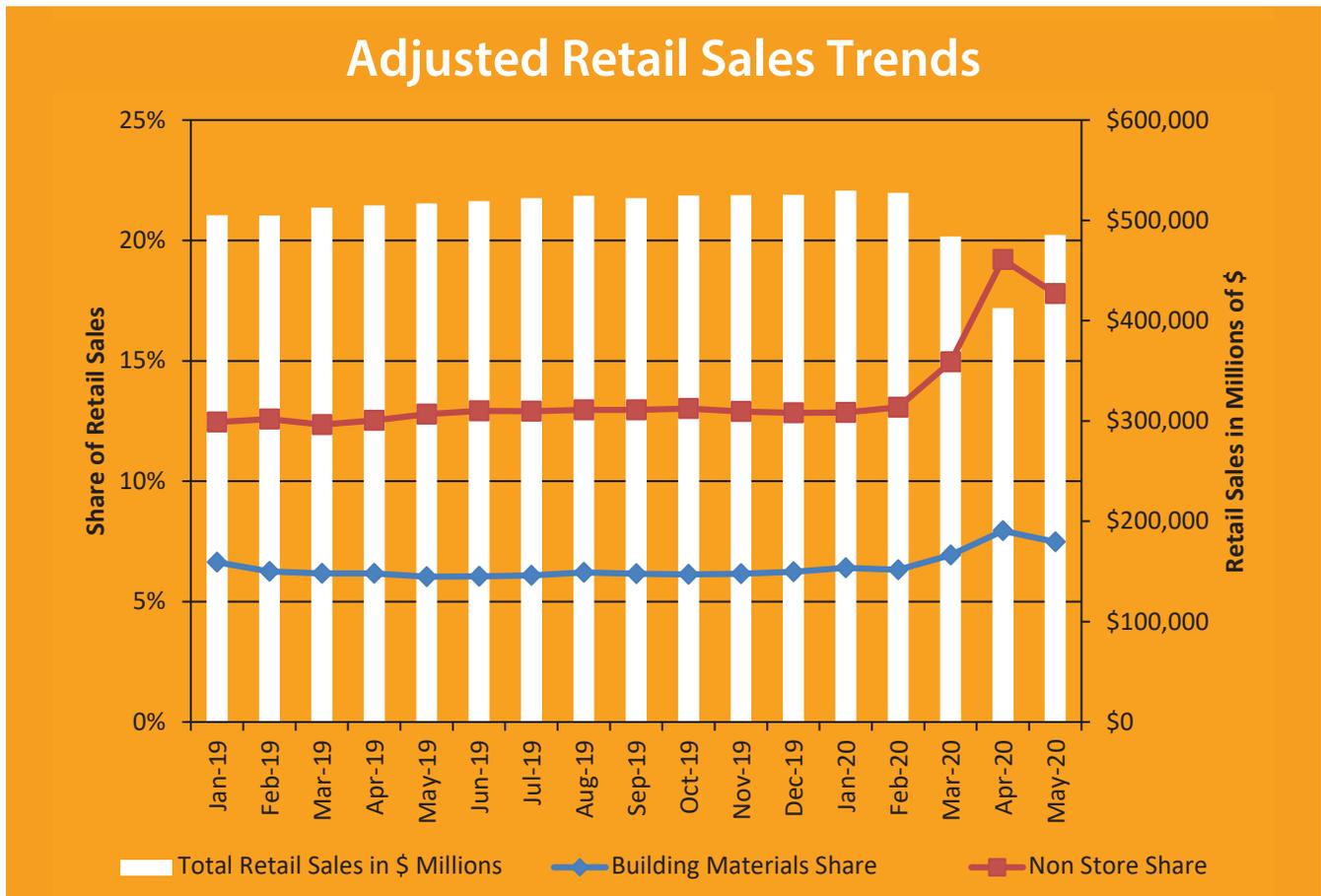
HOME IMPROVEMENT SENTIMENT GROWING TOWARD DIGITAL PURCHASES

Just as consumers are growing more comfortable doing their food, clothing, and furniture shopping online, there is evidence that home improvement customers are planning on making their purchasing decisions online more often.

In a just-released Consumer Specialists survey regarding the impact of COVID-19, the future points to more online sales. In the survey, “those planning home projects” who are expecting to get the majority of their products online has grown from 5.1% in 2019 to 8.8% today. The same study shows that there is strong growth in using online as a “source for information” on projects. In fact, a dominant 63.5% of those surveyed are turning to the internet as a source of information in making building product purchasing

decisions in 2020, compared to 51.3% in 2019. While “contractor recommendations” remain a strong information source for purchases, the internet is clearly the No. 1 source of information by which home improvement purchasing decisions are being made.

It was once thought that clothing was too personal of an item to be sold successfully online; however, retailers have overcome this challenge with features such as compelling images and product videos, generous return policies, and detailed product summaries that arm the customer with more information than the typical salesperson. If clothing sales can successfully cross the digital divide, building and home improvement sales—which have seen a rise in recent demand—can accomplish the same thing with the right strategy.



MAKING YOUR BUILDING PRODUCT BRAND MORE ATTRACTIVE FOR ONLINE SALES

Here are a few ways building product companies can improve their online engagement with customers:

Make the sale sooner. It's now possible to build virtual showrooms that reduce the need for POP and trade show experiences. When you're able to physically show contractors and influencers the look, relative size, durability, and thickness of the building products they are considering purchasing, your company may be able to win them over from a distance—and allow you to use omnichannel marketing for engaging potential customers sooner and more often.

Improve your digital presence. In a digital selling environment, your website or virtual showroom may offer the only opportunity to interact with a customer. It's best to make these sites as informative, illustrative, and interactive as possible. Make sure to utilize high-quality photography and avoid sluggish page-load times. Just as a retail store changes its displays from time to time to keep audiences engaged, be sure to update your content regularly. Ensure your sites and landing pages are mobile-responsive. Users who have a negative experience are 62% less likely to purchase from you in the future. So it is important to make sure your offerings are as impressive via smartphone as they are from a desktop.

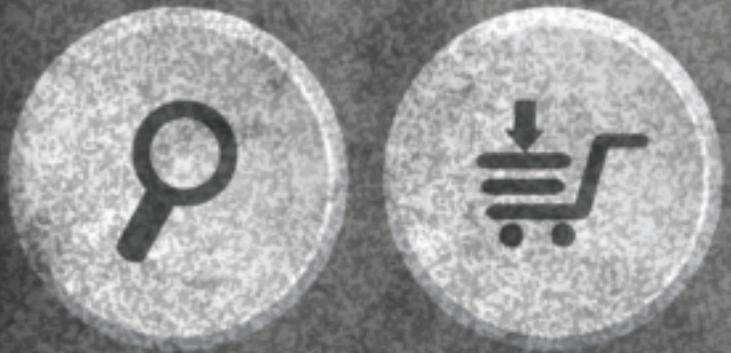
Redouble your content marketing efforts. In the world of B2B sales, content marketing—blogs, thought-leadership pieces, testimonials, and editorial content—is king. You're not just charming visitors to your site and hoping they'll buy something. Rather, you're broadcasting to the customer that you are sensitive to their needs, understand your industry, and have a ready-made solution to solve their problems. Content marketing can be interesting, funny, persuasive, or engaging—but it should always be useful.

Conversion rates are nearly six times higher for content marketing adopters than non-adopters. Content marketing also costs 62% less than traditional marketing and generates about three times as many leads. Word-of-mouth marketing—in the form of video testimonials and case studies—are especially useful in winning over anxious buyers. 

About the author:

Steven (Steve) Kleber is founder of Kleber & Associates (K&A), a full-service marketing and communications agency founded in 1987 with a focus on the home and building channel, specializing in lumber and building materials. For content marketing strategies to help your building product brands excel in a digital environment, visit www.kleberandassociates.com.

E-COMMERCE STRATEGIES

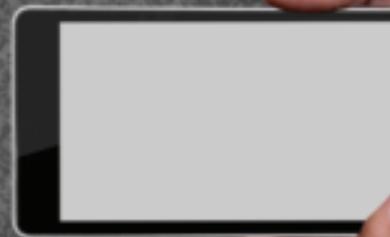
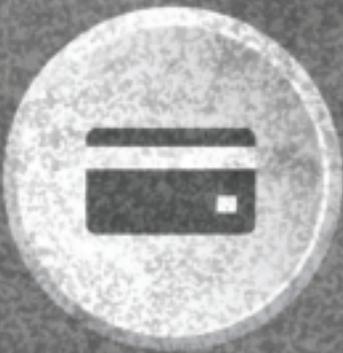


E-commerce is something that a lot of building material manufacturers, dealers, and distributors want to do but have trouble launching because it's an entirely different model than what they're used to. Despite the initial work and logistics involved, it's vital to your business that you start thinking about how you can roll this out. E-commerce is everyone's expectation in both B2C and B2B markets. In fact, B2B online sales across industries are three times as large as B2C sales.

FOR BUILDING MATERIALS:

How to Start, Grow, and Scale

By Zach Williams



BENEFITS OF E-COMMERCE IN THE BUILDING MATERIALS INDUSTRY

One of the best benefits of e-commerce is that you get closed-loop reporting; all the customer data is yours. Having detailed data allows you to nurture the full customer journey and gives you greater control compared to simply handing leads off to reps, manufacturers, or distributors. E-commerce enables you to see every single micro-decision a customer makes so you can keep tweaking and improving your conversion rates.

This doesn't mean that the traditional sales model is broken. But e-commerce offers you the ability to create new sales opportunities while still honoring the relationships you have with manufacturers, dealers and/or distributors. It's smart business to grow demand for your product. Instead of viewing e-commerce as competition, view it as a way to grow market share for everybody involved in the sales process.

THREE MAJOR REASONS TO CONSIDER E-COMMERCE

We recommend e-commerce for three primary reasons:



#1: Customer Expectation

Whether directly or subconsciously, customers today have the expectation that buying any product, including yours, should be easy. If you're not selling directly online yourself, but your product is being sold elsewhere (i.e. manufacturers) or you are selling multiple products in-store only (i.e. dealers and retailers), you're losing out on both gaining customer data and owning that channel.



#2: Logistics

No matter how you view e-commerce today, it's going to be a necessity at some point down the road. By getting started now, even in a limited capacity, you'll be able to figure out logistics on a smaller scale and iron out any issues that pop up. Then, when you are ready to really ramp up your e-commerce sales, you'll already have a smooth process in place. This is especially important when it comes to shipping and lead times.



#3: Competitive Advantage

If none of your competitors are currently offering products via e-commerce, you've got an easy win ahead of you, because you'll be seen as the best e-commerce store in your niche.



CHOOSING WHICH PRODUCTS TO SELL ON E-COMMERCE

E-commerce might not be a good fit for every product you offer, especially when you're first getting started. Begin with selecting your core market offering, which should include products that are easy to explain. From there, you can begin to scale up.

Another consideration when picking your products is how to price them online.

Also figure out the best way to handle shipping, logistics, and lead time. People are used to 48-hour shipping and delivery, so it's smart to explain why it takes longer for your product to arrive.

A lot of companies—whether a manufacturer, dealer, or retailer—don't price things competitively online because they don't want to disrupt the channel right away. You might consider doing standard MSRP prices while you're smoothing out logistics, and then offer a more competitive price.



LAUNCHING YOUR E-COMMERCE STORE

When creating your e-commerce store, you need to make sure you're answering your customers' biggest questions about your products. The main components that are necessary to do that include:

- Imagery
- Lead times
- Reviews
- How your product works and how it's installed
- Dimensions

Make sure that all of this information is laid out in a way that your customers can easily digest. These components should also answer the top 10 questions your sales reps answer on a regular basis. Imagery, for instance, can be used to show what the product looks like from multiple angles, what tools are needed for installation, and how the product looks next to complementary products.

Pella is an excellent example of a manufacturer that's doing this right. They have pictures showing the standalone product and what it looks like in use. They also include information on how to buy the product, even if it's not through their website.

When your company first starts thinking about an e-commerce store, make sure you get buy-in from all departments, including the sales team. From there, choose a platform. The most important element during setup is integrating the buying process directly into your website. Don't send your customers to another website or your conversion rates will suffer.

It's also vital to streamline the checkout process. You don't want to spend time building your online store, then have your leads drop off during the checkout process. It should be minimal and

easy to navigate. It does take a lot of effort to make the checkout process simple, but it's worth it.



WHO IS DOING E-COMMERCE WELL?

There are a lot of building material manufacturers, dealers and retailers that are already doing e-commerce well. One of our favorite manufacturers is Stikwood, which focuses on the DIY market. When you go to their home page, one of the first pieces to load is "Shop." This immediately lets you know that you can buy their product directly from their site.

They're also using video to help explain their product, such as videos of a person holding each product to help customers imagine the scale. Their cart experience is also great.

Another winner in the e-commerce space is Hunter Fan. They do what you expect an e-commerce site to do, including offering different customization options such as size, color, and finish. The product page is straightforward and includes pricing, reviews, and descriptions. If something is out of stock, you can sign up to receive an email notification when it's available.

E-commerce definitely isn't something that you can throw together in a day or two. But it is smart to get started sooner rather than later so you can be a leader in growing market share for your product area. **LG**

About the Author:

Zach Williams is the founder and CEO of LBM marketing platform Venveo. Venveo believes that your online presence has the potential to be more than just a checkbox, but an actual revenue generator. To read more articles like this, go to venveo.com/blog.

