

The Lehigh Way

The Technology Issue

New drone offers customers a higher perspective.



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Welcome to *The Lehigh Way*.

This issue of *The Lehigh Way* is our “Technology Issue” and features some of the ways that Lehigh is taking advantage of new technologies to benefit our customers and employees. While much of the information and overall content remains the same, the delivery systems and efficiencies that technology offers help to provide a better overall experience.

Committing to safety is a Lehigh core value. Providing pertinent OSHA credentials, SDS information, supplier training certifications, and customer specific training records is an everyday requirement. The first article chronicles the creation of a Lehigh identification badge and electronic credentials card, and details how a cross-functional team was able to combine binders with reams of information and convert them into a format easily accessible to clients.

I hope you will enjoy an article on the benefits our new in-house drone capability. While Lehigh has always documented jobs with beautiful photography, the new high resolution aerial video abilities bring customers to a higher level of understanding, collaboration and inclusion throughout the construction process.

The third article highlights the changing of the guard in our OSHA Alliance. Tom from Lehigh and Gordy from OSHA are moving into retirement and their two new counterparts are taking up the mantle of this ground-breaking program. We look forward to the future but are grateful to these gentlemen who helped more than 10,000 of the young and inexperienced seeking careers in construction.

Our Ask the Expert segment features the Director of IT at Lehigh, Bob Metzger. Bob talks about the ever-changing landscape of the cybersecurity arena, as well as the challenges that he faces with his many clients. Protecting critical information systems is especially important for small businesses that may not have the resources or time to keep an eye on the latest threats. Lehigh IT can help.

As we head into spring, keep in mind that the Lehigh PRO crew is already scheduling building maintenance and facility repairs from winter damage. Please don't hesitate to give us a call.

As always, I appreciate your feedback and suggestions on how we can improve this magazine.

David E. Knauss

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'D. Knauss'.

President

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Lehigh's Safety Program Goes Digital

SVI Card Offers Customers Credential Transparency

by Samantha Brown

Lehigh Construction Group has long valued safety and efficiency — from construction, maintenance and repair services to building maintenance and emergency response. And as with any established company, it's normal for policies and procedures to be updated every now and then.

While the proverb “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it” certainly applies here, a team of Lehigh employees took the initiative to develop the Lehigh Scan, Verify and Inform (SVI) card, a new-and-improved online system for housing employee information. Prior to the rollout of the card, Lehigh construction crews used to carry

two three-ring binders of safety manuals, SDS information, forms and safety data along with them to the job site.

“Every time we hired a new employee, we had to print the information to go into the manuals,” explained Human Resources and Administrative

Manager Josie Stockweather. “They were given these binders to keep with them on job sites to be able to access for their own reference or for customers to review.”

The procedure was functional but needed to be streamlined. According to PRO Operations Manager Jim

Drzewiecki, the binders were difficult to keep track of.

“It was cumbersome,” he said. “You had to keep all of this information in — in a backpack. When you needed it, it wasn’t always quickly accessible to find the required information quickly.”

Lehigh employees imagined a better, more accessible and updatable system that could house all the data — small enough to fit in staff members’ pockets and ultimately serve customer and employee needs better. So, in August 2019, a team of Stockweather, Drzewiecki, IT Manager Bob Metzger, and Marketing and Communications Director Doug Eberhardt formed to develop the SVI card. The idea was to use Lehigh’s current online communication tool and assign each employee a quick response (QR) barcode that hosted their credentials and pertinent business data.

The idea for the web-based tracking system, designed to access employee credentials and offer customers transparency, formed when

“It really was a team effort. Jimmy saw a need and envisioned an idea, Josie had all the records and raw material information, Bob mapped it, we put it all onto a card and then ... Bob and I went through and did the training on it.”

—Doug Eberhardt, Marketing and Communications Director

Lehigh was working at Tesla, which required a card that said they were certified to run certain equipment. “Everywhere you go, they want ID now,” said Metzger. “So, we figured we’d combine the safety handbook, SDS information, the employee handbook, common forms needed by crew members, training records, and the ID photo and information into the online system, create a QR scannable barcode ID, put all your credentials on it and they can scan it.” Metzger shared that Drzewiecki posed the simple question that got the ball rolling: “Can we do this?”

From there the pair mapped out a diagram of the way they thought it should look, while Metzger developed a framework for it on the internal company website. Within hours the

project was greenlit — it was just too good of an idea. Eberhardt joined the effort, coordinating employee contact information into a database, printing the credit-card sized ID cards and combining the QR codes with headshots of each employee. Then Stockweather updated the employee information, handbook, SDS detail, forms and manuals. She updated a master spreadsheet that had all of the employee data and passed that along to Metzger, who later imported the data onto the server.

