

The Tool Box

Serving the Electrical, HVAC & Plumbing Industries Since 1912

Five Strategies For Spotting Trends First By Robert Tucker, The Innovation Resource

Economists, the late Paul Samuelson once quipped, predicted nine out of the last five recessions. Yet they failed to warn about the big one: the Crash of 2008. Unbowed, they keep at it. Last year, they predicted interest rates would go up. They went down instead. They predicted oil prices would rebound: they sunk to below \$35 a barrel instead.

And what about those media prognosticators, how well did they do? U Penn researchers checked up on the predictions of pundits like CNBC's Jim Cramer, New York Times' columnist Thomas Friedman, Wall Street Journal columnist Peggy Noonan and many others and concluded they had the accuracy of "dart throwing chimpanzees". And don't get me started on futurists who boast about trends they accurately predicted but fail to mention the many they missed.

Although prediction algorithms might be about to change the forecasting game (see below), for now at least, prediction is still more art than science. For leaders, the need to make prediction-based decisions has never been greater. Missing market shifts and misreading important trends can be career-limiting. Blackberry's co-CEOs misread the iPhone, dismissing it as a niche product. Kodak invented the digital camera but stood by as it unraveled the company's business model. Radio Shack ignored consumer trends that rendered it irrelevant. Some cable companies dismiss the "cord-cutting" trend that is beginning to roil their industry.

As a futurist and innovation coach, I don't try to *predict* trends so much as to alert my clients to changes that could spell opportunity, if action is taken. I'm convinced we all need to become better trend-watchers to avoid being blindsided. Communications technologies make it easier than ever to connect to the wider world, yet tempting to drown in information overload. It's easy to misread the signals of change because there are simply so many of them.

Here's the good news: with a bit of focused attention, you can build skills in this area such that they become a strength rather than a vulnerability. Not only will it lead to better responsive moves, but at times, your improved capability will enable and empower you to pounce on emerging opportunities. Here are five strategies to guide you in this important arena:

• Audit your information diet. Start by doing a simple assessment of the various information sources – periodicals, books, reports, newspapers, email newsletters, etc. that you're accessing. Think of this as your "information diet". Just as when we diet, we carefully monitor our caloric intake, become more aware of your "information intake". For the next week, monitor how much time are you spending on trivial items like Donald Trump's latest outburst, versus how much

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Mechanical Member: W. O. BLACKSTONE & COMPANY, INC.

W.O. Blackstone is a full service mechanical contractor with a rich history of successful projects and a strong reputation of quality work. We are a team of skilled craftsmen & service technicians; project managers with mechanical engineering degrees; and a talented support staff.

The Construction Division capabilities include professional HVAC services in the design/build, design/assist, and plan & specification market for both private and public commercial sectors. We focus on the office, healthcare, industrial and institutional markets.

The Service Division is focused on providing 24/7 service and customized preventative maintenance plans. Many of the people we work with tell us they are concerned about the energy costs of their buildings and equipment, or they might be apprehensive about the costs of replacing aging equipment or even stressed about the performance of their systems. Our approach is to alleviate these concerns, present cost effective solutions and deliver consistent value.

We are proud of our heritage and work hard every day to honor this foundation of quality work, customer service and commitment to excellence.

W. O. Blackstone & Company, Inc. P. O. Box 88 Columbia, SC 29202-0088 Phone: (803) 252-8222 Fax: (803) 254-4521



Lewis Caswell Awarded The Order of the Palmetto

Lewis Caswell, Chairman of W. O. Blackstone & Co., Inc., was presented The Order of the Palmetto by Senator Katrina Shealy at the 12th Annual Statewide Mechanical Contractors Meeting on 3/21/16, at The Phillips Market Center at the State Farmers Market in West Columbia. The Order of the Palmetto is the highest civilian honor awarded by the Governor of South Carolina. It is awarded to persons who make contributions of statewide significance. The Honorable Nikki Haley bestowed this distinguished honor on Lewis. He has been a member of the Mechanical Contractors Association of SC for 56 years, serving as President from 1971-1972.