An Expansion on "Launching Your E-commerce Store"

MARKETING FOR E-COMMERCE • By Elton Mayfield

With the technology surrounding e-commerce and the complex processes that bloggers love to talk about, you may think that marketing for it takes a team of experts working 24 hours a day. This is actually not the case. Here's few tips on marketing for e-commerce that you can always use as a basic format for great selling.

Choose the Right Platform

To get the best experience, you need the right foundation. Fortunately, choosing a great e-commerce platform is usually the easiest part of the process. All you have to do is look at the types of sales that go on the platform on a daily basis. For instance, if you sell jewelry, you will notice that Etsy already has many jewelry sellers there. This means that the platform will naturally tend to cater to this kind of seller.

A quick Google search for e-commerce platforms should turn up quite a few options. Choose the best based on reputation and user interface. This interface should definitely include some sort of internal analytics that can help you analyze your sales performance (for more on analytics, see my article, "Plan to Measure What Matters," on page 46). One to check out would be Shopify. It has some features that would be good for brick-and-mortar businesses.

Great Pictures

Regardless of what you are selling, great pictures make all the difference. If you are a small dealer, you will be fighting an uphill battle without great visuals. Why? Those pictures are the first impression that prospects will have of your product. Think of yourself as a consumer. Would you trust a seller that didn't even have the wherewithal to take a good picture of what he was selling? Your suppliers should be able to provide many of these.

Great Descriptions

A great description means more than digitally yelling about your product online. Forget the exclamation points and the overbearing language. Focus on truly describing the benefits of your product to your audience.

The other aspect of having a great description is optimizing that description to the platform you have chosen. Make the investment to learn about how your platform indexes products and services. Once you have figured this out, you can organize your thoughts in a way that will be attractive to the digital algorithms pushing your organic presence and the human beings who will actually purchase your products once they see the listing.

Pricing

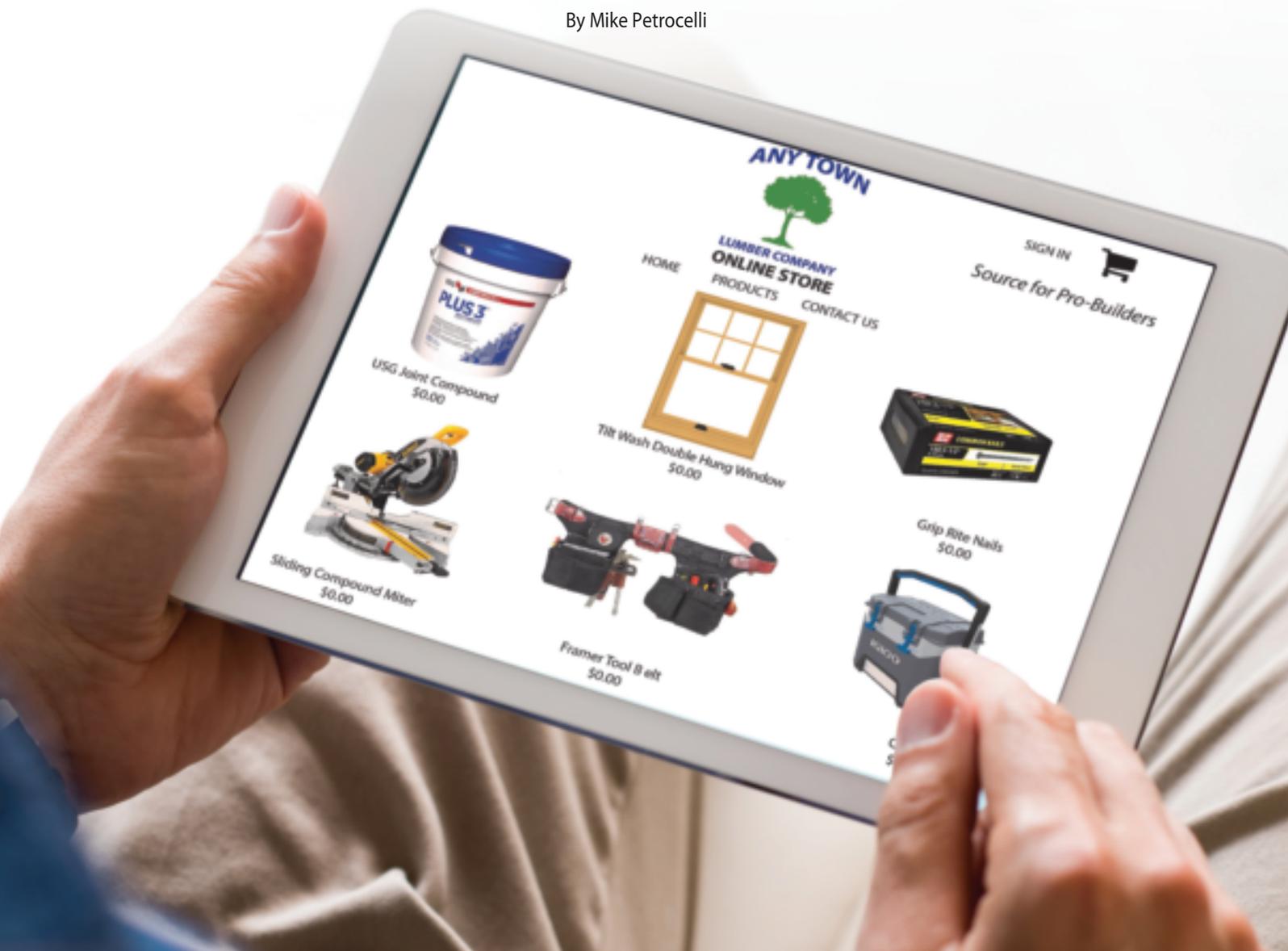
Pricing does not always mean trying to lowball your way into the market. Would you purchase dress shoes for \$5 a pair? Why not? It's the lowest price, definitely. But you would certainly have questions about the quality of the product being presented. Although you want to maintain a fair price that will actually get you sales, this will not always be the low price in the marketplace. Take stock of where your products sell the most. Hopefully you have chosen a platform that provides you with statistics that you can analyze.

If you follow the best practices above, you will be able to succeed no matter what product or service you're marketing. Stick to the basics no matter how complex the process seems. Selling online is about the quality of the product and the connection to the customer, so don't try to make it more difficult than it has to be! **LG**

“POP-UP” Online Stores

WHICH TYPE OF ONLINE STORE CAN WORK FOR YOU?

By Mike Petrocelli



Although it's an actual misquote, the line "If you build it, they will come" from "Field of Dreams" has been used by many an advertising wiz over the years to build anticipation and inspiration in their campaigns. In the sports fantasy movie, Iowa farmer Ray (played by Kevin Costner) hears a mysterious voice in his cornfield one night say, "If you build it, HE will come!" Obviously, this line was hijacked to make it work for campaign "lead ins" for the masses.

In the world of online stores, "If you build it, they will come!" is now the norm if it wasn't before the pandemic. Online shopping has created mayhem in the package shipping world. We all know who the gray vans with the cascading "half smile smirks" across the sides belong to. UPS and FedEx are lucky to find enough help during this time, and the U.S. Postal Service is working with all hands on deck, as well. Having an online store in the building industry is becoming a need if you don't already have one.

DECISIONS, DECISIONS, DECISIONS

There are a few different online store versions used by most organizations to sell products and services. The platforms range in intricacy, size, and capabilities. Here are some quick overviews of the available options and their focus. The last one may surprise you!

DIY—YES DO-IT-YOURSELF ONLINE STORES:

For the software adventurer of course! Since many of us know the potential fate of the DIY homeowner, this idea may raise a bit of a flag. Many hosting companies offer the platform to build your own online store, especially since the company most likely hosts your domain. This is a good way to get a general website with a smaller-capacity online store feature attached. The given software usually gives you a basic payment platform, an image library, a way to track inventory, and basic features to design and manage your online store. Like many who venture into DIY, you are taking on a challenge that you may find limits your scale and ability to expand beyond your own capability and create capability challenges without a professional. In other words—don't get in over your head!

PROFESSIONALLY CUSTOMIZED ONLINE STORE TEMPLATE:

For a customized look without the deep need to know web developing basics and beyond, there are templates available that give you the ability to lean on a professional web developer without being swept up into the bottomless abyss of doing it yourself. It gives you a skeletal look at how your website could look before you actually create it. With this option you do need a professional, but you get a vision before you start. The advantage here is that the "pro" that you work with will know the capabilities and capacity of what you need and how your store can accommodate your future needs.

BUILDING INDUSTRY-SPECIFIC ONLINE STORE TEMPLATES:

Nationwide brand recognition and products are the advantage of this segment. Industry-specific templates let you get up and

running with minimal effort and work because they're already built and include either a platform that's easily filled in with your desired product mix or, in many cases, are PROVIDED by a national brand (say, for instance, True Value, Ace, or another pre-populated template). They tend to include all you need to kick it off, with minimal effort. These are e-commerce in nature and will align with your corporate brand with the program you affiliate with. Many are tried and true and encompass most of the departments and add-on ability, if you so desire.

CUSTOM "POP-UP" ONLINE STORE:

Just like a mobile pop-up store or a kiosk, this type can be used to highlight a certain segment of products separate from your website or allow you to tie into a charity for a certain amount of time. It creates a sense of urgency and can be put up, and taken down, in a very timely manner. It allows the owner to tie into a cause and kick funds directly to the affiliated charity, so they receive instant access to the monies raised through the "Pop-up" store. These stores are great for sales and can be used across many industries. They are very inexpensive due to their simplicity of setup and populating timeframe. This is a very versatile option that we, at Petrocelli Marketing, have a lot of experience with and use frequently. Uses include employee incentive programs, booster clubs, and simple "sale shingles" that different organizations use to sell individual and/or seasonal items on. They are very flexible for several uses.

Online stores are the norm, as you know, even as the new normal ushers in. With people staying home, these stores have been kicked into a higher level of comfort for consumers since we were mostly stuck at home for a couple of months. Capture your piece of the action as the online shopping wave becomes a tsunami! **LG**

About the author:

Michael Petrocelli is the owner of Petrocelli Marketing Group, which specializes in imprinted giveaways. He spent years as a wholesale rep in the lumber industry and now works with dealers and suppliers. Mike can be reached at mp@petrocellimkt.com or 800-264-4294.

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4 Reasons Today's Retailers Purchase E-COMMERCE INSURANCE

By Brittany Emerson

Thanks to the internet, retailers have more opportunities to reach customers than ever before. E-commerce makes it easier for local customers to browse products, place orders for pickup, and make payments.

Your customers' online shopping preferences may be inspiring you to shift your business model and change the way you bring new products to market. In fact, eMarketer expects retail e-commerce sales to increase to \$4.058 trillion in 2020, making up 14.6% of total retail spending this year. This represents the continuation of a significant sales trend impacting retailers across the industry.

If you're among them, keep in mind it's impacting your insurance needs too.

BROADEN THE SCOPE OF YOUR BUSINESS INSURANCE

Standard property and general liability insurance is essential for retailers. A great place to start, this coverage is designed to protect you from losses associated with structural weather damage, for example, or customer slip-and-fall injuries. But new business risks come along with conducting sales in cyberspace. That's why all retailers—from virtual operations with no physical storefront to traditional brick-and-mortar stores that are now offering e-commerce—may need to widen their insurance umbrella. They need to ensure they also have coverage to protect their business from the costs related to product failures, service failures, data security, and business interruption. These exposures exist for brick-and-mortar retailers as well as those that transact online.

4 E-COMMERCE EXPOSURES THAT CAN IMPACT YOU

1. PRODUCT FAILURES

A customer may not personally pluck your product off of a store shelf, but they're still purchasing a physical product from you. What if they receive a defective item or one that causes them harm? A child can swallow a small part, a jagged edge can drive a deep cut into the skin, or ingestion can lead to an illness. Any of these things can provoke a lawsuit, and you could be named in it, even if the product originates from a manufacturer.

2. SERVICE FAILURES

Service failures can happen as the result of technical errors, network damage, or code glitches. For example, a step in your checkout process may contain a programming "bug" that keeps an order from being processed—and the order may not be there when a customer goes to pick it up, despite making a payment. Or your site could go down, and a business partner (an advertiser, distributor, or manufacturer) could sue you for lost profits.

3. DATA SECURITY

E-commerce exposes customer data to risk, let alone valuable business data, even if you're depending on a secure IT environment. Customers input sensitive information into your platform—their addresses, credit card numbers, and more. But mistakes are made and breaches happen. If so, you'll need coverage for incident investigation, anti-fraud protection for customers, legal fees, settlements, and more.

4. BUSINESS INTERRUPTION

If you're using a third-party provider to assist you with orders or internet service, you could suffer losses as a result of issues occurring on their end. Unexpected events that bring your work to a standstill can cost you revenue—and you need coverage to protect your cash flow. **LC**

About the Author:

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NOT JUST BUSINESS AS USUAL

By Dr. Autum Pylant



The phrase “business as usual” does not apply to the last few months. And, it might not apply to business in the future. Companies around the world have had to change the way they operate, adapting to new measures in order to stay afloat. A lot of business transactions that would normally be done in person have moved to the internet. That’s not to say that many businesses weren’t already doing business online, because they were. However, the COVID-19 crisis saw millions of consumers changing routines and doing more online shopping because they had no other choice. According to a report by Adobe’s Digital Economy Index, e-commerce has gained \$52 billion in extra online spending since the pandemic began.

