Promoting life safety and fire prevention worldwide
Serving the Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Industry Worldwide

The IKECA Journal is an industry publication for cleaners, fire marshals, insurance professionals, facility managers, vendors and other interested parties in the commercial kitchen exhaust cleaning and inspection industry.

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It’s the beginning of summer as I write this message, and if I focus on the positive, we have many things for which to be thankful: your organization is financially healthy, IKECA’s membership is strong, and the Board of Directors and Committees continue to work hard for you.

Depending on where you are in the world, you may still be waiting for the emergence from COVID-19 disruptions. However, you’re now dealing with the challenges of returning to and defining the new normal.

IKECA, your Association is proud to share with you all that we accomplished during the pandemic:

- IKECA provided its members guidance and planning tools to navigate changes necessitated by COVID-19, in the KEC Pandemic Preparedness Planning Guide.
- Continuing education for CEUs toward IKECA Certification renewal is of utmost importance. Facing a pandemic and travel/gathering restrictions, IKECA presented its 2021 Fall Tech Conference 100% virtually, enabling certification holders to earn their CEUs and engage in IKECA without the cost of travel or time away from the business.
- The IKECA Board of Directors, despite plans being disrupted, completed an in-depth strategic planning effort, resulting in a multi-year plan focusing on three main areas: Membership & Stakeholders, Advocacy & Education, and Sustainability for the organization.
- Volunteer leaders produced educational videos, released online, for members interested in emerging topics and to keep members up to date on Association events and services.
- Industry standards development work continued uninterrupted. In late 2020, ANSI approved the revisions to the ANSI/IKECA C10-2021 Standard for the Methodology for Cleaning Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems, which was published in 2021. Also in 2020, revisions to the ANSI-IKECA I-10 Standard for the Methodology for Inspection of Commercial Kitchen Exhaust Systems were also approved for publication.

None of this would have been possible without the time and talent donated to the organization by our Board, Committees and volunteer members. A special thanks to those who have recently stepped up to a leadership position within IKECA and to the members who have just recently joined a Committee or Subcommittee to lend a hand toward IKECA’s progress.

As we move further into 2021, IKECA’s Strategic Plan includes both advocacy and sustainability. We are striving to deliver a renewed public awareness of IKECA and the importance of quality KEC services. IKECA attended the Restaurant Facility Management Association (RFMA)’s conference in June, and IKECA’s presence was very well received. There were attendees that had no idea before the conference what IKECA is and those who knew of IKECA but were unsure of what we do. They all welcomed IKECA’s presence and they are looking forward to seeing and working with us in the future. From those who we met at the booth, we were the answer to many questions throughout the KEC industry.

We will continue to attend industry related conferences and establish partnerships with related industry associations. We will increase awareness of IKECA in and outside the industry and share our mission of life safety and fire prevention.

For our international community, IKECA continues to be the benchmark for foreign members and other countries to seek guidance, education, and best practices. During 2021 there have been many inquiries of developing new relationships, memberships and chapters throughout the world.

As we look forward to our Fall Technical Conference, we will be together virtually. You can plan on another great educational and informative event on a highly accessible platform. All participants will be able to earn CEUs, view product information, see vendor demonstrations, and talk with our sponsor exhibitors in the virtual exhibit hall. Join us, and keep the camaraderie and relationships going, as they are so important.

Your Association misses you all, and we cannot wait to be back to “live and in person” for so many reasons! If all is right in the world next year, our plans include the return to an in person, memorable celebration for our 2022 Annual Conference in Scottsdale, AZ. In April. See you all there! ♦
The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the US economy in the past 18 months. Many businesses laid off workers due to temporary shutdown; others shifted their entire staff to remote work. The biggest job losses came in April 2020, when US unemployment reached a staggering 14.7%.

The #1 job field hit by the pandemic? Leisure and hospitality. No surprise there... with restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues temporarily shut down or operating on limited capacity for months, many workers at these businesses lost jobs. The restaurant industry, perhaps more than any other industry in the nation, has suffered the most significant sales and job losses since the COVID-19 outbreak began. More than 8 million restaurant employees were laid off or furloughed, and the industry lost $280 billion in sales during the first 13 months of the pandemic.

With restaurants and other commercial kitchen venues comprising a significant portion of KEC service business, it’s important to keep an eye on this recovery.

There is a lot of work in front of the restaurant industry. To help operators navigate reopening in the new dining landscape, the National Restaurant Association (NRA) created guidance including state-by-state COVID-19 vaccine tracker tools with guidance for employers on responsibilities, and numerous state-level reopening guidance tools and resources.

If you haven’t already, now is the time to reach out to your restaurant customers to ensure they are including appropriate KEC services in their reopening plans. If they are struggling, ask if they have access to the NRA resources or other support, and offer to partner by ensuring they meet local code and ANSI/IKECA Standards recommendations for their establishments.

Speaking of reaching out... KEC service operators all over the world have inquired with IKECA as to how they can work with us, to establish relevant ANSI/IKECA Standards in their jurisdictions and potentially how IKECA certification can be recognized by their national licensing bodies.

We’ve been thrilled to talk to operators in Italy, Australia, South America and Dubai, UAE and other global locations; we’ve had great discussions with them on how they can engage with IKECA both on the short-term and potentially longer-term. For instance, currently, IKECA sponsors a Canadian Council, a chapter of sorts comprised of IKECA members located in Canada; this model could potentially be followed to create other Councils or chapters, all over the world. This would help continue to expand the world wide recognition of ANSI/IKECA Standards, and IKECA certifications.

As we gather virtually, (hopefully one last time...) for the 2021 Fall Tech Meeting I trust you’re also looking forward to IKECA’s 2022 Annual Meeting, where we shall gather in person, in Scottsdale, Arizona in the spring and continue on the road to recovery. IKECA has proven resilient through the pandemic, holding well with membership renewals and certification credential renewals for 2021. Financially, good planning and regular reporting and adjusting has proved to be a key element in budget oversight, and better-than-planned performance of the 2020 operating budget.

