



# CHAMPIONS OF INNOVATION

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## 2021: CELEBRATING INNOVATION

Whether you're a startup or a legacy company, innovation is at the heart of what makes businesses succeed. Champions of Innovation allows businesses to share their own stories of how they developed new products and processes that allowed their company to grow. This special sponsored content section will inspire you as your business travels its own innovation journey.

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# Creating a Bridge to Shared Success

When we discovered the Paycheck Protection Program didn't work for all our small businesses, we created the Nicolet Bank Small Micro Grant Program, a forgivable grant funded solely by our bank. That program resulted in \$1.25 million given to 325 local companies in Spring of 2020.

"Real People. Real Conversations." isn't just a tagline, it's how we do business. We are committed to our local businesses and clients to work together for shared success.

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Real People. Real Conversations.



**Brian Rasmussen**

*Publisher, Insight Publications*  
*brasmussen@insightonbusiness.com*

Whether you're a startup or a mature company, innovation is vital to your success. Innovation was never more visible than this past year as we witnessed businesses of all sizes coming up with new products and processes as we made our way through the pandemic.

You may remember we previously handed out the Insight Innovation Awards each May, but this year with all the innovation happening, we decided to make a change. Instead of highlighting only a few businesses' innovative processes and products, we wanted to share as many business innovation stories as possible. The Champions of Innovation sponsored content section allows businesses to share their own innovation stories in their own words and photographs.

In the pages that follow, you will read about businesses creating new processes and products as they dealt with the pandemic and other businesses that include innovation as part of their everyday processes.

I hope you'll be as impressed as I am with the amount of innovation happening in the New North and the impact it has on the region's economy. ❶

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# Innovation drives Nicolet Bank



2020 taught us many things, one of which is the incredible resilience and fortitude of our customers and communities. For those of you who found a way to survive and thrive, we are willing to bet it is because of the innovation inherent in your companies. We certainly found that to be true for Nicolet Bank. Given the audience that will be reading this, we fully recognize the folly of writing a “do it this way” article. What we will do, however, is let you know how Nicolet views innovation with the hopes that it may help you somehow.

The definitions of innovation are varied, but most center on the idea of products and/or processes and new and/or creative ways of executing them to create value.



All of these are true to some degree. Still, Nicolet chooses to look at innovation as the mindset of our collective employees. We do this because of our purpose and how we compete.

Our purpose at Nicolet is to serve our customers, our communities and each other. We do this with and through people, not just a creative or innovation group, but with every employee who works at Nicolet. We recognize that our culture and our brand rest on the actions of the people closest to our customers.

In 2016, we partnered with our friend and customer John Sweeney to bring this to life. John co-wrote a book, “The Innovative Mindset.” The book shows the lessons of John’s work in improv comedy, as a keynote speaker and as an entrepreneur. Some of you may remember him as the keynote speaker at the THINK conference in 2017.



**Mural at Nicolet National Bank on College Avenue in Appleton.**

Here are a few lessons from the book that we want our people to know:

- Everyone at Nicolet has customers, whether internal or external. Our job, our purpose, is to serve these customers. Our core values of “Be Real, Be Responsive, Be Personal, Be Memorable, Be Entrepreneurial” guide our actions to serve.
- Listen and defer judgment: When we hit pause and consider the potential of ideas, we will better serve our customers. Replace the phrase “it can’t be done” with “let’s find out.”
- Declare your intentions: Add your thoughts to the conversation because you may have the key to the solution. No one is allowed to sit and listen. Join in.
- Take action: Our purpose and our core values are action-driven. There isn’t time for over-analysis when you are trying to get things done. There is a greater risk of staying the same than in trying something new.



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**Company:**  
Nicolet Bank

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**Innovation:**  
The innovative mindset

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[nicoletbank.com](http://nicoletbank.com)

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- Practice these skills daily. Innovation isn’t a department or a small group of individuals; it is everyone.
- Think of the potential of living in this mindset; we listen, look for potential and see new ways to serve. We invite others into the conversation and respect their ideas. We take action and move forward. We live our purpose to serve.

If you would like a copy of John’s book, we have about 25 on hand. Email us at [voice@nicoletbank.com](mailto:voice@nicoletbank.com) with the subject line “Innovative Mindset,” and we will get one to you.

Cheers to a great 2021 and beyond!

# PCMC responds to flexible packaging with ease

When COVID shifted buying habits, PCMC was poised to fill the gap



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During 2020 when certain aspects of life remained at a standstill, PCMC launched several innovations to our print and bag converting customers. Flexible packaging experienced record-level increases in 2020 as consumer buying habits made a dramatic shift. The increased demand coupled with future sustainable film packaging mandates had many converters exploring new options. This gave us the unique opportunity to provide new solutions to our customers when they needed them most.

We've been leading the way on polybag machines and polyethylene (PE) pouches for years and continue to do so with our newest pouch machine — the Ares 400-SUP from Hudson-Sharp. It was created from listening to our clients' changing needs and is the perfect complement to label and narrow web printers. The Ares 400-SUP helps customers meet sustainable film packaging mandates that consumer packaged goods are gearing up for by 2025 and 2030. It is a compact, efficient, easy-to-operate, quick-changeover machine designed for short/medium-run production. It runs recycle-ready PE, laminated films, paper and bio-films effortlessly and with a low scrap rate.

Running thinner and sustainable material presents a unique set of challenges for flexographic printers. Those challenges are what drove the development of our new center surface rewinder. It handles tough-to-run materials like cling film, stretch PVC, extensible substrates and light-gauge shrink films with ease. Its lack of turreting in roll-to-roll transfers eliminates waste from unstable materials. The new rewinder is an available option on



**PCMC's newest innovations, the Ares, Meridian Elite and Fusion C, tackle some of the biggest issues printers and converters face from record-level increases in demand.**

our Fusion C flexographic press.

One of the biggest variables in the flexographic printing process is the quality of the anilox roller. When anilox cells perform at correct volumes, it allows for better color matching and print repeatability — saving time, ink and waste. That is why we developed the Meridian Elite laser anilox cleaner. Its patented laser technology deep cleans engravings of any line screen without increased surface temperature or hot spots. The fastest cleaning cycles in the industry along with smart and connected features help keep printers and converters operating at peak efficiency. The Meridian Elite was awarded with two monumental industry awards — the 2020 FTA Technical Innovation Award and the 2020 Label Industry Global Award.

Our new ION digital conversion system allows printers and converters to add variable data features to their business portfolio while utilizing their existing printing assets. The ION digital conversion system is available for many platforms including labels, folding cartons,

wide web packaging and other specialty printing markets. It eliminates costly setup expenses and reduces waste by improving changeover times on shorter

runs. Powered by Memjet's drop-on-demand thermal inkjet technology, each print head contains 70,400 print nozzles firing more than 3 billion dots per second. The new aqueous pigmented ink-set offers a durable, lightfast solution to your digital print needs.

Without question, 2020 proved to be a year like no other. COVID-19 helped reinforce just how essential manufacturers, printers and converters are in meeting basic needs. We're grateful that we played a small part in our customers' ability to continue to provide necessities to people when they needed them most. **1**



**Company:**  
PCMC

**Innovation:**  
Equipment making a difference

pcmc.com

# Regional PPE initiative supports nonprofits

In April 2020, it became apparent that safely operating a business, especially a nonprofit, through COVID was going to be challenging. Personal protective equipment (PPE) supplies were needed throughout the entire world for organizations to operate safely. Additionally, PPE was hard to source, and what could be sourced was expensive and, in many cases, came from unreliable vendors. Nonprofits did not have the time, talent or resources to invest in securing supplies. Funders, on the other hand, were faced with an outpouring of requests. One funder received \$200,000 in requests to support PPE expenses in a one-week timespan. Funders were faced with the question of how a system might be created to use business talent and resources to source and centrally distribute the PPE items for free to nonprofits.

Heidi Dusek, executive director of the J. J. Keller Foundation, designed a system to integrate business talent, centralized fundraising and supply distribution using the power of scale to help all nonprofits operate safe and healthy workplaces. Given Valley Packaging Industries' (VPI) background in supporting the Fox Cities Diaper Bank and other business streams, VPI was approached and agreed to be the nonprofit lead for this project, acting as the fiscal agent and logistics coordinator. The model was simple — offer a regional coordinated effort to source, bulk purchase and distribute various PPE needs for nonprofits in the region. While the solution showed great potential, the overall strain on funders and nonprofits was proving to be heavy in administrative resources for all parties.

Finding a solution to that wasn't hard. A team of young professionals at Oshkosh Corp. found a way to simplify the administrative burden by finding a business tool to capture and process requests that made it



**Valley Packaging Industries staff repackages 55-gallon drums of hand sanitizer donated by FEMA into packaging to make it usable to local nonprofits.**

simple to access PPE for nonprofits in Northeast Wisconsin. Behind the scenes, corporate sourcing and logistics talent from J. J. Keller & Associates worked with vendors to navigate bulk purchase agreements and maintain inventory workflows. Additional talent from Oshkosh Corp. assisted with process flow and accountability tracking. Funding and in-kind supply resources from 12 funders and corporations helped the team collaborate and adjust to the emerging needs to provide free PPE items while allowing the nonprofit staff the time and capacity to do what they do best — support their clients and run programs.

This collaboration continues to gain momentum as PPE has been provided to more than 60 nonprofits since June. PPE distributed includes cleaning products, masks, gloves, hand sanitizer, acrylic panels, thermometers, disinfectant wipes and more. Since PPE is still needed, this model continues to scale



and reach people and organizations throughout the region, with potential to move beyond offering PPE in the future. It's a true testament of collaborative, creative problem-solving

and continuous improvement. The system has the potential to partner businesses and nonprofits on a regional level in other ways. If you are a nonprofit, you can access the supplies by visiting the website below and submitting an order. If you are a business or donor who sees the value of this model and would like to contribute or explore future implications, please contact Heidi Dusek at [hdusek@jjkeller.com](mailto:hdusek@jjkeller.com). 

**J. J. Keller**  
Foundation, Inc.



**Companies:**  
J. J. Keller Foundation  
and Oshkosh Corp.

**Innovation:**  
Delivering PPE to nonprofits

[valley-packaging-ppe-donation-center.  
square.site](http://valley-packaging-ppe-donation-center.square.site)

Password: PPE2021

# Pandemic causing a slowdown?



## Innovation is alive and well in New North

New North, Inc. initiated the NEW Launch Alliance to create a more connected, robust, resourceful and productive entrepreneurial ecosystem in Northeast Wisconsin. We realize a strong strategy for the region's growth is led by creative business ideas that are turned into new companies.

We are proud of corporations across our region that have a rich history of engineering and manufacturing new products. The list of innovations includes military vehicles, warships, vaccine clinical structures, two-stage snow blowers, packaging for the food industry, supply-chain global logistics and analytical software, bathroom touchless taps, smart toilets, and the future U.S. Postal Service trucks. These discoveries all come out of our New North Region — and so do mentors. It all starts with an idea, which then gets developed, financed and launched.

With this article, we wish to highlight examples from our region that may today be at the stage of creative ideas, prototype or a small business. With support of regional assets, we anticipate someday featuring them as mega companies, paying it forward with stories of their journey to future startups in Northeast Wisconsin.

### **Creativity abounds in our STEM-led high schools and postsecondary schools. Some of the ideas include:**

- Smartphone app that will help families with easy access to resources and services in their own ZIP code
- Smart hearing aids that will detect falls, track activity and call 911 if needed
- Virtual reality training modules

- Products to improve the survival of honey bee colonies in cold weather
- Ice safety device that will test the thickness of ice on large bodies of water
- Eco-cover that uses natural and organic material to protect animal feed that is also nutritionally beneficial to the animals

Small businesses were launched related to machinery, equipment and transportation devices:

- Riding gym floor sander designed to renovate, sand, strip and finish portable floors
- Longboards manufactured to allow for skateboard flexibility with aging adults
- Kick-sleds for transportation across snow and ice trails
- Ice auger machine that not only drills holes but also is used as a transportation vehicle onto the ice

### **Food and beverage innovations took off this past year:**

- Healthy drinks for children with fruit and spice tastes with themes that feature characters from fairy-tale books on their decorative tins
- Authentic ice wines, leveraging our cooler climate

### **Not to be outdone, advancements in health care took center stage:**

- Specialty laminated paperboard sleeves and inserts for COVID-19 vaccine distribution
- Venom lab techniques that collect venom from snakes, spiders and scorpions for anti-venom manufacturers
- Surgical devices that offer targeted stabilization during medical procedures



### **Lastly, we wish to highlight our three regional pitch winners with their technology-based businesses:**

- Proceed.app — distributing digital learning materials for small- and medium-sized businesses using visual elements
- Debtle — tackling the consumer debt crisis with a cloud-based platform that automates and simplifies the negotiation and settlement of overdue invoices and bad debt accounts
- Pure & Complete Phonics — engaging, game-based spelling and reading application for students with dyslexia that is authentic, realistic and culturally responsive

Hang on East and West coasts. We are the Fresh Coast and making waves in innovation. 



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**Company:**  
New North, Inc.

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**Innovation:**  
NEW Launch Alliance

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thenewnorth.com

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# Water that acts like bleach

“Yeah, and what else does it do, cure cancer?” That’s the kind of sarcastic and often hostile reaction Roving Blue CEO Yana DeMyer has often gotten when trying to explain her company’s core technology to the first-time listener.