Shopping online might be the new norm as businesses have been limited by state and local guidelines on when they can open, and many are allowing their employees to continue working from home. While the convenience of working from home has its benefits, security becomes more challenging.

Security is important with every swipe of a credit card and when payment information is entered online. The Payment Card Industry Security Standards Council (PCI SSC) provides guidance to achieve that security through a global, cross-industry effort. They lead the path to increasing payment integrity through data security standards and programs that can help businesses detect, mitigate, and prevent cyberattacks.

The Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCI DSS) was established in 2004 to help prevent credit card fraud. Today, with a global team of strategic partners, PCI DSS is responsible for securing payment data. If you accept or process payment cards, these standards apply to you. PCI security standards help businesses build and maintain a secure network, protect cardholder data, maintain a vulnerability management program, implement strong access control measures, regularly monitor and test networks, and maintain an information security policy. While these goals seem simple enough, how does one go about actual implementation and compliance?

HERE ARE EIGHT BEST PRACTICES BASED ON THE CIS CONTROLS AND CIS BENCHMARKS THAT ORGANIZATIONS CAN FOLLOW TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE PCI COMPLIANCE:

USE A FIREWALL

A firewall is your first line of defense against malicious attacks; make sure your firewall is regularly maintained on your network and PCs.

INSTALL ANTI-VIRUS SOFTWARE

Under PCI DSS, anti-virus software is required for any device that interacts with or stores Primary Account Number data.

PROTECT YOUR PASSWORDS

Use strong passwords. Change default passwords on hardware and software.

ENCRYPT DATA AND SECURE CARDHOLDER INFORMATION

In order to be PCI DSS compliant, all payment data must be encrypted during transit. If using a wireless router, it must use encryption and be password-protected. The PCI DSS requires that you protect cardholder data, to include card numbers and user information, with encryption. Any information that is written or typed must be secured through lock and key. To maintain PCI DSS compliance, organizations must keep a log of the dates, times, and people who access the physical data.

KEEP SOFTWARE UP-TO-DATE

Software should be updated regularly on devices that interact with payment information.

RESTRICT ACCESS WITH UNIQUE ACCESS IDS

Access to cardholder information must be documented and restricted to parties who need to know it. These individuals are required to have their own login credentials.

MAINTAIN ACCESS RECORDS AND DOCUMENT POLICIES

PCI DSS compliance mandates that businesses document how information flows through the organization, and when access is required. This should include a hardware and software inventory list and the employees who have access, and a policy that addresses information security for employees and contractors.

REGULARLY TEST FOR VULNERABILITIES

Businesses should only buy and use approved PIN entry devices and validated payment software at point-of-sale or website shopping carts. PCI DSS requires regular scans and system tests to identify weaknesses, outdated software, and holes in your cybersecurity. You should also regularly check PIN entry devices and PCs for skimming devices.

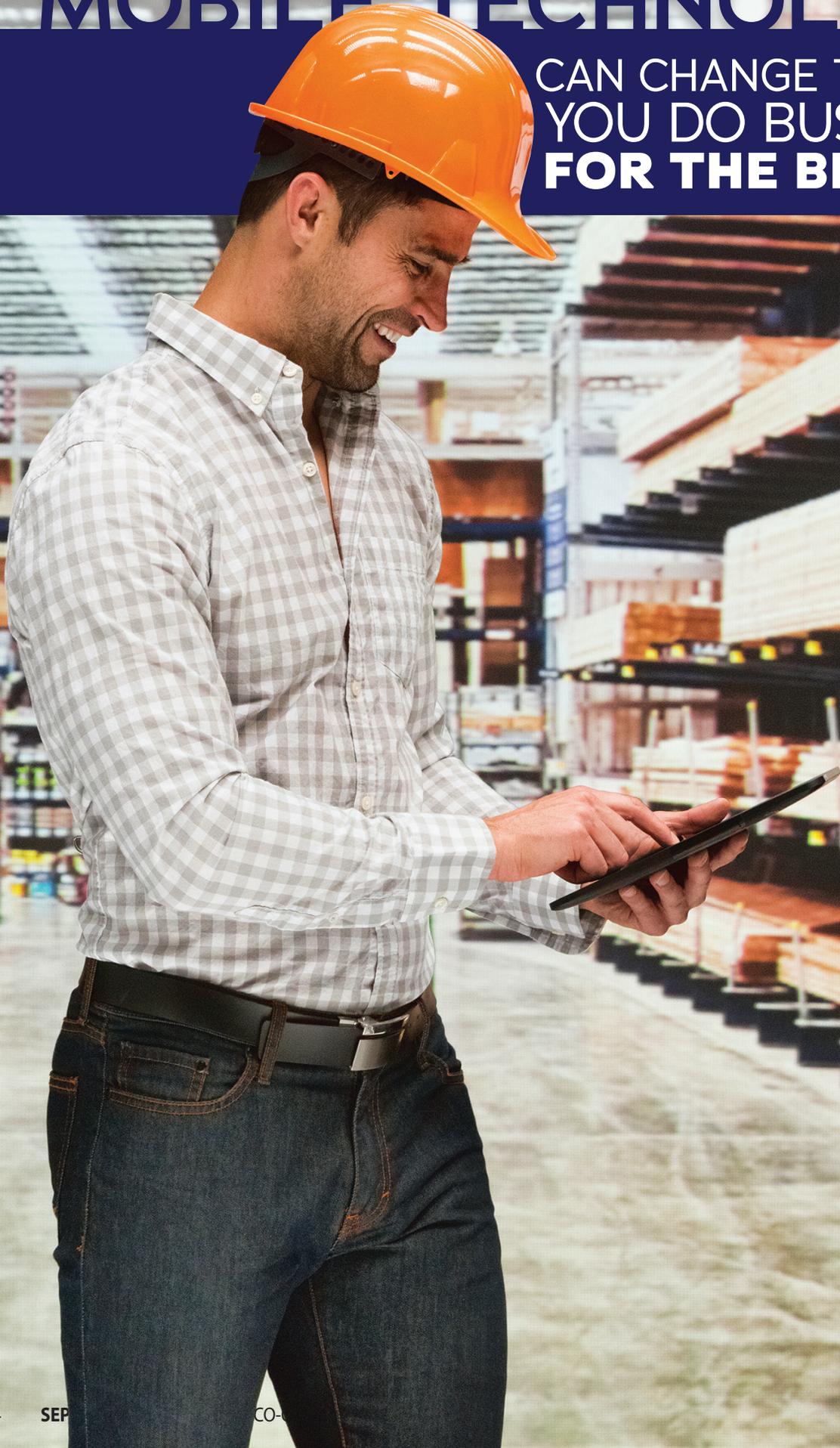
As every aspect of the business world has changed recently, it’s important to recognize that complying with PCI DSS is not just a one-time project; rather, it’s an ongoing process that needs to be followed and adhered to year-round. 

About the author: The Center for Internet Security, Inc. (CIS) makes the connected world a safer place for people, businesses, and governments through our core competencies of collaboration and innovation. We are a community-driven nonprofit, responsible for the CIS Controls and CIS Benchmarks, globally recognized best practices for securing IT systems and data. We lead a global community of IT professionals to continuously evolve these standards and provide products and services to proactively safeguard against emerging threats. Our CIS Hardened Images provide secure, on-demand, scalable computing environments in the cloud. CIS is home to the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center (MS-ISAC), the trusted resource for cyber threat prevention, protection, response, and recovery for U.S. State, Local, Tribal, and Territorial government entities, and the Elections Infrastructure Information Sharing and Analysis Center (EI-ISAC), which supports the rapidly changing cybersecurity needs of U.S. elections offices. To learn more, visit [CISecurity.org](https://www.cisecurity.org) or follow us on Twitter: @CISecurity.

MOBILE TECHNOLOGY

CAN CHANGE THE WAY
YOU DO BUSINESS
FOR THE BETTER!

By Jack Leary



As we try and settle into what is the new normal, many dealers will be looking for ways to enhance their operation without large expenditures. At the same time, you're hoping to add value to your customers by giving them a better experience while keeping them on the jobsite and, along with employees, healthy and safe.

One area that could assist with achieving these goals is better use of available technology. Mobile technology has evolved rapidly, and in just a couple of decades it has made smartphones a regular part of our daily lives. Did you know that according to a number of research studies, more people own a mobile phone than a toothbrush? It's a crazy statistic, but really illustrates the amount of cell phones in use today.

I suspect every reader of this article has a cell phone and many own other mobile devices such as tablets and smartwatches. It has been estimated that we check our phones about 150 times a day. Maybe you are even reading your issue of the Lumber Co-operator on a mobile device?

According to a PEW Research Center study, June 12, 2019, the vast majority of Americans—96%—now own a cell phone of some kind, with 81% owning smartphones and roughly half now owning tablet computers.

Emarketer.com has reported the average U.S. adult spent 3 hours and 43 minutes a day on mobile devices last year, with mobile commerce growth seeing an average year-on-year increase of 33.8% since 2016. They also projected mobile commerce to reach \$2.91 trillion in 2020—25.4% more than the \$2.32 trillion it registered in 2019.

This seems like a great opportunity for the LBM industry to grab a piece of this channel's rapid growth. Low-cost mobile technology can change the way you do business for the better, helping to grow your business and improve profitability. So what types of things could your business accomplish by leveraging mobile technology?

For starters, in this era of social distancing, you can make it easy for your contractor customers and your salespeople to coordinate remotely. Mobile can provide greater visibility of information for you, your salespeople, and your customers by providing easy access to information such as estimates, open orders, past and current, inventory information, and delivery information, all with the goal of enabling less downtime on the jobsite.

SOME OTHER BENEFITS MOBILE TECHNOLOGY CAN HELP YOUR BUSINESS WITH INCLUDE:

- Improved productivity of outside sales reps, inside salespeople, and your customers' contractor crews.
- Manage ordering and delivery processes of building materials in real time and with greater accuracy.
- Eliminate unnecessary phone tag, texting, or emailing back and forth.
- The ability to assign roles to everyone involved in a project via online dashboards.
- Simplify approval processes, and reduce item errors, returns, and invoice disputes.
- Enable better accountability of both customers and employees.
- Reduce stress with customers and salespeople having fewer errors, by making individual orders more accurate, which could translate to fewer deliveries and fewer returns. If it costs an average of \$193 every time you send a truck out, what type of savings could that translate to over the course of a year for your business? Projects can become more profitable for you and your customers!
- Track when orders are placed and when orders are processed by date and time.
- Improve efficiencies throughout the sales process, which will improve relationships because of better customer service while at the same time improving your margin.

This list is not all inclusive, just some ideas to get you thinking. By the way, is your website optimized for mobile viewing? If not, you could be at a competitive disadvantage in today's mobile age.

So where does mobile fit in your business? If you don't have a mobile strategy, I suggest you should create one as part of a well-thought-out integrated marketing plan. Remember, any investment you make in technology is an asset for the business in the future.

Mobile technology can make your operation easier to do business

with; projects can run more efficiently, therefore returning higher profits for you and your customers. And if that allows them to spend more time on the jobsite instead of at your yard or store, I think that will make them happy, which I suspect will provide you with an advantage over your competition! 

About the Author:

This article was written by Jack Leary, senior vice president and partner at Impact 180 Consulting Group. In these challenging times we are here to help. Feel free to contact Jack at leary.jack@impact180group.com.

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a bright red t-shirt, is looking upwards and to the left with a thoughtful expression, her right index finger pointing to her chin. Behind her is a large, brown, speech-bubble-shaped clipboard hanging from a black binder clip. The clipboard contains the main title and subtitle.

BRAND IMAGE:

WOULD YOU BUY FROM YOU?

By the Wheelhouse 2020 Team

BRAND IMAGE:

Two simple words, one difficult concept. A brand image is the impression in the consumers' mind of what a company represents. Both real and imaginary qualities are expressed through brand image and proper advertising campaigns, displaying a consistent theme that allows for a perception to be developed over time. For any brand in today's competitive marketplace, the most important element is the perception of that brand to the end consumer. When looking at a brand image, an end user needs to relate to and identify a specific perception to a brand, rather than the presence of the logo.

Every major brand has a distinct personality. All companies serve consumer needs in different ways. Whether it's a low-cost brand, such as Walmart, or a luxury brand like Rolex, a strong brand image leaves consumers with certain perceptions and feelings. How are they able to do this? Brands develop specific attributes, most of which are earned through their actions. Brands with strong marketing programs always look to improve that list of attributes in order to attract the type of customer they want to serve.

HERE IS A LIST OF SIX HELPFUL TIPS TO HELP YOU IMPROVE THE WAY OTHERS SEE YOUR BRAND:

1. KNOW YOURSELF

This is clearly the most important aspect in being able to develop a strong brand image. By knowing your business and your products and services, you are best able to communicate the brand to the target market consumer that best fits the company. When determining what your strengths are, it's best to ask this question: Why do consumers and clients choose us? Is it quality? Is it price? Do our products make them feel a certain way after purchasing? The more you know about yourself, the better you will be able to market to a segment of potential customers. Also, knowing your company inside and out allows you to establish parameters to compare yourself to competitive brands, and understanding how you stack up to the competition will help you adapt to meet the market trends and ultimately give insight as to how you can continue to better serve your customers.

2. FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE EVERYTHING

I repeat: First impressions are everything! Whether you're on a date, in an interview, or marketing your brand—there's nothing worse than a bad first impression. They stick, they bring negative connotation, and we all know getting rid of a negative thought in the mind of the consumer is a tricky task. Take a look at your brand. What perception would a potential client get from looking at your website or being in your stores? From your marketing campaigns? Is it a positive message? You should always be striving for consistency with your brand strategy. The best way to look at a first impression is to think about a trade show where you were unaware of the brand, but were drawn to the booth. And those first impressions last.

3. REFLECT YOUR BRAND IN THE COMPANY CULTURE

Nobody will know your company better than you. As you make new hires, it's important to emphasize during the hiring process how your employees should be a positive reinforcement of your brand promise. They should reflect the brand image in your company culture as they are an important part of building your product or service on a daily basis. Happy employees are better employees. If employees believe in your brand and products, they will be daily ambassadors for your business. Also, the more employees that are given the opportunity to be creative and work independently, the more ideas and new marketing strategies will be brought to the table, adapting with changing market trends. In terms of the building materials industry, the various company cultures we work with within this segment set a precedent for brand image. A well developed and understood culture leads strategic marketing initiatives directly in association with the various customers you work with.

4. FIGURE OUT HOW TO APPEAL TO AND ATTRACT THE TYPES OF CUSTOMERS YOU WANT

The easiest question is sometimes the hardest to answer. Who is your customer? Without a customer, you don't have a business. It's imperative that your brand image speaks to your target audiences and what they value in your company. These are your competitive advantages as to why they buy from you and not a competitor. Make sure to keep in mind that sometimes the competitive advantages are more than product features and benefits, and can also include other elements of your company culture, customer service, quick response times, and fast shipping. Also, remember that current customers are the best customers. They will give referrals, act as additional brand ambassadors, and sell for you! Sometimes, a good customer will end in a future sale because of the ease of mind with the purchase. They are confident you are satisfying their needs and always have their best interest in mind. When figuring out how to appeal to and attract the types of customers you want, it's important to remember your customers are looking for an experience, too, not just a product. Find ways to keep them involved with the brand between purchases.

5. WHAT EMOTIONS ARE YOU SELLING?

Customers often feel a certain way about a product based on how it makes them feel. Customers feel value and success in themselves, thus making the purchase. Having emotions associated with your brand enables customers to relate their purchase to a certain positive experience. People remember a time that brought great happiness, and they want to experience the feeling again. Emotional marketing is mainly displayed on television ads but is also reaching print and digital campaigns. If your brand is able to sell based on an experience, it will create lasting brand loyalty with a customer base.

6. BE PRESENT

Your customers are speaking to you. Listen! Social media marketing allows companies to connect with their customers better than ever before. Blogs and review sites are a great way for customers to share an experience and emotion about your products and services. The more you listen, the more ideas and concepts will be developed to meet the changing needs of your expanding target market. The engagement customers have on social media platforms allows them to feel as if they are "part of the brand," so to speak. They purchase your products, and this additional experience allows them to talk to other users, provide feedback, and start forum threads to continue the conversation about your products and services. Any additional insight you can gain from this feedback is essential to future growth. 

About the author:

Wheelhouse 20/20 is a strategic marketing and advertising agency that works exclusively in the building supply channel. Wheelhouse 20/20 uses events, direct representation, print, media, digital, and social networking sources collaboratively with sales tools and training to achieve their clients' objectives. Wheelhouse 20/20 can be reached at 877-439-5917.



NAVIGATING THE NEW NORMAL WITH

SOCIAL MEDIA

By Steven Kleber

Amidst the uncertainty of COVID-19, we're all trying to settle into the "new normal." While that means something a little different to everyone, we all share a common goal: trying to adapt to something most of us didn't see coming. While the pace of life has slowed and many people find themselves sheltering in place to combat the spread of the virus, a great reordering is taking place. Building product brands are re-evaluating what is most important to them and utilizing social media to communicate in ways that are new—even in 2020. And why not? Famous musicians are giving concerts from their bedrooms while politicians and business leaders are conducting interviews from their home offices. A "fourth wall" of formality has been broken, giving way to new and more intimate means of communication.

This moment provides building product companies with an opportunity to put traditional fears and formalities aside and look for ways to learn, grow, and strengthen the value they provide to customers. As your brand must have a presence on social media, now is the time to reach out to your followers in a more authentic and helpful way. If your company doesn't have a robust presence on social media, this may be the time to allocate budgets that would have been invested in trade shows and domestic or foreign travel to online content marketing campaigns. These campaigns should be more meaningful and informative, rather than overly promotional.

The postponement or, in some cases, cancellation of industry trade shows scheduled for the remainder of 2020 has freed up marketing dollars for many brands. Because these companies

aren't getting face time with prospects and customers at trade shows, it's crucial to keep their brands top of mind.

These are sensitive times, and it is a perfectly natural response for companies to want to put their heads in the sand and "go dark" on customer outreach until life and the economy get back to normal. Fortunately, there are a number of ways to reach customers during this time without alienating them.



SOCIAL MEDIA TRENDS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW

Make no mistake, the earth under our feet is shifting as we speak. There is an economic tsunami coming for businesses unable to communicate meaningfully with their customers or offer value from a distance. The likely demise of AMC Theatres, the biggest movie theater chain in North America, is just one example of businesses that may not survive in a post-COVID-19 world.

HERE ARE SOME MEDIA TRENDS HAPPENING RIGHT NOW THAT BUILDING PRODUCT BRANDS SHOULD CONSIDER:

- **IN-HOME DATA USAGE IS SURGING.** With millions more people working from home and uncertainty around school re-openings amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, in-home data usage is on the rise. According to Comscore, average in-home data usage was up 18% from March 1 through 17, 2020 versus the same time period in March 2019. The most notable device-level data-usage increases seen thus far are for mobile phones, smart speakers, connected TVs, and streaming boxes/sticks. These increases are likely from all family members interacting with more streaming media while staying home.
- **SOCIAL MEDIA USE IS INCREASING.** Social media usage has grown as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, as more users go online to stay connected with family, friends, and colleagues. Recent insights reveal exactly how much some apps are benefiting. According to a recent survey of more than 25,000 consumers in 30 markets, conducted by consulting firm Kantar from March 14 to 24, WhatsApp usage spiked by 51% in some countries compared to last year. Across all messaging platforms, the

growth in usage has been the largest in the 18- to 34-year-old age group. WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram all saw a 40%-plus increase in usage from this same demographic.

- **MANY BRANDS ARE INCREASING THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA ADVERTISING.** While many companies have pulled ad campaigns or suspended production of their product entirely, other brands are boosting their social content marketing campaigns in an attempt to communicate more intimately with captive audiences. Although many brands are suffering, others, such as video conferencing, have seen upticks in sales and stock value. That demand is translating into boosted promotional budgets. Marketing technology firm 4C Insights found a 25% year-over-year increase overall in ad spending on digital platforms for the first half of March.

While the COVID-19 pandemic is causing some business models to crumble, confident brands are refusing to roll over. Building product companies—which make products that impact the lives of contractors and specifiers on a daily basis—can leverage social media to maintain their footing and even gain new ground.

REALLOCATING ADVERTISING DOLLARS TO INCLUDE DIGITAL AND CONTENT MARKETING

We interviewed some of our media partners in early April, and a sizable number told us they were seeing increased interest from brands in both print and online advertising. The good news is that publishers are, in many cases, willing to help out brands by providing additional incentives; for example, offering native content or digital ads in addition to display ads. So, if you're currently loyal with a trade publishing group, it might be worth your time to re-evaluate your budget. Or this could be a great time to dip your toes in new waters. While everyone needs to be sensitive to the times, remember that your business needs to sell to survive, and content marketing will be increasingly important moving forward.

If your brand targets consumers, this could be a good time to increase your Google AdWords or Facebook advertising spend. We're witnessing an uptick in our clients' web traffic and ad engagement. If your brand isn't currently advertising on these platforms, you might want to explore how you can leverage dollars freed up from trade shows toward online advertising. One of the great things about Google and Facebook ads is that you can modify (or discontinue) them at any time.

As your brand likely has some degree of presence on social media, take the time to reach out to your followers in an authentic and helpful way. Try to make your posts educational and—within your brand standards—inject some lighthearted humor. The key is not to be overly promotional. If you're offering discounts on products

and services, then by all means promote that; but be careful not to use the current situation as a way to inundate a captive audience with messages about how great your products are or try to make the hard sell. Your business should definitely be running ads on social media networks, but be mindful that most people are just trying to hold it together right now. Put yourself in another's shoes and think about what might resonate most with them. Don't be afraid to connect and show your brand's human side. Lean into video content that isn't overly produced or highly stylized. This is the time to build affinity and be a good corporate citizen.

BEING PROACTIVE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

These tumultuous times have emphasized how important it is for companies to understand how to use social media effectively. In many businesses (not just building product companies), social media outreach is the shared responsibility of several program managers who may not be deeply concerned about social media. In other companies, the social media manager is a duty farmed out to a young staffer who is tasked with creating content that generates views and likes rather than meaningful conversations. While many helpful tools have come about over the past decade to help automate social media outreach (e.g., Hootsuite, Loomly, and Mailchimp), companies can no longer afford to run their social media programs on autopilot. Now is a good time to study your customers' (and competitors') behaviors and tendencies and retool your social media outreach in more meaningful ways.

For starters, social media managers should take a hard look at their editorial calendars and cancel all scheduled posts. There are several reasons to do so. One, the news cycle is changing constantly, and managers need to be sensitive to that by communicating in real time. Two, audiences may not be working regular hours anymore as professionals are balancing home life, caring for children and working in unfamiliar settings. Rather than putting together 30 days of social media posts in advance, a better strategy going forward may be to utilize social media listening tools (e.g., Hubspot, Buffer, TweetReach, and BuzzSumo) to inform your content and create native posts that reflect what's happening now. It may mean communicating less often, but the priority for your social media outreach should be relevant information, meaningful customer conversations and message amplification rather than clicks.

Shifting from click metrics can be a difficult transition for companies, as so many businesses operate on the stance "You can't manage what you don't measure." However, this approach puts the emphasis on listening rather than talking. In a future that feels uncertain for many, audiences need a partner who will listen and respond to their needs, not just sell them products. In order to maximize the effectiveness of your messaging, you may need to re-examine your online traffic to see when customers

are actually interacting with your posts. If your peak messaging interaction times in a 9-to-5 world were lunchtime and 4 p.m., those times may have shifted as more people work from home. As companies attempt to recoup losses and re-evaluate their work forces, telecommuting may become the norm for many businesses moving forward.

In B2B marketing and sales, webinars are often one of the most effective tools for moving potential customers through the sales funnel. They give your company a chance to highlight the stars of your team and position them (and the company) as thought leaders. When webinars are interactive (and they should be), customers are afforded a tailor-made sales interaction that is a meaningful use of their time. If your brand works with a dealer network, use virtual roundtable events to build loyalty among your dealers and distributors. Consider using one of the available web conferencing tools such as Zoom or Skype to hold a virtual dealer meeting. Great topics to discuss may be plans for growing brand awareness in a post-COVID-19 environment and how you are supporting your partners in keeping their businesses going.

Keep your sessions brief (less than an hour), use cameras to keep people engaged (don't just talk over PowerPoint slides), and be sure to have a moderator. This host is like a referee who can help maintain the pace of the presentation, keep the energy levels high and put important information into context for the benefit of listeners. The key is to let your customers know that you've got their backs and give them a chance to interact with a helpful face.



While we know this time is challenging and full of unknowns, it is not the time to run and hide or put your head in the sand when it comes to social media. If you haven't thought deeply about social media in a while or your company doesn't have a solid social media strategy, the best time to develop one may well be now. **LG**

About the author:
 Steven (Steve) Kleber is founder of Kleber & Associates (K&A), a full-service marketing and communications agency founded in 1987 with a focus on the home and building channel, specializing in lumber and building materials. For content marketing strategies to help your building product brands excel in a digital environment, visit www.kleberandassociates.com.

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8 BEST PRACTICES FOR LEAD GENERATION LANDING PAGES

in 2020

By Joshua Rich

Successful lead generation is an essential part of any business, but it can be tricky for companies with longer sales cycles. These include companies that deal in big-ticket purchase items, like construction equipment, building products, or lumber materials.

An effective and time-tested lead generation method is the use of landing pages. Landing pages refer to different ways prospects can enter or “land” on your website. Targeted lead generation landing pages focus exclusively on collecting information that can be used to check for qualified leads. You can create different landing pages to target different audiences. For example, if you sell construction materials, you may want different landing pages for homeowners, builders, and architects. By catering content, unique selling propositions (USPs), and benefits to each of these groups, your prospects are served highly relevant information, increasing the chances of conversion.

There are several ways to enhance and improve the effectiveness of your landing pages. Here are eight best practices to help you make the most of your targeted lead generation strategies and tactics.

#1. FOCUS ON ONE PRIMARY OFFER OR GOAL PER LANDING PAGE



The best lead generation landing pages should be focused on one primary offer. Don't try to advertise two, three, or every service that your company offers—that is the role of your home page. Think of your landing page as a long-form ad. Prospective leads may arrive on this page from clicking on an ad, banner, or other marketing asset. The landing page should expand on the initial offer shown. Bolster this offer with your company's USPs—what benefits set you apart from your competitors? Encourage prospects to focus on the value your product or service offers. In addition, don't include your website's navigation bar at the top of your landing page. This provides a distraction and easy way out of your targeted landing page content.