To make the concept work, Metzger expanded the existing Lehigh Communications Center, a system designed for communicating with employees and subcontractors, and eventually generated barcodes unique to each Lehigh employee. When you



The new system was streamlined to act as an ID with a photo and incorporated up-to-date customer approvals, trainings and updated hazardous material documentation, and was easy for employees to have on-site and on-person at all times.

Source: Lehigh Construction Group

scan an employee's QR card it directs you to that employee's information, all on one easy-to-read page.

After a few months, the system and cards were finished and distributed to employees. Then, Metzger and Eberhardt took over to train employees on how to use the SVI card and navigate the interface, and to direct employees on how to share information with customers.

Customers, employees and Lehigh business partners can now scan the SVI card with a smartphone camera and gain instant access to safety manuals, training certificates — like safety and training information — and so much more. The speed and transparency this new system offers to customers is invaluable, the SVI development team said.

Some of the most common certifications are for all field employees to obtain the OSHA 30 hour certification, with the Field Operations Team (FOT) on staff certified in OSHA 500, and one completing the 510 course. When asked, employees need to be able to show customers their credentials. Before the SVI card, multiple steps were involved. Now, with all of the consolidated information living in one place, any issues, concerns or questions are solved instantaneously. Training records and individual customer safety course completions are updated in real time.

"I was on a job site with a couple of different contractors and I showed them the SVI card," Jon Wilcox, service manager, recalled. "It just blew their mind. They were very impressed with it and wanted to do something similar where they could take their phone, scan it, see everything that we have for training and get everything resolved immediately."

Lehigh staff can also send requested documents from the SVI card, cutting out human resources' role and responding to customers more quickly in the process. The new process helps mitigate any risk for delays on the job site and is a relief for all involved.

"It's definitely easier now to pull something up instead of going to the spreadsheet to see where that was," echoed Stockweather. "To have everything on the card is easier."

The SVI card can even tell you which tools a staff member has with them at the job site, and CPR and first-aid training is visible on each employee's card as well.

Lehigh, which has always held safety as a Core Value, has a simple philosophy: to send everyone home safely to their families every day. "Safety is paramount for us," Eberhardt said, "and I think it's been over 1.3 million hours without a lost time accident, and even before that we had another time when it was over 1.8 million.

So, having the CPR and the first aid there, and having the forms available for the people right on-site, is especially important."

The old procedure, while functional, had room for dramatic improvement, and the technological advancements were welcome. With Lehigh staff, customers and partners all praising the innovation and initiative, it serves as a reminder that challenging a cross-functional team with a common vision and embracing new concepts with technology can create an innovative solution that benefits the customer.

LEHIGH SVI CARDS OFFER:

- OSHA certifications (10-, 30-, 500- and 510-hour) as well as individual certifications
- Safety training – aerial lift training, silica review/rigging and handling, how to handle an OSHA inspection, etc.
- Individual customer orientation training
- CPR and first aid
- Employee handbook and training manuals
- Respirator fit and test certification
- Toolkit visibility

Source: Lehigh Construction Group

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Cutting-Edge DRONE TECHNOLOGY

Lehigh Offers New Technology to Provide Customers with a New Perspective

by Kelsey Castaneda

Lehigh Construction always aims to utilize the latest technology in order to provide a top-of-the-line, safe building experience for customers. About a year ago, Lehigh purchased an Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS), or what is commonly referred to as a drone, to take customer service to a higher level.

“Lehigh Construction Group has always had a strong customer focus, and the drone effort came about with Dave Knauss thinking about ways to embrace new technology to showcase our work for customers,” said Lehigh's Marketing and Communications Director Doug Eberhardt.

According to Eberhardt, the drone has proven exceptionally helpful for the Lehigh team in many ways — reviewing job sites, chronicling job progress, documenting subcontractors, reviewing problems and, of course, showcasing progress at job sites to customers.

Drone Piloting

While the team knew that drone technology would help them to take

advantage of new photography capabilities and provide unique perspectives of their construction projects, the path from purchasing a drone to offering drone technology to customers ended up having a few more steps than one might expect.

While anyone can go to a retail store and purchase a drone, how one intends to use a drone determines the steps they need to take before their first flight. In order to be used for commercial purposes, UAS technology requires certification, insurance and training to ensure it is used safely and properly.

According to Eberhardt, there are two types of uses for drones that are acceptable by the Federal Aviation

Administration (FAA). “The first use is as a recreational flyer. Anyone who gets a drone as a present and uses it for fun occasionally is a recreational flyer,” Eberhardt said.