Enjoy the 2021 Virtual Fall Tech! ♦
It’s my pleasure as the President of the Canadian Chapter and board representative to state our committee’s purpose: to address concerns of Canadian members on issues which are specific to the Canadian markets and industry including, but not limited to, reviewing, recommending and executing programs, policies and alliances that affect our members.

It is also part of the Chapter’s charge to promote the IKECA brand and to assist in developing standards for KEC companies, AHJs and municipalities across Canada.

A personal welcome and thanks to our Chapter volunteers:

Alex Young, Chapter Chair, is the president and CEO of Power King Exhaust Cleaning. He has served at his current position in the exhaust cleaning industry for more than twenty years. Power King was established in 1986, as a family owned and operated professional exhaust cleaning company. Prior to joining Power King, Alex worked in the fire suppression and extinguishers industry. His work in this industry provided a natural transition to his interest in the exhaust cleaning industry. Alex leads new business development, manages overall operations, and guides the long term direction of Power King. Due to his team’s hard work, Power Kings’ portfolio of clients includes some of the most recognizable brands in the Canada. Over the years, Alex has provided industry knowledge and input to the Ontario Fire Marshal’s office, and AHJ training courses provided through the Ontario Fire College as an industry leader, and is involved in the annual Municipal Fire Prevention trade show and training symposium. Alex has built his business on tried and true fundamentals of honesty and integrity. In fact, during a training symposium with the Collingwood and Barrie Fire department here in Ontario, Power King’s current motto was created: “You are only as good as your last cleaning.”

Bill Doherty, Co-Chair and former Canadian Chapter president, is part owner of Pressure Kleen Services Company Inc. for over 30 years and has dedicated over 41 years to cleaning kitchen exhaust systems to the highest standard. He was the first Canadian CECS and first Canadian CESI, as well as the first President of the Canadian IKECA Chapter when it was formed. Bill has presented at several IKECA conferences and has been on several committees.

Rob King has a background in the construction industry building houses and log homes with lots of experience doing renovations. Rob had his own home inspection company for two years in the early 2000s. He spent 17 years as a volunteer fire fighter (retired in 2020), and 12 years as a full time fire prevention/public education officer with a municipal fire department. Rob is currently working as a Fire Instructor at the Ontario Fire College for the Office of the Fire Marshal. He has been in this position since June 2018.

David Tiller started his career in the fire protection industry after graduating from the Fire Protection Engineering Technology program at Seneca College many years ago. He worked for a large fire protection company in the GTA where he did inspections, service and installation on all types of fire protection and life safety equipment. He then moved to Muskoka to start up a fire protection business. He became a volunteer fire fighter with the Bracebridge Fire Brigade and later became the Fire Prevention Officer with the Huntsville Lake of Bays Fire Department. He has spent 9 years as an instructor at the Ontario Fire College, and now is a Program Specialist with the OFMEM.

Lee and Geraldine Holden started offering kitchen exhaust cleaning services in 1993. Both Lee and Geraldine had knowledge of the industry and thought it would be a good seasonal business to compliment Lee’s career in the Heating and Ventilation industry, switching out furnaces and adding heat recovery ventilation. Geraldine’s career focused primarily on advertising and sales with media providers teaching her the formula for successful promotion planning. The

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News from North of the Border, continued
Alex Young, CECS

partnership was a success and has continued to grow the business to provide a succession plan for their son to take over the business.

Jason Frank, CECS, is the Operations Manager for Superclean Services in Windsor, Nova Scotia. He has 23 years in the KEC business.

A personal thank you to all volunteers. I look forward to working with such a well-rounded and diverse Chapter, within which the wealth of knowledge that can only benefit our mission. I would add that should any of our Canadian members have questions concerns and or ideas to please contact myself via email for the committee's review and/or help. We look forward to the meetings and work ahead!

Update from the Certification Committee
Charlie Cochrane, CECS

The Certification Committee is continuing to make progress on the rewriting of the CECT certification. We are prepared to send out a summary of topics that we feel should be included in the exam. This public comment period is slightly delayed so a psychometric firm that the Board of Directors will choose can review it.

While this is on a brief pause we are reviewing questions in our “item bank” to determine where we have gaps such as topics from C-10 and NFPA 96.

Our goal was to have an updated CECT exam ready for the fall meeting however, we have decided it would be more prudent to get the input of the psychometric firm first to help ensure we are on the right track.

We anticipate that the CECT exam will be ready for administration before or at the 2022 Spring Conference.

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Update from the Conference Committee
Randy Russo, CECS

The Conference Committee serves the members and supports IKECA as it pursues its mission. Together with the Board of Directors, the Conference Committee’s charge is to plan and implement high-quality programs that focus on providing attendees opportunities for professional development, networking, and benchmarking. The Conference Committee also plays a critical role by providing the opportunity for members to “get involved” in IKECA’s Spring and Fall Tech conferences.

2021 has continued to bring many changes for us. We have moved to a virtual conference setting for the 2021 Fall Tech. We ALL look forward to seeing each other as planned in Scottsdale, Arizona in the Spring of 2022.

The Conference Committee, with support from IKECA’s Board, and our continued 100% commitment, will work to keep our Conferences the BEST they can be for our members.

We are honored to serve on this committee.

Update from the Education Committee
Dane Bundy, CECS

The IKECA Education Committee is always working on new ways to get educational tools and resources out to the members and KEC professionals here in the states and internationally.

The pandemic has changed all our lives in many ways, including the aftermath of lack of workforce. Many of us have found ourselves short staffed and overwhelmed and many owners, managers and foremen are working in the field to retain clients. The education committee has done its best to continue to meet regularly and keep moving forward. Rest assured, we have not lost focus of the task at hand - things have just been moving at a slower pace. As we approach the winter months and start to slow down (and hopefully get staffing ramped back up) we look forward to putting our heads down and getting some great content rolled out in winter 2021 and spring 2022.