Lewis wants to thank all of you that have helped him along the way and for all those that were instrumental in nominating him for this award. He also wants to thank the MCASC for their service to the state and the mechanical contracting industry.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

Benny Waldrop	4/2	Honorary Life Member	
Buddy Davis	4/6	Central Heating & A/C Service, Inc.	
Gloria Maguire	4/13	Eck Supply	Wife of Jim
John Whatley	4/16	6 Greenville Mechanical, Inc.	
Fred Gibbs	4/22	Bear Mechanical Services, LLC	
Sylvia Jacobs	4/22	R. C. Jacobs, Inc.	Wife of Duwayne
Bucky Cole	4/23	AAA Supply, Inc.	
Crystal Strickland	4/23	Adams Insurance	
Shirley Tuck	4/27	Tuck & Howell	Wife of Jerry
Joe Clarey	4/29	Zurn Industries	-

Happy Birthday Members!

We Would Like To Announce Yours. If you would like to be listed,

April 1, 2016

"Tool Box Talks" - Safety Tip LOCKOUT - TAGOUT

If you are required to repair or maintain any machinery or equipment, or any electrical power source, start the job by locking out and tagging out all energy sources and starting mechanisms. Locking or tagging out is the only sure way to prevent other employees from accidentally activating the system.

Contact your supervisor when tagging out any piece of equipment or machinery so that he is aware of the situation. Schedule any maintenance or repairs ahead of time with the supervisor to avoid conflicts and any interruptions of the work.

Install your tag out or lock out at the power or ignition source. If a piece of equipment can be activated from more than one location, then additional locks or tags may be required. Make sure that the tag or lock is secure and will not blow off or fall off the machine.

Machines can still be harmful even when they are turned off. Make sure that the machine is not coasting to a stop and watch for moving parts that turn by gravity. Be careful of air or hydraulic pressure lines that have not been bled. Read the manufacturers recommendations for repairs to avoid any hidden dangers such as springs that are under a load that might accidentally be released.

Remember to remove your lock and tags after your work is complete. NEVER remove a lock or tag that has been installed by someone else. If you find a lock or tag out, contact the person who tagged that equipment out and the supervisor for further instructions. NEVER ASSUME THAT SOMEONE JUST FORGOT TO REMOVE THE LOCK OR TAG.

BE SMART - LARGE JOB OR SMALL, TAG IT OUT FIRST !

PinPoint Safety, LLC - Mel Rosas 12216 Pinegate Court, Pineville, NC 28134-9139 Telephone (704) 277-5673 Fax (704) 900-8241

Condolences	Welcome New Members	
Mrs. Patricia Gayle Mansell & Family On the loss of her husband	Piedmont Area: Michael Chapman & Traci Griswold Eldeco, Inc., Greenville	
Michael Wayne Mansell Mansell Air Conditioning & Heating, Inc. Midlands Area President, 1986-1987	Kevin Cantwell Fleetmatics, Charlotte, NC	
windfands Afea Freshdent, 1900-1907	Midlands Area: Tom Albus Albus Leigh Agency, Lexington	
Upcoming Events	Carroll Heyward, Jr. W. B. Guimarin, Inc., Columbia	
<u>7th Annual Midlands Area Nine at Night</u> Thursday, April 7, 2016	Coastal Area: Joel Langhals Eldeco, Inc., N. Charleston	
Charwood Country Club, West Columbia	Alex Blizzard Gateway Supply, North Charleston	
<u>10th Annual Piedmont Area Clays for College</u> Friday, April 22, 2016 The Clinton House Plantation, Clinton	Ron Towery National Power Corp., Fort Mill	
<u>The Charleston Slam</u> <u>7th Annual Inshore Fishing Tournament</u> Captain's Meeting May 20, 2016 Sponsored By: Graybar Electric Company	<u>Birth Announcements</u> Jimmy Neil Mathers, III Born 2/23/16, 9 lbs 3 oz, 21 inches Proud Parents: Neil & Megan Mathers Proud Grandparents: Tommy & Terry Walkup	
Tournament - May 21, 2016 <u>170th Annual MCASC Summer Convention</u>	Walkup Electrical Construction, Florence	
August 4-7, 2016 Wilderness at the Smokies Hotel & Waterpark Resort Sevierville, TN	Viviene Patricia North Born 3/27/16, 8 lbs, 20 inches Proud Great Grandmother: Lynda Jo Ferriott Honorary Life Member	
9th Annual Pee Dee Blast Sporting Clays Event	<u>Anniversaries</u> Mr. & Mrs. Bonny Waldron, 415	
Friday, September 16, 2016 Back Woods Quail Club, Georgetown	Mr. & Mrs. Benny Waldrop - 4 15 Mr. & Mrs. Rudy Cullum - 4/16 Mr. & Mrs. Jim Harmes - 4/20	
	Mr. & Mrs. Jim Haynes - 4/30	

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you're taking in that's substantive, deeply researched and well written. Ask other leaders in your network what they're reading, and share articles of interest. Suggestion: Make it a point to subscribe to publications rather than only grazing the web. Let them build up – the important analysis and survey results that keep you abreast.