“It does sound way too good to be true. I tell people that we can take ordinary tap water, dissolve some gas into it, and that gas turns the water into a powerful sanitizing solution —stronger than chlorine even — and that they can then use it to purify water, and to clean and sanitize surfaces. Then that gas quickly reverts to ordinary oxygen, so there are no chemicals left behind. Well, that does seem to be a stretch, doesn’t it?” DeMyer says.

But the fact is, the process is real. The

gas discussed is ozone and when it is dissolved into water, it does all that. “The implications are vast. Any one person or any business that uses chemicals to sanitize things could potentially benefit from this technology. It is low cost, can get very small and portable (the GO3™ water bottle pod, the first device to sanitize water in the bottle), and requires very little power.

Institutionally, there could be huge water savings to boot, as you don’t have to rinse the water away; it’s just water.”

Our barrier is awareness. Thank you, Insight Publications, for helping us tell our story. If your business would like to explore what electrolytic ozone can do for you, please call or visit our website to learn more. **I**



**Company:**  
Roving Blue

**Innovation:**  
Power of EO3™

rovingblue.com



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## Bassett Mechanical builds healthy solutions

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused an increased focus on building and facility health. Facility owners and operators from various industries have begun to take active steps to increase the safety and health of their operations.

As a company, we have seen a rise in interest from customers looking to further explore the numerous building health options available to them. Primary concerns from customers seeking these solutions include interest in a proactive approach to air quality and supporting a safe and comfortable environment for their occupants and associates.

As experts in innovative building health solutions, our teams quickly answered this need by creating a summary of building health options to help customers choose which solutions would best fit their building health goals. This tool helps customers of any industry or market quickly understand what building health could look like at their facility and what the benefits to implementing these options could be. It includes details on solutions like Needlepoint Bipolar Ionization (NPBI), touchless fixtures, preventive maintenance, integrated control systems and UV lighting.

Our newly launched NPBI solution has become a popular choice for many customers. Customers who

choose this solution often express a desire to ensure their occupants feel safe. To support this concern, upon the installation of an NPBI unit, we offer customers a window display, which informs occupants an NPBI unit has been installed to maximize the air quality, cleanliness and safety of the facility. This gives our customers a way to show their occupants that they are taking proactive steps to create the optimal environment for their visitors and employees. Bassett Mechanical also has taken steps to install this solution in all four of our office locations.

Facilities of all shapes and sizes can benefit from these responsible and innovative approaches to indoor air quality. We are proud to expand these options to provide the peace of mind customers need during a time when air quality and comfort are especially significant to their operations. **I**



**Company:**  
Bassett Mechanical

**Innovation:**  
Facility upgrades

BassettMechanical.com



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# Network Health finds innovation during coronavirus



Network Health is a local provider-owned health plan transforming the health and well-being of our communities. We promise to be our members' health and wellness partner, helping them flourish in every stage of life. Our local ownership allows us to be flexible and responsive, creating cost-saving solutions.

Understandably, when the coronavirus hit Wisconsin, our members were concerned about personal and financial health along with the uncertainty of how their businesses would be impacted. They needed solutions quickly that provided extra support and the reassurance of knowing they would be taken care of when things got tough.

Network Health responded and was there to help by launching safe ways to help our members with innovative financial relief and additional benefits.

In March of 2020, we enriched telehealth coverage with \$0 virtual doctor visits and extended these benefits through April 2021, so members could feel safe seeking care. Additionally, Network Health offered premium rebates to small- and mid-size companies. For those

**In 2020, for the second year, we partnered with CBS 58 and the Annual Hunger Task Force Drive Thru Food Drive. We think it is important to give back to our friends and neighbors in the communities we live and work in.**



**KiErrin Phillips, Supervisor, Quality Health Integration, Wellness and Condition Management**

members on many of our Medicare Advantage and our individual and family plans, we sent pre-paid benefit cards to use on qualified expenses. To keep our members informed during the pandemic, we also partnered with local companies to share best practices and support in the form of blogs, direct mail outreach, phone calls and social media. It helped everyone stay connected.

To take care of our members, we also needed to take care of our employees. In less than 48 hours after the shutdown, Network Health mobilized an at-home workforce. We scaled our business operations to keep employees safe while not missing a beat on service levels to our customers.

The Hometown Advantage™ is Network Health's way of doing business. It's centered on the fact that we are a Wisconsin-based company and have been improving the lives of local business owners, individuals and families for decades. We support our local employer customers by doing business with and buying from



**Company:**  
Network Health

**Innovation:**  
Hometown Advantage™

[networkhealth.com](http://networkhealth.com)

companies that do business with us — helping other Wisconsin-based businesses grow and succeed. In fact, in 2020, Network Health returned over \$5.6 million to the community by spending with our own customers. We support our communities in ways beyond health insurance coverage.

Network Health continues to transform health insurance and deliver innovative plan solutions that provide exceptional value to our members. We take care of the communities we serve, because we know we are helping our neighbors, friends and family. Network Health is determined to go above and beyond to continue moving forward together. ①



**65,754 Network Health Medicare Advantage members received a personal protection gift box filled with supplies to stay healthy and safe.**

# Youth mental health screening tool readies for wider launch



A series of tragic youth suicides in the Fox Cities around 2010 was the impetus for developing a wide-reaching mental health screening tool for young people in Northeast Wisconsin. At the time, Samaritan Counseling Center in Menasha established a regional advisory board that tapped a program from Columbia University called TeenScreen. By 2014, Columbia discontinued TeenScreen, and board members pivoted to address perceived shortcomings in that program through a collaboration between local researchers and mental health experts. The improved tool, known today as the Connected Community Wellness Screen (CCWS), was developed by Lori Hilt, Ph.D., of the CARE Lab at Lawrence University in partnership with Samaritan. Fast-forward to 2021, and onsite CCWS school teams work in 10 Northeast Wisconsin school districts at 56 sites to administer the screening and connect families to community mental health resources.

## Pandemic and positivity rates

The pandemic exacerbated the need for trusted adults to make contact with young people in need of mental health support. School administrators often refer to CCWS as a “mental health ER on wheels” because staff members are present to young people when their normal mental health symptoms boil over into emergencies from grief, sadness, hopelessness and anxiety, all the way to suicidal ideation. Last March, CCWS immediately established protocols for virtual administration of



the confidential online screenings. Given the team’s inability to meet with students in classroom settings, participation rates fell, but positivity rates increased markedly. The need for mental health interventions was, and is, more important than ever.

## The ROI of mental health

CCWS is a point of access to quality mental health care for entire family systems. Families get help with relationship problems, family-system trauma, mental health disorders, addiction and poverty outcomes, including improved adult worksite productivity and decreased sick day utilization. Furthermore, young people who get early intervention for issues like crippling anxiety have improved academic success and higher graduation rates and learn lifelong coping skills.

## Let’s Get Candid™

Since 2014, CCWS has been tested rigorously and improved continuously in school and research settings. After

a series of inquiries at national conferences, CCWS invested in the development of Candid™, a CCWS model for mental health professionals across the nation to implement in their local schools. At press time, Candid is in beta testing and a complete rollout of the product is expected this fall.

To inquire about Candid or Connected Community Wellness Screen availability and outcomes, please contact me at [jparkers@samaritan-counseling.com](mailto:jparkers@samaritan-counseling.com).



**Jennifer Parsons** is program director of the Connected Community Wellness Screen at Samaritan Counseling Center.



SCHOOL YEAR	Students offered screening	Percent participation*	Screened positive for mental health concerns	Referred for further evaluation**
2018-2019	14,297	51% (7,301)	1,770 (24%)	1,565 (88%)
2019-2020	13,186	43% (5,684)	1,596 (28%)	1,394 (87%)
2020-2021 (YTD)	5,080	45% (2,326)	844 (36%)	635 (75%)

\*Parent/guardian and participant consent is required

\*\*After clinician follow-up interview

**Company:**  
Samaritan Counseling

**Innovation:**  
Connected Community Wellness Screen

[samaritan-counseling.com](http://samaritan-counseling.com)

# TitletownTech fund helps startups reach next level

TitletownTech is a place where bold, self-driven entrepreneurs dream big and create impact. Equipped with a \$25 million venture fund and a modern, impactful space in the shadow of Lambeau Field, TitletownTech officially opened its doors in the summer of 2019. As of today, TitletownTech has invested in 22 early-stage companies ranging in size, industry and market.

To the team at TitletownTech, innovation, in its simplest form, is about identifying a problem and figuring it out. To take this innovation definition from theory into action, it takes confidence, commitment and a clear sense of purpose. Founders motivated by purpose-driven innovation are committed to solving meaningful problems in meaningful markets. And those founders are the people who start the companies that TitletownTech invests in.

As purpose-driven innovation and the startup world collide, TitletownTech is in a unique position to see firsthand what new technology, business models, scientific discoveries and value propositions are coming to disrupt the status quo. Among the emerging trends that make the team at TitletownTech especially excited are artificial intelligence, imaging, digital marketplace, virtual reality, mobility, human engagement and sensor technology. When technology is connected with value creation and purpose, innovative companies are born, and success is likely to follow.

Artificial intelligence (AI) has quickly become a hot topic in the startup ecosystem. AI is most valuable when a company can pinpoint a use case, prove out a model and quickly grow around that use case like a center point. Springbok Analytics developed an AI-powered software platform that transforms standard MRIs into dynamic three-dimensional analyses of muscle, giving users access to data that has never been seen before. Initially, the technology was used to assist



**Members of the Strive MedTech team talk technology.**

surgeons in tendon-lengthening procedures for children with cerebral palsy, but it has since pivoted to partnering with sports organizations and the military to provide clinical decision support tools for injury management and performance optimization for elite populations.

Data constraints previously have prevented crucial applications of AI technology to revolutionize industries, products and lives. The total amount of data necessary to create valuable, reliable AI models is massive, and in many cases, datasets are private, incomplete or sparse. To solve this imminent problem, Synthetiaic combines high-fidelity 3D modeling and novel, generative AI to grow large and high-

quality datasets sufficient for machine learning. Synthetiaic can produce high-quality training data even if there is no starter sample. The company also supervises the subsequent training and deployment of ultra-high-accuracy AI models, which outperform models generated using a traditional approach.

Corey Jaskolski, the founder and CEO of Synthetiaic, has led technical projects for clients including NASA, the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, and many U.S. Army and Navy research laboratories. Since 2012, Jaskolski has been a National Geographic fellow, embarking on missions across all seven continents. Last September, Jaskolski was named the 2020 Rolex National Geographic Explorer of the Year, a prestigious award granted on the basis of “personifying leadership in exploration and storytelling.” Previous winners include filmmaker James Cameron, among a list of other incredibly talented individuals. Most recently, Jaskolski developed a custom camera array to capture a 3D-digital copy of a critically endangered Sumatran rhinoceros. It is this work that led Jaskolski to found Synthetiaic.

The impacts of AI will come in many forms — from protecting endangered species from poachers to helping doctors diagnose medical problems earlier and faster.



**TitletownTech, located in the shadow of Lambeau Field, officially opened its doors in July of 2019.**

The applications of AI are vast, the opportunity is huge and Syntheticaic is expanding the outer limits of possibility.

While digital marketplaces aren't exactly new to consumers (e.g., Amazon, Etsy), for the chemical industry, it was novel before ChemDirect entered the scene. In 2019, CEO Tyler Ellison brought his knowledge of logistics to the industry, which led to the creation of ChemDirect. During his tenure as the CEO of Nova Molecular Technologies, a specialties chemical manufacturer, he experienced two major problems in the industry: Manufacturers did not own their customer data and customers were forced to buy chemicals blindly from distributors, lacking both product and price choice.

This \$5 trillion industry lacked transparency, impacting both supply and demand. In his effort to solve those problems, Ellison created ChemDirect, an e-commerce marketplace that removes the barrier between producer and consumer. ChemDirect is leading the chemical industry into a new era of market transparency, resulting in new value for both manufacturers and buyers that includes cost and time savings as well as optionality.

Over the last decade, the transportation and mobility space has experienced constant innovation. Think of Uber, electric vehicles or autonomous driving — the means in which someone gets from point A to point B are many. Aryv, a Janesville-based transportation technology company, is tackling the ride-share experience for the non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT) market.

In the United States, 3.6 million Medicaid beneficiaries annually miss or delay health care due to transportation problems. This causes an echoing effect through the health care system, leading to significant health repercussions for the individual and operational inefficiencies for the provider. A NEMT trip is defined as a transportation service provided to individuals who are not in an emergency but may need medical assistance during their trip.

Six years ago, Aryv CEO Mark Carmichael had the idea of making

technology that would bring efficiency and transparency to the NEMT market. The Aryv platform includes live location tracking, level-of-need matching, HIPAA-compliant Google Places API integration, simple booking and credential transparency. Further, its technology encourages, enables and tracks various medical certifications of each driver seeking to become an individual non-emergency medical transport. Certification examples include how to handle blood spills and how to administer CPR. Since 2015, Aryv has grown rapidly and is currently operating in six states.