The committee has received the Board of Director’s strategic plan and has created a game plan to hand out assignments to start getting content out to the membership. The committee has been taking direction from other committees on what content to produce in order to help them get education out that directly ties to their agenda. We will continue to make educational videos and host virtual round tables going forward. We are looking forward to seeing everyone in person for the Spring Annual Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona, beginning on April 26, 2022.

Go to the IKECA website or directly to IKECA’s YouTube channel and to see our current videos and stay tuned for more to be added: IKECA’s YouTube channel

The Education Committee is looking for new members and members for short term projects. If you have any topics or suggestions you would like to see the committee develop, or would like more information on joining the Committee please email info@ikeca.org.

Update from the Finance Committee
John Muller, CECS

The Finance Committee continues to monitor the organization’s ability to weather the short-term impact of the pandemic on its finances and emerge on a financially sustainable path while still pursuing the initiatives necessary to fulfill its mission. So far, the impact has been relatively minor and able to be absorbed without any serious difficulty, we expect to be able to continue to do so. In the coming months the Committee will review its policies on investment of reserves.
Update from the Insurance Committee

Mike Rosenau, MBA, CSP, ARM, CPCU
& Frank Mitarotonda, CECS

It is truly a privilege to serve as the co-chairs for this relatively new committee. The purpose of this committee is to expand awareness of IKECA to insurance, risk management and authorities having jurisdiction (AHJ). As you all know, having recognition and awareness of IKECA with these vital external stakeholders is beneficial to all association members.

The latest news is approval of the merger of the insurance committee with the AHJ committee by the IKECA Board of Directors. Since both committees had similar missions, it was appropriate to combine the committees to conserve resources and to expand its reach. Going forward, we will continue to have an insurance/AHJ educational track for IKECA both the fall and spring conferences. Inclusion of this track could generate interest in IKECA membership with these professionals. We propose making a concerted effort to build awareness of IKECA within various insurance industry trade associations. We will also recommend future topical educational sessions that have mutual benefit to IKECA and these external stakeholders.

Our committee members look forward to the work ahead. If you have any ideas for us, then please send us an email at mrosenau@societyinsurance.com or frankm@chieffire.com. We welcome any suggestions you may have to further collaboration between IKECA and these groups.

Update from the Marketing Committee

Grant Mogford, CECS

In the period of January, 2021 — June 30, 2021 IKECA has over 2,000 followers on three platforms (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) with 20 new Facebook fans, 15 new Twitter followers and 35 new LinkedIn followers.

Users have engaged with IKECA content about 700 times since January 1, 2021. Facebook and Twitter traffic has brought IKECA over 1,200 users.

Google Analytics shows that over 8,100 users have visited the IKECA website with almost 27,000 page views with an average of over 2:10 minutes per visit. 20% of the visits are from returning users, meaning that 80% or over 21,000 are new visitors.

I am pleased to announce that Joe Dahlheimer with Duravent will be taking over the Chair position of the Marketing Committee. I look forward to continuing as a member of this committee and to working with Joe.
Update from the Membership Committee
Dennis Poulin, CECS

We’ve all had challenges navigating through the pandemic. Many of us know companies that unfortunately, have not survived this new economy and marketplace. Despite all the factors that tested the KEC industry over the last 18 months, IKECA continues to show real evidence that we are thriving and have a bright future. Our numbers today are NOT at an all-time low and we are back on a growth trajectory. Today we are 152 Active North American and 34 Active International strong and resilient member companies.

We are particularly pleased that our 25 Associate Member colleagues continue to support and sponsor our conferences as well as being the reliable source for goods and services that we need for our own operations.

What may well be a leading indicator of a positive horizon is the fact that we continue to attract new stakeholders in the Life Safety industry. We have 25% growth in the AHJ and Risk Management Professionals and as a single group they number 653. I don’t know of any other trade group that has had similar success in connecting with them. Perhaps we’ve done a better job of identifying the common agenda that we all share.

One of the most revealing numbers of growth is a 54% increase in Food Service Operators/ Facility Managers members. We’re proud to announce that the Restaurant Facility Managers Association, also known as RFMA, has joined IKECA and IKECA has joined RFMA as well. IKECA exhibited at the RFMA annual conference in June 2021 and plans to continue to do so going forward. This should assist both the food service and KEC communities with better opportunities to serve each other.

So much for the number counting!

You’re going to see more connectivity with IKECA in the future. We’ll be introducing more opportunities to participate in round table Zoom discussions as well as promoting greater interaction between and among the membership at large. One of IKECA’s greatest resources is the talent and expertise among us. So if you’re looking for a solution, speak-up, you’ll likely find someone willing to help. It’s how we thrive!

My thanks to the contributing members of this Committee:

- Charles Cochrane
- Greg Fisher
- Tim McNamara
- Frank Mitarotonda
- Don Pfleiderer
- Eric Scolari
- Kathy Slomer

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Also available for purchase are the 2021 NFPA 96 and the 2021 C10 Standard.
IKECA is back in action and back in person for the 2022 Annual Meeting! You’ll want to save the date for this unmissable event. See you there: Wednesday April 27 - Saturday April 30, 2022 - Scottsdale Plaza Resort, Scottsdale, AZ.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO THOSE WHO RECENTLY ACHIEVED THEIR DESIGNATIONS AND CERTIFICATIONS!

