

The Protection Connection

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 2

APRIL — JUNE 2004

ILLINOIS ELECTRONIC SECURITY ASSOCIATION

State Legislative Issues Affect Alarm Company Operations

Special points of interest:

- *NBFAA Benefits*
- *Committees Formed*
- *IESA 2004 Officers and Directors*
- *Who are the IESA Members?*



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HB4450 relates to automatic contract renewal clauses. The bill was introduced earlier this year as a result of a constituent complaint relating to an issue with exercise clubs. In its inception it stated that if a client was not reminded of the renewal in a timely manner that the item became a "gift" to the client.

Yes, that would cause an issue with alarm contracts. No one wants to "gift" services.

There is some good news/bad news about the status of the bill:

Bad News #1: The legislation has made it out of committee so that it will be considered this year.

Good News: The language that made it out of committee is very acceptable to us. We have convinced the sponsor that the bill should only cover consumer contracts and that they should only apply if the contract has an ACH billing process. The current draft does not include Commercial transactions.

Bad News #2: Now the really bad news. Attorney General Lisa Madigan has

chosen this piece of legislation to house a major piece of Consumer Fraud Legislation. As it comes out of committee it is her intention to redraft it to make it a criminal fraud issue if found in noncompliance.

You should note that the IESA's legislative Committee and our Lobbyist are taking action to convert the language of this bill to something that is acceptable to alarm contracts.

HB5132 requires all governmental bodies to put a person onsite to log in and out all workers for the purpose of confirming the Prevailing Wage is being paid to all workers. Each worker would be required to log in and out with a photo ID card.

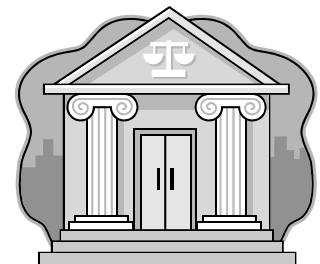
HB5133 allows a Labor Management committee appointed at the job site to Bring Suit against a contractor without help from the department of labor.

HB5134 expands the definition for requiring Prevailing Wage work to people that provide labor that are not on site but is for the benefit of a public works job. I read it to include your technicians that do any prep

work off site.

The Board of Directors and the IESA Legislative Committee have directed our lobbyist to promote the opposition of HB5132, HB5133 and 5134

HB5022 Amends the Private Detective, Private Alarm, Private Security, and Locksmith Act of 2004. It removes the requirement that a licensee shall permit his or her office facilities and registered employee files to be audited or inspected upon 24 hours notice by the Department of Professional Regulation. Makes changes concerning the Department's subpoena power. We want to have this bill approved so that the department can proceed with proper investigation of unlicensed alarm contractors.





President,
Tony Calderone

The President's Message by Anthony Calderone

2004 should prove to be a very busy time for the IESA. We are in the middle of several issues that impact your business. Now is the time for you to get involved and stay involved.

The City of Chicago is considering amending their electrical code to not require conduit for fire alarm systems, what this means to you is the opportunity to bid those jobs that may have otherwise been problematic because of the conduit requirement. We need your help advancing our position as a unified industry.

Of serious consequence is a bill introduced in Springfield that would dramatically alter the renewal provisions of your alarm agreements with your customers. Referred to as the Evergreen bill, this

change would eliminate automatic renewals of your agreements. In fact if you failed to notify your customer within a specified period of time the goods or services would be considered a gift to your customer. That's right, all of your hard work could be for naught. This needs your immediate attention, call for specific information.

On the bright side we want to welcome back Alarm Detection Systems as a renewed member, and already ADS is back in the fold with Ed Bonifas chairing our legislative committee, and boy has he been busy. Thanks Ed.

This should be a year of growth in membership, there are many companies that do not belong to our association, and your know many of them. How about

asking them to join you at our next meeting, come and see what it is all about. It is a fact that the majority of people join any organization simply because someone asked them. Can you believe it! Extend your hand ask them to come you'll be surprised.

The attendance at our meetings is back on the rise; we are working very hard securing a speaker for each of our meeting. Our May meeting for instance will be a speaker talking about employee liability issues; this is one you do not want to miss.

And lastly, what else is there that we can do for you? If you have any thoughts we would like to here from you. Till then take care.

IESA Committees

Ed Bonifas from Alarm Detection Systems has agreed to take on the challenge of Chairing the IESA Legislative Committee. He will work with our Lobbyist on the State front to make sure that we are aware State issues that will affect your business. In addition, he will monitor National and Local matters.

Patrick Devereaux from Emergency 24 has agreed to Chair the Membership Committee. In addition to recruiting new members he will be looking at finding new benefits to offer.

Each of these Committees need your help. If you can volunteer time or have issues that need to be addressed contact the IESA office at (630) 305-8800.



