

THE ILLINOIS MANUFACTURER

FIRST QUARTER 2022



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VICE PRESIDENT OF STATE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
ARCHER DANIELS MIDLAND COMPANY



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**ILLINOIS
MANUFACTURERS'
ASSOCIATION**

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Illinois Manufacturers' Association is the only statewide association dedicated to boldly moving Illinois' makers forward. The IMA is the oldest and largest state manufacturing trade association in the United States, representing nearly 4,000 companies and facilities.

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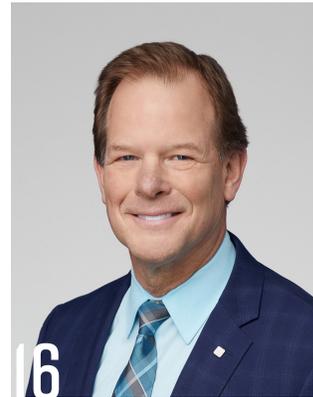
Share Your Company
News with the IMA . . .

News information, press releases and articles may be sent to Sydney Jarrard, Editor and Manager of Publications, Illinois Manufacturers' Association (IMA), 220 East Adams Street, Springfield, IL 62701, or sjarrard@ima-net.org



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ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION

MARK DENZLER, PRESIDENT & CEO



Several weeks ago, I had the privilege of participating virtually in a business roundtable panel at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) that was held in Glasgow, Scotland. Our panel focused on Transatlantic climate cooperation. In 2022, Germany will serve as president of The Group of 7 (G7), an inter-governmental political forum of the leading nations: the United States, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, and the United Kingdom.

The five-member panel included a senior advisor to Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry, a Deputy Director-General from a German Ministry, and representatives from Tesla and Heidelberg Concrete. While the panel focused on working cooperatively to reduce emissions and increase sustainability, I took the opportunity to highlight many of the great accomplishments from the manufacturing sector that often go unnoticed or unappreciated.

Far too many people still have a negative connotation of the manufacturing sector and envision belching smokestacks and dirty, dangerous shop floors. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth. Today's manufacturers are clean, diverse, sustainable, and high-tech. We have a great story to tell about amazing innovation and breakthroughs in efficiency and sustainability.

Since 1990, there is no sector that has reduced its emissions more than the manufacturing sector. Over the last decade alone, American manufacturers have reduced emissions by 21 percent while increasing economic output by 18 percent according to the Energy Information Administration.

I thought about all of the great things that Illinois manufacturers are doing with environmental innovation recently after a discussion with leaders at ADM, which has long been a leader in carbon capture and sequestration. ADM recently announced a partnership with 8 Rivers Capital to locate one of the world's first zero emissions Allam-Fetvedt Cycle power plants in downstate Decatur, the Breeding Clean Energy Complex. This technology which combusts gas with oxygen, as opposed to air, uses supercritical carbon dioxide as a working fluid to drive a turbine instead of steam. It has the potential to displace over one million tons of CO2 per year.

Nearly fifty years ago, Nucor Steel started melting recycled scrap in an electric arc furnace. This was the first commercial-scale furnace in the United States, changing steel production. Today, Nucor, which has a mill in Kankakee, is the largest recycler in the nation. Approximately 70 percent of American-made steel is now produced in electric arc furnaces. These furnaces require less than half the energy to melt a ton of scrap steel and result in significantly lower emissions.

Manufacturers are leading the way forward and have been for many years by utilizing Combined Heat-Power systems, implementing zero waste standards, using renewable energy, retrofitting vehicle fleets, pursuing LEED certification, improving water conservation, and employing other energy efficiency measures. Our sector uses one-third of all energy consumed in the United States, so it is evident that these efficiencies help the environment and companies' bottom line. In addition, the IMA's energy partnership with Constellation is creating a lot of options for companies looking to reduce their carbon footprint or increase efficiencies.

Innovative manufacturers don't just use cutting edge technology – we create it. I hear it nearly every day when I talk to companies who eagerly share the latest news on their recycling efforts or new technologies in their factories. There is no doubt that manufacturers of all shapes and sizes are making smart investments that promote sustainability, reduce emissions, and harness new energy solutions.

Manufacturers have created a great story, and the IMA is committed to telling it. We need to continue reimagining the future, transforming the perception of the industry, and inspiring the next generation of manufacturing leaders. Our nation's success depends on it. ♦

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Denzler". The signature is stylized and fluid, written in a cursive-like style.



ILLINOIS
MANUFACTURERS'
ASSOCIATION

BUSINESS DAY 2022

Wednesday, March 30, 2022 · 701 E Adams St., Springfield

Schedule of Events

11:00am – Registration
Ballroom, DoubleTree Hotel

Noon – Luncheon & Program
Ballroom, DoubleTree Hotel

2:00-5:00pm – Lobby Your Legislator
State Capitol (this subject to change due to
COVID restrictions at the capitol)

5:00-8:00pm – Gala Reception
Ballroom, DoubleTree Hotel
(must provide ticket to enter)

Attendees must be fully vaccinated or show proof of negative test within 72 hours. All relevant City and State masking requirements will be followed.

Sponsorship Opportunities

PLATINUM SPONSOR – \$10,000

Includes your company name on promotional materials, one ad in packet, and 20 registrations to events

GOLD SPONSOR – \$5,000

Includes your company name on promotional materials, one ad in packet, and 10 registrations to events

SILVER SPONSOR – \$2,500

Includes your company name on promotional materials, one ad in packet, and 5 registrations to events

BRONZE SPONSOR – \$1,000

Includes your company name on promotional materials, and 2 registrations to events

SUPPORTER – \$500

Includes your company name on promotional materials, and one registration to events

INDIVIDUAL REGISTRATION – \$175

Cancellations must be made in writing and received by March, 18, 2022. Refunds will not be made after that date.

HOTEL INFORMATION -For hotel reservations, call the President Abraham Lincoln Springfield - A DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel at (866) 788-1860 and ask for the IMA rate, or visit <https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/ilmanufacturersassociation/>
• Discounted rates are only available until March 8, 2022. •

For questions regarding Business Day, contact **Christine Sisk** at (217) 718-4213, or csisk@ima-net.org

REGISTER ONLINE AT
www.ima-net.org/business-day/

Thank you to our sponsors:



NEW ILLINOIS LAWS IN 2022

DONOVAN GRIFFITH, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS



The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic did not slow down Illinois legislators who filed more than 7,000 bills in 2021. While many of those bills did not pass, several did that could have an impact on Illinois businesses. The following laws will either take effect or make an impact on industry in 2022:

Statewide Minimum Wage Increase: On January 1, 2022, the Illinois minimum wage increased from \$11.00 an hour to \$12.00 an hour. This is the fourth of seven increases that will occur until the minimum wage in Illinois reaches \$15.00 an hour on January 1, 2025. The IMA opposed the minimum wage increase and, along with others in the business community, offered reasonable solutions to help mitigate the impact including a geographic wage and a more robust tax credit for small employers. Unfortunately, Democratic lawmakers still pushed through this staple to Governor Pritzker's agenda early in his first term.

Here are the following dates for future minimum wage tax increases:

• January 1, 2022	\$1.00 increase	\$12.00
• January 1, 2023	\$1.00 increase	\$13.00
• January 1, 2024	\$1.00 increase	\$14.00
• January 1, 2025	\$1.00 increase	\$15.00

As a reminder, as part of the minimum wage increase, the Illinois Legislature approved a limited income tax credit for businesses with 50 or fewer full-time employees. The Illinois Department of Revenue has recently published a guidance for employers who wish to claim the tax credit.

Net Operating Loss Extension: As a vital component of the Reimagining Electric Vehicles (REV) in Illinois Act, which was championed by the IMA to incentivize economic growth in Illinois by expanding the electric vehicle and battery manufacturing industry, Illinois' net operating loss deduction regulations were amended. For tax periods ending on or after December 31, 2021 and for any net loss incurred in a tax year ending on or after December 31, 2021 for which the statute of limitations has not run, entities claim the NOL credit over a 20-year period versus a 12-year period. However, the amount that can be claimed in a given year was capped by Governor Pritzker last year at \$100,000. The \$100,000 cap is set to expire December 31, 2024.

Unvested Equity: An IMA initiative allowing employers to verify certain benefits of job applicants passed the General Assembly this session and was signed into law as P.A. 102-0277. Currently, when an applicant for a job informs a potential employer of unvested equity or deferred compensation, they may lose by leaving their current job, and they ask that potential employer to match those incentives, there is no way for the potential employer to confirm those benefits actually exist due to restrictions put into place in Illinois' equal pay and privacy laws. With this new law that went into effect on January 1, 2022, when a job applicant voluntarily discloses that they have deferred compensation or unvested equity they would lose and would like matched, the potential employer has the ability to confirm the aggregate amount of that benefit with the applicant's current employer.

Labeling Laws: With heavy involvement from the IMA, two new laws passed last year that will go into effect on July 1, 2022, dealing with labeling. One of the new laws requires "Do Not Flush" logos on non-flushable wipes, along with requirements on the size, placement and contrast of the logo. This legislation stems from the issue of consumers flushing non-flushable wipes and causing issues for the wastewater industry. This issue grew during the pandemic as more and more consumers purchased and used sanitation wipes and substitutions for toilet paper during shortages. The second law provides that an oral drug is misbranded if gluten is included as an inactive ingredient and is not listed on its label. The bill originally called for a gluten warning, but through discussions involving the IMA, the warning was dropped in favor of having gluten simply listed as an ingredient. The IMA often advocates for labeling changes to be made on a national scale, not on a state-by-state basis, in order to avoid creating a patchwork of regulations that would vary from state to state and would be difficult to manage.

Shareholder Meetings: The IMA, along with IMA member companies, helped to champion legislation that allows a corporation to determine whether shareholder meetings should be held remotely or physically. After over a year of working in and adjusting to life with COVID-19, corporations are needing modernized regulations to allow them to continue to operate during times when physical contact is not possible or not advised due to potential health risks. This law goes into effect in 2021.

While these are just a few laws that might impact Illinois businesses, there are always more bills being filed. Ensuring that legislators with Illinois manufacturers' best interest in mind is important. With a new legislative map shaping the coming election, every seat in the Illinois General Assembly will be on the ballot, and there is a unique, once-per-decade opportunity to make sweeping changes to Illinois' political landscape. Consider backing those legislators in the upcoming primary election. ♦



YOU DESERVE THE BEST

IT'S TIME TO MAKE THE CALL.