**PECT Professional Exhaust Cleaning Technician**
- Armando Vega / Bare Metal Maintenance, Inc.
- Matthew Fanslau / Bare Metal Maintenance, Inc.
- Thomas Lees / Wright Air Systems, LTD
- Mitchell Smith / Wright Air Systems, LTD
- Alex Shield / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Timothy Lyons / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Jonathan James / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Brianna Atchison / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Nicholas Frierzscha II / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Travis Norman / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Tyler Atchison / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Selena Thornton / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Brady Lantz / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Tanner Norman / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Thomas Baker / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Anthony Taylor / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Jeremy Bibb / Koorsen Environmental Services
- Zachary Martin / Derby Pressure Wash
- Omar Ramirez / US Vents
- Kenneth Burts / US Vents
- Joshua Murgo / Performance Industrial

**CECT Certified Exhaust Cleaning Technician**
- John Tobler / Tobler Construction
- Travis Ashley / Vent Pros
- Randy Luraas / Red Star Services
- Ramon Jimenez / Vent Pros
- Luis Abarca / Vent Pros
- Louis St. Louis / Freedom Fire LLC
- Jonathon Darling / A-1 Air Vent Northern States, LLC
- David Gaver / Apex Hood Cleaning
- Robert King / CleanerQ
- Tyler Lamb / T-N-T Hood Cleaning
- Terry Lamb / T-N-T Hood Cleaning

**CECS Certified Exhaust Cleaning Specialist**
- James Murray / Providet Services Associates, Inc.
- Betsey Paul / BCP Mechanical
- Jan Dziewit / Xena Builders Group LLC/Xena Commercial Exhaust Services
- Craig Wood / Apex Hood Cleaning
- Robert Matthews / A-1 Air Vent Northern States, LLC
- Blake Schalm / Air Flo Cleaning Systems

**BCCS Boston Certified Cleaning Specialist**
- Cody Sullivan / Nelbud Services Group
- Ricardo Rivera / Impact Fire Services
- Michael Woo / Cochrane Ventilation
- Michael O’Boyle / CS Ventilation
- Walter Perez / One Call Ventilation
- Branton Pryor / Cochrane Ventilation
- Victoria Todd / Air Cleaning Services

**CESI Certified Exhaust Systems Inspector**
- Christopher Pccione / Vent Pros Inc.
- William Almon / Williamson County Rescue Squad

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**New Members**

**Active International**
- Mark Poole / SA Industrial Services NSW Pty Ltd

**Active North America**
- Michael Pedri / North Bright Inc
- Craig Wood / Apex Hood Cleaning, Inc.

**Additional Location**
- Scott Deckard / Koorsen Environmental Services (Indianapolis)

**Associate Member**
- Tina Swanson / Restaurant Technologies

**AHJ**
- Richard Adler / Alamogordo Fire Department
- Robert Albert / Shelton Fire Department
New Members, continued

- Dominic Buffolino / Nassau County Fire Marshal Office
- Michael Burnside / Village of Caledonia
- Dennis Campbell / Killingworth Fire Marshal’s Office
- Thomas Clark / Baraboo Fire Department
- Frank D’Amore / North Plainfield Fire Department
- Jason Fife / Rochester Fire
- Andrew Fischer / NYS Office of Fire Prevention & Control
- Derek Flynn / Fanshawe College
- Steven Gaffrey / City of Encinitas Fire Department
- Ryan Gauthier / Palmer Fire Department District One
- Steven Gonzalez / Riverside County Fire
- Greg Hecht / Cape Girardeau Fire Department
- Harold McDonald / City of Waukesha Fire Department
- Daniel Murphy / Tiverton Fire Department
- Barry Nease / Newport Fire Department
- Jonta Paten / Cape Canaveral Space Force Station Fire and Emergency Services
- Chris Pedersen / Yakima County Fire Marshal’s Office
- Douglas Perry / San Diego Fire-Rescue
- Frank Rudecoff / Roaring Fork Fire Rescue Authority
- Eduardo Sanchez / City of National City
- Gregory Smith / Henrico Division of Fire
- Scott Thomas / Goshen Fire Department
- John Vidovich / Los Angeles Fire Department
- Jeff Waldrep / Anniston Fire Department
- Shane Watson / Kincardine Fire and Emergency Services

Food Service Industry

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- Eddie Guzman / Takos & Beer
- Ramon Hernandez / Lompoc Valley Medical Center
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I entered the kitchen exhaust cleaning industry on a different path than most. My understanding of the KEC industry prior to my involvement with IKECA and Omni Containment Systems was limited to paying for the kitchen exhaust cleaning services in our restaurants.

It was this limited understanding that fueled my new relationships with Omni Containment and IKECA. All I knew was that people came in the middle of the night, scraped and blasted grease out of my restaurant’s hoods, and I was presented with a better way to manage grease. The techs appeared to me, at that time, to only be hood cleaners that were overpaid to work at night.

Before joining the KEC community, I never paid attention to what these workers did in my own or my clients’ restaurants. I often times heard complaints about a lack of communication, messes left behind, but never any real praise for what KEC workers did. The overwhelming sentiment was, and I think still is, that KEC providers are simply grease cleaners.

The fact is that KEC providers are some of the most important people in the supply chain of safety and environmental protection in the world. The understanding that is required to clean a kitchen exhaust system, the knowledge of regulations, the level of detail and the individual sacrifice to ensure the job is done in a way that meets or exceeds client, regulatory, and individual expectations is beyond what most people can comprehend.

If you are reading this, your career is probably involved in the KEC community, whether you are a KEC cleaner, owner, or manager; someone that influences those spaces; or a client receiving services for your restaurant/commercial cooking operation/s. The reality is that every human is influenced by the work a kitchen exhaust cleaning company provides. This is because we make restaurants and our community’s groundwater safer every time we service a hood.

It is understanding this influence that I hope to imprint on the minds of others. Kitchen exhaust cleaning firms deserve the same respect that any critical function in society does. The people of our communities deserve to have a high-level understanding of the cooking facilities they visit, knowing that they are safer in that building because of the KEC cleaners and regulations that support their safety.