- **Develop new antenna.** It's been said that "leaders are readers" and I'm continually amazed at how well informed the innovative leaders I meet each year are on a broad range of topics. I first noticed this trait when interviewing 50 leading innovators back in the mid-80s. I'd go out to interview them and they'd start interviewing me! They are, as I noted in Winning the Innovation Game, like vacuum cleaners sucking in the latest trends. They avail themselves to opposing points of view and alternate perspectives. They ingest a wideranging number of surveys and reports. But they also get out there to see for themselves, to experience, to press the flesh. They travel extensively and actively question customers, suppliers, industry luminaries, and experts. They are alert to change at all times and notice small details that might easily be overlooked. Suggestion: Do more aggressive "front line observational" research, and ask questions wherever you go.
- Use social media as an early warning system. The field of prediction is ripe for reinvention, and that's exactly what's going on these days behind the scenes. According to the Wall Street Journal, predicting the future is about to become "embarrassingly easy," as prediction algorithms the fruits of the big data revolution become so widespread that conventional forecasting methods come off as oh so 20th century. Dataminr is a six year old startup that applies advanced analytics to the entire Twitter "fire hose" to detect events likely to move the market. Already, 75 financial clients, including big investment banks and hedge funds, are subscribers. More and more companies are paying attention to Twitter, and to potential wisdom of the crowd forecasting techniques that are possible from this data set. "It's pretty hard to come up with industries that would be happy knowing later, less and not everything," said Ted Bailey, Dataminr's CEO. According to Fortune, Dataminr revealed preliminary reports of Volkswagen's emissions scandal three days before its stock price plummeted 30 percent. The Twitterverse erupted 45 minutes before the Associated Press tweeted about the Paris attacks. Question: how can you and your organization tap social media as an adjunct to your early warning system?
- Recalibrate your forecasting skills. University of Pennsylvania professor Philip Tetlock wants to know what makes some people better than others at seeing into the future. With funding from DARPA, Tetlock and his team have been hosting forecasting tournaments in order to identify what separates good forecasters from the rest. In these competitions, thousands of everyman prognosticators volunteer to answer roughly 500 questions on various national security topics, from the probably movement of Syrian refugees to the near term stability or instability of the Eurozone. In his book Superforecasting: The Art and Science of Prediction, co-authored by Peter Scoblic, Tetlock reports that the tournaments identified a small group of people who generated forecasts that, when averaged, beat the crowd by well over 50 percent in each of the tournament's four years. How did they do it and whence are their powers? Turns out these adept forecasters buried among us are: philosophically cautious and humble, comfortable with numbers but not always math whizzes; pragmatic and capable of considering diverse points of view, and open minded. They are intellectually curious and enjoy puzzles and mental challenges. Key takeaways: if people feel they will be held accountable for their views they tend to avoid cognitive pitfalls such as overconfidence and a common failure to update beliefs in response to new evidence. Lesson: with effort, we can all improve our forecasting abilities. Tetlock's research suggests basing forecasts on facts and logic, and being alert to personal bias and guessing. His research stresses the need to think in terms of probabilities and recognize that everything is uncertain except history.
- **Take action on trends.** Although Blackberry's co-CEOs watched Apple announce the iPhone in 2007, they dismissed it as a niche product. They didn't consider it again for another six months, losing valuable time. Even a cursory look at disrupted companies shows that their leaders were vaguely aware of the threat to their business model. They waited too long, then mounted halfhearted responses to the threat. It's natural human tendency to want to delay action till others have gone ahead and paved the way. But the advantage that comes

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MCASC SUMMER CONVENTION – AUGUST 4-7, 2016 You Can Make Reservations By Calling 1-877-325-9453 Be Sure To Mention MCASC Or Mechanical Contractors Association of S. C. When Making Reservation. Or Complete This Form & Send To The State Office (Not To Hotel). Please Book ASAP "NOW"!!!

When Room Block Is Gone, Cannot Get Anymore Rooms At Group Rate.

Please have the information below available if you call to make your reservation. All reservations MUST be guaranteed with a major credit card. First Nights Room & Tax Will Be Charged At Time Of Making Reservation. For your records, you may want to keep this form, and write your confirmation number in the space provided. Hotel Room Rate has been extended 3 days pre and post convention dates.