You work hard for your business. We work hard for you. Our state-of-the-art used oil and antifreeze services are closed-loop processes specifically designed to keep your work zone and the environment safe and free of harmful waste. Our team of first-class, highly skilled experts know how to get the job done fast and maintain the highest level of safety and full environmental compliance. Don't wait another day. For your free quote, please contact Dean Popovich at 877-938-7948. With over 20 years experience in the environmental service industry, Heritage-Crystal Clean is the name over 90,000 customers trust to get the job done right.



THE ILLINOIS UNCLAIMED PROPERTY SELF-AUDIT PROGRAM:

HMB LEGAL COUNSEL



The Illinois Treasurer, which is the state agency that administers Illinois' unclaimed property laws, recently sent letters to many Illinois businesses notifying them that they were the subject of an unclaimed property self-audit. These letters raise many questions. We have answers.

LET'S START WITH AN EASY ONE. WHAT EXACTLY IS UNCLAIMED PROPERTY?

Unclaimed or "abandoned" property is property or accounts held by companies or financial institutions for which there has been no activity or contact with the "owner" regarding the property for a specified period of time (at least one year). After the designated period of time (referred to as the "dormancy period") with no activity or contact by the owner, the property becomes unclaimed, and the "holder" (the company or financial institution) is legally required to turn the property over to the appropriate state. Unclaimed property can be tangible or intangible, and it includes a

variety of items such as uncashed payroll or dividend checks, customer overpayments, contents of safe deposit boxes, and unredeemed money orders or gift cards.

LET'S START WITH AN EASY ONE. WHAT EXACTLY IS UNCLAIMED PROPERTY?

Even if you are not currently contemplating. Illinois originally adopted its Unclaimed Property Act ("Act") in 1961 and the Act has since been amended at various times.

HAVE THERE BEEN RECENT CHANGES TO THE ACT?

As a matter of fact, the Illinois General Assembly significantly amended the Act in 2017. The 2017 changes include:

- The business-to-business exemption was eliminated. Illinois was previously one of only four states with a business-to-business exemption.
- It reduced the dormancy period for many types of property from five years

to three years.

- It adopted a 10-year statute of limitations for any property included in a report.
- It adopted a "transitional provision" that effectively made the new property report requirements retroactive for a five-year period.
- It specifically authorized the Treasurer to contract with third parties to perform audits and to participate in multi-state examinations.
- It adopted a 10-year record retention requirement, which allows the Treasurer to use a "reasonable method of estimation" for holders that do not retain the required records.

ARE THERE SPECIFIC PROPERTY TYPES THAT MANUFACTURERS SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT?

In addition to the other examples already mentioned, manufacturers should also be concerned about commission payments, vendor checks, accounts receivable credit balances and workers' compensation.

SO IF UNCLAIMED PROPERTY IS NOT A LARGE SOURCE OF REVENUE FOR ILLINOIS, DOES THAT MEAN THAT MANUFACTURERS DO NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT AN AUDIT BY THE TREASURER?

Definitely not – and in fact, it’s quite the opposite. The Illinois Treasurer has strong reasons to believe that many holders, including manufacturers, are not in compliance with Illinois unclaimed property laws, including the significant amendments adopted in 2017. For this reason, the Treasurer recently launched a self-audit program. In July, the Treasurer sent letters to a number of Illinois based businesses to alert them that they might have unclaimed property obligations that have not been properly reported. These letters ask the businesses to identify and pay all unreported unclaimed property within 90 days. The letters also noted that the Treasurer has contracted with Kelmar Associates, a private audit firm, to assist with the self-audit program. The Treasurer is expected to issue another round of these letters by the end of 2021.

WOW. THAT SOUNDS SERIOUS. IS THIS A TYPICAL AUDIT?

No. Technically, it is a self-audit. It is also not a voluntary disclosure agreement because the Treasurer has specifically identified certain holders that it believes are not in full compliance with Illinois unclaimed property laws.

HOW EXACTLY DID THE TREASURER IDENTIFY THESE HOLDERS?

The Treasurer generally identified three types of holders for the self-audit program:

- Holders who never filed annual unclaimed property reports.
- Holders who inconsistently filed an-

nual unclaimed property reports; and

- Holders who filed unclaimed property report but not for all property categories typical of the holder’s industry (including manufacturing).

Based on anecdotal evidence, virtually every company that has been contacted so far is a sizeable business based in Illinois.

SO THERE IS A 90-DAY PERIOD TO COMPLETE THE SELF-AUDIT. IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET AN EXTENSION? AND WHAT IF A COMPANY IGNORES ONE OF THESE LETTERS?

As long as a company acknowledges the self-audit notice and indicates a willingness to participate in the program, the Treasurer has generally granted a 6-month extension to perform the necessary review of records. As far as what will happen to a company that ignores the self-audit notice... it is hard to say at this point, but it would not be a surprise if the Treasurer engages a third-party to perform a full-blown audit of the company.

SO LET’S SAY I’M A MANUFACTURER THAT RECEIVES A SELF-AUDIT NOTICE. NOW WHAT DO I DO?

There are several things that you need to do. The first is to identify the unclaimed property types that are relevant for a manufacturer and the associated accounts where those properties reside. This will likely require a discussion with various departments, including treasury, accounting, finance, accounts payable and accounts receivable. It will be necessary to review the general ledger to determine relevant property types such as payroll, accounts payable and receivables. It will also be necessary to understand how the company handles stale dated items within each of these accounts.

After the various unclaimed property types have been identified, it will be necessary to review disbursement records to isolate those transactions that could result in unreported unclaimed property. This will require a review of check registers or third-party bank documentation to identify stale dated checks. Checks that are voided after a certain date are included in the unclaimed property population. It will also be necessary to review accounts receivable aging reports to identify aged credit balances that remain on the company’s books.

After the potential unclaimed property population is identified, it is then necessary to research the disposition of each transaction to determine whether the property is in fact unclaimed. For example, if a voided check is identified, it will be necessary to determine whether there is documentation to show that the check was issued in error or otherwise resolved through a different payment. Likewise, for accounts receivable, there might be documentation to show that a credit was posted in error. The burden is on the holder to produce the necessary documentation to remove an item of unclaimed property from the overall population.

Finally – and this applies not only to the self-audit, but to routine unclaimed property compliance as well - it is necessary to locate and notify the owners of the unclaimed property through issuance of what are called due diligence letters. The Treasurer has issued rules setting forth what must be included in a due diligence letter, including identifying the nature and value of the property along with a statement that the property will be turned over to the state.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE THAT A HOLDER SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE SELF-AUDIT PROGRAM?

If you receive a notice, please do not ignore it. A self-audit is far preferable to a third-party audit. ♦



CONTEMPORARY CONTROLS: ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURING IS ALIVE IN ILLINOIS

Contemporary Controls is headquartered in Downers Grove, a suburb 22 miles west of Chicago, and has been a supplier of network, integration, and control products since 1975. The company is a long-standing member of the IMA and IPC, a global association (headquartered in Illinois) for electronics manufacturers and suppliers.

According to the Chicago Historical Society, by the early 60s the Chicago area made nearly half of the consumer electronics goods produced in the United States, and area companies such as Zenith, Admiral, and Motorola were widely recognized as industry leaders. George Thomas, founder and president of Contemporary Controls, remembers this well. As a young electronics technician working at the digital instrumentation lab at Motorola's consumer products division in Franklin Park, Illinois, he helped to develop automotive test equipment for Motorola's television sets and automobile radio products.

"Consumer electronics manufacturing slipped away from Chicago," says Thomas, "but it doesn't mean electronics manufacturing is gone in Illinois.

Thomas earned his BSEE and later his MSEE from the Illinois Institute of Technology with help from Motorola's tuition reimbursement program. Then in 1975, Thomas started Contemporary Control Systems, Inc. as an engineering firm looking for applications for a newly developed microprocessor. (The microprocessor was introduced to the electronics industry by Intel in the early 1970s.)

Today, Contemporary Controls remains a leading manufacturer of network, integration, and control equipment for the building, energy, and industrial automation industries, with a focus beyond Illinois to supply "Made in USA" products worldwide. The company's resilience can be seen through its ability to adapt to the changing technologies, customer requirements and worldwide marketplace.

Contemporary Controls was born in George Thomas' rec room with a home-made microprocessor and help from his wife, Judy. While working with the Intel microprocessor, Thomas realized that it had great potential for control and monitoring applications. He saw a business opportunity.

"I purchased the Intel 8080 microprocessor for \$360, which was a small ransom at the time," said Thomas. Thomas developed the first microprocessor-based computing ratiometer for the textile industry to measure web tension—by monitoring the speeds—of cascaded pull rolls. "I designed the units, my colleague wrote the software code, and my wife helped wire them. She never did that again."

Though she never wired circuit boards again, Judy Thomas

worked for the company in many capacities, and recently retired from her marketing communication role in 2013. Their daughter, Kathleen Thomas, joined the company in 2005 as Judy's marketing assistant and is currently Contemporary Controls' digital marketing coordinator.

By 1982, the company migrated to manufacturing, growing to eight employees. By 1987, they had expanded the facility three times with 42 employees designing and assembling products.

Contemporary Controls grew further to establish itself as a world-wide supplier and manufacturer. In 1997, Contemporary Controls established Contemporary Controls Ltd. in the UK. In 2002, the company expanded to Germany and China, with additional manufacturing in the China facility for high-volume, low-mix production. These four locations currently serve the Americas, Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), and Asia-Pacific (APAC).

Today, incorporating automation to maximize productivity, Contemporary Controls' employs 54 employees worldwide. With manufacturing facilities that are ISO9001:2015 certified and under UL surveillance, its products support systems integrators, contractors, mechanical and controls original equipment manufacturers seeking simple and reliable products from a dependable source.

Contemporary Controls is especially known in the heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) industry as a manufacturer and worldwide supplier of high-quality building automation and control network (BACnet) products. The BACnet protocol provides industry standards for the communication and expansion of building automation and control systems for applications such as HVAC, lighting control, access control, fire detection systems, and their associated equipment.