It is easy to say that kitchen exhaust cleaning work is full of unskilled labor and just another dirty job. In fact, we have counseled hundreds of clients in the KEC industry who have hired people with this exact mindset. Owners of KEC firms often times hire with the intention, “I’m just going to hire a body to put on a truck.” The individuals who are hired are then paid based on this mindset. The general hope is that they will obtain knowledge through osmosis from the other team members. This fails most of the time and causes the massive turnover we see in the KEC industry.

It is time for the KEC industry to be recognized for the influence we have. It is not enough for IKECA to know its influence and only reach the couple hundred members it has. There are over 6,500 dedicated and active KEC providers in the United States, with an additional 7,000 other companies providing services that heavily influence the review, design, installation, maintenance, and remediation of kitchen exhaust environments.

The industry is ready to be seen and heard and our communities need to understand and accept the risks they take when restaurants and jurisdictions ignore the seemingly simple regulations. Boiled down to their most basic, IKECA’s standards are to keep restaurant and commercial cooking hoods accessible and clean and ensure grease stays out of the groundwater system.

The path to consistent industry-wide influence is education and inclusion of all individuals who influence the market as a whole. As an industry, we must speak to the entire market, not just a small subsection that makes us feel important and understood. The fact is

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Know Your Influence: Why KEC is NOT just a Dirty Job!, continued
Brian Smith / IA Business Advisors

less than 3% of the market listens to those who have taken on the responsibility of building a foundation of positive influence for said market; that influence is waning and at risk of becoming irrelevant.

Educating our peers is the key to our industry’s success and those who benefit from our work being positively influenced. When all the KEC industry knows the importance of their influence, then all the people who are influenced by the KEC industry will understand the importance of what we go through to keep restaurants, the people who enter them, and our groundwater safe.

You must know your influence and change your perception about our industry. Educate the workforce from day one to understand the difficult but rewarding task they have. Get involved in IKECA or other forward-looking organizations that can benefit from the influence you have in our industry and in your communities. Finally, demand that those who speak for the industry speak in a manner that will positively influence and give a thorough understanding of the importance of the kitchen exhaust cleaning community.

We keep our communities safe from the threat of fire and contamination. It’s time for our communities to understand the level of knowledge and attention needed to meet or exceed these expectations.

Dr. Brian Smith is the owner of IA Business Advisors. His organization has helped over 18,000 clients since 1996 and continues to provide both virtual and onsite consulting services worldwide. Brian has started over 50 companies, 43 of which are still part of his business ownership portfolio.

In 2018 Brian developed The “I” in Team series to help leaders find, be, and build their positive influence. Find the “I” in Team is an international bestselling book as is the newest title in the series, Individual Advantages: Be the “I” in Team.

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Blue is the New White
Josh Zolin / Windy City Equipment Service & Fall Technical Meeting Keynote Speaker

What do you want to be when you grow up? Where do you want to go to college? Don’t you want to be successful?

These are the questions we all spend our most impressionable years hearing. The narrative that we’re taught from a young age. As if to say “You need to get good grades and go to college to even begin considering yourself successful.”

Well, I’m here to tell you that nothing could be further from the truth. Yes, there was a day and age when that was good advice, but that was all of about 50 years ago and the window was brief, at best.

There’s a slew of unbelievable careers available to us, but the perception of the almighty college education remains. Don’t get me wrong, there’s nothing wrong with college. And many kids know from a very young age that they want to be doctors, lawyers, stockbrokers, teachers, etc. The question is, how many want to be those things because they aren’t aware of what other options they have? And how many don’t think they can become those things (or don’t want to) and still fail to understand what other options they have?

Go to college or flip burgers for the rest of your life. This is the picture that was painted for me in high school and, I’m guessing, probably was the same for many of you.

Work smart, not hard, they said. Go to college, take the core classes, and you’ll figure out the rest along the way. Oh, and make sure you dig yourself hundreds of thousands of dollars in debt while you figure it out. It’s not only normal, it’s necessary.

If you’re reading this right now, chances are you completely comprehend the idiocy of this mindset because you’re in and around the skilled trades.

You know, the skilled trades, that thing that you do if you’re not smart enough for college. What you can “fall back on” if you can’t cut it with formal education. What is commonly portrayed to the youth of the nation as a degrading, second-rate career.

Many in the trades may even feel this way about themselves. So much so that they don’t want their children in the trades, and they give the same advice that their parents gave to them.

Stop.

Let’s take a look around really quick. Take a look out the closest window. First of all, the window you’re on the inside of was made by a glazier; the house or office built by a construction worker. On the outside, what do you see? Maybe some trees planted by landscapers, roads paved by pavers, streetlights wired by electricians, power lines erected by power line technicians, cars serviced by mechanics, and the list goes on. You can’t throw a rock in this world without hitting something that was a result of the skilled trades. And yes, exhaust cleaning is included with that.

The problem is that we’re looking at it all wrong as a society. We turn up our nose at careers that require us to work with our hands, yet these are the careers that manufacture civilization as we know it.

Why?

Because we have a marketing problem. The trades have lost their swag. And it’s up to us to get it back.

Kids don’t want to pave roads, wire streetlights, build windows, or plant trees… Or do they?

Do they want to pave streets? Or do they want to connect people across cities, states, or even countries? Do they want to wire streetlights? Or do they want to illuminate the roads so people can chase their dreams, do their jobs, or just get home safely to their families every night?

Do they want to build windows? Or do they want to allow people the luxury of being able to look out into the world without be exposed to the harsh weather or elements?

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Blue is the New White, continued
Josh Zolin / Windy City Equipment Service & Fall Technical Meeting Keynote Speaker

Do they want to plant trees? Or do they want to build sceneries that inspire beauty, comfort, or peace? So you see, the perspective we have directly influences the value we place on these careers. Nothing I said above isn’t true. It’s how we appeal to the next generation that will determine if the professions in these industries live or die.

To say that what we do “matters” is a drastic understatement. To say it’s “necessary” doesn’t do it justice.