It is no secret that the number and intensity of storms continue to increase



**The ChemDirect team has made TitledownTech home after relocating from Venice, Calif., to Green Bay.**

with climate change. In addition, the flooding destruction of severe storms causes sewage overflow, which is a \$32 billion problem in the United States. StormSensor uses new sensor technology and Internet of Things data networks to provide weather, flow, depth and temperature data every five minutes, every day. This helps government municipalities, utility authorities and environmental leaders understand how water moves in their subsurface infrastructure (think Google Traffic Maps for water), helping them operate quickly and effectively, and make informed decisions on capital improvements.

Prior to founding StormSensor, CEO Erin Rothman worked at a consulting firm focused on monitoring stormwater — a necessary task to ensure property compliance with state regulations. She quickly realized there

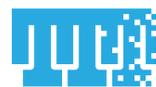
was a huge opportunity to create a solution that would save time, money and introduce new value to the market. StormSensor's mission starts with sensor data and ultimately helps cities thrive by making communities smarter, more resilient and sustainable as climate change continues.

The COVID-19 pandemic has prompted many people to embrace new means of interpersonal engagement. Video conferencing software has become a staple in work life and in social life. The demand for safe ways to engage with others has continued to grow, and Demiplane is positioned to be the best digital platform for tabletop role-playing games (RPGs). Traditional RPGs are played in-person. The appetite for online and virtual RPGs was

present pre-pandemic, but once the pandemic hit, it grew tremendously. Demiplane is an online tabletop gaming platform that combines player matchmaking, live and interactive video capabilities, shared journals and inventory, dice rolling and other services into one system. Founded by Peter Romenesko and former Dallas Cowboys center Travis Frederick, Demiplane supports

more than just the popular Dungeons & Dragons — it supports just about every tabletop game available.

With each new investment, TitledownTech continues to create impact and support entrepreneurs building value upon this strong Wisconsin foundation. By leveraging a unique ability to connect entrepreneurs with world-class organizations, partners and talent, the team at TitledownTech is excited for the future of purpose-driven innovation. 



**TITLEDOWNTech**

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**Company:**  
TitledownTech

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**Innovation:**  
Investing in problem-solvers

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[titledowntech.com](http://titledowntech.com)

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## Providing safety measures with efficient automation

In the wake of COVID-19, Camera Corner Connecting Point strived to ensure businesses could continue operations either remotely or safely in the office for those unable to work from home.

One of the many solutions needed for safe onsite operations is temperature monitoring devices. Organizations around the country dedicated staff members to using touchless, handheld thermometers to ensure no one with a fever entered the facility. Although this was functional, it was far from efficient. Manual temperature reading created lines to get into stores and delayed employees from getting to their daily duties, as well as increased costs by allocating staff to temperature scanning rather than performing their job duties.

Customers and employees alike were frustrated and needed a better system.

Clients approached CCCP as a technology innovation leader, asking for a solution. As a platinum HP reseller, CCCP used its relationship and buying power to identify leading-edge technology in temperature scanning — the Meridian Temperature Screening Kiosk. The

Meridian is a touchless temperature-scanning device designed to protect the health and safety of employees and guests by preventing anyone with an elevated temperature from entering a facility. This kiosk also has the ability to set alarms that sound when those above the temperature threshold attempt to enter.

Additionally, the Meridian has facial recognition software and can tie into your existing physical security systems to allow doors to unlock if individuals are recognized and do not have a fever. This kiosk scans for temperatures quickly and easily, with a green or red light as well as auditory confirmation of whether a fever is detected. By using a Meridian Temperature Screening Kiosk, CCCP's clients are able to continue business operations without having to dedicate staff to taking temperatures manually.

CCCP has kiosks available for live demo onsite at its downtown Green Bay location on the corner of Main and Monroe. To set up a demo, contact Michael Seering at (920) 438-0507. 



**Company:**  
Camera Corner  
Connecting Point

**Innovation:**  
Meridian Temperature  
Screening Kiosk

[cccp.com](http://cccp.com)



## A competitive advantage

Creating emotional intelligence  
in your organization

Every setback begs for a giant comeback. Employ Humanity salutes and celebrates all the people, teams and organizations that continue to boldly innovate, color outside the lines, think big and challenge the status quo. Wisconsin's quality of life and comeback is unrivaled because of your courage — you are CHAMPIONS! Without question, the humans driving this innovation are spirit-filled with courage, resiliency, creativity and purpose. When you look under the hood of the most creative and innovative companies, you will find cultures of the highest emotional intelligence.

What is emotional intelligence? Emotional intelligence is the skill to recognize one's own emotions and the emotions of others, discern between different feelings, use emotional information to guide behavior, and adjust emotions to adapt and pivot. Emotional intelligence is the biggest competitive advantage in the marketplace. No one can program a machine to build trusting relationships, create innovative ideas and deliver spirit-filled leadership. Great news — emotional intelligence can be developed. Upskilling emotional intelligence is the foundation for greatness.

Employ Humanity, a leadership development and culture design company, expresses gratitude to the

businesses, schools, nonprofit organizations, leadership institutes and HR teams for your ongoing partnerships. Together, we are creating open minds, big hearts and strong character. Together, we are creating better versions of people who champion creativity and innovation. Congratulations to Employ Humanity Excellence Award winners Miron Construction Co Inc., Sargento Foods Inc., Oshkosh Corp., and Prevea Health — all headquartered in the New North. Best wishes to Oshkosh Corp.'s Wilson Jones — a true servant leader — in his retirement.

Bill Marklein, founder of Employ Humanity, is a national speaker, corporate trainer, coach and trusted adviser in the space of emotional intelligence. Marklein has published three books available for purchase at [employhumanity.com](http://employhumanity.com) to give you the tools, insight, self-reflection and concepts to elevate emotional intelligence within you to thrive in business and life. His available books include "Endless Bloom," "Limitless Rise" and "Relentless Glow." 



**Company:**  
Employ Humanity

**Innovation:**  
Emotional intelligence  
programs

[employhumanity.com](http://employhumanity.com)



## Lakeland's cooperative education program sets it apart

Lakeland University sophomore Parker Fogle is on track to earn his bachelor's degree with no tuition debt, thanks to LU's innovative Cooperative Education program. Co-Op is a unique approach to earning a college degree that stresses experiential learning while also supplying local employers with a much-needed workforce.

Fogle, who is majoring in business administration with an emphasis in manufacturing-supply chain and logistics, is working a Co-Op job at Johnsonville, one of many global employers that have become Co-Op partners.

Lakeland's Co-Op program places students in full- and part-time jobs with partner companies and organizations. Students earn academic credit and valuable experience for their work, and a combination of Co-Op scholarship dollars and wages positions them to graduate with little or no tuition debt.

Fogle, who works in Johnsonville's production and packing area, established a Lakeland Co-Op milestone this semester when he was approved for acceptance into Johnsonville's tuition remission program. This puts him on target not only to graduate debt free, but likely with some money in the bank.

"Proving to Johnsonville that I am a hard-working student and that I will do what it takes to gain their respect while getting my degree can only help with getting a full-time job at Johnsonville after graduation," Fogle said. "I plan to show them that their investment in me was well worth it."

Fogle worked closely with Lakeland's Co-Op team to land the job, which is also providing him shadowing opportunities with three other departments that are all



**Parker Fogle, a Lakeland University sophomore, is on track to graduate debt free thanks to Lakeland's Cooperative Education program.**

his areas of interest: supply chain, logistics, and quality and safety.

The demands of work and school are helping him balance his time. Fogle is earning six credits for his Co-Op and taking two or three classes per semester, depending on their difficulty.

"Managing credit load is very important because my Co-Op is my top priority to succeed at Johnsonville," said Fogle, a Lakeland's dean's list honoree who earned 18 college credits while he was in high school. "Also, I take at least one summer class to keep up with graduating on time."

Johnsonville reviews its employees on a frequent basis, and at Fogle's last review it was noted that he had not missed a day of work and had never been late.

"Learning from the ground up,

being on time and never missing a shift will pay dividends for me after graduation," Fogle said. "After one year on the job, I have accomplished all these."

Lakeland also serves thousands of students who are working adults, learning on the job and in the workplace.

Students enrolled in LU's William R. Kellett School of Undergraduate & Graduate Studies can earn academic credit toward their bachelor's or master's degrees through work-based projects with Cooperative Design courses. Students meet with their academic advisor and their employer to create the content for

these innovative courses.

The approach helps students cut down the time it takes to earn a degree while solving real workplace challenges like conducting research for a new product line, creating a training manual, designing better ways to analyze company performance data and a host of others. ❶



**Company:**  
Lakeland University

**Innovation:**  
Co-Op employment

lakeland.edu

# Weidert Group helps businesses through inbound marketing



Weidert Group, founded in 1980, had its biggest year ever in 2020, despite an unprecedented health and economic challenge that resulted in nearly 800 small businesses closing each day, according to one source. While the U.S. economy contracted in 2020, Weidert revenue increased 35 percent and we added nine new positions, in large part because what we help clients do — inbound marketing and sales — serves a critical need for businesses that's become even more important during the pandemic.



Weidert Group is located in the historic Kimberly Library on the Institute of Paper Chemistry campus in Appleton.

## Inbound marketing helps manufacturers pivot

One of the biggest pandemic challenges faced by B2B manufacturers was that it shut down face-to-face prospecting and selling. Salespeople could no longer meet with customers and prospects, and trade shows and conferences were canceled or made virtual, eliminating an important means of connecting with new prospects.

The inbound marketing methodology reflects that the world, pre-pandemic, had become increasingly buyer-centric. Consumers and businesses alike have been conducting an increasing portion of their "buyer journey" virtually, using online searches to research and learn about potential solutions to their needs. The pandemic essentially made the virtual journey the only viable route and demonstrated to all businesses

that in order to compete, they needed to pivot quickly to be visible virtually to their best prospects, regardless of where they were in their journey. Which is why we got so busy in 2020!

### Inbound marketing:

- **Makes relevant content available** (and visible to search engines) for those seeking answers at every stage in their buyer journeys, whether they're just starting to research possibilities, assessing a range of options or they've narrowed their choices and are close to a decision.
- **Nurtures prospects** using technology and observed buyer behavior to provide prospects with the content that is most relevant to their interests and specific situation. The best nurturing strategies combine demographic information about people and businesses with behavioral observations that indicate intent and urgency.

So, while the pandemic is preventing many traditional sales and marketing practices, inbound marketing offers an effective way to virtually market and sell with no limitations — in some cases even pursuing markets that became more attractive because of the pandemic.

Here's what's usually included in an inbound program:

- **Content strategy and content creation.** Editorial direction and recommended content types (blogs, e-books, tip sheets, checklists, videos, etc.) for different topics/challenges and for different stages in the buyer journey.
- **Social media plans and execution.** Social media is the starting point for content promotion and distribution.



**Manufacturers are attracting prospects to their websites using content, an approach to marketing that warms up leads for sales and shortens the sales cycle.**

- **Search engine optimization** (SEO) of websites and content, ensuring high ranking on search engine results as people search for answers and possibilities.
- **Competitive reviews** provide insights into what competitors are doing with content, social media, website performance, etc., to determine the best opportunities for growth.

While some industries, like foodservice, hospitality and travel have been decimated by the pandemic, many industries and individual businesses have been fortunate enough to adopt new strategies and technologies that have allowed them to weather the difficulties. The team at Weidert Group feels twice-blessed by our pandemic experiences. We've come through it intact and healthy, and we've had the opportunity to help other businesses thrive as well. 

**WEIDERT GROUP**  
*inbound marketing for complex industries*

**Company:**  
Weidert Group

**Innovation:**  
Business development through inbound marketing

[weidert.com](http://weidert.com)

# Bank First helps clients through pandemic

Bank First's promise states: "We are a relationship-based community bank focused on providing innovative products and services that are value driven."

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic challenged Bank First to use its innovative spirit to respond to the crisis. The bank quickly identified three primary areas to focus its efforts: the health and safety of its employees, continuing to serve its customers and providing financial assistance to local businesses.

Generated by the bank's pandemic committee, the implementation of a pandemic playbook was instrumental in determining next steps. Bank First pursued ways to meet the needs of its customers and community members while ensuring the health and safety of its team. The bank created safety protocols within its offices and enabled a large portion of its workforce the ability to work from home while continuing to serve customers. Bank First launched a new online appointment-scheduling system and improved its processes by fully integrating a streamlined system to complete mortgage applications 100 percent online.

When shutdowns became the primary topic of conversation, Bank First chose to become a champion of its customers by purchasing \$100,000 in gift cards from more than 140 restaurants located within its footprint. This action ensured immediate relief in a time of uncertainty. The bank later donated these gift cards to local families, nonprofit

## Bank First headquarters at 402 N. 8th St. in Manitowoc.

organizations and businesses through various programs once the restrictions were lifted. In continuing its support of local restaurants, the bank also provided weekly lunches to its almost 300 employees from March through June of 2020.



### In March 2020, employees from Bank First's Sheboygan office enjoyed lunch and frozen custard from a local favorite, Randall's Frozen Custard.

