

*Translating the Power of Technology into Performance*

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"By and For Independent Control System Integrators."

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## Welcome to our new CSIA Members:

### Associates

- APEX Manufacturing Solutions, Boise, ID, John Nichols, Managing Director
- Automatizacion Industrial Del Sureste S.A. De C.V., Veracruz, Rogelio Zarrabal, Director General
- Control Systems Integrators, Inc., Marion, IA, Don Ferris, President
- Krug Associates, Inc. dba/KBL Associates, Hayward, CA, Jeffrey Krug, President
- MESA Associates Inc., Knoxville, TN, Mike Whitt, Integrated Services Manager
- Patni Computer Systems Limited, Navi Mumbai, Sanjeev Gupta, VP Product Engineering Services
- Prevas AB, Goteborg, Sweden, Makaël Anderson, Project Manager

### Partners

- Honeywell International, Glenmoore, PA, William Stevens, Channel Manager

## CSIA Membership:

The above listing would seem to indicate that we're off to a great start this year in increasing our membership. It appears that more and more System Integrators are hearing about CSIA and once they contact us, they become eager to participate in our Association. With our new management firm (Association Acumen), and our soon-to-be on board Executive Director, Bob Lowe, there's going to be a lot of effort toward expanding our membership. There are literally hundreds of potential CSI members out there, but many fall short of meeting our membership standards. We're searching for quality and not just quantity in order to firmly establish that CSIA members are a cut above the rest.

In our dealings with Associations in other Industries and Disciplines we're often told that CSIA is really unique because of our Best Practices & Benchmarks. They really are the envy of others and we are quite fortunate to have this superb tool at our disposal. Whether you are a Certified Member or an Associate, these standards are yours for the taking and hopefully all of our members will avail themselves to access and use these gems.

When asked, "Why are you considering joining CSIA?", many prospective members tell us that they have heard about the CSIA Certification program and wish to learn more about the process and its advantages. This is very encouraging and with the help and support of our major Partner members, we envision a future day where many Users will require their Integration suppliers to wear this Certified label.

## CSIA Insurance Update:

At present we utilize 3 Insurance carriers, one for all lines of business except Professional Errors & Omissions, one for E &O, and one for Umbrella. We're pleased to advise you that negotiations have now been completed with a A ++ rated Carrier to write all lines of coverage. Effective April 1 our new Program will be launched. Full details on this will be available next month. All current insures will be contacted individually to advise how the change will be implemented for them.

## **This Month's Legal Tip:**

## **Surviving the New COBRA Minefield**

*If your company has group health insurance, you are probably familiar with COBRA. COBRA provides certain former employees, retirees, spouses, former spouses, and dependent children the right to temporary continuation of health coverage at group rates. This coverage, however, is only available when coverage is lost due to certain specific events.*

*But did you know that the stimulus package that President Obama recently signed into law, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA), changes COBRA? As if COBRA was not complex enough, the new rules add to the minefield employers must navigate.*

*Now is a good time to confirm whether or not your company is subject to COBRA. Many employers believe, incorrectly, that they are exempt from COBRA if they have fewer than 20 employees covered by their group health plan. In fact, an employer is subject to COBRA for a plan year if it had the equivalent of 20 or more full-time employees on at least 50% of its business days in the prior plan year, even if fewer than 20 of those employees participate in the health plan.*

*Rather than simply provide a summary of the new law---which could not be easily accomplished in this limited space---we thought that sharing answers to common questions would be more helpful. To that end, our thoughts and advice on a variety of questions raised by ARRA, based upon the statutory language (and informal comments from the Internal Revenue Service and Department of Labor), are available online. Please [click here to visit the online guide](#). We will regularly update this list of questions and answers as we receive more guidance from government agencies, so please use this link to check back often.*

*CSIA General Counsel Mark Voigtmann can be reached at 1-800-382-5426 or via e-mail ([Mark.Voigtmann@bakerd.com](mailto:Mark.Voigtmann@bakerd.com)). Ten minute questions and answers are free to CSIA members. At this year's annual CSIA meeting in Naples, Florida, Mark will be speaking on "CSI Responsibility for Functional Safety for Machine and Process Control."*

## **ARC Conference Highlights:**

**This year's ARC conference was one of the best ever, even with the somber mood of most attendees brought about by our present economic crisis. The theme was "Sustainability", and the majority of presentations from Users showed that it didn't necessarily cost more to go "green". In fact it can even contribute in profit improvements to the bottom line.**

**Two major topics I liked which are applicable to current opportunities for our Integration members are;**

- **Reducing Costs through Integrated Power & Automation by Larry O'Brien, and**
- **Sustainable Operations through better Asset Lifecycle Management by Sid Snitkin**

**For the Power topic the main points are that Users are becoming more aware of the cost of Power to their manufacturing process, which many have always accepted as inevitable in the past. By introducing automation to Power usage, the savings can be very significant. And, in most cases the cost of this investment is recoverable in less than a year.**

**There are numerous steps that have to be managed for total Asset Lifecycle Management. But all of these fall into three categories, "Design & Build", "Operate & Optimize", and "Maintain & Improve". What struck me as some real opportunities in our present downturn and hiatus is that the majority of the work that our members perform is in the "Design & Build" stage. And, right now these opportunities are few and far between. But the "Optimize, Maintain, & Improve" opportunities are definitely out there, and would certainly benefit the bottom line of Users who moved in this direction.**

**Most Users only look for Integrators when they are in need of a "Design & Build" system. They ignore or are unaware of the Optimize and Improve opportunities that are available to them. And, most Integrators wait and look for the "Design & Build" notice from the Users to spring into action. Why not become proactive and search out these opportunities with your past clients, especially now when everything is on hold for new "Design & Build" systems. It would be a real "win-win" situation for both the Integrators and the Users. You would get some needed business and your customers would end up with a more efficient, less costly operation.**

# It's Executive Conference Time

**Why should anyone want to go to our forthcoming CSIA Executive Conference, especially during these present trying times?**

**Well, for three good reasons --- Namely:**

**1. The world's in a mess---Our country's in a mess---and, Your business is ??? We're all in this together. So we've put a program together with some of the best brains available to highlight possible solutions and avenues of opportunity that could get us through this situation with minimum losses and perhaps some real gains. Check out the Agenda to see what we mean. (<..\..\Conferences\Conferences\2009\Agenda.pdf>)**

**2. Not everyone is feeling the effects of this current downturn. Why? What are some of your peers doing that set them apart? Ask them. They'll be happy to tell you. As for others, many of our members are facing similar problems. What steps are they taking to get through this hiatus and prepare for the future? Here's a great opportunity to share your concerns, your problems, and your survival strategies with other members such as yourself. There's a lot of wisdom out there to be gained by talking with and listening to others.**

**3. You deserve a break – today – and very definitely in May. Come down to one of the finest resorts located on the best beach on Florida's Gulf coast. We guarantee you'll love it. Get away from the winter weather, and join your friends in sunny Naples. We'll look forward to seeing you there. Check out the facilities and see what I mean.**

**([http://www.naplesbeachhotel.com/resort/resort\\_photoGallery.html](http://www.naplesbeachhotel.com/resort/resort_photoGallery.html))**

**So, hopefully we've sold you on registering for the conference. Why not do it today? And you can register for the hotel at the same time, all via our website. ([www.controls.org](http://www.controls.org))**



**The order for quantities and sizes of our coveted CSIA embroidered shirts has to go in soon. So don't miss out on adding this trophy to your shirt collection. Late registrants will regrettably go bare handed. Register now.**