The benefits of manufacturing in the U.S. have become more apparent as supply chain disruptions reverberate through the global economy. Industries rebounding from the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic closures are now struggling with shipping delays, material shortages, and increasing costs. Onshore manufacturing gives U.S. companies a strategic advantage compared to companies who manufacture overseas.

"The impact of these supply chain disruptions and material shortages are significantly reduced when you self-manufacture," said Thomas, "Localized production eliminates steps in the supply chain, quite simply, by reducing the physical distance between a supplier and their U.S.-based customers."

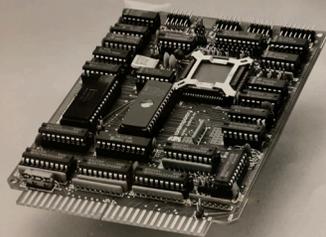
During the pandemic induced shutdowns, Contemporary Controls' HVAC control products were deemed essential in the



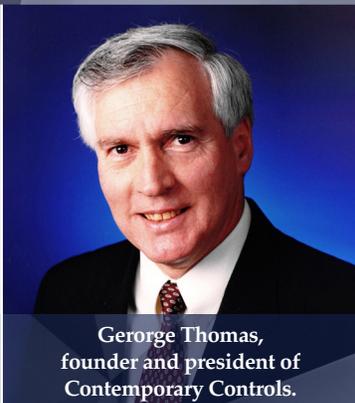
A PCBA for a BA Cnet-compliant air handler manufactured at Contemporary Controls' Downers Grove, IL facility in 2021 using SMT technology.



A PCBA used as a communication gateway manufactured at Contemporary Controls' Downers Grove, IL facility in 2021 using SMT technology.



A through-hole PCBA for an STD BUS manufactured circa 1986 with an Intel 80188 microprocessor.



George Thomas, founder and president of Contemporary Controls.



An inside look at a Contemporary Controls' SMT placement machine that is currently used for production.



The first-microprocessor-based computing ratiometer, developed by Contemporary Controls in 1975.

operations and safety of hospitals and urgent care facilities.

"With the manufacturing process in place, we were able to remain fully operational throughout the pandemic and deliver these products when and where they were needed most."

Electronics have evolved drastically over the years, and Contemporary Controls' manufacturing capabilities have evolved with it. In the 1980s, the company used what was then state-of-the-art technology, hand wiring circuit boards to printed circuit board (PCB) designs utilizing through-hole integrated circuits. Today, the facility is equipped with a multi-function Surface Mount Technology (SMT) process line that creates lead-free, high-density printed circuit board assemblies (PCBAs). The SMT line produces designs with 0402 (1.00mm x 0.50mm) capacitors and resistors supporting 256-pin quad flat pack (QFP) and 337-pin ball grid array (BGA) integrated circuit package types for microcontrollers and microprocessors. These PCBAs are then installed into their enclosures, tested, and stored in their final packaging in an environmentally-controlled warehouse, ready for worldwide shipment.

"Having the entire process, from design and software engineers to manufacturing and shipping, enables us to adapt quickly to the changing times while satisfying the demand of our customers," said Manufacturing Supervisor at Contemporary Controls.

The company also provides original design manufacturing (ODM) services to design and develop proprietary application-ready products for ODM customers.

"We design and manufacture our own products, but we also function as an ODM to provide just-in-time manufacturing where we adapt our technology to a customer's needs and manufacture the resulting product under their brand," said Thomas. "Having our R&D department in the same facility as our production line means we can offer end-to-end engineering solutions to our customers."

Products manufactured at its IL headquarters are certified "Made in USA" per the Buy American Act (BAA). "We are encouraged that many of our Latin American customers prefer to buy 'Made in USA' products," said Thomas. Contemporary Controls follows the rules of origin as stated in the United States - Mexico - Canada (USMCA) trade agreement act (TAA) to ensure their "Made in USA" products comply with international law.

"Business is up, and product orders are flooding in, but now we are dealing with shipping backlogs, and are struggling with component availability," said Thomas. "Like most electronics manufac-

turers in the U.S., many of the parts we use to build these products come from overseas."

"It's been a struggle to import components but being able to manufacture in-house has been an advantage for us. It eliminates the extra time and cost to ship products manufactured overseas. It also allows for in-house oversight of quality."

"We've had to get creative. For example, we utilized our China subsidiary to help us broaden our search and locate some components that we needed for our IL manufacturing line," said Joe Stasiak, sales manager at Contemporary Controls since 2002. "Our customers are used to a high standard of service and support. We've always maintained stock levels to anticipate our customers' needs for high-demand products, such as our Ethernet switches and routers."

In response to the pandemic, Contemporary Controls is constantly reassessing and adapting to meet customer requirements by modifying their product line to address customer needs, further increasing safety stock levels to better anticipate future orders, expanding transportation methods used to receive parts, and increasing the use of air shipments to reduce shipping bottlenecks.

"With many employees working from home offices, we have seen an increase in demand for products that provide secure, remote access to job sites," said Harpartap Parmar, Senior Product Manager and 20-year veteran at Contemporary Controls. "We've expanded our product line for virtual private network (VPN) solutions to provide secure access to remote job sites while giving systems integrators the flexibility to monitor and maintain systems from the convenience of their home or office."

Nowadays, keeping items in stock can be a challenge. "Our primary goal is to support our customers and minimize the impact these issues have on their ability to conduct business. Air shipments are a more expensive mode of delivery," said Joe Stasiak, sales manager at Contemporary Controls. "But we know first-hand that a shortage of just one component can stop you from completing a product build."

"Manufacturing in Illinois is a vital part of the state's economy," said Thomas. "While current component shortages present challenges, our manufacturing and ODM capabilities have positioned us to weather these current challenges. Our ability to design, test, and build under one roof makes us more self-reliant and competitive in the global market." ♦

ZEROING IN ON CONTROLLABLE FACTORS OF ENERGY PRICE: WHAT YOU CAN START DOING TODAY

CONSTELLATION

What is the best way to buy energy that capitalizes on managing both price and risk? There are several considerations that play into an energy-purchasing decision, including appetite for risk and the amount of time to allocate to the buying process.

Energy users within competitive retail markets should take advantage of the benefits available to them, including choosing their energy supplier, such as Constellation, and the ability to structure their electricity procurement strategies in a way that can capitalize on both price and risk.

Uncontrollable vs. Controllable Factors

Many different factors can affect the price of energy, including uncontrollable factors and controllable factors. Uncontrollable factors include weather, the economy and other difficult-to-predict market factors like the shale revolution, which has increased gas production, surpassing demand and lowering energy prices across the board.

However, an important controllable factor that customers should consider is the structure of their power supply contract.

Consumers in competitive markets can select power contracts that range from monthly to annual to multiyear agreements and choose from a range of buying structures. These include “Fixed Price,” “Index” and “Blended” options.

These options have given customers unprecedented flexibility to align their energy cost strategy with corporate goals, budgets, risk tolerance, and fiscal calendars.

What is the Best Buying Structure?

While not all energy purchasing needs are created equal, neither are all power purchasing strategies. Research from Constellation found that certain strategies perform better compared to others, but only in specific market conditions, such as a recession and polar vortex.

The research showed that despite distinctly different market conditions, one truth remains constant: A “blended” strategy is generally the best way to purchase power for most businesses with respect to balancing both price and risk. However, there are market-related events that may impact the trajectory of these figures, including anomalous weather events, such as what was seen in February 2021 with Winter Storm Uri, when prices skyrocketed in Texas and had rippling impacts beyond.

How to Approach Blended Energy Strategies

Each business is unique, and while basing the approach on business needs and goals can be very beneficial, it’s also important to consider risk tolerance, usage patterns and even incorporation of automation.

1. Risk Tolerance

For more accurate budgeting and planning, businesses often prefer to minimize risk. However, there are ways to take advantage of market variations while reducing risk. For example, purchasing a percentage of load at regular intervals over time – known as layering – rather than all at once, provides not only budget predictability but also allows the option of taking advantage of market opportunities.

2. Usage Patterns

When and how a company uses energy is important. Does your business use more energy in the summer or the winter? Is your business a 24/7 operation that uses the same amount of power throughout the day, or is 75 percent of power used during the day?

Answers to these questions help identify ways to take on risk and provide budget certainty in the purchasing approach. Constellation’s Energy Manager application can help you monitor and find patterns in your energy usage, and is available at no charge to customers.

3. Automation

Rather than worrying about whether the right purchasing decision is being made at the right time, some or all of an organization’s power purchasing can be automated. An automated, algorithmic approach can help achieve a more consistent procurement process over time and take the guesswork out of the decision. Constellation’s Minimize Volatile Pricing allows customers to diversify and automate their energy purchasing over time.

Whether or not an automated or manual method is utilized, our analysis demonstrated that it is most beneficial to have at least some portion of load incorporating an index price (i.e., customers would pay a variable index rate like the Day-ahead or Real-time index for their electricity) to ensure the “blended” strategy ultimately pays off both price- and risk-wise.

It is worth considering whether your business’ existing energy purchasing strategy is helping your organization achieve business goals, manage risk and achieve budget certainty. To learn more about our electricity solutions, visit www.constellation.com/power. ♦



Constellation – 24/7 access to billing and energy usage data

FREIGHT TRACKING: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

AM TRANSPORT SERVICES

Even before the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic which has upended the supply chain, the Amazon effect had changed consumer expectations across the board. As far as shipping goes, the Amazon effect has created an environment in which customers expect and demand to know where their orders are from pickup to delivery.

However, all too often the safe pick-up and delivery of goods in transport are dependent on a variety of things out of the shipper's control, from major weather events and traffic problems to manufacturing or warehousing delays.

In order to save time and money, many shippers work with reputable 3PLs or freight brokers. Professionals in the logistics space tend to focus on good communication because it's the number one element they can control. Tracking full truckload shipments is essential to good communication which in turn builds customer confidence and satisfaction.

Let's take a look at four tracking methods available to logistics providers and their reliability in an ever-changing logistics environment.

Tracking Methods

1. Check calls

Most logistics providers complete check calls. For years, there was simply no other way to inquire on the whereabouts of customer freight. However, this is the least reliable tracking method for a variety of reasons. For example, there is no way to verify someone is telling you the truth until the load is actually delivered on-time.