When the Small Business Administration first announced the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), the quick action and innovation of the bank's lending and administration team identified opportunities to assist local businesses with the program. Bank First used an invaluable resource — its employees — by training and redeploying more than 70 staff members from the front line and other departments to assist with the PPP application process. Concern for the local business community inspired bank employees to work evenings, weekends and holidays to help their friends and neighbors obtain financial relief. Employees saw the need to contribute however possible, as the survival of many businesses was dependent on their actions. Customers and community members were kind to give compliments on the ease of process, attentiveness and support given by the bank's team.



The bank was quick to select an exceptional vendor to submit PPP applications to the SBA. This enabled the bank to not only serve its current business customers but help other businesses that were turned away from their financial institution due to lack of resources. Through teamwork and assistance through the PPP program, as of March 2021, Bank First has aided 2,050 businesses in securing more than \$365 million in vital funding; impacting and preserving over 31,550 Wisconsin jobs.

Throughout the pandemic and within the current economic environment, Bank First continues to live up to its promise. Mike Molepske, CEO of Bank First said, "From the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, our commitment to provide both existing and new customers with the financial support they need has been at the forefront of our efforts. At times of uncertainty, it is vital for community banks to be actively engaged by anticipating and responding to the needs of the community. Through the Paycheck Protection Program and several of our own initiatives, we have been able to provide assistance to ensure businesses continue operating effectively and families are able to put food on the table." 



**Company:**  
Bank First

**Innovation:**  
Launching new systems,  
streamlining processes

bankfirstwi.bank

# Invention of connection



## PROPHIT CO.

**Company:**  
Prophit Co.

**Innovation:**  
Dignify®

[prophit.com](http://prophit.com) | [dignify.com](http://dignify.com)

Who would think that a significant mission like “spreading dignity to the people” could begin with a napkin? For Prophit Co., it did.

More than a decade ago, co-owner of then Prophit Marketing, Joe Kiedinger, was struggling to connect with his new pre-teen stepson, Alex. Kiedinger, an outgoing, former cruise ship entertainer was vastly different than his deep-thinking, introverted stepson. The more Kiedinger tried to reach out to the boy, the more they seemed to clash.

Then, one game night, as Kiedinger placed his Monopoly piece on Pennsylvania Avenue and lifted the property card, it hit him, “Wouldn’t it be great if I had a card with all of Alex’s rules of communication right on it? Then I’d know how to connect with him!”

He quickly sketched out his inspiration on a napkin.

He was on to something. Kiedinger and wife Danica, co-owners of a small marketing firm based in Green Bay, could envision the card concept greatly

### **The Prophit Co. headquarters on N. Broadway in Green Bay.**

impacting their marketing clients who shared frustrations about internal communication. So, the pair eagerly began to study possible card applications. Kiedinger learned that 56 universal traits exist, which were identified by marriage specialist Larry Bilotta, that comprise our human dignity — traits like organized, faithful and enthusiastic. Each individual is motivated by a unique blend of these traits. Kiedinger and Bilotta plotted a way to use his algorithm in a process to help people express how they want to be treated.

After several years of experimentation and study, the About Me Card was born. For the first time, Kiedinger saw how his son viewed the world. Their relationship changed immediately. “It was probably the biggest epiphany I’ve ever

experienced in my life,” Kiedinger said.

The small, 3-by-5-inch card contained a list of each user’s unique personal motivations as well as the “rules” to follow to best communicate with them. The card was soon paired with a scheduled one-on-one meeting rhythm called the “Check-In,” which guided a leader and employee through a more meaningful dialogue than the typically brief — and often unproductive — one-on-ones of the past.

The vast majority of managers in corporate America have no professional leadership training and struggle to navigate through mentorship. The Check-In allowed those leaders to simply follow prompts to walk through a conversation that was not only custom-fit to their associate, but one that offered staggering results. Prophit clients shared rather stunning outcomes: lower turnover, reduced conflict, higher job satisfaction and drastically improved employee engagement.

But how? How did a paper card and some questions turn things around for companies? The answer was profound. What Kiedinger discovered was human dignity. Employees and leaders alike felt dignified in the process of connecting with one another. They were able to share their unique drivers and needs while learning to adapt to those of others as well.

The Kiedingers knew they had something remarkable on their hands and wanted to continue to spread its positive influence. The co-owners sought a digital application that included further resources and increased its reach. No longer did Check-In partners need to be in the same room with physical cards and a Check-In sheet between them. Now, Check-Ins could take place anywhere in the world. Along with the invention of the About Me Card and the Check-In, which allowed individuals to express their rules for dignity, a new name and a new digital platform were created: Dignify®.

By installing this technology into their internal processes, leaders were able to reduce the drama by guiding two people through a conversation, building understanding. The tool also could lead co-workers through similar conversations to build trust and understanding. As one user reported, “It’s hard to believe that a 30-minute conversation using Dignify can feel so good. I understand where my co-worker is coming from and we discussed positive ways to better work together. It was actually a little fun.”

The patented online platform is now used worldwide from Texas to Bordeaux, France, and is used by nonprofits, mom-and-pop shops, big business and even a Fortune 500 company. What do all these places and businesses have in common? People.

Anyone and everyone can use Dignify, and it’s changing lives.

From its founding in 2002, Prophit has metamorphosed from a three-person staff creating and placing advertisements to a full-fledged organizational health firm providing communication and leadership strategies that increase operational excellence.

As Kiedinger says, “Marketing will only accelerate what was going to happen anyway. Company culture and leadership are what drive the bus and create real growth.”



**Alex and Joe**

He continued, “We dig deep to first establish a healthy company before we push any messages out to the world. We, internally, spread dignity and teach dignity-based communication. We take the time to analyze what’s working, what’s not, and train leaders on how to improve their methods. We validate the client’s purpose and ensure it is trickling down through all the ranks, and finally begin purpose-directed marketing. Purpose-directed marketing is a reimagined approach that focuses on the company — purpose first, its heart, its true north. It comes last in the process because the world can’t truly know what a company stands for until everyone is on board internally.”

The company was a decade ahead



**Headquarters:** Green Bay

**What it does:** Provides the process, coaching and tools for leaders to build cohesive teams that build business results.

**Year founded:** 2002

**Number of employees:** 15

**Of interest:** Utilizes patented Dignify® technology to improve communication, build healthy relationships and drive optimal results.

of the times. Today, we see that people carry their motivations, emotions, personality, thoughts, hopes and communication style with them wherever they go. There is no true division of self. We cannot simply ignore or bury workplace conflict and tension forever. It creates resentment and stress. Leaders across the globe are finally realizing that if they want a stress-free, successful company, then they need a focused strategy to get there.

Prophit Co.’s Dignify is changing lives, truly and completely. Kiedinger says, “Leaders and their associates alike have shared stories of ‘complete 180 degrees and heart-wrenching realizations’ about how a leader’s past will shape them. Each and every person is shaped by their past. Each unique person has coping mechanisms and talents. Dignify reveals how a person succeeds in the world and begins a journey of helping them become the best version of themselves. Dignity is a personal foundation; it is how they bring good works to the world.”

Today, Prophit Co.’s mission is clearer than ever: to spread dignity to people. This simple but admirable call to action is one that inspires and empowers the Prophit Co. team through the choices they make each day, even leading the organization to provide major discounts for nonprofits and helping challenged teens who would otherwise not be able to afford the life-changing tool, Dignify.

As Kiedinger said, “It’s my personal mission to teach acceptance in this unaccepting world. How could I hold back a tool like this when it has the capacity to impact so many people’s lives? I just can’t and I won’t. The world is finally at our doorstep, knocking away, as people discover the power of dignity. And I can’t wait to share it.” 📌

# Prefense on cutting edge of fighting germs

We've all been forced to heighten our awareness of hygiene and germs because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The makers of Prefense have been sharply focused there for years. Since 2008, Prefense, LLC has developed and improved products that help give you confidence in a world full of surprises.

"Prefense helps people confidently live their lives in a world full of germs and we develop products that do that," said Prefense CEO Dave Wears. "We've just introduced Prefense Multi-SurfacePro, an EPA-approved antimicrobial surface protectant that inhibits the growth of odor-and stain-causing bacteria, algae, mold and mildew for up to three months in a single application. Imagine the time savings for you and your employees. The technology has the potential to expand our product line into new categories for many years to come. We're here in the Upper Midwest and ship everywhere, including Alaska and Hawaii. We also export our products to China, Malaysia and Mexico, where we are able to make additional claims with the same formulations."

Prefense Hand Sanitizer is a gentle foam — far more pleasing than harsh, smelly, runny alcohol-based hand sanitizers that seem to be everywhere these days and made by nearly anyone. In 2020, there were over 150 FDA-ordered recalls of alcohol-based hand sanitizers and 20,000 children under the age of 6 poisoned by them.

"Folks must beware. Some contain unacceptable and dangerous levels of methanol, which is deadly," said Wears. "Poison hotlines have seen a 40 percent increase in calls, as the market is saturated with the stuff."

Unlike alcohol-based sanitizers which are flammable, Prefense Hand Sanitizer is safe to store in hospital and school closets. "Our formula is water-based, so it actually helps your skin retain its natural moisture



**Prefense revolutionary antimicrobial protection products for skin and surfaces are produced right here in the heart of America and distributed around the world.**

instead of damaging your hands," Wears said. "And it's much more economical. One pump is all you need. Our 8-ounce bottle has 640 uses in it."

"It's touching to hear the stories of folks who have discovered Prefense Hand Sanitizer. They're used to suffering the hazards of alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Prefense Hand Sanitizer solves the problem and it legitimizes our efforts



**Pasquele Moreci, owner of Roberto's Ristorante in Elmhurst, Ill., treats his bar area with Prefense Multi-SurfacePro, which delivers antimicrobial protection that lasts up to three months.**

to bring better alternatives to market. It motivates us to keep it up," said Ken Hughes, vice president of global sales.

"The simplicity and performance of our products are our first priority," said Michael Meuli, vice president of research and development. "Efficacy is key. We were thrilled to attain validation from a Brigham Young University study featured in the Journal of Hospital Infection in February 2021, that shines a bright light on Prefense Hand Sanitizer as a very favorable alternative to

alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Our Prefense Multi-SurfacePro forms a durable coating, protecting surfaces for up to three months and inhibits the formation of biofilms like the bacteria and mold on your bathroom surfaces. In many foreign countries, we can claim broad spectrum killing power. The product works when dry, unlike everything else on the market."

The BYU study featured in the Journal of Hospital Infection suggests that the FDA-allowed active ingredient used in Prefense Hand Sanitizer "rapidly inactivates SARS-CoV-2, making it potentially useful for controlling SARS-CoV-2 spread in hospitals and the community."

For more information or to become a distributor for Prefense's better-protection alternatives, please contact the Prefense team at [info@prefense.com](mailto:info@prefense.com). You can also purchase Prefense products at [prefense.com](http://prefense.com). 



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**Company:**  
Prefense

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**Innovations:**  
Prefense Hand Sanitizer and  
Prefense Multi-SurfacePro

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[prefense.com](http://prefense.com)

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## Fox Cities Chamber keeps conversation going

We all know the COVID-19 pandemic hit employers and educators hard. But what if your organization's primary role is to support all the employers and educators in your region to promote growth and prosperity? In a global pandemic, the task of "growth and prosperity for all" can seem overwhelming. For many in the Fox Cities, "survive the day" has seemed a more fitting objective throughout the past year.

"We immediately decided we'd just pick up the phone," Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Becky Bartoszek said of that infamous day in March 2020 when the world ground to a halt. "And that's what we did. We called and called. We asked our members how we could help and listened to what they were challenged with. They were hard calls to make, and a lot of our members didn't have an answer yet to what they needed. But we just committed to keeping the conversation going."

In the end, the Fox Cities Chamber worked successfully with 220 small businesses across Outagamie, Calumet and northern Winnebago counties to secure \$550,000 in grants, as well

as facilitated low-interest loans for 47 local businesses. The chamber took its programming online and worked tirelessly to aggregate resources and COVID-19 information for the community. Appleton's Oktoberfest was reimagined into an opportunity for businesses to partner with charities. And true to its mission, the chamber advocated for public policy and public health initiatives that would help keep doors open across the Fox Cities.

"Handling a global pandemic is not something our chamber, or chambers anywhere, had a road map for. But with 138 years of experience serving our 17 communities, we know that outreach and relationships are what matter," Bartoszek said. "And that was our focus throughout this pandemic. In 2021, we are keeping our focus on being here for our community."

To learn more about how the chamber can support your organization or community vision, visit [foxcitieschamber.com](http://foxcitieschamber.com) or call (920) 734-7101. 



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**Company:**

Fox Cities Chamber

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**Innovation:**

Outreach & New Connections

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[foxcitieschamber.com](http://foxcitieschamber.com)

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CHAMPIONS  
OF  
INNOVATION



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**Company:**

Sure Controls Inc.

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**Innovation:**

SureConnect Remote Service Box

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[surecontrols.com](http://surecontrols.com)

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CHAMPIONS  
OF  
INNOVATION

## Sure Controls improves tech connections

Sure Controls' mission is delighting our customers through design foresight, product leadership and unequalled responsiveness. With that in mind, the Sure Controls engineering team set to work building a solution that encompasses every one of those goals. What they came up with was the SureConnect Remote Service Box.