Our work influences every living generation on Earth. We are the creators that shape the world as it’s seen today. And we are the heroes that keep pushing the boundaries of civilization as we know it.

So, tell me again how these careers don’t fit society’s definition of success.

Josh Zolin is the CEO of Windy City Equipment Service, a 3x Inc 5000 fastest growing companies in America. He is also the author of the popular book Blue is the New White: The Best Path to Success that No One Told You About – Until Now. And host of the Blue is the New White podcast. He is also a proud husband, and father of two beautiful girls. ♦️
Top Reasons to be on LinkedIn and What You Need to Jumpstart Your Experience

Rich Perry / Richard A. Perry Coaching and Consulting

Did you know that LinkedIn is the world’s most respected professional networking platform? Right now, there are over 700 million professionals from every business area and at all employment levels who trust LinkedIn to develop their professional skills, learn industry news, and make valuable connections to further their career.

This article shares a few key reasons why you should be using LinkedIn for business opportunities and growth. But more than just being a registered user, it’s important to actively use the platform to experience all that it has to offer. That’s why I’m also going to share my best tips to help you jumpstart your experience.

Top Reasons to be on LinkedIn Today

#1 Platform for Fortune 500 Companies – Research by the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth showed that 98% of Fortune 500 companies currently use LinkedIn to share important news, feature branded stories, hire new talent, and grow their respective networks.

Best Platform for Connecting with Decision Makers – In 2019 LinkedIn reported that there were 90 million senior-level influencers using their platform for professional purposes. Of these, 63 million were decision makers and 17 million were opinion leaders.

Recruit Top Talent – LinkedIn reports that more than 30,000 companies use their platform to post job openings and recruit top talent. In any given month, over 3 million jobs are posted on LinkedIn making it a hot spot for career advancement or to find an exciting new opportunity. LinkedIn also reports that 40 million people use their platform each week to search for new employment opportunities and that three people are hired every minute because they used LinkedIn as a hiring tool.

Numbers Don’t Lie – The platform boasts a membership of over 774 million spanning more than 200 countries and territories around the world. LinkedIn is also home to 30 million companies who know the value of sharing industry news, insights, and information on the largest professional social media network.

Employees Advocate for You – LinkedIn reports that companies on their platform see about one third of their total engagement coming directly from their employees. They also find that employees are 14 times more likely to share the content posted by their employer than any other source.

Checklist to Jumpstart Your Experience

Whether you’re already on LinkedIn or it’s still at the top of your to-do list, here are a few key items to jumpstart your experience. We’ll go into greater detail and discuss ways to optimize your profile and activity in a later submission.

Professional Headshot – Use a professional looking headshot for your profile photo. Stay away from car selfies, images that require you to crop out other people, or random shots from the family picnic. LinkedIn is a social media platform that connects professionals. Your profile photo is the first thing someone sees when they find you, so you’ll want to make a great first impression. Connect with a local photographer and schedule a basic one-hour shoot. This will provide you with a few high-quality images that you can use on your social media channels, in marketing materials, and media interviews.

Rich’s Insider Tip: Many networking events even have photographers on location with a basic backdrop setup, or sometimes floating around the room, providing an opportunity for attendees to get professional headshots taken on the spot!

Highlight Relevant Details – One great thing about LinkedIn is that it allows you to focus on the details of your work experience. There are organized areas to write your summary (About Me section), featured work, job experience, education, licenses & certificates,
Top Reasons to be on LinkedIn and What You Need to Jumpstart Your Experience, *continued*

Rich Perry / Richard A. Perry Coaching and Consulting

Projects you’ve worked on, published work, honors & awards, organizations & community involvement, and so much more. You may have to carve out a decent chunk of time to list everything, but it will be well worth it.

Keep Profile Dynamic – Once you fill in all relevant areas noted above, remember to keep going back to update your profile whenever you reach new milestones, earn certificates or achievements, or advance in your career. Reject the idea that this profile is only an online resume. LinkedIn has the potential to be so much more than a static page. It should be a living extension of who you are as a professional.

Include Video & Audio – One powerful way to turn your LinkedIn profile into a dynamic extension of your professional career is to include video and audio elements. This could include video tutorials, presentations, speaking reels, interviews, podcast episodes, or livestreams.

Exchange Endorsements / Recommendations – Reach out to colleagues, collaborators, clients, and those who can vouch for your skills and accomplishments. Exchange endorsements for each other’s skills, as this will help offer social proof of your talents and abilities. You might also want to collect recommendations (testimonials) from clients and colleagues that would be happy to go the extra mile and sing your praises.

Share Valuable Information – Post industry news, top tips, insightful articles, employee achievements, and other information that is relevant and would be of interest to your network. Consistency in this area is one surefire way to position yourself as an industry leader.

Grow Your Network – Be proactive in connecting with leaders in your industry. Offer to stay in touch through LinkedIn the next time you attend a local networking event, seminar, or the annual IKECA meeting. You could add your profile URL to business cards and link your page to your website and other social media channels.

LinkedIn is much more than a digital version of your resume. It offers incredible opportunities for professional development and business growth. Use this checklist to jumpstart your experience and get the most out of what LinkedIn has to offer your business.

If you’d like to see a working model as you move through the checklist then connect with me on LinkedIn and use my profile as a visual aid. Search me by name or find me by typing the URL (CoachRichPerry) into the search bar. You could also go to my website www.RichPerry.com and tap the icons to connect with me across my favorite social channels. ♦
IKECA Exhibits Live at RFMA Conference in Charlotte, NC!

Thank you to all who hosted and attended the RFMA Conference in June! It was a pleasure meeting all who stopped by our booth.

“The time that Randy, Don, and Dennis took to educate me on all things hoods at RFMA is truly appreciated. Hood work is always done in the middle of the night, by hard working people I never see, leaving messages I often overlook, and frequently resulting in operational downtime at the worst possible times. I am specifically grateful for helping me to find a permanent solution for grease containment and preservation of my abused exhaust fans. Hoods have been a 30 year source of frustration for me that I hope to put behind me.”