#2. DON'T BE AFRAID OF LONG LANDING PAGES



While it's important to keep your landing page design clean, simple, and easy to read, it's also important to provide your prospects with all the information they need. The more information, testimonials, and background you provide the user, the more credibility and brand awareness you build with them, and the more willing they will be to share their information. Some companies even place their lead gen forms at the very bottom of their landing pages. In fact, longer landing pages can increase lead generation by as much as 220%.

#3. KEEP THE LANDING PAGE CLEAN AND SIMPLE



It takes about 50 milliseconds for a user to make a first impression of a website, and the last thing any prospect wants to do is read long,

dense paragraphs of text. Keep your landing page design clean, simple, and professional. Use images to break up text. Colorful images can increase readership by 80%. However, make sure your images are compressed—slow load times can drive prospects away.

Break up your content into bullet points or short paragraphs. While it's commonly understood that users will skim website content, it's also important to realize that users will also skim headlines. Make sure important content can be found in the beginning and end of your headlines.

You also want to make sure your call-to-action (CTA) button is impactful and captures your user's attention. Use a strong, contrasting color and clear, descriptive copy. Users want to know what they are getting for their information. Instead of writing vague CTA copy like "Submit" or "Learn More," try writing specific, informative copy like "Schedule a Product Demo" or "Get a Free Consultation Now."

#4. BUILD CREDIBILITY WITH TESTIMONIALS ON YOUR LANDING PAGES



Use client testimonials to build credibility and show the value you have brought to happy customers. Users often conduct their own reviews research, so by including testimonials and social proof, you are saving prospects time and effort while presenting your best client successes. In addition, 88% of consumers say they trust online reviews as much as personal recommendations. You can also build credibility by listing any reputable brands you work with.

#5. OPTIMIZE YOUR LEAD GEN FORM



When it comes to lead form best practices, you want to make your form as easy as possible to fill out. One method is to combine fields where you can. Instead of asking the user to fill out their first name, then last name, just create one "Full Name" field. See if you can enable autofill for addresses or calendar pickers for dates. Form friction is especially important to avoid on mobile devices. If the form seems too inconvenient to fill out, prospects may leave.

In addition, you don't want to ask too many questions. Do you really need to know their personal address? Asking for unnecessary information may feel intrusive and make users wary. Only ask for information you need, and use your landing page's content to provide value and context for their information. You may also consider including a privacy policy, terms of use, or a security seal near your form to foster trust.

#6. OPTIMIZE LANDING PAGES FOR MOBILE DEVICES



With half of worldwide internet traffic coming from mobile devices, it's extremely important to optimize your landing pages for mobile. This includes ensuring landing pages are responsive, images are compressed, and your form is easy to fill out. According to Adobe, companies that optimized for mobile devices tripled their chances of increasing mobile conversion rates to 5% or above.

#7. USE SEO TO DRIVE PRE-QUALIFIED TRAFFIC TO LANDING PAGES



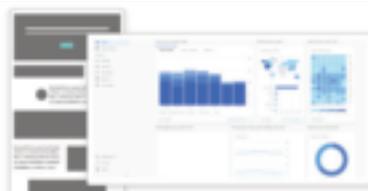
You can also drive landing page traffic through organic search engine results by improving your landing page's search engine optimization (SEO). This will allow you to generate qualified leads from related searches. You can improve the credibility and brand awareness of your landing page by including your company's name in the Meta Title Tag (the first line of clickable copy in a search result listing). In fact, 66% of top-performing landing pages follow this tactic. The Meta Description Tag is free advertising space—use it to include your company's USPs and unique benefits. Some examples include "free shipping," "free installation," and "quick setup."

You will also need to target search terms, or keywords, for each landing page. Avoid targeting vague, popular terms and instead focus on terms that are tailored to your specific vertical, unique benefits, and target audiences. This will result in search terms that are less competitive yet highly relevant to your seg-

mented content, resulting in more highly qualified leads spending more time on your landing page and driving additional form fills.

You'll also want to make sure to include a link from your landing page back to your company's home page. The more "backlinks" your home page has, the more site authority and credibility search engines will associate with it. Online security is also a major ranking factor, so make sure all your landing page URLs are using a secure protocol—meaning that they begin with HTTPS and not HTTP.

#8. CONTINUE TO TEST AND MAKE CHANGES



Once you launch your landing pages, keep an eye on your metrics through a reporting service like Google Analytics. Are your landing pages hitting the right demographics? Are users staying and engaging with your page? And most importantly—are you seeing an increase in new leads?

Keep track of the bounce rate and time on site metrics to get an idea of how engaged prospects are with your landing page. A high bounce rate means users are leaving immediately without engaging with your page. You can then look into your audience demographics and traffic sources to see where your content may have missed the mark. Perhaps homeowners are finding your landing page for architects through a traffic source you didn't account for.

Do you have a low bounce rate and high time on site but low form fills? This lets you know users are engaged with your content, but there is friction somewhere in the lead form. Are you providing value for their information? Consider offering a free ebook, demo, consultation, case study, or product tour upon form submission.

A/B testing is a great way to continually enhance your landing page marketing strategy. It's important to only change one factor per A/B test, such as headline copy. You can optimize your landing pages to deliver highly relevant content for specific audiences. In fact, Hubspot has found that companies with 10 to 15 landing pages see a 55% increase in leads!

Lead generation landing pages are a great asset for any company, but they can seem intimidating to design, manage, and optimize. We hope this list of eight best practices for lead generation landing pages will help you and your company attract new prospects and drive lead conversion. 

About the Author:

Joshua Rich is the founder and CEO of Bullseye Locations, a leading provider of global locator software and services. Bullseye develops integrated locator software solutions that help companies of all sizes engage consumers, cut costs, and drive growth. Founded in 1998, Bullseye is privately held and headquartered in Branchburg, N.J., and serves over 5,500 customers worldwide, including Loblaw, Mizuno USA, Honeywell, The Vitamin Shoppe, Lumber Liquidators, AIG, and The Sika Group. For more information on Bullseye, please visit bullseyelocations.com.



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build.captivacustom.com



Cleary 365 allows you to quickly build prehangs and shop for all our in-stock items 24/7.

cleary365.com

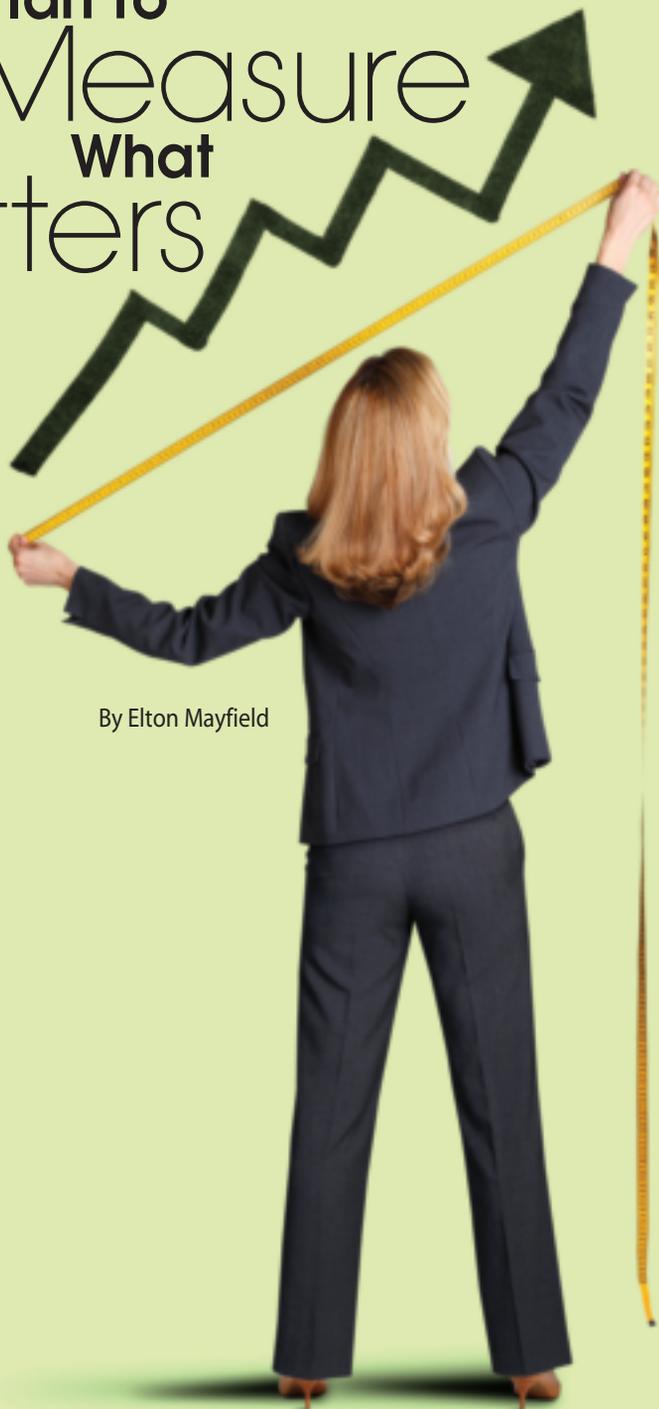
Max

Masonite Xpress Configurator™

The Masonite Max configurator makes it easy to create the perfect exterior door for your customer.

mconnect.masonite.com

Plan to Measure What Matters



By Elton Mayfield

The “measure what matters” phrase

has been around for a long time, but as marketers we can put it into practice more today than in any decade or generation in the past. I have recently had the opportunity to help a prospective client navigate their options when being aggressively pursued to renew a Yellow Pages agreement. It is a classic example of an outdated marketing tactic, with pressure and confusion being pushed on a small business owner. It's important to take full advantage of the many effective tactics that can be measured for results in our current era of digital marketing.



You likely have a website and are exposed to at least the basic analytics. Beyond that, you probably have the ability to dive deeper if you want and have access to advice or interpretation of the analytics. However, data doesn't mean anything without specific goals and analysis—it is just a collection of numbers. If you want to improve the value of your digital marketing and understand how it is impacting sales, there are four specific metrics to track.

1. Traffic

Website traffic is critical to seeing measurable success. The problem is that many companies consider it the end goal. Traffic should be the precursor to the goal of the conversion, which, depending on the type of business, can mean a lead submission form, a tracked phone call, a white paper download, an email signup, or other identified desired action. If you desire X number of conversions to generate revenue, then you need Y number of website visitors to get there. The conversion rate of your website dictates the number of visitors you need.

However, this isn't a crapshoot. You have control over variables that drive traffic to your site through the various traffic sources.

If you globally have a 2.5% conversion rate, then you can quickly get to the number of website visitors you need to reach your goals or you can invest time and effort into improving your conversion rate (bonus if you can do both). You can see through basic web analytics what the number of visitors is by source and work to further optimize or advertise to push more visitors from each source category.

2. Activity

Activity is what you're doing to generate impressions, traffic, and conversions. This is the broadest category to track but is important. To be able to calculate ROI, you need to measure the cost and resources invested in the activities that drive the other

measurable aspects of your digital marketing. This is the time you put into SEO, PPC, social, content marketing, content creation, and other efforts that you invest in through time or through an outsourced vendor. Without measuring this cost, then you can't fully understand what your true cost of goods sold is or what your cost per lead is.

3. Impressions

Getting less tangible, but still important to gain traffic to drive to conversions, is impressions. This can broadly be classified as the number of people who see an ad, see an organic search result featuring your listing, receive an email from you, or otherwise are exposed to your brand. Impressions aren't guaranteed to be seen by your audience, but are a measure of reach and intended exposure. By pushing to increase your reach and impression-share, you can see what campaign tactics and channels are most likely to drive traffic and, ultimately, conversions. Not all traffic channels are created equal, and you can quickly see what is driving quality traffic versus just wasting your time and budget dollars.

4. Goal Conversions

This is the total number of specific conversion actions taken by users driven to your website. As stated previously, depending on the type of business, this could be a lead submission form, a tracked phone call, a white paper download, an email signup, an e-commerce sale, or other identified desired action. These are tracked through several sources and can be tied to "goals" in Google Analytics that will allow for reporting by source. You can determine whether organic search, direct, referral, social, or traffic from specific campaigns drove the desired action. For e-commerce sites, you can also pass through sales revenue data so you can see in nearly real-time what you're making from each traffic channel.

Beyond Google Analytics, you can get granular data from pay-per-click advertising campaigns through Google AdWords, Bing Ads, and other paid campaign sources to know what is working and what isn't. If you don't know this data, know that it's "knowable" and work with trusted partners to get it set up for your site, advertising account, analytics platform, etc.

Before launching any campaign—and even during well-established campaigns—we recommend taking a step back quarterly to review metrics in these primary categories and shore up any areas where they are not fully known or detailed. If you can't measure it, then it can't matter. [LC](#)

About the Author:

Elton Mayfield is the co-founder of ER Marketing, a B2B marketing agency with a special love for the building industry—quite possibly, because they've been building clients themselves. For more than 18 years, ER Marketing has been dedicated to improving the marketing channel for all things building.

HARDWARE & HARDLINES

PRODUCT SHOWCASE



NAILS

SCREWS

FASTENERS

TOOLS

COMPRESSORS

DECK HARDWARE

DOOR HARDWARE

Photo Credit: PrimeSource Building Products, Inc.



PrimeSource Building Products, Inc.