The SureConnect Remote Service Box is a standalone system that establishes a remote connection to any ethernet or Profibus network. This technology permits Sure Controls technicians to assist, troubleshoot and diagnose any installation at any time from any location. This service provides numerous benefits, including creating shorter shutdowns, helping customers avoid downtime maintenance and related expenses, allowing technicians to access equipment that otherwise could not be accessed remotely, and letting technicians move from machine to machine quickly and easily. This Wi-Fi-enabled device gives us easy access to any of our customers' machines within their plants.

Uncomplicated for us and easy for our customers, the SureConnect Box requires little effort or IT assistance to set up for our customers. All that is

needed to get the box working is to power the Wi-Fi access point box using a standard extension cord plug into a 120VAC outlet and to plug an ethernet cable into an internet connection. Sure Controls will remotely configure the boxes to connect to the local machine network.

Sure Controls is excited to introduce this new innovative service offering to our customer base. We believe this service will help our manufacturing customers avoid downtime and losses and provide us with an extra ability to deliver unequalled responsiveness.

In addition to the SureConnect Remote Box, another innovation on the Sure Controls calendar is a mobile collaborative robot using Omron technology to provide the ultimate in flexible automation to meet existing and future automation needs. On the leading edge of industrial automation, Sure Controls has an exciting list of upcoming projects in store for 2021 and beyond. 



## Robotics, technology fuel Waupaca Foundry success

The foundry of the future is already in operation at Waupaca Foundry. The industry refers to the shift as “Foundry 4.0,” and for Waupaca Foundry, it is about creating the next-generation foundry that re-engineers the metal casting process to maintain quality, efficiency, and worker health and safety.

Waupaca Foundry is the nation’s largest manufacturer of iron components, operating eight foundries and machining operations across the United States. The firm employs 4,300 people and casts iron parts for customers in the automotive, off-highway, commercial vehicle and industrial sectors.

Melting metal into durable goods is one of the oldest industries in the world, but this forward-thinking operation has been planning for industrial life beyond 2020 for decades.

“Our commitment to automation and technology started 30 years ago to meet

customers’ exacting quality demands,” said Waupaca Foundry CEO Mike Nikolai. “We needed a solution that involved meeting extremely tight tolerances at a very high volume.”

To that end, the company embarked on a corporate-wide risk reduction program in 2017 featuring continual improvement initiatives designed to evolve the production process and improve safety. Waupaca Foundry has invested \$53 million from fiscal 2019 through fiscal 2021 to upgrade robotics systems in all of its foundries. Across all facilities, approximately 135 robots help create the company’s gray, ductile, austempered ductile and HNM™ Series high-strength ductile iron castings.

The most significant technology expansion was opening a machining plant in Waupaca in 2019. The 50,000-square-foot facility features robotics at every step in the machining function and uses automated guided vehicles for transferring parts, robotic CNC lathes that trim parts, and robots that pack and unpack parts.

In addition, plants in Waupaca



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**Company:**  
Waupaca Foundry

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**Innovation:**  
Foundry 4.0

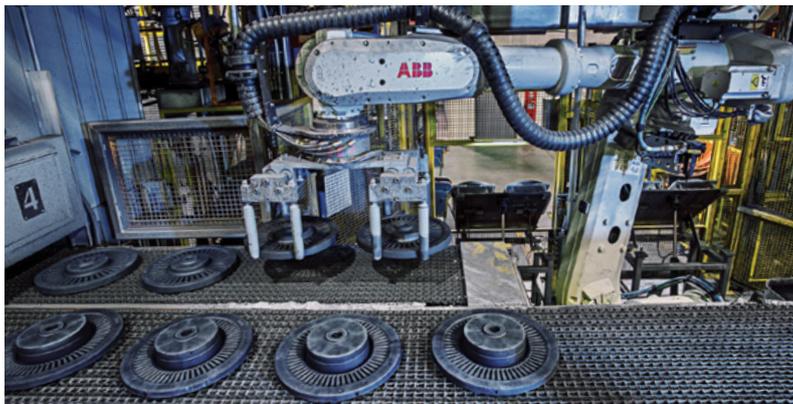
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[waupacafoundry.com](http://waupacafoundry.com)

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and Tell City, Ind., have had technology improvements in their core rooms and mill rooms using robotics to produce cores, and to clean and finish castings.

The driver is not technology for technology’s sake, but innovation to meet customer demand and improve the workplace. High-volume production requires the ability to replicate quality and extreme tolerances — often a task that can’t be duplicated by



humans. Robotics and automation are precise and repeatable.

A primary benefit of automation is to increase safety for workers because robotics reduce repetitive tasks and help to improve worker ergonomics. The robots do the heavy lifting, and the nature of work in the foundry is reimagined.

In addition to robotics, Waupaca Foundry is an industry leader in sustainability innovation that includes a formal management system approach to energy reduction. Under the systemic approach, leaders can gather and analyze data that identifies opportunities for additional energy reduction in

plant operations. As compared to 2010, Waupaca was able to achieve an overall reduction in energy consumption of nearly 25 percent at all U.S. plants. Energy is one of the largest costs of manufacturing, with an annual price tag of about \$150 million in fiscal year 2019 across all Waupaca Foundry locations.

“We are setting the pace in our industry by committing to continuous improvement in environmental sustainability by reducing our energy use,” Nikolai said. “Our efforts not only reduce our impact on the environment but make us a more competitive iron castings supplier in the global marketplace.” 

### Innovation breeds opportunity

General labor jobs are still needed in the foundry and machining operations, but career opportunities have expanded in fields like programming, designing and maintaining robots. Waupaca Foundry also designs and develops robotic cells internally, so team members have the opportunity to develop the training for new careers. In all cases, Waupaca Foundry robotics and technology expansion are bundled into other equipment and may be performing secondary tasks and eliminating waste in the process.

“Like all manufacturers, we’ve had a challenge in recruiting and retaining entry-level workers,” said Jarrod Osborn, vice president of engineering and manufacturing. “Implementing robotics at the plants allows us to offer innovative job duties and enhance worker skill levels.”

Rather than eliminating jobs, robotics and automation are creating more highly skilled jobs. Waupaca Foundry has long had a policy of promoting from within, and jobs are evolving to include careers in programming, electrical and mechanical engineering, process engineering and skilled maintenance.

The foundry and machine operations boast highly engineered production processes designed and created by in-house technical teams. However, robotics and technology expansion are bundled into equipment that requires a high level of integration and continual oversight by team members.

“Our manufacturing process is always evolving, and we constantly reinvest in technology and automation to run cleaner, safer, and more efficient plants,” said Waupaca Foundry CEO Mike Nikolai. “However, our No. 1 asset is our team and we’ll continue to invest in our employees’ training and development.”

# WMEP Manufacturing Solutions' programs help businesses automate



WMEP Manufacturing Solutions works with small- and mid-size manufacturers to assess whether automation is a fit for them. If so, WMEP consultants work with manufacturers to effectively get them from automation ideation to implementation.

Traditionally, industrial automation has been limited to high-volume, low-mix applications. However, recent improvements in technology allow automation to be implemented in high-mix environments with a quick return on investment.

This expansion of potential automation applications brings a new challenge: where to start for high-mix, low-volume applications. Additionally, once equipment hits the floor, how do manufacturers support it for long-term success?

A To Z Machine Co. of Appleton turned to WMEP, a nonprofit consulting organization dedicated to helping Wisconsin manufacturers improve their productivity and profitability, to train its team on evaluating automation projects using WMEP's AutomationTech™ program.

The program is designed to bring participants up to speed on the latest technologies, train them to use assessment tools and provide a facility-wide automation analysis. Special consideration is given to human capital, both the productivity of existing personnel and the skill sets required to support automation.

Through the program, A To Z Machine established an automation project priority list and pursued the projects that were low risk, solved its labor struggles and had an attractive return on investment.

A To Z Machine has a wide range of capabilities. The company excels at producing high-mix, low-volume products for an array of customers. A To Z can manufacture almost any machined item, ranging from



**A To Z Machine's Autonomous Mobile Robot (AMR) in action, delivering tooling and gaging throughout the machine shop.**

small to large parts. The company forms long-term partnerships with customers and strives to become their premier supplier.

One of the challenges A To Z faces as it grows is a continuous need for skilled machinists. The company can expand its square footage and can purchase additional CNC machines, but that also requires the business to expand its team of machinists.

A To Z started using automation about 10 years ago with the purchase of its first multi-pallet horizontal machining center.

"We realized the positive impact this automation had on our business, such as reduced setups, improved quality, better efficiencies, and a greater ability to respond to our customers' production needs," said Marc Manteufel, manufacturing engineering and IT manager at A To Z.

As a result, A To Z continued

to expand its use of this type of automation. This success also prompted the company to partner with organizations like WMEP Manufacturing Solutions to learn about other automation opportunities. After attending WMEP's AutomationTech™ workshop, A To Z acquired tools and ideas needed to explore other types of automation.

The company investigated using an autonomous mobile robot to deliver tooling and gaging throughout its main shop. A To Z also explored using a conversational six-axis robot to load parts on a CNC lathe.

After evaluating each robot for return on investment and risk, A To Z purchased and implemented both pieces of automation equipment.

The autonomous mobile robot, or AMR, made enough deliveries in its first six months of service to pay for itself, Manteufel said. The ROI was reached in half of the projected time, he noted.

All of the automation implemented at A To Z Machine is intended to make its team's jobs easier and more productive, not to eliminate jobs.

"We can increase our throughput and make our team's jobs more enjoyable by investing in technology," Manteufel said. 



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**Company:**  
WMEP Manufacturing Solutions

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**Innovation:**  
Guiding manufacturers through automation

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wmep.org

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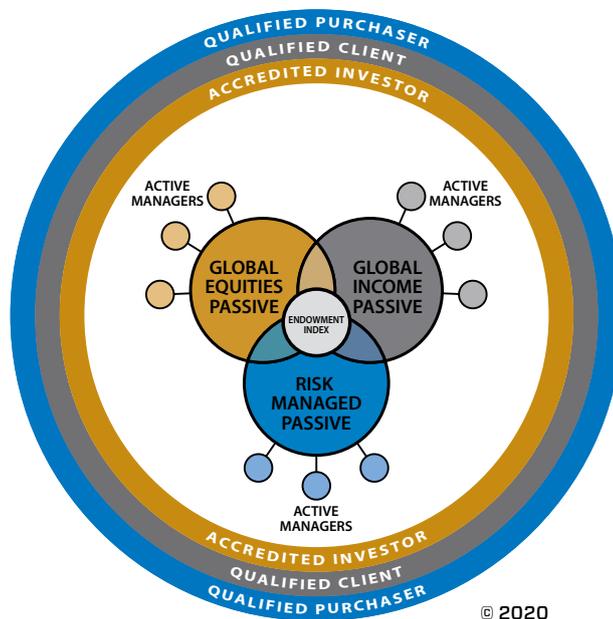
# Investing with innovation

Endowment Wealth Management is an independent SEC Registered Investment Adviser (RIA) founded in 2013 with the goal of embracing technology and financial innovation to offer an institutional quality asset allocation framework to wealth management clients throughout the United States. We have enhanced the traditional 2-D (stock and bond) portfolio structure with our unique 3-D (equity, income and risk managed) Endowment Investment Philosophy® (EIP). We then provide investors the opportunity to expand their diversification to each 3-D allocation by providing them the option to invest at the following three investment types: passive ETF models, active specialty satellite managers and private investments. Finally, we combined our 3-D EIP with high-touch, fee-only fiduciary advice<sup>1</sup> and multifamily office styled service for our clients.

## Our guiding principles drive us to make family wealth management “faster, better and cheaper.”

Here are our innovative solutions to do just that:

- Created our firm’s proprietary 3-D Endowment Index® calculated by NASDAQ OMX® (ENDOW) in May 2014. This 3-Dimensional Index provides an objective 3-D benchmark and is an endowment style portfolio. The index is a rules-based benchmark based on the asset allocations of over 700 colleges and universities. This innovative index received national attention when it was recognized by ETF.com as a finalist for Index of the Year.<sup>2</sup>



- Visit [www.EndowmentIndex.com](http://www.EndowmentIndex.com) for more information.
- Created a digital platform called MyRoboAdviser.com to offer millennials and DIY investors cost-efficient access to our 3-D Endowment models and democratization of a what previously was an institutional approach. Visit [www.MyRoboAdviser.com](http://www.MyRoboAdviser.com) for more information.
- Provide our clients and other advisers access to ETF models, which are designed to enhance tax efficiency, lower costs and enhance transparency. Visit [www.ETFModelSolutions.com](http://www.ETFModelSolutions.com) for more information.
- Offer accredited and qualified clients access to over 50-plus private investments managed by experienced managers.
- Offer accredited and qualified clients access to a wide variety of proprietary private equity funds such as investments in venture-backed technology companies, fin tech, CBD and more.

- Provide clients with connectivity to all of their investment accounts through a personalized digital wealth portal along with an online digital vault.
- Developed a smartphone app that provides mobile access to the client’s digital portal.

We are headquartered in Appleton, one block east of the airport on College Avenue. We have four other offices and continue to expand our footprint nationally by serving clients in 17 states since our 3-D Endowment Model and related three tiers of passive, active and illiquid investment allocations resonate well across borders and with institutional and retail investors alike. To learn more about Endowment Wealth Management, please visit [www.EndowmentWM.com](http://www.EndowmentWM.com). 