— Geoff Stanisic, YC’s Mongolian Grill Restaurants
Hood Cleaning Service Vehicle

Features:
- Cab and body are separate. Benefits to this are no chemical/fuel odors in cab, a reduction of noise and safety in an accident.
- Motor and burner are installed on a slide so the unit is outside of the body while operating.
- Because of the slide, the motor and burner are more accessible, making them easier to service and re-fuel.
- No exhaust hole needed in the roof.
- Available with 3 bar ladder rack or two bar drop down ladder rack
- Vehicle Specs:
  - Transit T250 Single Rear Wheel Cab Chassis
  - GVW 9,000 lbs

Kitchen System Install/Service Mid Roof

Features:
- Mid Roof Van has 69.5” of interior height
- 10’ conduit storage compartment
- (3) 7’ pipe storage compartments
- Vehicle Specs:
  - Transit T250 Mid Roof Cargo Van
  - GVW 9,000 lbs
- Options Available:
  - T350 with 9,500 GVW
  - High Roof Available with 79” interior height
  - 40,000 BTU rear heater
  - Shelving, storage bins and tool boxes (shown)
  - Also available with dry chemical fill system and workbench
The economy is coming back. The phone is ringing, people are spending money and business is really good. Suddenly, it seems like everyone that had ever thought about having their exhaust systems cleaned suddenly wants you to do it…..yesterday! Sales are skyrocketing. There is only one problem: a serious shortage of qualified technicians. Unfortunately, the problem is throughout the entire trades industry, not just KEC.

If you were hoping for a silver bullet that would enable you to immediately hire as many techs as you need, I am afraid you are going to be a bit disappointed. There are no instant answers to the tech shortage but here are a few ideas that might just help attract a few extra techs in the not-too-distant future:

- **Techs are attracted to companies that reward performance.** Every employee needs a bit of a carrot in front of them to increase productivity. Likewise, all techs want YOU to know they are doing a good job. The solution is pretty simple: create a system that rewards performance. If they work a bit harder or more efficiently, award a bonus. You have probably heard this little tip before - “reward the performance you want repeated”. How does that help recruit new techs? Techs are looking for companies that both appreciate their work and provide rewards for outstanding performance.

- **Increasing your hourly rate may not be as costly as you think.** Several years ago I was doing some consulting for an HVAC company (principles are the same). Most companies in their area were paying techs $18.00 to $25.00 an hour. This particular company was paying $35.00 an hour! I asked how he could afford to do that. His reply surprised me a bit. The owner explained that paying the highest wages in the area not only attracted the best techs but those higher paid techs were more efficient,
seldom called in sick, grumbled less, had limited numbers of callbacks and were more respectful to management and customers. Turnover was down which also which minimized the need and expense for training. Simply having a workforce he could count on more than made up for the extra dollars he was paying. Make sense? I think it does.

- **Where is the best pool of potential techs located?**
  Let's face it, not everyone excelled in high school. I, for one, did not wake up to the fact that I was going to have to make a living one day until I was in the middle of my junior year. Guess what, there are a lot of quality individuals that woke up late, too. Where are they? Believe it or not, many are in the retail or food industry or perhaps at Walmart.

  I'm sure you have been in a situation where you walked into a store and were immediately impressed by an employee. They were friendly, helpful and respectful. When I or my wife run into an individual like that, we always turn to each other and say, “I'll bet that person is not here next time we come!” Why? Because others will notice their work ethic and attitude and will offer them a job.

  When you run into an individual that impresses you, hand them a business card and tell them how much you appreciate their attitude. Tell them if they ever consider changing careers to give you a call. I have had contractors tell me they have done that and they received calls months, sometimes years, later. The principle is simple: hire for attitude and train for service. Finding new techs in today's market is a 24/7/365 job.

- **Is your company a great place to work?** Family is special. I am guessing that when you were growing up you had at least one special friend and that you wanted to spend as much time at their house as you could. Why? Because you felt loved and accepted. How many times have you heard someone say the place where they work is like being part of a family? Family works hard together, relaxes together, meets each other's needs and is willing to lay down their lives for other members. Really great families are hard to find, but when you do find one it’s really, really special. It's a group you want to be part of for a very long time.

  That leaves us with a question. Are you a good company to work for? Is there a family environment? Do employees want to be there? Family environments attract others that want to be part of it as well. When you found that special family when you were young, I am betting it wasn’t long before other kids in your neighborhood ended up spending time at the home as well. A true family environment attracts employees who want to be part of the family as well.

  Rewarding outstanding performance, paying above industry wages and benefits, being around others with great attitudes recognizing and creating a family environment may not instantly guarantee new employees. However, doing these things will attract new employees over time and I would be willing to bet most will stay for an extended time. Remember, happy employees tell their friends who just might want to work there as well.

  *Tom Grandy has over 50 years of experience in industry and small business. He has worked as the General Manager of a service company, was Regional Director of Company Development for the DIAL ONE franchise and is the Founder of Grandy & Associates.*

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What Does “Certified” Mean in The Kitchen Exhaust Industry?

Christine Wilks / IKECA Director of Certifications and Standards

IKECA Certifications give kitchen exhaust professionals an edge in this highly competitive business. Our certifications set the industry standard of knowledge and increase worker professionalism in the field. An IKECA certification next to your name shows a dedication to success, helps increase your potential for a better salary, and provides recognition throughout the kitchen exhaust industry.

More jurisdictions and facility managers than ever are requiring certification for job bids in their area. Now is the time to show your customers that you are one of the best in the industry and take advantage of one of the most powerful member benefits IKECA has to offer.