2004 Meeting Schedule

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend membership meetings that will feature topics of importance to your business:

May 12, 2004

September 8, 2004

November 10, 2004

All meetings are at the Holiday Inn Hillside. Social hour is at 6:00pm Dinner is at 7.

If you have a topic or speaker that you'd like to have at one of these meetings, call the office at (630) 305-8800.



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Summer Golf Event

Get out your golf clubs and be ready for a road trip to golf with members of the WB&FAA on Thursday, June 17, 2004.

If you would like to help plan the event call

(630) 305-8800

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IESA Information Center

Do you need to know about events that affect the IESA and the industry?

Do you need forms to register for classes or to attend an event?

All of these questions can be answered 24/7 by visiting the WB&FAA website at

<http://www.iesa.net>

Be sure to visit the Members Only Area

User Name:

iesa

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Use Your IESA /NBFAA Member Benefits

Your insurance agent just walked into your office and tells you that your liability insurance renews next week. Unless you've done your homework and reviewed your policy several months prior you're stuck.

Did you know that you now have a benefit through the NBFAA that can save you hundreds of dollars on Liability Insurance that gives you proper E & O coverage?

One of our own IESA members just told us that he has saved over \$800 on his liability coverage this year!

You owe it to yourself to call Security

America today before your stuck with re-nuing a policy that is expensive and doesn't cover you adequately to industry standards. Their number is 866-315-3838 For more information on insurance benefits and others visit the WB&FAA and the NBFAA websites or call 414.276.9232



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FOCUSING ON THE HUMAN SIDE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Quandary of Where and How Much to Spend on Advertising by Stone Evans

As a business owner, you have often entertained the question as to how much to spend and where to spend your advertising dollars. For most small business owners, these questions can add to the headaches suffered in the course of normal everyday operations of their business.

THERE ARE NO SIMPLE ANSWERS

The how much to spend and where to spend it questions have no easy answers.

Depending on your type of business, many people suggest that the "how much" should be equal to anywhere from 4% to 10% of your gross receipts.

The quandary is that a business cannot survive without a fresh flow of incoming customers. But, a business can seldom generate a fresh stream of customers without spending money to get the word out about their business.

THE CHALLENGE OF DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE ADVERTISING

Have you ever paid for advertising and sat back to await the fresh flow of customers, only to find yourself sitting and sitting and then sitting some more?

Don't feel bad about that. It has happened to many of us before.

See, knowing where to spend the advertising money is not enough to get the job done.

Where to spend the money only begins to highlight the other issues connected with advertising:

- Marketing Plan
- Advertising Strategy
- Headlines, Ad Copy and Visual Presentation
- Tracking the Success of Your Advertising Campaigns

THE MARKETING PLAN

The Marketing Plan is used primarily to identify your products and services, costs, strengths, weaknesses and the strengths and weaknesses of your competitors.

To learn more about constructing your own marketing plan, visit the Small Business Administration website for a comprehensive study of the elements of a Marketing Plan:

http://www.home-business.com/nav/articles/links/sba_plan.html

ADVERTISING STRATEGY

It is important to understand what you expect to gain from your advertising.

Do you simply wish to get your name known so that when your customer will need you, they will think of you first? Or, do you wish to get your customers in your front door on Saturday?

When you know what you want, then you will better understand just how to do it.

HEADLINES, AD COPY AND VISUAL PRESENTATION

You might be surprised how many business owners put out advertising without regard for the quality of the sales pitch or presentation. The quality of your distribution outlet or the amount of money you spent to get there will do little for you if the advertising vehicle is a junker.

Test all of your advertising materials in smaller markets before blowing your advertising bank roll on it. You must absolutely know the value of your advertising before putting large sums of money behind it.

TRACKING THE SUCCESS OF YOUR ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS

Tell your customers to save another 10% when they tell you they heard or saw your ad in such-and-such location. Suggest that they can register to win a free widget if they fill out a form and have them to tell you how they heard of your business. Advertise a specific widget in your ad and track the sales of that widget.

It does not matter how you track your advertising --- just make sure you do it!

IN SUMMARY

The ideal way to spend your advertising budget is to buy a rifle with a high-powered scope and to only shoot your targets in the light of day.

If you are not tracking your advertising, then you are shooting a pellet gun without an attached scope, with blinders on, and shooting in the dead darkness of night.

Even with a bigger gun, the blinders in the dark constitute the single largest mistake made by advertisers. If you are unable to track your advertising to learn what is working well, what is working somewhat, and what is a money pit, then you are condemned to repeat your mistakes over and over again.

By relying only on gut instinct, you may be choosing to spend more money in the money pit and to lose all of your money in the process.

When you get down to the nuts and bolts of making money from your advertising, you should plan, prepare, track and study your results. You must have factual information on which to base your advertising decisions. When you are making the right advertising decisions, then making money from your business might just come easy.