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CHAMPIONS  
OF  
INNOVATION



**Company:**  
Endowment Wealth  
Management Inc.

**Innovation:**  
3-D Endowment  
Investment Philosophy

[EndowmentWM.com](http://EndowmentWM.com)

(920) 785-6010

<sup>1</sup> The advisory fees are available on request and may be found in Part 2 of the Form ADV.

<sup>2</sup> To learn more please visit [www.EndowmentWM.com/AwardsDisclaimer](http://www.EndowmentWM.com/AwardsDisclaimer)

# Many are rediscovering prefabrication benefits

Sometimes, time-tested ideas are worth revisiting. Such is the case with prefabrication for construction projects.

Prefabrication historically has been a tried-and-true method for contractors to hand off production and assembly of certain components or materials to subcontractors or original equipment manufacturers. This work would involve prefabrication of a broad range of components by multiple trades in controlled shop environments before these modules or skids were shipped to the job site.

For a variety of reasons, the construction industry moved away from prefabrication for a time. Now, the industry is moving back toward the prefabrication model, with more components being prefabricated and oftentimes preassembled in controlled offsite environments. Several factors are contributing to this shift, including a chronic shortage of skilled trades and crafts available in the numbers needed on large construction projects.

Today's version of prefab is effectively redefining how plants, facilities and structures get built. The industry is coming full circle, with design for manufacturing assembly concepts taking hold. The cost, precision, quality and safety of prefabrication and preassembly make this decision an easy one for owners and general contractors, and AZCO is among the leaders in this movement. With more than 83,000 square feet of prefabrication space and highly skilled teams of pipefitters, welders, electricians and others working together on complex assemblies, AZCO is helping lead this concept toward more relevance than ever.

Here are the four primary benefits of prefabrication:

## Improved safety

Fabricating and producing components in a controlled shop environment greatly reduces hazards both in the shop and on the job site. Fewer trades are required at the project location, and trades working in offsite facilities are spread out.



**AZCO's prefabrication shop is divided into three bays with large overhead doors at the front and back of the shop, allowing materials and finished products to flow through the facility seamlessly.**

## Greater quality

A critical enabling factor for prefab work, including at AZCO, is moving to 3D — digital models of the component that are used for precise specifications. With closer collaboration between engineering and fabrication centers, the interface between conceptual design and various stages of production and then to a bill of materials is streamlined. With that knowledge packaged and integrated, fewer errors and less rework will result.

## Schedule efficiency

With greater control over production schedules for materials produced in shops or controlled assembly environments, modules and skids can be scheduled precisely for delivery to the project site. With specialty trades such as electrical, plumbing, welding and ironwork providing the know-how, components are now being produced for just-in-time shipment and installation upon arrival at the project site. With real-time knowledge of the status of component assembly and delivery, crews can be kept busy at all times, with no slippage in the ultimate completion deadlines.

## Improved cost control

By transferring resources and labor away from costly field installation of components toward the front end,



**The robotic plasma cutter helps cut labor timelines and allows more projects to be processed through AZCO's prefabrication shop.**

where these project elements are designed and built in more controlled environments, many cost benefits can be quantified.

AZCO has introduced new technology such as plasma cutters and robotic machines into previously labor-intensive fabrication processes, reducing production times by a factor of 10 or more. With prep work now done in a few minutes, versus a full day, trades now spend their time on specialized tasks like welding and assembly. This reduction of labor has a direct benefit in cost savings. Prefabrication is another one of those time-tested ideas that is being rediscovered — proving its worth all over again. **1**



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**Company:**  
AZCO

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**Innovation:**  
Prefabrication

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azco-inc.com

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Ansay & Associates corporate headquarters in Port Washington, WI.



Ansay & Associates Innovation Committee. Back row, from left: Greg Kirsch, Erik Mikkelson, Alan Neva, Mike Ansay. Front row, from left: Emily McCutcheon, Audra Noack, Rachel Ansay, Michelle Perez. Not Pictured: Stacey Robertson.

## Ansay & Associates improving connections

Ansay & Associates is uniquely different because we're helping transform an industry — insurance — that has historically been mired in navigating through archaic legacy systems. In fact, we are the first insurance agency to use a new technology called the Internet of Insurance, a collaboration with digital innovators DAIS (<https://dais.com>). We had complete alignment on the vision: to create a system in which agents, carriers and policyholders are connected in real time, 24/7, 365 days a year, through a cooperatively owned digital network.

Our collaboration revolutionized how we manage our business with insurance carriers by validating the concept of single-entry multi-carrier. This type of change was on the docket for 35-plus years, and now it's a reality. The challenge for so long was working with the legacy systems within each individual insurance company. It hamstrung independent agents from marketing their business in an efficient way.

Our collaboration with DAIS created a platform of technology that allows us to use existing platforms from existing carriers and make them relevant, while expediting the process to create a breakthrough. The entire logic is to help independent insurance agents in their journey

to digitize the industry. We thought to ourselves: In our personal lives, we see companies like Netflix delivering video streaming through microservices, so why shouldn't we demand the same intuitive customer experience in insurance for policyholders and carrier partners?

The team here at Ansay & Associates is always looking at ways to improve the customer experience and reduce the cost on behalf of the customers. Our key relationships with carriers caused this innovation to be born. The big idea was to elevate the agent and streamline the process. We've accomplished that, but we didn't rest there. After launching the Internet of Insurance and allowing carriers and customers to test the platform, we met at the Underwriter Innovation Council to discuss how to take it to the next level.

Coming out of that council, we upgraded the system to include several underwriting improvements, as well as a dashboard with a streamlined submission status and navigation capabilities. This version also benefits underwriters by allowing submissions to be managed with increased efficiency, and the ability to send email quotes and new data that more accurately predicts conversion rates.

With the latest iteration of the Internet of Insurance platform in 2020,



Ansay & Associates has increased efficiencies by 25 percent. That's allowed us to change job descriptions to focus more on innovation and increase the compensation of our customer experience advocates. We're taking more processing out of the business and flipping it into proactive uses. In addition, the carriers that came on board with the Internet of Insurance at the outset saw 10 points more growth year-over-year. We expect even greater growth moving forward. 1



**Company:**  
Ansay & Associates

**Innovation:**  
Internet of Insurance

[ansay.com](http://ansay.com)

# How the Fourth Industrial Revolution is reshaping innovation in education



**Company:**  
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College

**Innovation:**  
Equipping students today  
with skills for tomorrow

nwtc.edu

**An NWTC student holds a fused deposition modeling (FDM) model of a jet turbine in Advanced Additive Manufacturing & Intro to Rapid Prototype, a class offered in the Prototype and Design program.**

We live in a technology-driven age that impacts our lives every day in various forms. Individuals, educators and employers must consider their approach in preparing future generations to meet the challenges and opportunities set by the rapid advancements in technology. What does this mean for the education system? With a targeted focus on innovative Industry 4.0 initiatives, institutions like Northeast Wisconsin Technical College are adapting inside and outside the classroom.

Industry 4.0, or the fourth industrial revolution, connects technology and digital innovation across all industries. While there is an entire ecosystem of enabling technologies that impacts the larger picture of this digital transformation, NWTC is aligning academic programs and training to the three key pillars of Industry 4.0: additive manufacturing, augmented and virtual reality (AR/

VR), and Internet of Things (IoT).

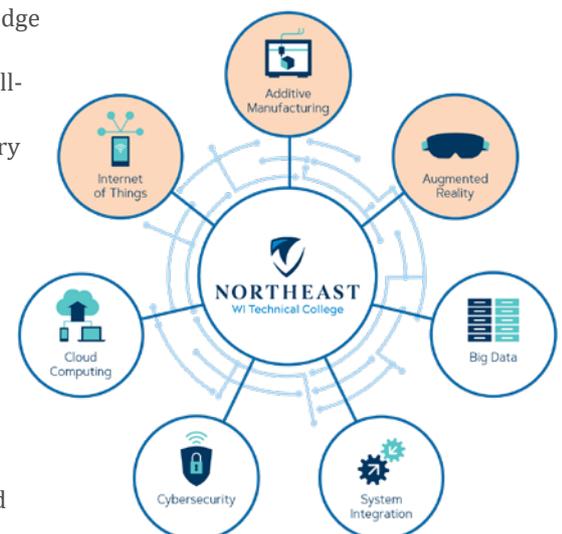
“Many employers want to incorporate Industry 4.0 but don’t know where to start,” said NWTC President Dr. Jeff Rafn. “These new technologies provide opportunities to help businesses not only survive but thrive, now and post-pandemic. By instilling this skill set and knowledge at the beginning of the learning process, our graduates will be well-prepared to adapt and enhance their qualifications within Industry 4.0 technologies.”

### **3D printing ‘creating new norm’ within manufacturing**

Manufacturing businesses can experience limitations to current processes and structures, from complexity of parts to customization. Additive manufacturing provides an integrated and digitally optimized solution to those challenges.

Also known as 3D printing, additive manufacturing plays an essential role for factories in adapting to the needs of the emerging market. Additive manufacturing is an economical and sustainable process with less creation of waste and lower assembly costs.

“While there are still learning curves, the maturity of this technology and wide range of possibilities offered by 3D printing is creating a new norm within manufacturing,” said Jill Thiede, associate dean, NWTC Trades and Engineering Technologies.



## AR/VR changing the way we learn

AR and VR are changing daily operations in many industries. Studies show individuals retain more information and can apply what they have learned better after participating in a VR simulation. Providing the user with real-time data to apply to real-world scenarios, AR/VR technology is enhancing employers' logistics, maintenance and training operations. Whether providing a virtual workspace for automotive technicians to troubleshoot remotely or simulation training for nursing programs, AR/VR is changing the way we learn both in the classroom and on the job.

NWTC is already incorporating this essential equipment into the classroom with Oculus Quest 2, HoloLens 2 and HP Reverb headsets. "AR/VR is a new way of learning that provides an experience, and experience is how you learn," said Jason Trombley, instructor in NWTC Trades and Engineering Technologies. "These advancements have lifted the boundaries of traditional curriculum to a whole new level. Whether it's fostering collaboration or enhancing virtual learning, the opportunities are endless. This is an exciting direction we are headed."

## IoT brings different technologies together

It is believed that within the last two years alone, nearly 90 percent of the world's data has been created. IoT makes this possible by embedding objects with sensors, software and other technologies for the purpose of connecting and exchanging data with other devices and systems. The key technologies of IoT include smart sensors, cloud data transfer, data analytics, machine learning and so much more.

To provide students with real-world IoT experiences, NWTC is partnering with area companies. Some of the opportunities include OEM manufacturing internships that allow students to leverage data

analytics for future innovations and using predictive maintenance to NWTC's own HVAC systems through collecting data internally. "The notion of IoT brings together different technologies that many times educators and industries have kept separate," Thiede said. "But now with this revolution of digitization, we are looking at the larger picture and how the processes fit together — starting from collecting data to taking action and all of the steps in between."



**An NWTC instructor demonstrates a clinical experience through a virtual reality simulation offered within the Nursing program.**

## Leading the way in Industry 4.0 education and training

NWTC also is leveraging industry cohorts to share and learn from its network of national industry partners. For example, NWTC is a participant and grant recipient in HP/EDUCAUSE Campus of the Future — a multiyear research project exploring the benefits of AR/VR technologies and 3D printing. NWTC is the only technical college involved in year four of the grant project, which is being made possible by HP and EDUCAUSE.

Major research universities, including Yale and Stanford, will be providing research and developing technology for the Campus of the Future project, while NWTC will be working to integrate the latest devices into technical training and education. "This is a significant partnership for NWTC, as it will help shape the future of industries. In turn, it provides the opportunity to



## CHAMPIONS OF INNOVATION

mold our students as innovators, critical thinkers, and help our businesses be competitive — which is a true advantage," said Sue Zittlow, associate dean of NWTC's College of Business.

To demonstrate Industry 4.0 to our youth, NWTC is creating career awareness within K-12 by hosting prototype and design seminars and interactive boot camps in areas like artificial intelligence, mechanical design and engineering. With industry partners, NWTC offers workforce advanced training grants to help businesses gain Industry 4.0 skills within their own teams.

NWTC is continuously reviewing its curriculum across multiple program

areas to infuse this new technology into areas such as nursing, engineering, HVAC, landscaping and many more. The options are limitless and will change our learning environments and experiences in a positive way. In addition to supplementing its current curriculum, NWTC is developing new offerings in data analytics, visualization, and additive manufacturing — all designed to address immediate needs within the current and future workforce.

For over 100 years, NWTC has supported and advanced education in Northeast Wisconsin. Today, NWTC continues to lead in educational innovation and provide the highly skilled workforce needed to fuel our local, state and national economy. The advancements NWTC has made in Industry 4.0 are leading the way for future careers and market advantage. To learn more about NWTC's Industry 4.0 programs and training opportunities, visit [nwtc.edu/Industry4-0](http://nwtc.edu/Industry4-0). 



## Navigating the challenge

**The challenge:** How do you help clients navigate a series of government programs that have no precedent, little guidance and the rules are made up as the year goes along, while in the middle of a pandemic with staff working from home?