IKECA offers three internationally recognized certifications, which demonstrate a high level of knowledge of the codes and standards pertinent to the industry:

Certified Exhaust Cleaning Technician (CECT): The CECT is the start of the crew members’ career in being certified in the kitchen exhaust cleaning industry - the baseline certification for individuals. It is designed for crew members operating under the supervision of a Certified Exhaust Cleaning Specialist (CECS). A technician with the CECT certification has demonstrated knowledge of the NFPA 96, OSHA Health & Safety Standards, and International Fire and Mechanical Codes. At a cost less than the CECS, the CECT is useful for those kitchen exhaust cleaners who operate in jurisdictions requiring a baseline certification. Make it a goal to have each crew member on your truck certified, starting with the CECT.

Certified Exhaust Cleaning Specialist (CECS): This is the next level of individual certification. It is designed for the experienced and knowledgeable individual who leads others on their crew. Every active Member of IKECA must have at least one employee certified as a CECS level or higher. This certification represents proficiency in the ANSI/IKECA C-10 Standard, NFPA 96, and International Fire and Mechanical Codes, as well as OSHA Standards for Hazardous Communication, Personal Protective Equipment, Control of Hazardous Energy, and more.

Certified Exhaust System Inspector (CESI): This certification is designed primarily for individuals whose job it is to investigate and report on the cleanliness condition of commercial cooking and ventilating systems.

What Is the Difference Between “Trained” and “Certified”?

The terms trained and certified might seem interchangeable at first glance, but they actually refer to two different types of qualification, each with its own benefits.

If someone has been trained, that means they know the process of cleaning. They have gone through on-the-job training where they have real-world experience working on exhaust systems. Individuals who take the additional steps to go through a training program should have a working knowledge of how to clean and inspect a variety of systems using a variety of methods. However, someone who is certified also knows the reasons behind the cleaning process. They have passed a test demonstrating that they have working knowledge and they have competency on the guidelines, codes and standards in the industry. Certification is knowledge-based recognition. In other words, they’ve studied the industry’s codes and standards and he/she has proven that they know them inside and out.

Who in the Company Is Required to Hold the Certification?

To retain IKECA membership, only one person within a company must hold a CECS or CESI level of certification. Other employees are not required to have any certification. They may be trained, but they are not necessarily certified. It pays to be aware of this distinction.

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Don’t Miss In *This Issue*

**What Does “Certified” Mean in The Kitchen Exhaust Industry?, continued**

Christine Wilks / IKECA Director of Certifications and Standards

How Does Your Company, Employees and Customers Benefit from Certification?

Certification is an investment in your business that increases retention and helps empower your staff in many ways, including:

- Recruiting and retaining trained, qualified and certified employees
- Satisfying the requirements of the local authority having jurisdiction
- Carving a market differentiator based on IKECA certification
- Attracting more customers
- Certification holders benefit from:
  - Increased recognition by peers and respect of colleagues in the profession
  - Improved opportunities for employability and advancement
  - Greater confidence in their professional competence
  - Increased professional trust from employers or the public
  - Increased autonomy in the workplace
  - Better compensation and career longevity

Customers benefit from:

- Objective, independent, third-party evaluation and assessment of professional competence
- Commitment to safety
- Accountability through ethical conduct standards
- Recertification requirements for continued or enhanced competence

Neither training nor certification guarantees that any company or individual will do a good job. Some organizations offer “certification for life” and others let candidates take open book exams. IKECA’s programs are different. We believe that individuals should continue their education well beyond the exam, and that those that we certify, uphold the most rigid Code of Conduct in the industry.

IKECA encourages everyone in the KEC industry to get their certification. For more information, go to the website www.ikeca.org/certification and email info@ikeca.org.
Volunteering... Time Well Spent
Randy Conforti, CECS, CESI / Precision Kleen, Inc.

What is a volunteer? According to Merriam-Webster, it is “a person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to undertake a service.”

IKECA is a non-profit association, and its board of directors and committees are made up of passionate individuals coming together, sharing ideas, working out problems, and guiding the association as one. One of the most common requests of the association is to volunteer. All the work that is performed by the association – from the board of directors to all the subcommittees – is done by volunteers.

What are the benefits of volunteering? There are many! First, you'll give back to your association by sharing your expertise with your fellow committee or board members, and be involved with the oversight of board policies and procedures. Second, you'll work closely with industry professionals and leaders, both educating and learning from them. You'll join others in working toward significant changes in our industry and furthering the advancement of our association. Third, and most important of all, you'll share in the mission of protecting life and preventing fires...Without your volunteerism, the current tasks we are working on become a heavier lift and the time to get our great work completed for the membership takes longer to become reality... and the industry benefits at a slower pace.

Volunteering is a commitment to offering your time. On a committee level, the time commitment is minimal: one hour, once a month (or less!) for the committee call, and then a small amount of time outside the meetings, working on action items. Both are nominal amounts away from work or family.

The Board of Directors level may take 1 to 1-1/2 hours a month, with meetings held several times a year. Depending on your level of involvement and level of passion, you can elect to contribute more! Your position is valued and only you know how much you can give.

The last year and half has become so challenging for all of us to operate, manage and work in our businesses - I get it! I'm living through all the same challenges and pains. Every minute I spend working on anything IKECA-related allows me to share my knowledge, experience and passions... to fulfill a commitment I made to those who asked me to participate and be involved. I offer the utmost respect to all of those who volunteered before me and promise to keep this great IKECA thing moving forward for the decades to come.

Within the last year, the calls and emails your board and management team have responded to are based upon members who do not understand the undertaking of managing, maintaining and developing an evolving association. When we ask you, the membership, “Do you understand what it takes to move the association forward?”, more often than not, the response is, “I don’t know” When you volunteer and become involved, you have the ability to support the work and decision making and share in the forward progress of this association.

To those who volunteered before me and for those who are currently volunteering: you are so generous for giving your valued and precious time. I’m saying a heart-filled THANK YOU! I appreciate what you have given, what you have contributed and what you continue to share. I know what it takes and we are all better for it.

It is time well spent. ♦
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