Contact: Dan Javitt **Email:** javitt@d@primesourcecbp.com
Phone: 732-296-0600 **Website:** primesourcecbp.com



What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

Home of the Grip-Rite and Pro-Twist brands, PrimeSource leverages a global supply chain and 34 domestic distribution centers to supply the building construction industry with an extensive product portfolio, including nails, screws (including FastenMaster and GRK) and collated fasteners (including Bostitch and Metabo); pneumatic tools and compressors; shingles, roofing, and ventilation products; diamond blades and accessories; gypsum; insulation; weather protection; adhesives and sealants; GRX brand gloves; poly products; deck hardware (including MiTek and Ozco); concrete accessories, and fencing.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

The RED System features tools, compressors, accessories, and fasteners the pros demand when they are looking for quality and value from a brand they know and trust. From framing, roofing, and fencing to cabinetry, finish, and trim, the RED System has a tool to get the job done right!

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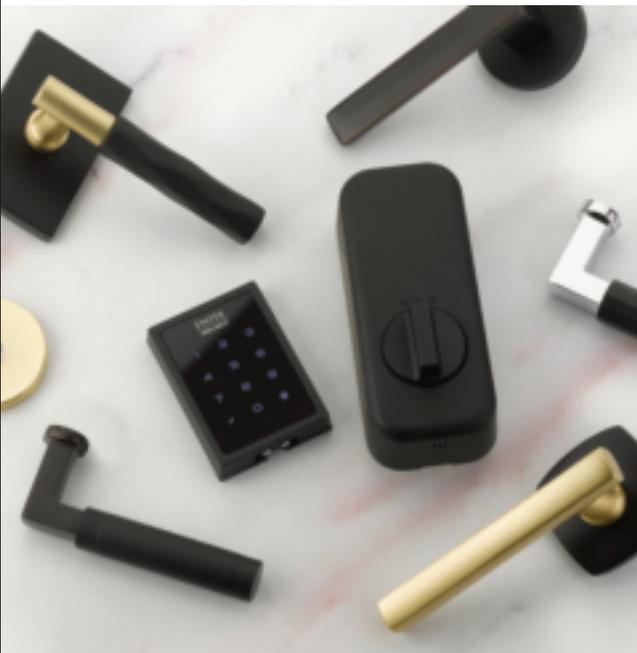
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EMTEK[®]

Emtek

Contact: Chris Newbury **Email:** chris@newburysales.com
Phone: 860-259-5691 **Website:** emtek.com



What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

Decorative door, cabinet, and bath hardware.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

EMPowered is a design-focused electronic lock solution that can integrate with the latest in smart home technology.

Holden Humphrey Co.

Contact: Lance Humphrey **Email:** lance@holdenhumphrey.com
Phone: 800-777-1053 **Website:** holdenhumphrey.com



What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

EZ Shear, Magnum Shear and Centrefire blade, Road Saw, Hardie blades, Gecko gauges, DeckWise deck accessories and Hardwood Wrench, and Cortex screws.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

The Bullet Tools EZ Shear is a quiet, portable, electricity-free way to cut fiber cement siding on the jobsite.



GRK Fasteners

Email: grk@grkfasteners.com

Phone: 877-489-2726 **Website:** grkfasteners.com



What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

GRK Fasteners offers a complete line of premium-quality, patented, ICC-recognized fasteners for use in wood-to-wood connections. With patented features on every screw, GRK is one of the most trusted brands for wood-to-wood fastening. Since 1990, GRK Fasteners has grown to be the pro's No.1 choice in structural and specialty fasteners, offering a complete line of fasteners that allow you to drive with speed, quality, and confidence.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

GRK Deck Elite screws provide a quick drive and clean finish in wood decking top boards. With GRK's Fast Bite Tip, Deck Elite screws start immediately in wood. The patented W-Cut thread design allows for a smooth, fast drive to increase productivity on the job, and the tan color of the screw provides an ideal finish. GRK Deck Elite screws have a corrosion-resistant coating to resist rust and keep decks looking like new.



Mullen Sales, Inc.

Contact: Rick Mullen **Email:** rick@mullensales.com

Phone: 860-729-3734 **Website:** mullenkb.com



What Hardline & Hardware products do you sell?

We represent Top Knobs, Atlas Homewares, DuVerre Hardware, Vesta Fine Hardware, Jeffrey Alexander, and Elements Hardware—all are lines of kitchen cabinet hardware and bath accessories.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

We sell Top Knobs cabinet hardware.



Huttig Building Products

Contact: Rob Pantelone **Email:** rpantelone@huttig.com

Phone: 888-727-8429 **Website:** huttig.com



What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

Huttig offers a complete line of fasteners that includes Huttig-Grip packaged, bulk, and collated nails, along with a full assortment of interior and exterior screws for both the DIY market and pro trade.



THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING LIFT!

The Disaster Assistance Committee (DAC) would like to recognize and thank our 2020 donors. Please help us continue to support NRLA member families in need.

(List reflects Oct. 2019 – Sept. 2020)

NRLA STATE AND LOCALS

- EBMDA– Eastern Building Material Dealers Association
- ENYLDA–Eastern New York Lumber Dealers Association
- LDAC–Lumber Dealers Association of Connecticut
- MHLDA–Mid-Hudson Lumber Dealers Association
- MRLDA–Massachusetts Retail Lumber Dealers Association
- NHRLA–New Hampshire Retail Lumber Association
- NJBMDA–New Jersey Building Materials Dealers Association
- NYLE– Northeastern Young Lumber Execs
- RILBMDA–Rhode Island Lumber & Building Material Dealers Assn.
- RLDAM–Retail Lumber Dealers Association of Maine
- VRLDA–Vermont Retail Lumber Dealers Association

NRLA MEMBERS

- Beckerle Lumber Supply Co., Inc.
- Belletetes Inc.
- Benson Lumber & Hardware Inc.
- Bicknell Building Supply
- Burke’s Do It Best Home Center
- Burt’s Building Supply
- Cape Cod Lumber Company Inc.
- Centre Millwork & Supply Co.
- Concord Lumber Corporation
- Dreyer’s Lumber & Hardware Co.
- GNH Lumber, Inc.
- Hingham Lumber Company Inc.
- J.C. Merriman, Inc.
- Jaeger Lumber
- Kelly-Fradet Lumber Inc.
- Kuiken Brothers Company, Inc.
- Miner’s Inc.
- Prehung Doors Inc.
- Prince Lumber Company
- r.k. MILES, Inc.
- T&K Lumber Company Inc.
- Ward Lumber Company Inc.
- Wiley Brother’s Inc.

The Lumber Industry Fund for Today (LIFT) is an industry-specific fund and member benefit established by the NRLA through its Lumber and Building Material Dealers Foundation (LBMDF) to provide immediate financial assistance and peer support to NRLA member employees significantly impacted by a fire or natural disaster resulting in a loss of shelter.

I have an employee who has lost their home to a fire—how can LIFT help?

LIFT will provide up to \$2,000 as a tax free, debt-free gift to your employee who has a qualifying loss. You will be asked to donate 25% of the gift, LIFT will cover the rest. Use of the gift is at the discretion of the employee for immediate needs such as food, clothing, temporary shelter and security deposits.

Contact the NRLA director of education for additional information, to make a donation, or to report and employee loss at 800-292-6752 or education@nrla.org or contact:

Gregory Branecky
Disaster Assistance
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HOW CAN I SUPPORT LIFT?

Individuals or corporations can contribute to LIFT. Your contribution may be tax deductible.
LBMDF c/o LIFT, 585 N. Greenbush Rd., Rensselaer, N.Y. 12144-9453





FastenMaster

Contact: Tom Ellerbrook **Email:** tellerbrook@omginc.com
Phone: 800-518-3569 **Website:** fastenmaster.com



What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

FastenMaster's structural screws and deck/trim fastening products have maintained category leadership positions with the regular introduction of innovations like ThruLOK and Cortex. Professional contractors find value in our LOKLine structural fasteners because they're tested to meet national building code, require no predrilling, and reduce installation costs. Our decking fasteners allow a pro contractor to take pride in the craftsmanship of their deck builds by installing deck/trim boards fast and easy while also providing a great finished look. All of these fastening solutions support our PRO Driven positioning statement: The people and products of FastenMaster improve our professional contractors' business.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

FastenMaster offers best-in-class customer service through our local field sales representatives (FSRs). Our FSR team helps your pro customers build better by providing education on the latest products and how these products enable a pro contractor to build faster, easier, and stronger. Our team is also highly focused on providing training for lumberyard employees and creating pull-through demand for our dealer partners. We welcome the opportunity to meet with your builders or staff to offer our knowledge and expertise on the fastening solutions we provide. For more information on FastenMaster products please check out our website and social media channels.



Top Notch Distributors, Inc.

Email: sales@topnotchinc.com
Phone: 800-233-4210 **Website:** topnotchinc.com



What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

Celebrating 45 years in business, Top Notch Distributors has been a family-owned, full-service provider of architectural door hardware since 1975. We strive to be the foremost distributor in the industry by continually exceeding our customers' expectations with the integrity, knowledge, and drive to provide the best service. Top Notch means top brands too. Top Notch now carries over 100 brands of residential, commercial, and electronic access control products. We stock a complete assortment of the mechanical and electronic brands your customers want.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

Top Notch now carries the Level Bolt, the first invisible smart lock. The Level Bolt is designed to fit inside your door and transform your existing mechanical deadbolt into a "smart" deadbolt. It has all the benefits of a smart lock and still maintains the design integrity of a home. Engineered from the ground up for strength and durability, the Level Bolt exceeds the highest industry standards. And, for most compatible homes, installation is easy and requires just a screwdriver. Call 800-233-4210 to place your order today!



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—Rose Luce, Bookkeeper,
Fontrick Door Company

"The transition went smoothly switching to Payment Processing Consultants. We had issues with our former company and representatives from PPC helped out to resolve—PPC is more efficient. The new machine seems to process faster as well."

—Tammy Hoehman,
Moshier Lumber, Inc.

"OH WOW! Did not realize the highway robbery that was going on. Please let me know what I need to do to change our processing, preferably sooner than later. Thanks for looking into this for us."

—Tracy S. VanArnam,
Owner, Morristown Fuel
& Building Supply Co. Inc.



Send us your processing statement to memberprograms@nrla.org for a full audit.

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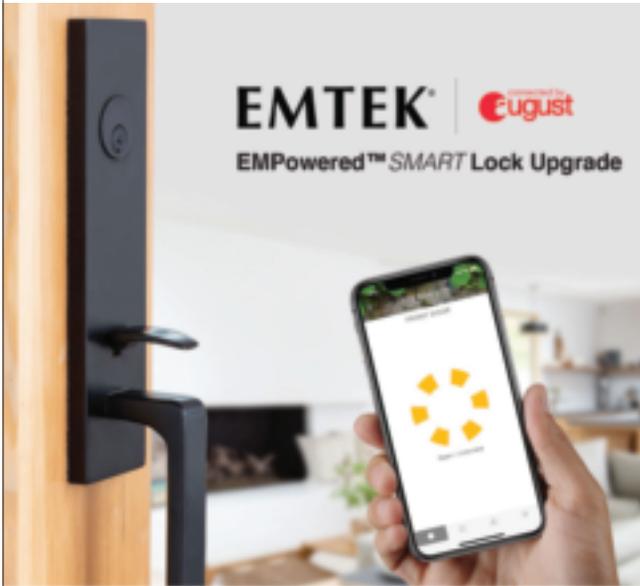
800-292-6752
nrla.org





R. A. Graham Co. Inc.

Contact: George Graham **Email:** georgeg@ragraham.com
Phone: 800-333-3933 **Website:** ragraham.com



What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

As your local and independent distributor for both door hardware and hardline products, our offerings range from Schlage, Emtek, and Baldwin to Freud, FastenMaster, Stanley, and more. After 41 years, the R. A. Graham Company is continuing to expand offerings and strive to service customers the best we can. Other brands we offer include Imperial Blades, Gorilla Glue, Edge Eyewear, CMT blades, Arrow Fastener, Kinco gloves, Bahco scrapers, Irwin, LE Johnson, Kwikset, Rocky Mountain Hardware, Classic Brass, Von Morris, Ives, Deltana, Don-Jo, Ashley Norton, Amerock, Pemko, Omnia, LCN, Von Duprin, Falcon, Schaub, Top Knobs, Sugatsune, Merit Metal, and many more.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

Emtek's EMPowered smart lock connected by August is the latest and greatest electronic deadbolt for remote access. Download the free August app, and access your lock from anywhere using the included WiFi adaptor. Also included is DoorSense so you actually know when the door is closed, not just when the deadbolt is extended and the door is swinging wildly open like with most other smart locks. Use Siri, Google Assistant, and Alexa for voice commands. Share access to others and track the history on the activity log. This lock is an amazing upgrade for any home.



L.J. Smith Stair Systems

Contact: Craig Tickner **Email:** ctickner@ljsmith.net
Phone: 616-283-3905 **Website:** LJSmith.com



What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

L.J. Smith offers a complete line of stairway installation tools and hardware designed specifically for stair installers to strengthen and speed up installations.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

Our newest wall rail brackets feature modern square edge detailing. This very high quality new bracket in black matte or stainless steel blends nicely with stairways featuring cable, panels, iron balusters, metal newel caps, and any of our handrail profiles. Easy install hardware included.



Britton Lumber Company

Contact: Brian Moses **Email:** bmoses@brittonlumber.com
Phone: 802-333-4388 **Website:** brittonlumber.com

What Hardware & Hardline products do you sell?

We stock a variety of fasteners, interior and exterior trim, foundation products including Bilco Doors, and cement products. We have dedicated sales experts who can answer your questions on any of these items.