This is what our firm, along with almost every other CPA firm in America, was faced with in 2020. The approach we took could be broken down into five segments:

**Learn:** We learned the different between the PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) and PPE (personal protective equipment) and the EIDL (Economic Injury Disaster Loan) and ERC (Employee Retention Credits). We relied on industry experts like WICPA, AICPA and NSA to help us wade through the legislation.

**Strategize:** We worked with those in our network, such as SBA loan consultants, to help develop strategies on which programs made the most sense for our clients. For example, some were better off using the ERC instead of taking PPP funds.

**Communicate:** We used mass emails and social media to get the broad message out to clients about what programs were available and what they may qualify.

**Implement:** In certain cases, we took steps to actually complete the application forms for PPP loans

and loan forgiveness, ERCs and EIDLs. We met individually with clients to determine which programs made sense for them and how they could maximize their benefit.

**Repeat:** The rules surrounding the new programs changed on a monthly, weekly and sometimes even a daily basis. First, PPP funds had to be used in eight weeks, then 24 weeks. We had to go back, strategize, communicate the updates and implement the changes. This will continue in 2021, as a new administration with new programs and rules comes into play.

Going through an experience like this has only made our firm stronger. Our relationship with clients is now stronger as we have helped them navigate through these unprecedented times with as much financial stability as possible. This approach can be used in any situation, not just a pandemic, in order to overcome obstacles that come up in any business situation. ①



**Company:**  
Heling & Associates

**Innovation:**  
Tax and accounting  
guidance

helingandassociates.com



CHAMPIONS  
OF  
INNOVATION

## First Business Bank embraces technology for clients, employees

Throughout the past year, business leaders were reminded of the importance of working with financial institutions that prioritize client service, innovation and technology for the benefit of their clients. This past year, First Business Bank's clients, prospects, employees and communities gained from our 30-year commitment to building a tech-forward banking company. Among our foundational beliefs is the statement: "Employ technology to be as efficient and accessible as possible."

When the world pivoted to safety, First Business Bank quickly launched an online Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) portal for prospective and new clients by modifying proprietary technology we previously built for our vendor finance business. This prior

investment in technology allowed us to mobilize in a matter of days, efficiently process more than 700 PPP loan applications, and fund \$332.3 million in PPP loans in a manner that vastly exceeded client expectations.

Through our established commitment to innovation, we also drive progress for our employees and our greater communities. While our recent custom PPP portal meant faster approvals and frequent communication with our clients, it ultimately led to quicker much-needed relief to our communities and allowed our employees to continue to deliver industry-leading service with efficiency. ①

Member FDIC



**Company:**  
First Business Bank

**Innovation:**  
Custom PPP loan  
application portal

firstbusiness.bank



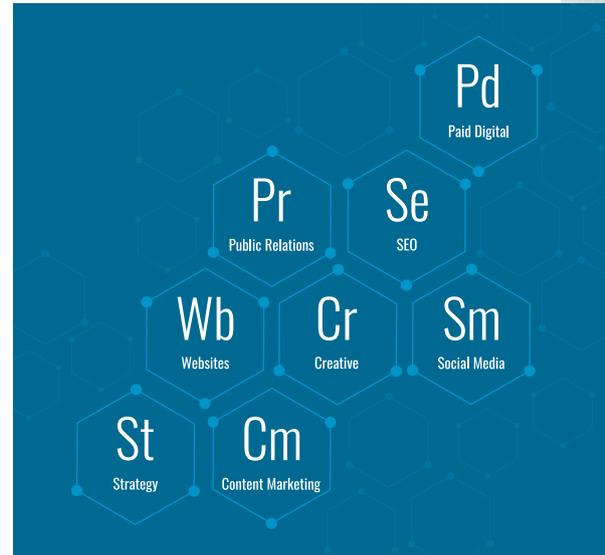
# Element delivers real results with integrated marketing



Running integrated marketing campaigns can result in impressive ROI: All your marketing channels can reinforce one another to achieve a more powerful brand experience than any singular marketing effort. But doing it right can be a serious challenge — either you're limited by your staff capabilities or forced to organize marketing strategy across multiple freelancers and agencies, which usually ends in an inconsistent experience with your brand.

Several pieces make up an integrated marketing strategy: content marketing, web design, creative design, social media, public relations, SEO and paid media/digital. The components you choose should be rooted in strategy that aligns with your sales goals and where each of your prospects is in the sales funnel. You'll also want to leverage data, research and experience to help you determine the specific channels to use.

At Element, we go the extra mile to deliver fully integrated marketing, bringing together all the services clients need under one roof. We offer everything from digital advertising to creative and public relations in-house, and we make sure those efforts work in tandem with one another. But we also know that those services have to be customized to clients and their sales goals so our clients can use the right tactics for their target audience at the right time. Unleash the perfect amount of skill and creativity; nothing more and nothing less.



## Innovative marketing in action: Helping unite beef lovers and giving back to the community

Let's take a look at an inspiring example of integrated marketing from one of our clients.

JBS, a leading beef producer, wanted to elevate a retail category by educating consumers and encouraging them to explore different beef cuts and recipes. We helped them launch the Beefitarian brand and develop an integrated marketing approach within their budget and timeline.

Our approach combined social media prizes and contests, a Pandora campaign, a unique influencer campaign, digital and traditional public relations, paid digital, and a cause campaign that raised \$10,000 for the Nashville Food Project, an organization that works to alleviate hunger in the Nashville community. The results were remarkable: beef category growth in the Nashville market, 15 media placements in both traditional and digital formats, 6 million total impressions, and 40,700 pageviews of the campaign microsite!

At Element, we go the extra mile to deliver fully integrated marketing, bringing together all the services clients need under one roof.

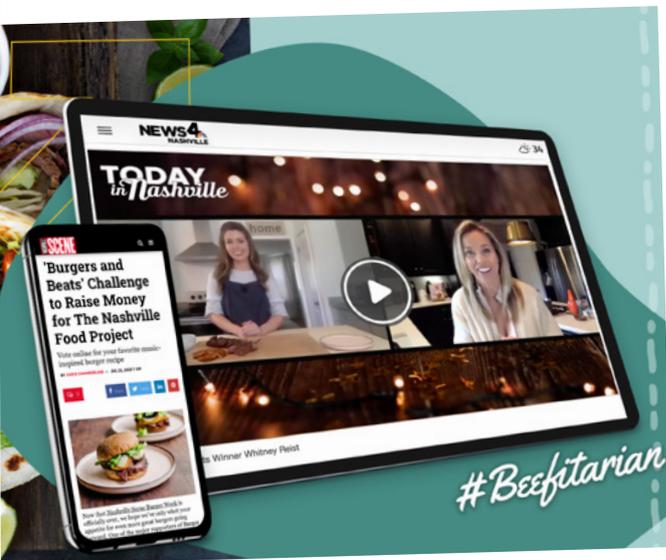
Like JBS, your brand can experience innovative integrated marketing that produces real results. Each of Element's marketing services includes dozens, sometimes more than 50, touchpoints along the way to ensure our clients benefit from a strategic partnership and an authentic relationship. Our mission, should you choose to accept it, is to create great work that strengthens your bottom line. Contact us at 920.983.9800 or [info@goelement.com](mailto:info@goelement.com).



**Company:**  
Element

**Innovation:**  
Integrated marketing

[goelement.com](http://goelement.com)



This integrated marketing campaign resulted in 6 percent category growth, 15 media placements, 6 million total impressions, and 40,700 pageviews.

# Green Stem connects with niche market

The date was Thursday, April 16, 2020, at 9:15 p.m. when Jim Waterman received a phone call from a close friend. That phone call has since proven to change the trajectory of his life. Much of the nation was 30 days into a stay-in-place order, and supplies like hand sanitizer and toilet paper were nearly impossible to find. Jim, a scientist in the fuel ethanol industry with a background in automation engineering, was already going stir crazy and looking for a project to occupy his newfound downtime.

On that phone call, an opportunity to act as a distributor for bulk-sized hand sanitizer to the Fox Cities presented itself. The only problem was figuring out how to convert 365-gallon totes into packaging that made sense for the general consumer. With a “shaky” understanding of FDA regulations, knowledge in the science of alcohol-based sanitizer and a background in automation engineering, Jim dove head first into the opportunity.

Over the next two weeks, Jim found a warehouse located in Appleton, started a new company called Green Stem LLC, obtained FDA registration for the facility, and received his first of many 1,000-gallon shipments of hand sanitizer from a USP-spec alcohol producer. Packaging was difficult to procure, but luckily Appleton is in the center of many plastic manufacturers. Jim built and launched a website and Facebook page and began work on



**Green Stem found a niche with creating custom-printed hand sanitizer bottles that can be given as favors at weddings and other events. It's since also begun offering scented candles and metal bottle openers.**



automated bottle filling. He also reached out to his mentor at Fox Valley Technical College to see if there were any students who could assist in building the bottling line. While the student assisted with the automation, sales of 2-ounce to 1-gallon bottles began.

By July, Green Stem was registered as its own brand of sanitizer. Around this time, major suppliers had caught up with demand and the company needed to find a niche market. In late July, a close friend had purchased hand sanitizer with a “wedding label,” but the quality was poor at best. The ink from the paper labels started running when exposed to the sanitizer, and they were desperate. After discussing the options, Jim tried printing a similar label using clear labels and a different printing technique. The result was beautiful. A niche market had presented itself in an industry that had been put on hold for the better part of a year: weddings. With 2.1 million weddings occurring nationally in a non-pandemic year, 2021 is projected to have 4 million weddings.

Jim began a campaign to mobilize a sales force by reaching out to wedding professionals throughout

the country by forming strategic partnerships. Now that Green Stem found its target market, it started to expand its customized product offerings to include business branded “swag.” In March 2021, Green Stem launched a line of scented candles and metal bottle openers, all fully customizable for any occasion. In addition to offering new products, a tree is now planted with every sale.

Jim looks forward to watching how Green Stem continues to grow in the Fox Cities. 📍



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**Company:**  
Green Stem

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**Innovation:**  
Personalized hand sanitizer

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[greenstemdesign.com](http://greenstemdesign.com)

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# Celebrating clients' success

Guaranty Title Services, Inc. was founded by attorney Louis J. Andrew in 1984 and has been a leading provider of title services in Wisconsin ever since.

After joining forces with Closing and Title Services, LLC in January 2021, our combined geographic coverage positions us as the leading title services provider in northeastern Wisconsin.

The title industry is evolving rapidly, and we embrace innovation to ensure we can proactively meet the evolving needs of our customers. We are champions of customer service, celebration and technology.

With our world changing dramatically in the last year, our focus was to make sure transactions closed safely, securely and accurately. From disinfecting offices with state-of-the-art anti-microbial spray to setting up tents in parking lots to perform closings, we protected the public and our employees from COVID and the elements. We successfully employed Electronic Remote Online Notary (ERON) services, which allowed us to close with customers safely and securely.

Guaranty Title Services takes our closings to a whole new level by gifting each client with bottles of wine or champagne. We are on the leading edge of the digital transformation and use technology to help showcase our buyers and sellers with selfie stations that link celebratory moments to our Facebook account.

Guaranty Title Services has gone paperless, allowing realtors and lenders to request closings right from our website. With the use of DocuSign, we are allowing our customers to digitally sign their documents anywhere.

We are champions of the title industry. Katie Schmitz, president and COO, and Andrew Horan, former owner of Closing and Title Services, LLC, now senior vice president of business development, are two of the most respected and knowledgeable title leaders in Wisconsin. Katie was one of only two people in the state to earn the prestigious National Title Professional designation.

We look forward to continuing to serve our valued customers across the Fox Valley and throughout Wisconsin, blending innovative new solutions with proven expertise and quality. **1**

The top is the tent GTS instituted during COVID for safety. Lower left and right are the unique ways the business celebrates closings.



**Company:**  
Guaranty Title Services, Inc.

**Innovation:**  
Providing excellent title services

titleservice.com



**Company:**  
Image Studios

**Innovation:**  
Livestreaming events

imagestudios.com



## Image brings virtual events to life

At Image Studios, we know how dynamic digital content affects brand image and perception, which is why we are in business today. When the coronavirus pandemic and quarantine began, we realized quickly how important video content really is to our customers. As our world has become immersed in Facebook Live, Zoom calls and video conferences, video and visual communications are what have allowed our customers to continue meeting and marketing their products and services.

In March 2020, we quickly asked our customers how we could help them continue with their events and marketing plans. Businesses were shutting down and charitable events were canceled, so we knew we needed to take bold steps to help our clients. Almost overnight, we received dozens of calls from clients and business partners asking for help to create a virtual program for their events and assist with livestreams. Although we had experience with these platforms, most of our clients were novices and needed professional guidance. With help from our team,

livestreaming quickly emerged as one of the most effective and authentic ways to reach an audience that was isolated and fragmented by the pandemic.

Our first livestreaming production was for a local fundraiser that moved an in-person event to an hourlong program. We captured prerecorded content and stories and created a stage for a live performance that allowed our host to interact with the viewers the night of the event. The fundraiser was more successful than organizers ever imagined, and it was created without the planning and expense of an in-person event.

Since then, we've produced dozens of livestreaming events for our clients, nonprofit partners and charitable organizations. As we do with every visual assignment, each production is unique. We will continue to make it our goal to always make any event — whether it's in person or livestreamed — special and impactful regardless of the platform. **1**



## Timber Rattlers ready for 2021 season

The Wisconsin Timber Rattlers have made it through the longest offseason in their history and are back stronger than ever as they prepare for this season with new ownership, a long-term agreement with the Milwaukee Brewers and lessons learned from the season that never happened.