2. ELD/GPS Tracking

Most logistics providers complete chElectronic logging devices have been required on semi-trucks since mid-December 2017. These devices record truck drivers' off-duty and on-duty time, engine power status, vehicle motion status, miles driven, and engine hours as well as other data points. Most ELDs also incorporate GPS tracking which can be used by logistics providers to keep track of freight location. And while this is an optimal method of tracking it re-

quires the trucking company to provide access which isn't always easy to acquire unless that company is doing a certain amount of shipments.

3. Driver Cell Phone Tracking

Most logistics providers complete check calls. For years, there was simply no other way to inquire on the whereabouts of customer freight. However, this is the least reliable tracking method for a variety of reasons. For example, there is no way to verify someone is telling you the truth until the load is actually delivered on-time.

4. Pallet Tracking

Pallet tracking is a relatively new addition to the tracking game. In pallet tracking, the shipper attaches a small tracking device to the pallet, and this device communicates location to the 3PL. One of the benefits of pallet tracking devices is they actually track the freight and not the driver who may or

may not be with the freight at all time.

These devices provide data that can help improve routes, monitor carrier behaviors, and analyze everything from idle times and delays to temperature, humidity, and incurred damages. And while some shippers are wary of the added cost of these devices, successful companies are successfully creating reverse logistics processes to recycle devices, thus reducing costs.

Tracking and the Future

Most logistics experts predict the current upheaval in the supply chain will continue well into 2022 if not longer. Smart manufacturers know that information is the best defense. Customer expectations of quick, reliable, and on-time delivery are not going to wane. Therefore, knowing where your freight is at all times is imperative to success and customer satisfaction. ♦



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INTERMITTENT LEAVE UNDER THE FMLA

GREENSFELDER, HEMKER & GALE, P.C.

The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (“FMLA”) was passed to provide job security for employees who must miss work due to their own serious health condition, the birth of their children, to care for family members suffering from a serious health condition or for reasons related to their family members’ military service. One of the most perplexing issues for employers trying to comply with the FMLA is “intermittent” or “reduced-schedule” leave.

Employee’s Entitlement to Intermittent or Reduced-Schedule Leave

The FMLA guarantees qualified employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave within a one-year period. When “medically necessary,” leave under the FMLA must be granted on a part-time or intermittent basis. Such intermittent or reduced-schedule leave is FMLA leave that an employee takes in blocks of time that are less than the full amount of the employee’s total entitlement. Intermittent leave might take the form of missing a few half-days in a week or missing an hour or two at a time for doctor appointments, or to stay at home with the child when a medical condition prevents the child from attending school. Reduced-schedule leave might also include, for example, an employee working part-time for 24 weeks to be able to receive cancer treatments and rest from the accompanying fatigue. Either way, the leave taken by the employee intermittently, or as a result of a reduced schedule, is deducted from the employee’s 12-week entitlement.

Employer consent is not required for intermittent or reduced-schedule leave that is medically necessary due to pregnancy, a serious health condition, or the serious illness or injury of a covered service member. However, intermittent leave requests for the placement for adoption or foster care of a child are subject to the employer’s approval. In addition, an employer typically must also consent to intermittent leave that an employee requests to provide childcare after the birth of a child or the placement of an adopted child.

If an employee is on intermittent leave and is absent on a company holiday, the holiday will not count against the employee’s leave entitlement unless the employee was scheduled to work on that holiday. 29 C.F.R. § 825.200(h). Similarly, if the employer’s business is closed for a week or more, the days the employer’s operations were inactive do not count against an employee’s leave entitlement.

Employer Responsibilities

Employers should develop clear written policies that detail both parties’ responsibilities with regard to FMLA leave, including intermittent leave. Being able to point to an easy-to-read policy that employees have acknowledged in writing may help employers manage employee expectations and reduce confusion or misunderstanding.

Employers should also engage employees who request time off for a health condition or to care for a family member in a process to determine whether the employee is seeking leave for a reason covered under the FMLA. Most often, employees will not use magic words such as “FMLA” and “serious health condition” in their requests for leave. Employers should be attentive to determine whether the request seems like a facially plausible request for FMLA leave. Employers should ask the employee questions designed to determine whether the employee’s request is one that would be FMLA-qualifying. Don’t ignore an employee’s seemingly simple or routine requests for time off. For example, if an employee says, “My daughter is not feeling well and I need a little time to take her to the doctor,” the employer should inquire into whether the employee’s child’s health condition is ongoing or requires more than just one visit to a medical provider. Non-serious health conditions—usually in the form of headaches or minor colds, even of an employee’s child, do not ordinarily qualify an employee for FMLA leave.

If an employee must commence leave on short notice before an employer has had an opportunity to fully evaluate the leave request, the employer should promptly respond to the employee and

explain how it is treating the leave request preliminarily. If the request is for foreseeable leave, the employer should communicate with the employee about how it will consider the request pending the receipt of a medical certification and further investigation.

Employers have a right to request a medical certification and should exercise that right. Upon receiving certification, an employer that identifies a need for a second opinion may seek one. When seeking a second opinion, the employer would be wise to provide the medical professional from whom it seeks a second opinion with all the relevant information about the employee’s condition.

Further, employers may and should request recertification of the continued need for FMLA leave at certain intervals. For non-military injury-related health conditions, if the original certification does not specify a minimum period of time, the employer may consider the original certification expired after 30 days and then request another certification. However, if the original certification does provide a minimum time period, the employer may only request a recertification once that stated time period expires and only if the employee requests leave beyond that stated time period.

In addition, employers should be mindful of the fact that the FMLA does not exist in a vacuum and that they are responsible for identifying all laws that apply to an employee’s request for medical leave. For example, state disability laws such as those under the Illinois Human Rights Act have specific requirements with respect to pregnancy and other conditions that must be taken into consideration when addressing requests for FMLA leave. Finally, when employees require additional leave beyond the 12 weeks that the FMLA provides, employers must evaluate whether continued unpaid leave is required as a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Finally, employers should train all levels of management on how to identify intermittent – and all – FMLA leave requests. Human resources profession-

als should not be the employer's only staff educated on FMLA rights and responsibilities. Employers should ensure that anyone with supervisory authority knows how to recognize an FMLA leave request so they can direct the request to a trained human resources professional.

Employee Responsibilities

At a minimum, employees must provide clear information about their need for intermittent or reduced-schedule leave and obtain the required medical certification. Employees should also provide as much advance notice of their need for intermittent time off under the FMLA as possible (the regulations state that employees must give notice "as soon as practicable," see 29 C.F.R. § 825.302). The burden is on the employee to prove that the notice he or she provided is adequate under the circumstances.

Often, because of the nature of conditions that trigger the need for intermit-

tent leave, it isn't always possible for an employee to work out a fixed reduced schedule with the employer. For example, if an employee suffers from flare-ups of a chronic condition, the employee may be forced to use intermittent leave sporadically and unpredictably. Even so, employers should require employees to communicate with their supervisors in writing each time they must take intermittent leave without advance notice and explain the reason, consistent with the employer's attendance policy.

Moreover, if an employer has a call-in policy, employees must follow it. Approval of FMLA leave does not relieve employees of their duty to abide by call-in policies when they are able to do so.

Finally, employees must not abuse FMLA leave by taking it for purposes not covered under the law or for which they have approved for FMLA purposes.

The FMLA can be a quagmire for employers that aren't diligent. Intermittent

and reduced schedule leave requests can be particularly difficult, raising unique questions and issues requiring employers to be particularly savvy. Employers should take intermittent leave requests very seriously and should never allow their annoyance over such requests and the inconvenience that intermittent leave may cause to cloud their judgment or impair their ability to assess the situation rationally and comply with the law.

While employers should show appropriate sensitivity to the hardships of employees and their families, they should also request medical certification and investigate the purported need for leave.

Ignoring FMLA intermittent leave requests or failing to treat them with due care can result in litigation that may prove more costly to the employer than the employee's FMLA leave. When in doubt, contact experienced employment counsel, such as the author, about these issues. ♦





WELCOME TO GREG WEBB, NEW IMA CHAIRMAN

AN INTERVIEW WITH GREG WEBB, VICE PRESIDENT OF STATE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AT ARCHER DANIELS MILDAND

Tell us about your background and how you chose manufacturing as a career?

I grew up on a fruit and livestock farm in Johnson County, Illinois where we grew peaches and apples. We also had a cow-calf herd of beef cattle. I attended SIU, graduating with a degree in Agricultural Economics. I knew early in my life I wanted to be involved in the food and agriculture industry, likely because of my upbringing and familiarity with it. My life experiences had put me in contact with many people who were in the industry with whom I'd admired and felt a kinship to. Farmers are an integral part of the food and agriculture supply chain. When I joined ADM, I was immersed in the conversion of what farmers grow to what consumers demand. It is a fascinating, revealing, rewarding, and enduring fondness for manufacturing I have enjoyed over the years.

Tell us more about ADM. What would you consider the most fulfilling part of your role there?

ADM is a world-class company, where we are unlocking nature to enrich life. We generate industry-advancing innovations, providing a robust portfolio of ingredients and solutions. Our position in the supply chain stretches from the producer of crops to the food, feed, fuel, or bio-industrial customer. With the world's premier agricultural origination and processing footprint, we have the breadth, depth, and logistical expertise to meet the needs of our customers with unparalleled capabilities. We have operations in 35 states, so the work I get to do in state government relations with the team of people I get to work with is both stimulating and challenging.

What advice do you offer young men and women who are interested in careers in manufacturing? Why should young people, returning veterans, or dislocated workers look at manufacturing as a career?

There is something fundamental in us that gains satisfaction

and gratification from being part of a team that manufactures and produces what started out as an idea or concept. Manufacturing is at the core of that innovative sparkplug where companies as old as ADM, who celebrated its 119th birthday in 2021, as well as entrepreneurial startups that are just beginning to incubate their ideas, are persistently striving to create new and better outcomes, becoming the best they can be in their respective industries. What I say to people to stimulate their interest in manufacturing is the fact you're part of a team. When we are put together, our individual, but varied talents, earned experiences, and zest to excel, make manufacturing a rewarding career.

What is the best piece of advice that you have been given during your long and illustrious career?