What is one product you'd like to highlight?

We stock Conproco ProMasonry Concrete and Mortar Mix. Conproco products are designed for professional use and are easier to work with on the jobsite while providing the same durability and strength as similar products. ProMasonry products meet or exceed industry specifications when used as directed.



**Coming up...
 DECKING!**
 IN THE NOVEMBER ISSUE

LUMBER CO-OPERATOR



**Decking/Railing/Screws & Fasteners
 Showcases Due: 9/28**

Contact jrauf@nrla.org for link to submit.

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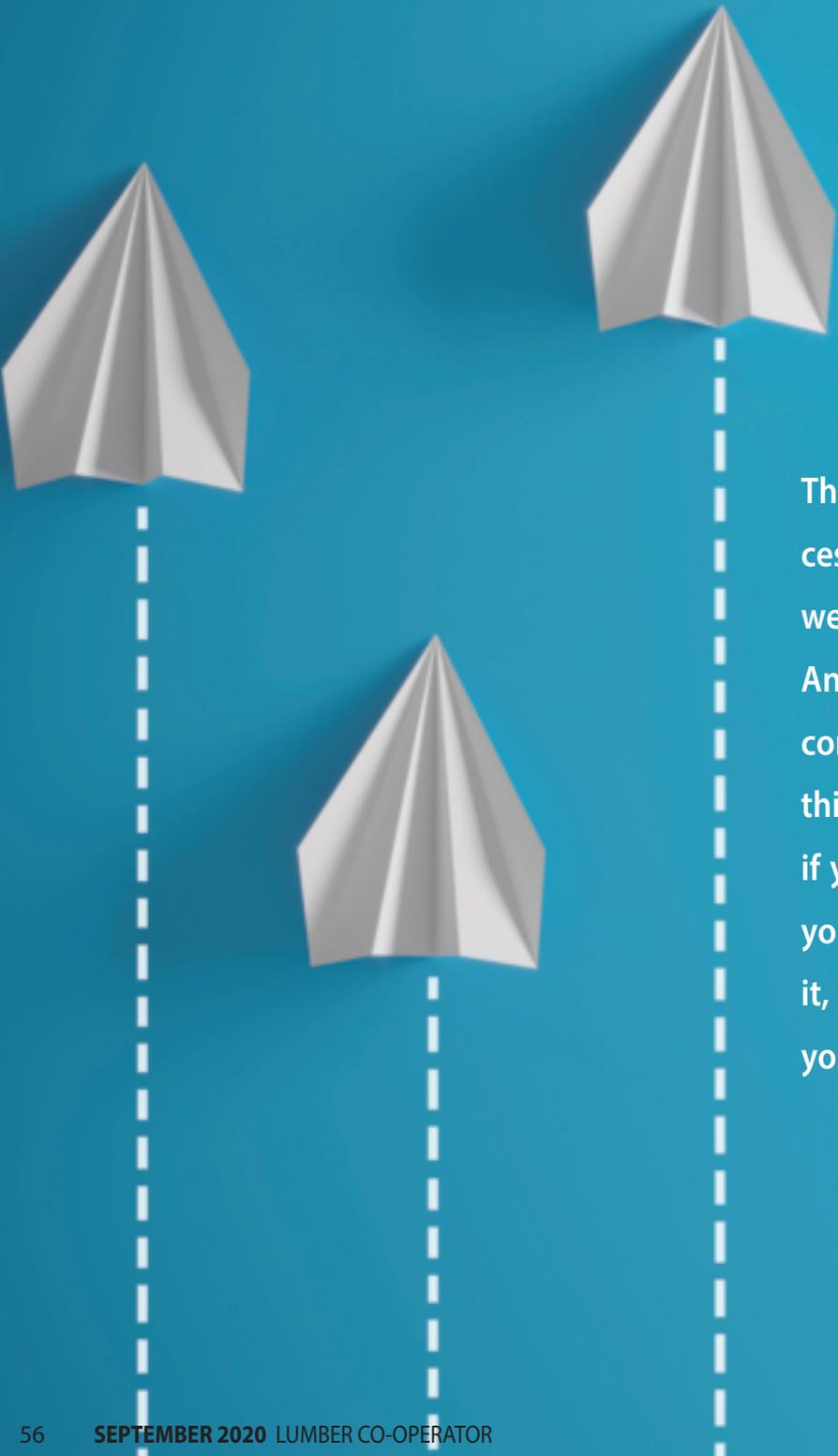
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Change Is Not Only Good, *but Necessary*

By Brian Charon



The most dangerous threat to a successful business is the “that’s the way we have always done it” mentality. Any good leader can tell you that the competition is always trying to out-think you and out-perform you. And, if you don’t constantly reassess what you’re doing and how you’re doing it, you’re bound to be left behind by your competition.

Right now, you're most likely nodding your head in agreement; what sound-minded person would disagree? We all know that innovation and execution is essential to growing your business. For example, just 15 years ago, having a GPS in your truck was a groundbreaking innovation, whereas now it is commonplace and critical to your logistical success. Had your company not made this change, you would have lost business to perhaps less expensive competitors that outperformed you with delivery time and reliability simply because of that GPS.

Now, to make you sweat a little. It's probably fair to say that, after payroll and inventory, your company-sponsored health insurance is your largest expense. If you're like the average company, your premiums are expected to increase an average of 8% per year due to "health trend," which is defined as the expected increase in cost and utilization to provide health care services year over year, according to the carriers. Some years are more, and others are less, but premiums tend to follow trend over time. Now, what if I told you that some of your competitors have found a way to lower their health insurance costs and maintain those costs year after year? As your premiums are consistently going up, it won't be long before those competitors wield a distinct cost and employee recruitment advantage.

The good news is that there is still time to catch up to your competition if you start thinking differently and are willing to make a change from the status quo. I have been in the employee benefits business for more than 25 years, and throughout this time, the health insurance carriers have been telling us that "health care trend" is the reason for premium increases. But then they say, "Don't worry, we have a new product that can help," or "This new program will bend the trend line." For one year, you may get a little relief, but trend always seems to come back.

I believe that trend could be managed down to a level that is consistent with regular inflation if the carriers were interested in controlling your costs. Even with all these new programs, health insurance premiums have increased by more than 200% since 2000, and the average employee out-of-pocket expense has more than quadrupled during this time. I have seen enough of these new programs to know that you can't rely on an insurance carrier to control your cost.

So, as an employer, what can you do? First, you have to find an advisor that won't accept the status quo. If your broker tells you, "the renewal came in at 11% but the good news is that we got it down to 5%," you should find a new broker. The answer should be, "5% is too much of an increase, but if you're willing to put in some effort, our firm can show you a way to lower your cost." Most importantly, you need to determine if your broker/advisor is part of the problem or part of the solution.

Second, be open to new ideas. Don't limit your option to the brand-name, fully insured carriers; remember—they are the ones that got you here in the first place. For example, we have a client who told us for years not to mention self-funding, as it just wasn't something, they were interested in. We respectfully brought it up anyway because that's our job, and we knew from experience that self-funding would be their best option. They are currently two years into a self-funded captive, and during that time they saved over \$1,100,000 or 27% of overall spend. We are not afraid to have the tough conversation, or to suggest out-of-the box solutions; that is our job as brokers/advisors.

Third, understand the Cost & Funding Spectrum. You need to spend time learning about risk management and alternative funding programs before renewal time—if you're waiting until renewal to learn about these, it is probably too late. Your advisor should be training you and your team on risk-based programs like Level Funding, Self-Funded Captives, and ASO, or on employee-directed programs like ICHRA.

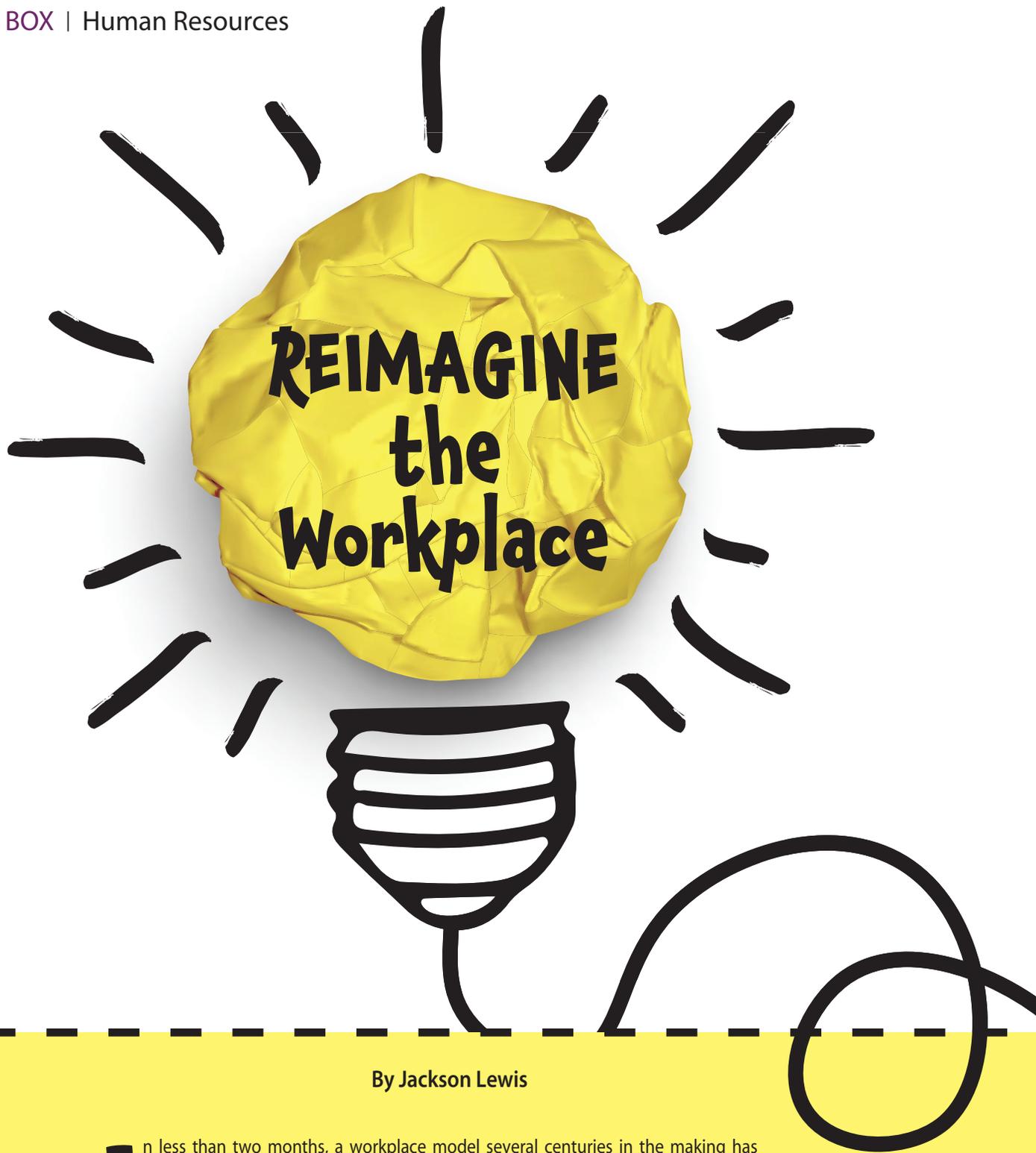
Four, develop a strategic plan. Set a goal for a few years out as to where you want you and your employees to be. You probably won't fix everything in just one year, but you will be on your way. Your long-term plan should be designed to move you toward your goal with each new plan year.

Fifth, and final. Be brave and execute. Inaction can be very expensive for you and your employees. Lean on your TRUSTED broker/advisor to keep you informed, answer your questions, and be your partner. 

About the author:

Brian Charon is a senior vice president at Eastern Benefits Group and leads Eastern's health insurance partnership with the NRLA. If you have questions, you can contact Brian at bcharon@easternbenefitsgroup.com.





REIMAGINE the Workplace

By Jackson Lewis

In less than two months, a workplace model several centuries in the making has been rendered essentially extinct in the U.S. and globally. No single business leader or government entity has enough firsthand experience with a global pandemic to be able to say with assurance when, if ever, the way we work will resemble pre-COVID-19 business operations. COVID-19 has impacted all of us, regardless of industry, location, or employer size. Employers are faced with adopting a more agile operational structure and managerial approach ready to respond to change, both medical and governmental, at a moment's notice. While getting back to business will look different for each of us, we are committed to providing guidance on the real-life and practical implications of how to make that possible. Keep up to date with the latest available information and resources on the next page.

REIMAGINE Your Workplace: Get Started

It is an understatement to say that the range of workplace, compliance, and business issues you will deal with going forward are very different from those that occupied your mind in February 2020.

The following checklist represents a high-level overview of issues to guide your thinking about how to re-open most effectively while mitigating your business and compliance risks.

Reopening orders contain extensive requirements creating compliance issues that can vary significantly depending on the specific state or local jurisdiction. Our Jackson Lewis team is closely monitoring updates and changes to legal requirements and guidance and is available to help employers weed through the complexities involved with state-specific or multistate-compliant plans.