One year ago, the Rattlers were still hopeful of opening their season on time. New Business Membership and Scennie Plan ticket packages sold at a brisk pace. Matt Erickson would return for his 10th season as manager. Buffalo chicken egg rolls were the winner of the Annual Food Fight.

Major League Baseball training camps closed on March 13, but fans of the Rattlers were not deterred and single-game tickets for the 2020 season went on sale to the public on March 14. The optimism for a new season was not dimmed as fans purchased tickets for the opening night Keston Hiura bobblehead giveaway, Star Wars night, Udder Tuggers weekend and many other popular nights.

This would all be over soon. Then, it wasn't.

On March 16, the Rattlers announced they would be closing the ballpark for two weeks. The State of Wisconsin had announced a ban on events of 50 or more people. This wouldn't just affect the home opener on April 9. It forced the cancellation of many events in the Fox Club Banquet Facility.

The shutdown was extended through Memorial Day and the first two months of the season were lost. It wasn't just games that were lost. Decisions were made to delay and eventually cancel the Green & Gold Charity Softball Game and Fox Valley Symphony Orchestra's Brats, Beer & Beethoven.

The team tried to do anything to bring in revenue. Easter brunch and Mother's Day brunch were changed from a sit-down event in the Fox Club to a take-home meal with curbside pickup. Fish fry meals and ballpark dinners were added to the take-home food offerings.

The business office reopened on May 26. However, there had been no announcement on whether any Timber Rattlers games would be played.

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### Company:

Wisconsin Timber Rattlers

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### Innovation:

New look for established organization

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[timberrattlers.com](http://timberrattlers.com)

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When gatherings of 50 or more were allowed again, Neuroscience Group Field became a theater. "The Lion King" and "Star Wars: A New Hope" were shown on the videoboard on June 26 and 27. It was a fun, safe time at the ballpark and almost like things were back to normal.

Reality slapped everyone in the face again a few days later — on June 30 — with the inevitable announcement that the entire Minor League Baseball season would be canceled.

The news meant that no professional baseball games would be played in the Fox Valley area for the first time since 1957. The Fox Cities Foxes began playing in 1958 under the ownership of Appleton Baseball Club, Inc., a nonprofit group that ran the team in a similar structure to that of the Green Bay Packers ownership.

This group oversaw a lot of changes: renaming the Foxes to the Timber Rattlers, moving from Goodland Field to Fox Cities

**Sights like this are just one  
of the things waiting for you  
at Neuroscience Group Field  
this summer.**

Stadium after the 1994 season and becoming an affiliate of the Brewers after the 2008 season.

The club had never seen anything like the pandemic, though. The loss of 70 home games and a variety of other events meant the loss of 90 percent of the team's revenue for the season.

The team carried on by doing what it could do and there was a kind of baseball at the stadium. The Brewers needed an alternate training site to keep those who weren't on the active roster ready to make it to Milwaukee at a moment's notice. The Brewers also needed a place for prospects to train. Using the Neuroscience Group Field made sense.

Unfortunately, fans could not attend these sessions. Had they been able to, former Rattlers Aaron Ashby, Ethan Small, Mario Feliciano, Tyrone Taylor and Brice Turang would have put on a show for them. Fans also would have seen players who went up to help the Brewers make the playoffs for the third consecutive season.

Fans could see live baseball if they traveled to Fond du Lac. Appleton Baseball Club-owned the Dock Spiders, an amateur team in the Northwoods League, plays its games at Herr-Baker Field on the Marian University Campus in Fond du Lac.

Attendance was limited to roughly 425 people per game for the 25 percent capacity guidelines. Fans were seated in a socially distant manner and every

reasonable precaution was taken to allow fans to feel safe.

Dock Spiders players also complied with health guidelines and made their way to the playoffs as they compiled a record of 31-17 during the regular season. In the post-season, the Dock Spiders beat the Green Bay Booyah and the La Crosse Loggers at home to claim the Wisconsin-Illinois Pod Championship.

That celebration couldn't replace the revenue lost or remove the uncertainty of the change that was happening to the landscape.

MiLB had operated under an agreement with MLB from the early 1990s in which minor league teams signed a player development contract with a major league team. The MiLB/MLB relationship remained unchanged for almost 30 years, but this deal was going to end on Sept. 30, 2020, without



**New Wisconsin Timber Rattlers owners Craig Dickman (left) and Rob Zerjav look forward to welcoming fans back home this season.**

the easy, automatic renewal of the past.

Major League Baseball wanted control of the product and facilities that met minimum standards. This meant some cities that had Minor League Baseball for more than 100 years were in danger of losing their franchises.

The COVID-19 situation complicated the negotiations, and MLB had several other situations to deal with in handling its abbreviated season. Many minor league teams were on edge.

The Timber Rattlers learned they would survive on Dec. 9, 2020. They were extended an invitation to remain a Brewers' affiliate.

The invitation gave the Rattlers a

10-year affiliation with the Brewers but also committed them to making significant stadium upgrades. That would mean spending more money than the community-owned Rattlers could raise.

Fortunately, Third Base Ventures purchased Appleton Baseball Club.

Craig Dickman, majority owner of Third Base Ventures, had experience with the club as a board member and board chairman. Dickman's first year on the board was 2002, which also was Rob Zerjav's first year as Timber Rattlers president and general manager.

Eighteen years later, Zerjav asked Dickman for advice on how to weather the storm and keep professional baseball in the Fox Cities. The conversations gradually developed into discussions with the

current board of directors and eventually into the idea of Dickman, the co-managing director of TitletownTech and former owner of Breakthrough, buying the club. Dickman, who for years had thoughts of one day buying a Minor League Baseball team, started the process and brought Zerjav in as a minority owner along with Madison-based lawyer Brad Raaths.

The sale was announced on Dec. 22, with Third Base Ventures purchasing the Timber Rattlers, the Dock Spiders and Neuroscience Group Field.

"I have known Craig for almost 20 years and his track record speaks for itself. I truly believe our new ownership group will allow the team to not only survive this pandemic but thrive for many years to come," Zerjav said.

The season is almost here. Tickets and sponsorships are available for games. The banquet facility is ready to host events again. The Wisconsin Timber Rattlers are back and they invite you to Come Back Home. **1**

# Using innovation to help clients with PPP loans

On March 27, 2020, the CARES Act was signed into law by President Donald Trump after being passed by the 116th U.S. Congress. The bill contained \$2.2 trillion in economic stimulus in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting impact on the economy. Included in the bill was the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which was initially approved with \$350 billion in funding availability to help American businesses, proprietors, and certain nonprofit and tribal businesses continue to maintain payroll and cover costs despite loss of revenue resulting from the pandemic and related mandates.

The U.S. Small Business Administration administers the PPP program with the U.S. banking system serving as the conduit to those applying for funding in the form of a low-interest rate loan which the SBA can fully forgive.



**Michael Waters,**  
Market President

In March 2020, the Settlers bank team decided to participate even though the SBA had not yet created the program architecture. Despite the perceived difficulties and lack of specific information, we wanted to help provide funding to entities that needed it to keep employees paid and, in some cases, just to survive.

We mobilized with the mindset to be innovative and use technology to streamline the process for applicants and our banking team. If we could not be innovative in our execution, the program would be onerous and cumbersome. Faced with that possibility, we used the following tactics to help make the PPP process at Settlers bank industry-leading:

**“... your streamlined, electronic (PPP application) process made this so simple!” — Mark D.**

- We immediately created a COVID-19 Loan Programs landing page on the Settlers bank website for applicants seeking information on the PPP (among others). The page provided general parameters and direct links to pertinent SBA pages and documents needed to apply.
- Our filing system was 100 percent virtual. Settlers' longstanding commitment to paperless methods had us well-situated to electronically manage the PPP process. Applicants applied by submitting a single email, then uploaded the appropriate documents. Those documents moved through the process from pending to review to submitted status virtually and sequentially.
- Our lending team used virtual meetings to efficiently communicate program details, clarifications and updates. This saved time and allowed for engagement with work-from-home employees while eliminating the need for travel. Our team also used virtual meetings to verify PPP applicants' identities (new clients), again saving time, and eliminating in-person contact.
- Our lending operations team used virtual checklists to ensure accuracy and compliance with the many requirements of the PPP. Along with these checklists, we created a “buddy system” to ensure dual review of the application before uploading it to the SBA.
- Settlers bank rolled out DocuSign® in 2019 and used it to obtain electronic signatures versus signing in person.



## **sb** Settlers bank

**Company:**  
Settlers bank

**Innovation:**  
Streamlining the PPP experience

[settlerswi.com](http://settlerswi.com)

The use of DocuSign® was another time-saver that eliminated the need for in-person contact.

By thinking innovatively throughout the PPP process, we were able to serve our applicants efficiently and avoid unnecessary contact despite the program's challenges.

By the completion of the first phases of PPP, the team at Settlers had served roughly 225 local businesses by making over \$53 million in loans. Those loans helped keep more than 5,200 people employed in and around the markets we serve. We have continued to help provide PPP funding during the most recent phase of the program. **!**

# D|K helps businesses innovate through people, products and processes



With roots tracing back 130 years, Davis|Kuelthau is proud to continue its legacy of serving as outside general counsel to the gamut of businesses, entrepreneurs and individuals who have built this great state.

## Who is D|K?

In 1891, the law firm of Stover and Stover was founded by James H. Stover and focused its practice on maritime law. In 1905, Carl Rix formed his own law firm and was joined by his nephews, Carl Kuelthau and Earl R. Kuelthau, in the 1920s. In 1941, Robertson, Hoebreckx, Davis & Vergeront was founded and soon gained prominence in private and public sector labor relations and general corporate matters. These three firms merged in 1967 to form Davis, Kuelthau, Vergeront & Stover. In 1980, Werner & Goodland, a real estate and financial institution law firm, merged with the firm, creating Davis|Kuelthau.

D|K has embraced tremendous growth in attorneys and Wisconsin offices over the years, as well as the scope of legal services offered. Our growth was fueled by strategic mergers and acquisitions as well as the hiring of talented, well-established attorneys throughout the state including, at various points, Appleton, Green Bay, Oshkosh and Sheboygan. Today, our team spans the state with offices in Appleton, Brookfield, Green Bay, Madison and Milwaukee.

Most recently, the attorneys at Northwind IP Law and Epiphany Law joined D|K in Appleton, expanding the firm's existing presence in the New North region. Drawing upon the firm's broader depth and combined with our Green Bay office, this regional team offers the full suite of business law services including corporate, employment, intellectual property, litigation, mergers and acquisitions, succession planning, tax, and, for individuals, estate and wealth planning.

Through every expansion, D|K



has remained true to its vision and mission. We are known for our commitment to providing clients with high-quality, personalized service.

At D|K, client needs and expectations are every employee's primary concern — a simple combination of listening and caring. A firmwide review process ensures that we continually improve staff efficiency and maintain the high standard of work that clients expect of us and that we expect of ourselves. The result? We serve not only as legal advisers but as partners in our clients' businesses.

## Leaders in protecting innovation

The most valuable business assets often are intangible assets. Yet, while most business owners take steps to protect equipment, buildings and employees, they often overlook protecting their intangible assets. Failure to protect intangible assets can lead to costly losses.

D|K's team has served the intellectual property needs of entrepreneurs, small- to mid-sized institutions and large corporations for several decades. Many of our IP colleagues previously served as in-house counsel to some of the nation's most renowned innovators and thus offer both the business know-how and the legal savvy to counsel you on all aspects of IP including patents, trademarks, copyrights and trade secrets.

Our technical experience covers a wide range of engineering, scientific, computer and medical principles as

well as business methods. We work with manufacturers producing the latest innovations in areas such as adhesives, electronics, food and beverage, furniture, lighting, machinery, plastics, steel, tools, transportation and more. We also serve the gamut of businesses serving the manufacturing industry including construction, real estate and financial services.

We are committed to helping our clients throughout the IP process from application or protection to enforcement of rights to defense of infringement claims. We work with clients to reduce their IP risks by:

1. Helping business leaders understand what can and should be protected
2. Identifying potential and actual risks
3. Establishing controlled access to data and creating HR policies surrounding the IP
4. Creating and leveraging a proactive loss prevention program

In short, we bring real-world experience and understanding, and a results-oriented mindset, to help you innovate through your people, products and processes. When the time is right, we'd be delighted to talk to you about your needs. 

## Meet our Appleton and Green Bay team:

Michael J. Bendel | Kathryn M. Blom | Robert W. Burns | Timothy A. Cisler | Sherry D. Coley | Thomas J. Connelly | Bruce B. Deadman | Kevin L. Eismann | Timothy J. Feldhausen | Patrick D. Furman | Gini L. Hendrickson | Stephen C. Jensen | James M. Kalny | Heather J. Macklin | Robert L. Macklin | Alexis M. Merbach | Thomas V. Rohan | Anthony J. Steffek | Abby S. Tilken | Ted A. Warpinski | Tiffany E. Woelfel



**Company:**  
Davis|Kuelthau, s.c.

**Innovation:**  
Helping businesses protect their IP

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