Try to find the job you have a passion to do every day. That will inspire you to be better tomorrow than you are today, and you should learn to get along with people. If you are lucky enough to work every day in something you love, it doesn't feel like work.

"IF YOU ARE LUCKY ENOUGH TO WORK EVERY DAY IN SOMETHING YOU LOVE, IT DOESN'T FEEL LIKE WORK."

What is your proudest accomplishment in your career? In your life?

ADM has afforded me the opportunity to live in a lot of different states and even a time in Canada. Those experiences have helped me to understand people's varied perspectives. I was mentored by some terrific leaders, and I take satisfaction



Corn processing



Intermodal ramp in Decatur, IL.

knowing I had some influence in shaping the development of people seeking my help. I hope that people will know me to be trustworthy and reliable. I strive to achieve an honorable character, so no matter how people know me, they will know me to be genuine.

What are your goals for the IMA?

The IMA is truly a leading trade association where building a framework for manufacturers to excel is top of mind. One of my biggest goals is building workforce capacity for manufacturers, both in terms of bringing visibility to the sector, as well as working with partners to provide the curriculum and training necessary to compete in regional, national, or international arenas. Illinois has many attributes as to why it has consistently been a top manufacturing state, but I yearn for us to have a robust and comprehensive policy framework, a reliable and trained workforce, and a sustaining attitude that manufacturing is an important, if not the most important, economic driver the state can pursue for the benefit of its citizens.

Are there any exciting, new endeavors on the horizon for ADM?

Many people may think of food and agriculture as very mature industries, but that would be a myth. With more than 50 Innovation Centers and about 40,000 colleagues, we connect crops to markets on six continents. There are so many innovations in foods and beverages, where we have a team of talented and creative colleagues. Health and wellness is another focus where we provide cutting-edge, research-backed solutions. Consumers are looking for help, and with our extensive portfolio and capabilities, we are able to help support healthier lifestyles, anchored in scientific research. We offer a complete range of solutions from prebiotic to probiotic and postbiotic strains, dietary fibers, vitamins, minerals, functional botanical extracts, and more. Sustainability is a key driver for the company where you will find us in the supply chain working with

farmers on carbon capture of the crops they grow, to striking a Memorandum of Understanding with the potential opportunity of providing feedstock for the production of Sustainable Aviation Fuel. We are exploring several other bio-solutions in our pursuit to reduce the carbon footprint of our customers and ourselves.

What do you like to do in your free time?

I love to garden with my wife, from vegetable gardening to flowers and landscape maintenance. We enjoy attending major league baseball games, going to concerts, and even the theatre occasionally.

What do you find exciting in manufacturing today, and what excites you the most about the future of manufacturing?

The globalization of our world has brought into focus what different countries across the world excel at, including quality of products and cost of goods. There is no other country in the world that inspires innovation like the United States, and I am excited about the possibilities these innovations will bring to the sector. This globalization has also led to many transitions over the past couple of decades for manufacturers, where many of our citizens don't think we are the manufacturing power we really are. Just imagine if we collectively focused on sharing the knowledge and understanding that manufacturers provide well-paying jobs and retaining or attracting a manufacturer into a region elevates the prosperity there. In addition, innovations in product and process lead to enterprises blossoming or substantially expanding, depending on the specific industry. Inspiration, innovation, and determination are at the core of the manufacturing sector, for which I expect associations and companies alike to nurture and seize the opportunities of the future.◆

TOP 5 CYBER SECURITY THREATS THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY SHOULD WATCH IN 2022

SMITHAMUNDSEN



Cyberattacks remain persistent in headlines; and yet, many companies continue to believe these will never happen to them. This mindset may be borne from believing you are too small to be of notice to threat actors or thinking you don't have the kind of data that would be attractive. Manufacturing companies may, in particular, believe they are fortified from such an attack because of the historically insular nature of the manufacturing industry and a lack of computerized connection with the outside world.

It's critical that this mindset evolve with the technology and the interconnectedness with other companies and consumers. Data a manufacturing company houses can include confidential data with business partners, sensitive data about employees and independent contractors, proprietary schematics regarding day-to-day operations and/or Operational Technology (OT) and Industrial IoT (Internet of Things). Vulnerability to cyber-attacks can also be seen in all industries in how they transfer money to their business partners.

The level of sophistication for bad actors only continues to grow and their cyberattacks have only increased in volume and intensity in the last two years. In 2019, the manufacturing sector was the 8th most targeted industry by cyberattacks. Such attacks mushroomed in 2020 due to the pandemic; and, in that same year, the manufacturing industry moved from the 8th most targeted industry by cyber attackers to second most targeted, falling below only finance and insurance. The 2021 Global Threat Intelligence Report (GTIR) indicated that this represents a 300% increase.

2022 is the perfect time to strengthen your cybersecurity practices and prevention. Here are the top 5 cyber security threats those in the manufacturing industry should know:

1. Ransomware Attacks.

This is the tried and true mode of cyberattack—one that threat actors continue to hone and one that continues to inflict a whole host of headaches for companies. Although there are many different ways for a data event to occur, ransomware continues to be the number

one method of attack used by threat actors. Think of this as data "kidnapping," where your company's data will be held for ransom. Manufacturers are attractive targets because a loss of equipment usage equates to big monetary losses and potentially significant business interruption – not just for the manufacturer, but for their business and industry partners that are part of the supply chain. As a result, manufacturers are more likely to pay the ransom to be back in operation more quickly. However, in 2022, these types of attacks will likely present an additional problem: paying the attacker may be the prudent, ready-and-available solution but it may open a company up to re-extortion or a second attack. This not only leaves you vulnerable, but your reputation as well.

2. Insider Threats.

Cybersecurity threats are not only found in bad actors in foreign lands – sometimes these threats are found within the company's walls. Internal threat actors are someone within the company, or a former employee, that threatens the business based on data security infor-

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mation the employee possesses. What is dangerous about insider threats is that anyone with access to the company's critical passwords can later become a threat actor. Companies that were not prepared for the new work from home shift – such as some manufacturers – were forced to make quick transitions in order to keep employees safe during the pandemic. But as a result, passwords were frequently shared, secure networks were not used, and personal devices became a potential technology solution. Ensuring that proper access and control structures are in place, for all employees, is critical. It is also vital that passwords are updated frequently and that your company keeps track of who is in possession of what information.

3. Unauthorized Access to Operational Technology.

The use of operation technology (OT) greatly benefits manufacturers' day-to-day operations. And while the use of this technology is not new, these devices have not always kept pace with the security measures needed to protect technology from outside bad actors. If a threat actor gained access to technology, it would not only halt a particular project, but it could be a potential safety concern depending on the criminal's intentions. Especially with the increased use of IoT technology – hackers would gain access to a whole host of processes related to manufacturing, including flow, light, pressure, temperature, and more. Exercising appropriate cyber-hygiene, including confirming appropriate upgrades and access controls, is important. The employment of technology, for more efficient production, will only increase, so now is the time to gain a deeper understanding of access points, security controls and incident response protocols.

4. Business Email Compromise.

There are two types of business email compromise attacks that are on the rise: social engineering, and invoice payment and fraud. In both instances, hackers pose as someone in the business in order to defraud employees, customers, partners, or vendors. Social engineering looks to impersonate internal employees and higher ups within the company, whereas invoice payment and fraud looks to redirect money straight into the hacker's bank account. With so many hands at play in the manufacturing in-

dustry, these types of attacks may find ready victims in your employee ranks. Not only can false payments be made, but intellectual property (IP) and other trade secrets that could devalue your company may fall into the wrong hands. Regular employee training and vigilance of suspicious activity in your network are critical.

5. Supply Chain Attacks.

You need to look no further than the May 2021 cyberattack on Colonial Pipeline to understand how a ransomware attack can affect those that operate in a supply chain. That attack alone shut down almost half the fuel supply chain in the Eastern United States. It was a scary example of how the impact on one link in the supply chain can cause a ripple effect on so many other organizations that are part of the process. Given that manufacturers are often integral links in the supply chain, now more than ever the industry should be vigilant.

Where do we go from here?

Lack of training and a lack of a plan can lead to panic. While threats in your industry may be imminent, preparation is key—as it can, if nothing else, lessen potential repercussions. Working with trusted advisors on creating an incident response plan and setting up appropriate and necessary safeguards can help create peace of mind and better ready your company for any level of cyber attack.



Gain insight into DEI-related benefits strategy and workforce planning

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2021 IMA ANNUAL LUNCHEON



Almost 400 business leaders from across Illinois gathered in person on Friday, December 3, for the IMA's 2021 Annual Luncheon at the JW Marriott in Chicago. This year, the IMA featured Paul Zikopolous, an award-winning speaker and author, and VP of Technology Group Skills Vitality & Enablement at IBM as the keynote speaker. In addition, a series of virtual breakout sessions were conducted in the days leading up to the Annual Luncheon, which covered a variety of subjects including energy, economic forecast, supply chain, and workforce challenges.

At the Luncheon, the IMA was proud to present the 2021 Barry L. MacLean Manufacturer of the Year to Gilster-Mary Lee of Chester. "Gilster-Mary Lee embodies the best of the best in American manufacturing with its focus on workforce opportunities and community safety. I'm so proud to recognize Gilster-Mary Lee as the 2021 Barry L. MacLean Manufacturer of the Year in Illinois," said Mark Denzler, IMA president & CEO. He further attested, "With a history spanning more than 120 years, Gilster-Mary Lee is now a leading private-label food manufacturing company with more than 3,000 employees at thirteen facilities in three states. During the pandemic, they've provided incredible leadership with a partnership with the Autism Workforce and have promoted COVID-19 vaccination throughout their community. Gilster-Mary Lee's innovation, integrity, and

investment in our communities is making the world a better place every single day."

The IMA's annual award recognizes a company for their leadership in six core areas:

- **Manufacturing Advocacy:** Serves as a strong voice for the manufacturing industry at the local, state, or national level.
- **Operational Excellence:** Creates a profound and lasting impact on stakeholders, companies, markets, and suppliers within the manufacturing sector with a strong entrepreneurial spirit.
- **Innovation & Technology:** Committed to innovation, Research & Development, transformative product development, or technological advances.
- **Workforce Development & Diversity:** Focused on building the next generation of leaders through support of education and workforce development programs.
- **Community Engagement:** Demonstrates long-term commitment to local community, charitable, and philanthropic efforts.
- **Sustainability:** Supports sustainable methods of production and elimination of non-value-added activities from operations.