Emergency Planning by Chester Donati

It's a troubling time to be in business. All kinds of emergencies can arise from storms to disasters.. "Be Prepared" isn't just a motto for boys...it should be a business motto as well.

There are some general rules for all alarm companies.

1. Cash is king —have adequate cash reserve on hand
2. Food, canned, etc
3. Bottled water
4. Flashlights and batteries
5. Transportation for all employees
6. Sleep-cots, change areas, clean up supplies
7. Reflecting gear for runners and servicepersons, employee identification up to date
8. Gasoline for cars — reserve supply

If you operate a central station some emergency planning must be considered.

1. Signal traffic—expect 100 times increase in traffic
2. Software capable of mass deletions of non-essential events
3. Prepared scripts — Most asked customer question is "Should I set my alarm?"
4. All hands—entire staff to call in—make off duty personnel responsible to report in for instructions
5. Software vendor response
6. Cross-train staff as emergency back-up operations.
7. Prepare for back-up central station operator positions



What's in your emergency kit?

Associate Members Notice

If you're not already advertising in the Protection Connection, send a copy of your business card in PDF format via e-mail to information@iesa.net to get your free listing!!



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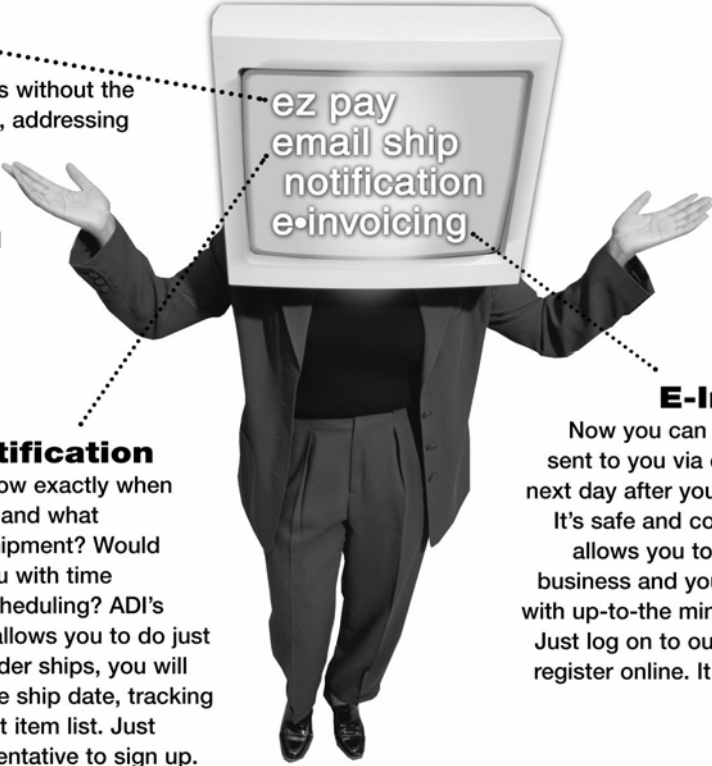
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10 Expressions to Avoid In Sales Information by Catherine Franz

Keeping up with what words are in and out isn't hard. Yet, with all the other more important things on our to-do list, it doesn't get remembered easily.

1. Any archaic, stilted words, such as: hitherto, whereby, thereby, herein, therein, thereof, heretofore.
2. "Kindly advise." As opposed to not kindly advising.
3. "Whereas." Instead use "where" or "while."
4. "Pursuant to." This is too informal for 2004. The express expired in the 1980s.
5. "As per your request." As per any other way...dah? Shorten to, "as requested" or "as your requested."
6. "As of today, we are in receipt of" or "we are in receipt of." Instead, "Today we received."
7. "Please don't hesitate to call." Again a term that went out in the 1980s. Update it with, "feel free to call."
8. "When time permits." This is great language for a poem but not sales information. The adjective "time"


doesn't have anything to do with permit. It needs to match people. Only people use time.

9. "Enclosed please find." Honestly, I don't know when this one expired, yet it did, so don't use it. And why send your reader on a hunting expedition?

10. "Of even date." This one I thought went out in the 1950s and I couldn't believe my eyes when I received not one but two sales letters with it included last week. So, I thought I would put this one for those that missed it back then.

Bonus: Yet and so -- use them conservatively and only for impact. They are on their way out as well.



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The objectives of the IESA are:

1. To promote mutual interests of the electrical protection industry.
2. To foster cordial relations among the members.
3. To use all lawful means as a medium for exchange and dissemination to members and the public, of information applicable to the field of Burglar and Fire Alarms, closed circuit TV and all other electronic security services.
4. To be guided always by a spirit of justice and honor in all business activities and that all members observe the Association code of ethics at all times.
5. Through cooperative effort, to engage in or conduct lawful activities which benefit the interests of the Electronic Security Industry.

**For Membership Information or to
Advertise in this publication contact the
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***A Chartered State Association of the National
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