THE DEADLINE FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS IS JULY 4, 2016.

Primary Guest Name:		
Secondary Guest Name:		Number of People In Room:
Daytime Phone:	Fax:	
Email Address:		
City:	State:	Zip Code:
Arrival Date:	Dep	arture Date:
	* Check in time is 4 PM Check out	
• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •		not include 11.75% Tax or \$12 Daily Resort Fee.*
Standard Hotel Roo		bands For Admission To The Waterparks.) C (Double Queen With Sofa Sleeper) Or KNG (King) aker, Hair Dryer, In-Room Safe, Iron & Ironing Board.
DQB (Double Q	ueen W/Balcony DQC Double Queen W/So	fa Sleeper 🛛 KNG King
Murphy Beds Que	rsday \$169 Friday te – KES Bedroop en Sofa Sleepe m Safe, Iron & Irc	nds For Admission To The Waterparks.) d. Living Room With Two Fold-Down Queen levisions, Microwave, Refrigerator, Coffee Maker,
River Lodge:		
(1) Bedroom Delux Balcony, 3 Televisi		bands For Admission To The Waterparks.) Kitchen, Dining Room Table, Living Room, Fireplace, Board. 1 Queen Bed, 1 Twin/Queen Bunk Bed, 1 Twin
(2) Bedroom Premi Balcony, 4 Televisi		tchen, Dining Room Table, Living Room, Fireplace, Board. 1 Queen Bed, 1 Twin/Queen Bunk Bed, 1 Twin
Studio Suite – STU	rsday \$179 Friday & Saturday (Includes Wrist DIO 2 Queen Beds, 1 Twin Sofa Sleeper, Balcor n Safe, Iron & Ironing Board.	bands For Admission To The Waterparks.) ny Television, Microwave, Refrigerator, Coffee maker,
	□ Handicapped Accessible	□ Crib
Other Request:		
	Number:	
	Than 10 Days Prior To Check In Will Result . een time of booking & 10 days prior to arriva	In Forfeiture Of 1 st Night's Room Tax & Resort Fea l, will result in a \$30 cancellation fee.
	ade: Confirmation	
	Smokies Hotel & Waterpark Resort, 1424 Old K (877) 325-9453 Hotel: (865) 429-0625	Inoxville Highway, Sevierville, TN 37876-1358 www.wildernessatthesmokies.com

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to those that spot trends early is that we take early action. We alter our processes, we change our business model. We diversify. We enter new markets, whether adjacent or in new territories.

If you're an executive or manager, it's easy to want to delegate trend-watching. It's easy to think we have more time than we do to mount a response. In response to an ever-increasing degree of technological, social and economic change, I invite you to redouble your trend-watching capabilities and prepare for the VUCA world (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity). In 2016, it's going to be vital to pay attention to how we pay attention.

Robert B. Tucker is the author of *Driving Growth through Innovation: How Leading Firms Are Transforming Their Futures* (Berrett-Koehler, 2002, \$27.95). A popular keynote speaker, Tucker is president of The Innovation Resource, a consulting firm based in Santa Barbara, California, that assists companies in implementing innovation for growth. E-mail: rtucker@innovationresource.com

Patti Davis Honors Nancy Reagan – A Reminder For Parents

By Jane Jenkins Herlong

Patti Davis, known for her tumultuous relationship with her mother, shared lovely words at Nancy Reagan's funeral. "I choose to remember my mother framed by the window of a New York hotel room as I told her that I'd been involved in a complicated relationship for two years and had been cruelly tossed aside. I was 19. I felt older and more wounded than any 19 year-old should feel. I needed a mother and I came to mine. Holding out a fragile hope that she would keep me from crumbling beyond recognition. She did. She didn't judge me. She wasn't punishing or accusatory. She was tender and understanding and loving."

These are eloquent words of wisdom. Our children can make life decisions that will cause much pain to themselves and those who love them. Nancy Reagan, in her wisdom, knew about timing. Her child hurt and she knew to hold her daughter and not judge her.

Springtime is a reminder for me. Trying to simulate my grandmother's yard I attempted to plant a sea of daffodils. As a farmer's daughter, I should have known better - the tip of the bulb does not go down. As a result, a rogue warm day in December brought forth dwarfed sprigs. The bulbs were producing stems that would wind their way up to break through the warm earth. The blooming process may not be on our timeline.