The IMA also recognized our outgoing Board of Directors Chairwoman, Linda McGill-Boasmond, of Cedar Concepts Corporation in Chicago. To honor Linda's service to the IMA, a gift was made to Girls4Science, an organization she's championed that promotes getting young girls engaged in STEM careers. Girls 4 Science

focuses on helping girls between the ages of 10 and 18 develop skills, self-esteem, opportunity awareness, and relationship building.

Along with our partner, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois, we also concluded this year's Manufacturing Miles competition that was created to encourage healthy activities. Dozens of companies competed, and manufacturing employees logged more than 499,000 miles (walking, running, swimming, biking, etc) between March and October. There were three winning teams, one in each size category: Gilster-Mary Lee Corporation (small), Ingredient Incorporation (medium), and United Scrap Metal Inc. (large). As far as individual ranking goes, our overall top winner was Nick Pantaleo from United Engravers with 8,112 miles. Congratulations to all of the winners. Keep up the healthy activities!

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EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE POLICY TOUR

SARAH HARTWICK, VICE PRESIDENT OF
EDUCATION & WORKFORCE POLICY



The IMA just completed a statewide education and workforce policy tour. At each tour stop, we met directly with manufacturers, business advocacy organizations, and education professionals to discuss workforce development issues. The discussions were led by IMA member companies and included strategies to grow the next generation of manufacturing workers. Throughout the tour, we heard both regional solutions that would address and support unique local workforce needs as well as trending workforce barriers being experienced by manufacturers across the state. The trends encompass five general topics that can serve as a foundation to solving any of today's manufacturing workforce challenges.

Trend #1: There is a lack of interest in manufacturing careers across multiple demographics.

Today's manufacturing careers look significantly different from those of past generations, and unfortunately, there are many people who are not aware of what contemporary manufacturing floors look like. Manufacturing floors are clean, diverse, and increasingly high-tech. The question is this: how do we make that message clear to students, parents, teachers, administrators, and dislocated workers to peak interest in a career in manufacturing? The fact that the average person working in manufacturing today earns almost \$89,000 per year in salary and benefits – a number that is likely even higher today – is not sufficiently recruiting people to manufacturing careers. We have seen that each generation has a different set of preferences when choosing a career path. Anecdotally, we have seen that millennials seem to be more interested in an important job title with a high salary. Much of this is because this generation has experienced significant economic turmoil throughout their lifetime starting with being in high school during the 2001 terrorist attacks to graduating college at the beginning of the 2008 recession, and most recently, beginning to stabilize their financial lives when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Therefore, millennials are trying to catchup to what they expected their career, job title and salary to be at this point in their lives. The newest generation to enter the workforce also have different priorities when choosing a career. The "Gen Zers" aim to have meaning in their work, and they want to know that they are having an impact on the world. To that end, we heard solutions from many manufacturers across the state who have not only worked on rebranding their company to highlight the impact their product makes in the world over the impact of the product itself, but have also incorporated marketing concepts into their hiring practices by using videos for job descriptions. Some of these manufacturers have even looked into social media sites for targeted recruitment. These are tools that work to send the message that manufacturing skills and careers of today are sustainable, well-paying middle-class jobs that will be needed for years to come.

Trend #2: Workplace culture has a significant role in all aspects of your company business.

A positive workplace culture, based on regular employee feedback, does not only help with retention rates but also recruitment as "word-of-mouth" remains the most effective tool today for recruiting new employees. Several resources exist to help streamline employee feedback to examine a company's workplace culture and utilize that feedback in a way that supports both employees and their employer. A positive workplace culture and supportive work environment will ultimately increase overall productivity, significantly decrease turnover, and overall, will improve employee engagement.

Trend #3: Significant challenges exist in identifying and recruiting potential employees.

Today's environment has made it very difficult for employers to identify and recruit potential employees that have the skills needed to be successful in the workplace. People were not gathering in-person during the pandemic and that severely limited the use of job fairs and career expos. Employers are pivoting to reexamine the tools they use to identify and recruit potential employees. While some employers are continuing to post positions on various job sites, other employers have reconsidered the education and experience required for each open position and have even removed the requirement of a bachelor's degree. We heard from employers that have hired marketing professionals to help shift hiring efforts into developing a marketing campaign for their open positions. Creative, non-traditional strategies can also be imposed to help identify and recruit potential employees. There is an incredible amount of research and support for employers who are considering hiring individuals that were previously incarcerated as well as hiring individuals with visible or invisible disabilities. Many of those amazing companies are right here in Illinois. The same can be said for veterans and dislocated workers where there are often regional organizations that are already established to support both groups. The best place to start identifying potential employees is through outreach to community-based organizations, mostly because those organizations are one of the few places that people are actually gathering.

Trend #4: There are also significant challenges in retention and planning for retirement.

There are two key factors impacting retention among today's workforce: (1) people are no longer graduating from high school and getting a job in their hometown to work for 40 or so years until retirement, and (2) today's high school graduates can expect to have an average of 10 jobs throughout their lifetime. While workplace culture plays a significant role in retention, there are



other ways to improve retention like ensuring that advancement opportunities are made clear within the company. Employees want to see that opportunities exist for upward mobility and other benefits such as tuition reimbursement. It is not always clear to employees that those opportunities exist, and it is important to make sure that those opportunities are regularly communicated throughout the company.

There are also ways to help with planning for retirement through apprenticeship models. The IMA partners with the German American Chamber of Commerce, and many IMA members utilize the ICATT apprenticeship program as one successful tool for an employer's long-term planning needs. This off-the-shelf tool is dynamic and easy to use as it can be catered to an individual employer's needs. It can also help prepare for future retirements by ensuring that the institutional knowledge and skills are transferred to the next person that fills that position.

Trend #5: There are significant limitations of the education systems in Illinois.

The most significant limitation of our education system is the ability to address the skills gap. It is important to first acknowledge that there will always be a skills gap as Industry 4.0 further expands in manufacturing plants across the world. The goal of our education system is not to eliminate the skills gap (because that's not actually possible) but to instead narrow it as much as possible. It is essential to encourage ongoing conversations between manufacturers and their local education institutions as equipment and systems are being upgraded. A model for how to build and encourage such a relationship can be seen in the Advanced Manufacturing Academy grants that the IMA championed and awarded to two community colleges earlier this year. The academies established model partnerships by upskilling current employees and future employees through local education institution training programs to ensure that future employees have the skills needed to be successful in a manufacturing career.

It is also important that we work towards an education system in Illinois that ensures students can progress throughout their educational careers, developing the necessary skills that align with a career goal as early as possible in their schooling. It is vital that the education system from preschool to college is built and aligned to support the workforce of tomorrow through career exploration experiences as early as possible in intermediate and junior high schools. In high school, these experiences need to be extended to work-based learning opportunities including job shadowing and paid internships followed by training and job placements through local community colleges and/or 4-year universities. This ought to absolutely exist in Illinois by bringing together the silos of our current education system and ensuring that students are exposed to as many career opportunities as possible.

These five trends also come with opportunities for change. In the short-term, we encourage employers to build relationships with local schools and community colleges. Through ongoing conversations, these relationships will provide opportunities to address many of the regional barriers that employers are experiencing. The IMA Education Foundation is working toward developing a campaign focused on state-supported solutions to eliminate these barriers as well. Throughout the tour, we connected with incredible partners that will work to support the IMA, its members, and manufacturers across the state to advocate for workforce policies changes. We thank everyone for their participation and support throughout the tour. Stay tuned for more information in early 2022. ♦

AVOIDING UNEXPECTED INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY TRAPS IN EVERYDAY OPERATIONS

BANNER WITCOFF



Organizations' day-to-day operations can expose them to liability for intellectual property infringement in many unexpected ways. For example, many major Illinois companies have been the unfortunate recipient of cease-and-desist letters (sometimes including payment demands) because their employees downloaded and re-used images from Google Images in marketing material, used software on corporate computers without the license to do so, and the like. These actions, while often innocent, can expose organizations to thousands—if not millions—of dollars in unexpected liability. Here are five easy tips for keeping your organization safe from these intellectual property traps that might pop up throughout your ordinary course of business.

1. Keep Your Trade Secrets a Secret

Broadly, trade secret law protects information that has economic value when that information is kept secret by an organization. Most trade secret laws in the U.S.

and abroad require that organizations affirmatively act to protect their trade secrets. For example, the Illinois Trade Secrets Act (ITSA) requires that a trade secret "is the subject of efforts that are reasonable under the circumstances to maintain its secrecy or confidentiality" 765 Ill. Comp. Stat. 1065/2(d)(2).

That said, many organizations are not doing enough to protect their trade secrets from being learned by their competitors. Some find their secrets inadvertently disclosed during industry conferences, whereas others find their secrets accidentally disclosed through promotional efforts. No matter the mechanism, such disclosure can be costly. It allows your competitors to freely (and legally) use your trade secrets.

To avoid the risk of inadvertent disclosure, put in real effort to protect your trade secrets: keep your secrets on a "need to know" basis, and make sure that those in-the-know parties understand the seriousness of the risk of disclosure. Don't skimp on that effort: often, trade secret lawsuits can hinge on whether organizations made

sufficient efforts to protect their trade secrets from going public. Another helpful strategy to protect your organization from inadvertent trade secret disclosure is to require that your in-house legal teams review all public-facing material (e.g., presentation slides, promotional materials) to ensure that the material does not inadvertently disclose trade secrets.

2. Know When (And When Not!) To Patent

Virtually every organization can invent—even if they're not intentionally planning to do so. Don't let those opportunities slip out of your fingers: even the simplest inventions can be the launchpad for competitive success.

In the manufacturing world, inventions can arise in a variety of ways. Commonly, inventions come from problem-solving: for example, trying to figure out better/quicker/easier ways to manufacture a particular part, modifying aspects of machinery to work more reliably, or the like. Contrary to popular belief, there is no requirement that an invention be of a particular impressive-

ness for it to be patentable: rather, the focus should be whether you find it valuable (and whether your competitors would want it for themselves).