1. Develop a Return to Work Plan

- Consider reopening and other orders specific to your state and/or county
- Procure supplies and make workplace modifications required for safe operations
- Identify individuals who will be brought back to work using neutral selection criteria
- Identify those who can continue to work remotely; consider more formal telework plans
- Determine changes to exempt status, compensation, and schedules (e.g., staggered shifts)
- Consider workshare and unemployment insurance implications
- Determine updates that must be made to I-9 Employment Verification Forms and E-Verify
- Anticipate unique needs of various vulnerable employee populations
- Notify employees of return to work with established dates and, if they were terminated, rehire documents

2. Implement Policies and Practices to Ensure Safe and Lawful Return to Work and New Operating Realities

- COVID-19-related protocols (screenings, medical inquiries, temperature checks, fitness for duty, use of personal protective equipment (PPE), modified work practices to enhance social distancing, and address infection control)
- Prepare/update existing policies to address new laws related to use of leave and/or accommodations (FFCRA leaves, state/city-mandated supplemental sick leaves)
- Develop policies related to off-duty conduct
- Impose appropriate limits on business travel (domestic and international), in-person meetings, seating proximity
- Train employees on new policies, protocols, and rules
- Consider job description updates to reflect changes in job duties and essential job functions

- Consider how to adhere to regulations on changes in terms and/or conditions of employment for any employees on temporary visas
- Update immigration sponsorship policies to account for new business realities
- Create business continuity plan(s)

3. Anticipate Responses to COVID-19-Related Scenarios Upon Employees' Return to Work

- Whether an employee's health, contacts, or behaviors raise safety concerns
- Employee leave requests for school closures, illness, to care for others or because they are or live with an individual in a vulnerable population
- Employees who are capable of but unwilling to work from home
- Employees who are asked to report to work but prefer to and are able to work from home
- Employees who share rumors or concerns of employees or customers being sick
- Employees requesting information about another's (employee/customer) health condition
- Employees engaging in collective or other protected activity
- Non-exempt employees emailing and/or working outside normal business hours 

About the author:

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Texting In Business: It's Here To Stay

By Brian Moses

Sending text messages is a part of our daily lives outside the workplace, but in the last 10 years, texting has made the jump to business. Whether you want to believe it or not, texting with your customers is currently happening between your employees and contractors, but are you missing out?

As we know, most builders do not spend much time in their home office and are always on the go. Today when they travel to different jobsites, one of the only constants is the phone in their pocket and that is their most prized possession. Their phone contains their banking information, email, contacts, calendar, and camera. It is their mobile workstation and best tool in their bag.

As business owners and operators we realized that our outside and inside sales team members were receiving daily text messages from customers with orders, questions, and photos. Everyone, whether they were in the office or not, was having to respond and if they were out of the office, having to call in to check on delivery, stock, or an outstanding order. The line between business and personal was getting more blurred. We made the decision in January of this year to enable our landline to receive text messages by implementing a web-based texting platform to receive and send messages.

With a texting platform you may see some changes right away. One, your employees will no longer use their cell phones to communicate with customers and two, your customer will receive a faster response with more accurate information. By enabling your landline with a texting platform, text messages to that number will go directly to your inside sales team who can answer them, like an email, with accurate and up-to-date information. Quick and accurate information is key to good customer service. Using their phone, contractors will send in photos to clarify specific products, report damage, or send you a list of materials needed on a piece of cardboard. They will do that because you have made it easy to do business with and texting does not require a mobile app or login on the customer end.

Ease of communication is a good reason to consider using a texting platform for your business, but why else? Top roofing supply companies in the industry are currently using texting platforms successfully with their customers, which tells us this has been tested and proven at the Fortune 500 level. You most likely share the same customers who may now expect you to be able to text a question or order. Another reason, and what I consider the most important one, is business continuity when your employee leaves. Unless you own your employees phone number and give it to your next hire, the next time they get a text with an order, they will most likely write that order up for their new employer. Ensuring those texts stay with you is important.

Web-based texting platforms offer a subscription model meaning you will pay monthly, annually, or per message. For example, you can pay a flat rate for unlimited texts in and out or a per message rate based on outgoing messages. If you have multiple locations, this might mean multiple phone numbers enabled for texting which increases your cost. You should look for a platform that allows your team to login through an internet browser on their desktop and enable pop-up notifications when a message is received so you can quickly reply. The platform should allow you to send and receive photos and documents which will allow you to send order acknowledgements, credit memos, and invoices through text message. 

About the Author:

Brian Moses is 29 and works for his family business, Britton Lumber Company, out of Fairlee, Vt. Brian primarily works in outside sales but oversees Britton's enterprising software and I.T. You can text Britton Lumber at 802-333-4388 and ask for Brian who is willing to offer guidance on I.T. solutions.



We have missed seeing all of our generous sponsors this year, but we are looking forward to a great 2021!

Thank you for your support!

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RILBMDA Awards Memorial Scholarships

The Rhode Island Lumber and Building Material Dealers Association (RILBMDA) is proud to congratulate its 2020 Memorial Scholarship recipients! Five \$2,000 scholarships have been awarded to students pursuing post-secondary education. Additionally, one \$1,000 continuing education scholarship was awarded to an employee of an RILBMDA retail member company.

The RILBMDA Memorial Scholarships are named for the late William "Jay" Humphrey and David R. Beattie, who were industry leaders and recognized for their commitment to education, community, and the RILBMDA. The RILBMDA offers college scholarships to students within their membership who display academic excellence, strong citizenship, positive character, and a desire to make a meaningful contribution to society. The RILBMDA hopes to encourage recipients to continue their education and be active role models and leaders in their respective fields and communities.

Unable to recognize the recipients in person at this time, RILBMDA will be honoring all recipients at the Holiday Party/Annual Meeting on November 20, at the Marriott Providence Downtown.

2020 scholarship recipients and sponsoring company:

Emma Becker—Emma's father, Kenneth Becker, works for Humphrey's Building Supply. Emma will be a senior at URI majoring in Theatre.

Andrew Carlson—Andrew's father, Bob Carlson, works for Arnold Lumber. Andrew will be a senior at Northeastern University majoring in Management Information Systems.

Isabella Senerchia—Bella's mother, Stephanie Senerchia, works for Arnold Lumber. Bella will be a sophomore at URI majoring in Health Studies.

Erica Winn—Erica's father, Bill Winn, works for Arnold Lumber. Erica will be a graduate student at Rhode Island College majoring in Secondary Education.

Norman Winn—Norman's father, Bill Winn, works for Arnold Lumber. Norman will be a freshman at URI majoring in Computer Science/Cyber Security.

Continuing Education Scholarship:

George Cairns III—George works for Arnold Lumber and is enrolled at Providence College studying Engineering. 

RILBMDA Scholarship Committee

The RILBMDA would like to thank its dedicated Scholarship Committee: Chair, Denise Gabriele (Arnold Lumber (non-voting), Jay Pires (BlueLinX), Jessica Miniter (Scituate Lumber), Brian White (Coastal Forest Products), Tony Jarvis (Arnold Lumber), Maria Fratiello (National Lumber Company), Chris Kowalsick (Riverhead Building Supply), Steve Carlino Jr. (Douglas Lumber), Ryan Finnegan (Coventry Lumber), Dave Catlett (Holbrook Lumber), Steve Carreira (Humphrey's Building Supply), and Ray Angell (L. Sweet Lumber).

MRLDA Awards \$20,000 in Scholarships

The Massachusetts Retail Lumber Dealers Association (MRLDA) is proud to once again award 20 \$1,000 merit scholarships. The scholarships are given in support of the following educational pursuits: 1. associate's, bachelor's, or master's degrees, 2. vocational or trade school training, or 3. continuing education (5-years post-second-

ary), including vocational, degree, or certificate programs. To be eligible, a student must be an employee or family member (child, grandchild, sibling, parent, or spouse) of an employee who works for a retail or associate member in good standing with the MRLDA. Associate members must be headquartered in Massachusetts. 

The MRLDA would like to thank all those who applied this year and congratulate the recipients listed here:

Christopher Burak
Moynihan Lumber

Marina Caspe
Marine Home Center

Bailey Conkey
National Lumber

Strickland Davis
Goodrich Lumber

Shannon Geneseo
National Lumber

Madeline Green
Koopman Lumber

Elijah Green
Koopman Lumber

Jenna Harrison
Mozzone Lumber

Mollie Jasper
Koopman Lumber

Peter Johnson
Koopman Lumber

Rachel Manning
Fairview Millwork

Jackson Milne
Marine Lumber Company

Alexsandra Muise
Building Center

Chelsea Murray
Koopman Lumber

Shannon Murray
Koopman Lumber

Shannon Parr
Chelmsford Lumber

Caroline Pozerski
National Lumber

Kaden Rogers
Conwell Lumber

Anna Rozzi
Jackson Lumber & Millwork

Michael Stanley
Marine Home Center

OSHA Safety Grant Training at Medina Lumber

Medina Lumber takes advantage of NRLA's OSHA Safety Grant Program. Dan (The OSHA Man) Harrison trained owner Tom Snyder to be a forklift certification trainer, among other things—all while practicing social distancing. 



ENYLDA and WNYLDA Masks for Members

In supporting their members through the COVID pandemic, the two associations each purchased 1,000 masks to be distributed to employees and customers. NRLA Regional Directors Tammy Wandler-Ginexi and Steve Ciccone personally delivered the masks, accompanied by a letter thanking sponsors during the COVID reopening period to all retail members (17 ENYLDA members and 39 WNYLDA members, respectively). While the ENYLDA masks were badged with their association logo, the WNYLDA masks donned the logos of their top-level sponsors. It was a welcomed gift for members and a great example of much appreciated sponsor dollars going to support our dealers. 



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Daniel Klips

Location: Holley, NY

Position: Owner • Stockham Lumber Co.



HOW DID YOU BEGIN YOUR CAREER IN THE LBM INDUSTRY?

My career in the LBM Industry began when I was looking for part time work while attending college. I delivered and worked in the yard for the former owner of Stockham Lumber Co. After graduation I worked as a deputy sheriff for about five years. I still felt a connection to the industry, and this is where I began conversations with my former employer about taking over the business. Although it was difficult, I worked part-time in the store and full time at the sheriff's department for two years. When the transition was complete, I left law enforcement and entered the LBM industry full time.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF YOUR POSITION?

I participate in all aspects of the business from accounting to driving.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES YOU FACE IN YOUR CAREER?

Finding the right people to join the team.

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED SINCE WORKING IN THE INDUSTRY?

Just because someone is a competitor of yours doesn't mean you can't be friendly to one another.

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO ANYONE NEW TO THE INDUSTRY?

Ask questions and don't be afraid to learn. It's amazing how much knowledge is possessed by the veterans of the LBM industry.

WHAT ARE YOUR PASSIONS OUTSIDE OF THE OFFICE?

I enjoy spending time with my family. 

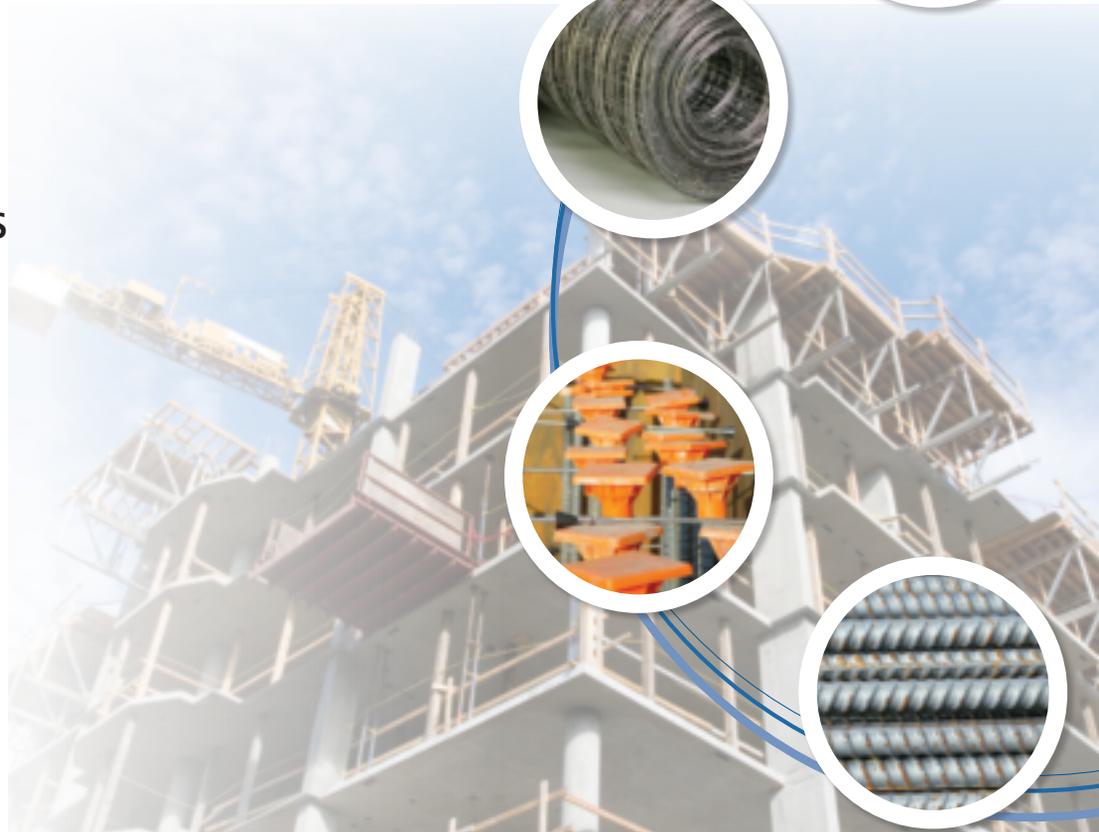
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