Do you have a child who is not blooming in season? Children who bloom out of sync will hurt themselves. I can attest to the fact that it is very difficult to watch and wait with hope for the bloom. Many parents talk till they are out of words as we watch the weeds choke our flower. Many times we become the weeds!

So what is a parent to do? Pray. **Pray for your child and pray for yourself.** Watch that your words are not weeds but filled with wisdom when speaking to your child.

So the next time you see a daffodil blooming out of season, remember the words of Patti Davis. Also, say a prayer of love, don't speak words of judgement. Let that flower be a reminder that somewhere out there is a loved human being in the process of human becoming. They are searching. Pray for them on their journey we call life.

Jane Jenkins Herlong

Work Smart-Laugh Often-Live Your Dream Jane Jenkins Herlong, CSP Motivational Humorist, Singer and Author "Bury Me with My Pearls" Amazon "Best-Seller," Top 20 in 10 Amazon Categories, 2015 First Place Illumination Book Award Winner, 2015 Christian Small Publisher Book of the Year Hear Jane's comedy and singing on Sirius XM Radio and Pandora Internet Radio Jane's Website, Direct: 803-480-1190

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The Mechanical Contractors' Association of South Carolina is now on Facebook. Search for us by our name and be sure to like the page to be kept updated on all of our news and events!

Associate Member: HUB INTERNATIONAL SOUTHEAST LIMITED

HUB International is a global insurance brokerage providing property, casualty, risk management, life and health, employee benefits, investment and wealth management products and services. HUB is dedicated to helping businesses and individuals evaluate their risks and manage their insurance needs.

HUB International has over 330 offices and 7,000 employees across North America and is ranked 9th among the World's 10 Largest Insurance Brokers. Our regional structure allows us to be proactive in addressing local market needs while centrally managing the growth of our business with consistent standards. Through its practice groups and deep bench of industry sector and insurance experts, HUB offers comprehensive solutions for businesses and individuals. Our geographic reach, global resources and operational range provide us access to more insurance markets with solutions that are tailored to client needs.

HUB International Southeast Limited P. O. Box 21308, Columbia, SC 29221-1308 Phone: (803) 739-6140: Fax: (803) 739-2200 graham.gardner@hubinternational.com www.hubinternational.com

Congratulations to our next Associate & Mechanical Members who will be highlighted in the upcoming issue of "The Tool Box": Albus-Leigh Agency, Lexington - Associate Member Johnson Controls, Inc. Columbia - Mechanical Member

APRIL 2016 MONTHLY AREA MEETINGS

MIDLANDS AREA

Thursday, April 7, 2016 @ 4:00 PM Location: Charwood Country Club, 222 Clubhouse Dr., W. Columbia

PIEDMONT AREA

Tuesday April 12, 2016 @ 6:00 PM Location: 306 East Frontage Road, Greer Sponsored By: Miller HVAC Service

PEE DEE AREA

Thursday, April 14, 2016 @ 6:30 PM Location: Roger's Barbeque, 2004 W. 2nd Loop Road, Florence Sponsored By: Carolina Insulation Contractors

COASTAL AREA

Tuesday, April 26, 2016 @ 6:00 PM Location: 3350 Meeting Street Road, Charleston Sponsored By: Metro Electric Company, Inc. 7th Annual Nine at Night Scholarship Benefit & Election of 2016-2017 Officers & Board

Topic: "Fans: Systems, Bloops & Blunders" Presented By: Dave Phelps Loren Cook Co. Election of 2016-2017 Officers & Board

Topic: "NESA Update" Presented By: Ronald D. Carter, Jr., Director of Operations, NESA Election of 2016-2017 Officers & Board

Topic: "State of The Ports" Presented By: James Van Ness, III, PE S. C. Ports Authority Election of 2016-2017 Officers & Board



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Serving mechanical contractors in South Carolina since 1912.

MCASC Executive Board & Staff

Allen Goff, President Stan Harbourt, Vice-President Duwayne Jacobs, Treasurer Michael Hunter, Associate President Mona Flowers, Managing Director

> Mechanicals make it happen -Be part of the best!

MCASC Vision Statement

The Mechanical Contractors Association of South Carolina (MCASC) will be the leading construction association in South Carolina for specialty contractors and suppliers in the electrical, mechanical (HVAC), and plumbing fields by serving its membership, the industry, and the Community in a vibrant and harmonious fashion.

MCASC Mission Statement

The Mechanical Contractors Association of South Carolina (MCASC) will provide its membership with:

The Association's objective for this mission is to enhance the future of the Construction Industry in South Carolina.