To make sure that valuable innovations don't slip through your fingers, build a so-called "patent pipeline" from your workers to your legal team, and from your legal team to experienced patent professionals. Employees should be routinely encouraged to report new innovations to your legal team. In turn, encourage your legal team to review these innovations with experienced patent counsel: often, such reviews will reveal whether or not the employees' ideas are eligible to be patented and/or are worth patenting. This process can take a while but can have amazing (and very profitable) results.

3. Manage your Marketing

Copyright law applies to original works of authorship, meaning that it covers written content (e.g., promotional blurbs), images (e.g., promotional imagery), and more. In turn, it is essential that organizations ensure they have the right to use every aspect of their marketing materials, whether in print, online, on television, or the like. After all, if an organization uses an author's work without acquiring the rights to do so, that author can sue the organization for thousands, if not millions of dollars.

One tactic used to moderate this risk by many organizations is to educate their marketing teams about copyright law. Unfortunately, some organizations' marketing teams have become quite comfortable with using image search engines to find images to be used as marketing material from random sources, and in some cases have become very adept at pilfering competitors' promotional language. Nip that behavior in the bud: educate your marketing teams that they must write every word used in marketing material themselves, and that all images/videos used in marketing material must come from internal sources or from appropriate external sources (e.g., stock image websites that an organization has paid to access). If necessary, hire writers, photographers, and/or videographers to fill your marketing material gaps: doing so is not only safer from an intellectual property perspective, but it can also help your organization feel more genuine to potential consumers.

4. Keep Incoming Employees Honest

It's not uncommon for some organizations to pilfer employees from their competitors. That said, make sure that the employee doesn't bring your competitors' intellectual property along with them.

Some employees, particularly those disgruntled with their previous employer, may be tempted to "help" your organization by bringing their previous employer's intellectual property with them. For example, in Silicon Valley, some programmers have tried to bring code along with them to new jobs, ostensibly to use that code to benefit their new employer (and, often, to make their new jobs easier). But that sort of behavior is not a risk limited to Silicon Valley: the same risk exists when employees (e.g., incoming manufacturing engineers) bring trade secrets along with them to their new jobs. As such, this sort of unasked-for "help" is a massive risk to any organization. It exposes the organization to an unexpected intellectual property lawsuit, often in a manner that leaves them owing significant sums to their biggest competitors.

To avoid this risk, ensure that all new employees understand the importance of respecting others' intellectual property, including that of their former employers. While new employees might try to help your organization by bringing along trade secrets or other protected material, emphasize that you don't want it, and that they should delete, destroy, or otherwise forget about it.

5. Police your Software Licenses

The Business Software Alliance (BSA) is a trade group that represents commercial software companies and routinely hunts down and attempts to punish the unauthorized use of software. In fact, the BSA routinely offers rewards to disgruntled employees to "Bust your Boss!"—that is, they reward employees who punish their former employers by reporting software piracy committed by those employers. Avoid becoming a recipient of one of their threat letters as much as you can: they can come with multi-million dollar demands.

One of the best ways to avoid getting a nastygram from the BSA is to perform regular Information Technology ("IT")

audits. Have your IT personnel routinely log all software used by your organization, including where it is installed, which user(s) use the software, and how the software is used. Such IT audits can allow you to identify deficiencies (e.g., circumstances where you haven't paid for enough licenses of a particular software platform) as well as opportunities (e.g., circumstances where you're paying for too many subscriptions to a particular service).

Critically, don't limit your IT audits to a simple scan of already-known devices on your corporate intranet. Employees might use unauthorized hardware and/or software tools during their workday, and the use of those tools might expose your organization to cybersecurity risk and may violate one or more licenses. For example, it is not uncommon for office workers to use free software tools (e.g., Gmail, Google Voice) to perform company-related tasks. That said, such tools can (unless properly configured and managed by your IT department) expose your organization to unexpected cybersecurity risks as, for example, the accounts might not comply with your organization's cybersecurity policies. Moreover, such use can violate software licenses: for example, use of a "personal" account on a software tool for business purposes might expose your organization to liability under the license agreement for that software tool.

In Conclusion – Proceed Carefully

The above is merely a taste of the sort of intellectual property risks an organization can face. Unfortunately, the devil is often in the details: some of the most insidious risks are those that require expert detection and remediation. Encourage your legal team to study your organization's operations carefully and, if needed, consult outside experts. Many law firms, including Banner Witcoff, are happy to provide free legal training seminars to help in-house legal teams learn to identify and remediate basic intellectual property issues. ♦



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MEMBER NEWS

Illinois American Water Launches Leak Task Force to Track Down Hidden Leaks, Saving Millions of Gallons a Day



In 2021, Illinois American Water launched a new leak task force to identify and repair leaks which are not surfacing. The task force uses advance sounding equipment to identify hidden leaks across the company's service areas. To date, over 50 leaks have been located and repaired, helping to conserve several millions of gallons of water a day.

According to Vice President of Operations Beth Matthews the occurrence of leaks within a community water system isn't uncommon. She explained, "Due to the underground location of our infrastructure, leaks may not surface for some time. Water follows the path of least resistance which can keep them hidden below the surface. This is why we implemented a proactive approach to chase down leaks and stop them in their tracks, conserving and protecting our precious water resources."

The Illinois American Water Leak Task Force uses acoustic sensors to record sound overnight. This approach helps to avoid traffic noise, etc. The recordings are saved and transferred via a cellular connection so task force members can review them. According to Matthews, the sound of running water is distinguishable from other sounds. She explained, "Our team is well-versed in these sounds and can usually tell if the water is from a main break or hydrant flushing."

After a possible leak is identified the task force pinpoints the location via the use of ground microphones. Once a location is confirmed a crew can safely begin digging and repairing the leak. The 52 leaks identified to date were located in the Southern/Metro East, Champaign County, Sterling and Streator service areas and consisted of leaks on water mains, service lines, valves and hydrants. The task force will continue to move across the state to implement the technology and save water.

Matthews said, "Every drop we save is of value to the communities we serve and the environment."

Customers can also help save water by incorporating wise water use into daily habits and checking for leaks. Even the smallest leak can cause the loss of thousands of gallons of water each month. That loss means

not only is water being wasted but can also result in an unnecessarily higher water bill.

S&C Electric Company Reveals New Modern Solution for Grid-Edge Outages



S&C Electric Company, a leading grid innovator improving power reliability and delivery worldwide, announces its newest innovation, the VacuFuse® II Self-Resetting Interrupter, the latest lateral solution for grid-edge protection. The VacuFuse II interrupter brings fault-testing to the edge of the grid and mitigates nuisance outages, ensuring greater reliability for customers and fewer truck rolls for utilities.

As severe storms become more frequent and as more people work from home, outages at the edge of the grid are having a greater impact than ever before. These areas are typically protected by overhead distribution transformer fuses, which operate whether a fault is temporary or permanent. When up to 70 percent of these faults are caused by nuisance issues, such as wildlife or foliage, overhead distribution transformer fuses are causing lengthy power outages that can be avoided.

S&C's new VacuFuse II interrupter tests whether faults are temporary and automatically restores power when they are. Because issues at the edge of the grid tend to cluster into pockets, this advanced protection device can target troublesome spots on the grid. Not only can utilities lower their maintenance costs with this new solution, but they also can keep customer satisfaction high and meet their expectation of a modern, reliable grid.

"Throughout our 110-year history, innovation has been the foundation of S&C Electric Company," said Anders Sjoelin, president and CEO of S&C Electric Company. "We work closely with our customers to understand their challenges and develop solutions for real-world applications. As utilities are facing a major energy transformation, they are looking for ways to modernize and improve reliability and resiliency in every part of the grid. The VacuFuse® II Self-Resetting Interrupter is the latest example of how we've collaborated with customers to solve industry challenges and created an innovative, easy-to-use solution that tackles outages at the grid edge."

The VacuFuse II Self-Resetting Interrupter brings a variety of benefits to utility customers:

- Improves Customer Satisfaction: Targets outage-prone areas on the grid and helps address Customers Experiencing Multiple Interruptions (CEMI)

- Lowers O&M Costs: Saves O&M costs by mitigating the 70 percent of outages caused by nuisance fuse operations above overhead distribution transformers

- Drives Reliability and Resiliency: Provides advanced protection to meet rising customer expectations and enables faster systemwide restoration during severe weather

The VacuFuse II Self-Resetting Interrupter works with overhead distribution transformers from 7.2 kV through 12.5 kV and is available in sizes compatible with 15-kV and 25-kV cutouts to accommodate most lateral systems. At only 12 pounds, the VacuFuse II interrupter is easy to install and is factory-configured prior to shipping with standard curves (i.e., K, KS, T), customizable curves, or S&C's new transformer-specific curves.

Phoenix Opens New Plant In Bloomington, Indiana



PHOENIX™

Phoenix, a manufacturer of injection molded closures, has announced the opening of a new plant with warehouse space in Bloomington, Indiana. This newly renovated 450,000 sq ft facility is located at the former Otis Elevator site on South Curry Pike and adds to Phoenix's robust production capability in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, and Tennessee. This exciting development will allow Phoenix to greatly expand production on several of their key products and meet growing customer demand.

The new Bloomington plant is SQF-certified and in a centralized location which was strategically chosen to be near their valued customers, heavy power infrastructure, interstate highway and rail access. For over 18 months, Phoenix worked with The Austin Company and CSO Architects to construct a state-of-the-art, energy efficient facility that has enhanced operational and traffic flow.

Phoenix also worked closely with Clark Greiner of the Bloomington Economic Development Corporation as well as Monroe County to clear administrative hurdles and add jobs in the community. The new Bloomington site is anticipated to create over 125 jobs throughout the next 4 years. ♦

MEMBER NEWS CONTINUED

G&W Electric Announces Approval of Multiple Patents for Single Phase Automation on Power Distribution Networks

G&W Electric

Engineered to order. Built to last.

G&W Electric, a global supplier of electric power equipment since 1905, today announced approval of a patent for single phase Fault Location Isolation and Service Restoration (FLISR) on power distribution networks, further improving reliability indices by only isolating the single phase that is affected by a fault.

Single Phase FLISR provides the solution to the utility industry's most common fault – a single phase line to ground fault. With three phase FLISR—even in the case that a particular fault involves only one or two phases—power is interrupted for all customers on the affected power line.

Single Phase FLISR technology, with improved power availability and reliability, allows utilities to automatically reroute power, minimizing the number of customers impacted by outages and reducing the length of an outage from hours to mere seconds.

"In recent times, the idea of automatically reconfiguring the power grid, through FLISR and Loss of Voltage (LOV), has become the primary means for power providers to reach their reliability goals," said John Mueller, chairman and owner of G&W Electric. "In migrating to single phase automation, we're able to support greater reliability goals and set the new standard for power system reliability, while increasing customer satisfaction."

Traditionally, FLISR and LOV systems have been performed in a three phase manner; however, migrating to single phase operations provides utilities with the path to incremental, sustainable gains in system reliability. G&W Electric offers the latest innovations in FLISR technology, such as single phase automation, to help utilities reduce the duration of outages and provide more reliable power to customers.

"These patents will allow G&W Electric to further develop single phase technology and continue providing the latest in FLISR automation," adds Mueller. "Single phase automation does not just increase reliabil-

ity, but also safety when it comes to power distribution metrics. In fact, many of the questions and concerns around three phase loads are alleviated when single phase is implemented to operations and systems."

John Deere Expands U.S. Footprint with Opening of Chicago Office



Deere & Company announced the expansion of its U.S. footprint with the opening of a new Chicago office where it plans to add 150 Information Technology jobs over the next two years, with the goal of hiring a total of 300 positions to support IT and additional roles within the company. Initially, the facility will target IT capabilities in eCommerce, cloud, data and analytics, and a variety of innovation related technical skills.

"A focused expansion of John Deere's global footprint aligns directly with our smart industrial strategy. This includes leveraging additional markets that have great diversity and technology skills to incorporate into our world-class talent base," said Andrez Carberry, Director of Global HR Operations at John Deere. "We build the best products in the world and through our technology, we improve our customers' profitability while driving more sustainable outcomes. Recruiting and developing diverse talent is critical to our continued growth and to the success of John Deere as a major employer of tech talent in Illinois."

Added Carberry, "We couldn't be more thrilled to be expanding our footprint into downtown Chicago."

"John Deere's new technology center in Chicago is just one example of the innovation and investment Illinois is inspiring with our top-tier talent and world-class infrastructure," said Governor JB Pritzker. "This new location will pave the way for hundreds of new IT jobs for Illinois residents and help Illinois continue its long-standing tradition of being at the center of breakthrough discoveries in agricultural and construction technology."

The new space, located in the fast-growing Fulton Market neighborhood, will allow Deere to recruit from the deep bench of diverse talent in Chicago and provide them with the flexibility of in-person collaboration. The new office is expected to open in

late summer/early fall of 2022.

"Over the past few years, the digital transformation and agility of our business operations have been accelerated by a more modern Information Tech Stack on the foundation of stronger digital and technical skills," said Ganesh Jayaram, Vice President of Information Technology at John Deere. "Chicago offers us the opportunity to augment our technical skills to drive this ongoing modernization of our digital business solutions".

The investment in Chicago includes an EDGE agreement offered by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), a program to support companies making large-scale capital investments and long-term job creation commitments in Illinois communities.

"John Deere's investment in new technology jobs in Chicago reinforces Illinois' place as a global leader in agriculture," said DCEO Acting Director Sylvia I. Garcia of the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. "DCEO looks forward to our continued partnership with John Deere, one Illinois' leading employers, as we advance Governor Pritzker's 5-year economic plan and invest in good paying jobs for Illinoisans."

Bourn & Koch Builds and Provides OEM Blanchard Grinders



Bourn & Koch builds and provides OEM Blanchard grinders, and recently partnered with THORS eLearning Solutions to develop an online learning course specifically aimed at providing manufacturers with training for rotary surface grinding.

THORS has developed an extensive library of learning content specific to manufacturing processes, including many specialized processes such as gear manufacturing, and now rotary surface grinding. Bourn & Koch has provided new and remanufactured Blanchard rotary surface grinders, along with service and support, to their customers since 2004. They have partnered with THORS to develop training materials that provide a knowledge base necessary to bring tomorrow's workforce up to speed on Blanchard grinding.

The Rotary Surface Grinding Video Se-

ries 1 covers everything from basic knowledge on rotary surface grinding to machine operation, troubleshooting, and more advanced techniques for Blanchard grinding. The video series is accessible from any computer, tablet or iPad.

New Copresco Press Installed for Fast Turnaround and On-Time Delivery



Copresco is upgrading its digital fleet with a second Konica-Minolta 6136P press to meet increased production demands and guarantees for fast turnaround and on-time delivery. The twin of the 6136P that was installed in late 2020 meets the same standards for Copresco's high volume production and provides exceptional black & white print reproduction.

"The people at Konica-Minolta are amazed by Copresco's demanding quality standards and commitment to maintain our Copies Overnight promise of producing 250,000 pages overnight for any client," says President Steve Johnson.

"We have fine-tuned the new press to assure that our large-scale black & white printing matches Copresco's award-winning color work."

The press offers inline saddle stitching for up to 80-page booklets and can handle multiple paper stocks and weights. Precise tone controls are included to allow the creation of halftone curves on the fly. "This is a feature normally only found on full color presses, but required by Copresco for our unparalleled monochrome work," Johnson added.

Copresco produces millions of pages of short-run publications, books, manuals and publications. Projects range from booklets, catalogs, handbooks, textbooks and technical materials to training aids, newsletters, calendars and cookbooks.

ILMO Products Company announces the acquisition of Gano Welding Supplies, Inc., effective November 1, 2021.



Gano Welding Supplies is a family-owned and operated business originally started by Ken and Oscar Gano. Headquartered in Charleston, Illinois, and serving the surrounding area since the 1920s, Gano carries a full line of welding equipment and supplies, and a wide range of industrial and medical gases.

"ILMO Products Company is a great fit as another family-owned and operated business," said Pat Slaughter, Gano's principal owner. "Gano customers can look forward to an expanded service area and product offering through our combined facilities, including ILMO's Specialty Gas lab. All while continuing to work with the Gano employees they already know."

Pat Slaughter will transition from an ownership roll to an operations roll, overseeing the state-of-the-art acetylene production facility in Charleston, Illinois. Pat's son, Frank Slaughter, brings his experience and qualifications as a Class-A HAZMAT driver to the roll of Route Driver.

"We are pleased to welcome Gano Welding Supplies and their dedicated employees to the ILMO Products Company team," said ILMO President/CEO, Brad Floreth. "Gano has an excellent reputation in eastern Illinois as a supplier for end users, and as a wholesaler of acetylene and other industrial gases. Learning the process of producing acetylene will be a new challenge, and we know that Gano has an experienced team to lead the way."

uniQure and CSL Behring Announce Primary Endpoint Achieved in HOPE-B Pivotal Trial of Etranacogene Dezaparvec Gene Therapy in Patients with Hemophilia B



CSL Behring, a global biotherapeutics leader, and uniQure N.V. (NASDAQ: QURE), a leading gene therapy company advancing transformative therapies for patients with severe medical needs, announced that etranacogene dezaparvec, an investigational adeno-associated virus five (AAV5)-based gene therapy for the treatment of patients with severe to moderately severe hemophilia B, achieved the pre-specified primary endpoint of non-inferiority in annualized bleeding rate (ABR) 18-months following administration compared to baseline Factor IX (FIX) prophylactic therapy in the pivotal Phase III HOPE-B gene therapy trial. The study also successfully achieved a secondary endpoint demonstrating statistical superiority in reduction of ABR compared to baseline FIX prophylactic therapy.

The primary endpoint in the pivotal study was 52-week ABR after achievement of stable FIX expression compared with the six-month lead-in period, considering all bleeds regardless of investigator adjudication as true bleeds. For this endpoint, ABR was measured from month seven to month 18 after infusion, ensuring the observation period represented likely steady-state FIX transgene expression. Secondary endpoints included assessment of FIX activity and statistical superiority of ABR after dosing.

"We are very pleased with these top-line results from what is the largest and first pivotal trial of a gene therapy for patients with hemophilia B," stated Ricardo Dolmetsch, Ph.D., president of research and development at uniQure. "The HOPE-B data not only achieved the pre-specified primary endpoint of non-inferiority in annualized bleeding rate following 12 months or more of stable FIX expression, but also the secondary endpoint of superiority in reduction of annualized bleeding, while continuing to demonstrate durability and stability in FIX levels and other benefits to this point in the study." ♦

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Chicago, IL

AMERICAN CONTROL ELECTRONICS
South Beloit, IL

ARMOUR MAGNETIC COMPONENTS, INC.
Chicago, IL

ASHLAND CONTAINER CORP
Chicago Heights, IL

BARRY CALLEBAUT USA, LLC
Chicago, IL

CARLISLE CONSTRUCTION MATERIALS
Franklin Park, IL

CARROLL INDUSTRIAL MOLDS INC
Milledgeville, IL

CAST PRODUCTS INC
Norridge, IL

CORONET CYBER SECURITY
Naperville, IL

DIRECT PACKAGING USA INC.
Morrison, IL

DOT FOODS INC
Mount Sterling, IL

EKLIND TOOL CO
Franklin Park, IL

ELGIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Elgin, IL

FACTORY PLAZA
Bensenville, IL

GILBANE BUILDING CO.
Chicago, IL

HARVARD FACTORY AUTOMATION
Harvard, IL

ILLINOIS CENTRAL COLLEGE
Peoria, IL

KIMBERLY-CLARK CORPORATION
Washington, DC

KOCSIS TECHNOLOGIES INC
Alsip, IL

LINCOLN TRAIL COLLEGE
Robinson, IL

MAGID GLOVE AND SAFETY MANUFACTURING CO.
Romeoville, IL

MAN-TRA-CON CORPORATION
Marion, IL

MONDI ROMEOVILLE LLC
Romeoville, IL

NEW LEAF SYMBIOTICS
St. Louis, MO

QUAD CITY ENGINEERING CO., INC
East Moline, IL

SCHULD BUSHNELL
Bushnell, IL

SECON RUBBER & PLASTICS INC
Red Bud, IL

STANLEY MACHINING & TOOL CORP
Carpentersville, IL

SYNCSHOW
Rocky River, OH

**UPPER ILLINOIS RIVER VALLEY
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