On the other hand, “any person who uses a drone under 55 pounds in pursuit of commercial activities (whether paid or not) must apply for a Certified Remote Pilot Commercial Operator license [according to FAA's] Part 107 guidelines,” said Eberhardt. This means that any person flying a drone for any commercial activity, such as using it to photograph a construction project in real time as Lehigh does, must acquire this license. Step-by-step guidelines on how to become a licensed Certified Remote Pilot can be found on the FAA website.



Although Eberhardt did not anticipate that he would ever add “pilot” to his resume, he noted that the certification process was fairly intensive and required passing an FAA-approved knowledge test.

Hazards and Safety of Drone Flying

If using a drone for commercial use, there is still plenty to consider — even after becoming a certified pilot — before flying the UAS. There are many hazards and safety practices to keep in mind with drone flying, which is something Lehigh takes very seriously.

Eberhardt explained that one of the most common safety issues with drone use is bird strikes — a hazard for both drones and birds. “High wind gusts and pressure changes can be problematic, too. The UAV [unmanned aerial vehicle] relies on satellites for GPS location tracking, so if there is a glitch with the firmware that runs the unit, or you lose communication with the controller, fly-aways can be catastrophic,” Eberhardt explained.

Choosing a Drone Model

When using their UAV on projects, Lehigh takes all these factors — wind, pressure and birds — into consideration to ensure all of their flights are as safe as possible. These safety concerns made choosing the perfect drone model even more important for the team. When choosing the drone model for Lehigh, Eberhardt wanted to be sure that the UAV would not only provide an excellent camera for outstanding still and video footage, but would also be a durable and safe investment for his team.

“I did a lot of research and ended up choosing our quadcopter, which has been an excellent choice. It has outstanding resolution and provides detail for up to miles,” just what the Lehigh team needed, Eberhardt said.

Check out some of Lehigh’s drone footage, such as a project for the Girl Scouts, on their YouTube channel, www.youtube.com/channel/UChe-5LLezawOCY5jzXmihA/featured.



“This drone has an automated RTH (return to home) feature that will sense battery levels, load, wind shear and other factors, and bring the unit back to its starting point in the event of failure,” Eberhardt explained.

Additionally, this particular model has a powerful, 1-inch CMOS sensor, allowing it to capture high resolution images. Additional features like adjustable lenses and internal storage make this device a top-of-the-line UAV product, and Lehigh is proud to offer these capabilities to customers.

Drone Insurance and Lehigh’s UAV Safety Policies

In addition to obtaining appropriate license and registration for a UAV, Lehigh chose to obtain commercial drone insurance to protect customer personnel, property and facilities, as well as the drone and pilot.

Though rare, flying an object the size of a drone can result in property damage or personal injury — especially when turbulent weather hits, making a

drone more difficult to control. Commercial drone insurance policies will vary by provider, but most policies will include personal/public liability coverage. Although drone usage is not covered under most standard policies or homeowners’ policies, the majority of insurance companies and brokers will offer drone coverage at an additional cost.

As safety is of the highest priority at Lehigh, the Lehigh team spared no expense to ensure their drone usage is as safe as possible.

“Lehigh is an extremely safety-conscious company, and we have taken out an appropriate insurance policy to protect customers and Lehigh,” said Eberhardt.

Lehigh isn’t stopping the safety precautions with insurance, though. The team takes this new technology and its possible safety hazards seriously and even created their own set of company safety policies and procedures for drone use.



“As this is new territory for us, we have created a log for tracking flights, and a checklist for basic maintenance and operating procedures. I put together a checklist before each mission to make sure the weather is feasible, the drone is in good, serviceable flying condition, the batteries are charged, and I am fit for flight,” said Eberhardt.

“Flying in areas near airports or other controlled spaces often requires specific licensing from the FAA detailing the flight time, location, time of day, length of mission and other variables. I am required to be able to be reached by the FAA during flight in the event of emergencies and need to land at any time if conditions become unstable or unsafe. Also, specific Notice to Airmen (NOTAMs), and other aviation related warnings need to be checked prior to flying in specific spaces,” Eberhardt said.

Some examples of other flying restrictions include:

- Flying near stadiums is prohibited during games.



- Flying in an area that the U.S. president is visiting is prohibited during blocked out time periods, as there are temporary restrictions upon that airspace.
- Flying during an air show or parachute demonstration is prohibited — times are blocked off for no flight.
- Flying in military air space, such as installations or bases, is always and absolutely restricted.

Taking Customer Service to the Next Level

Ultimately, as is true with everything that Lehigh does, the team’s drone technology is a benefit for customers and something that was implemented specifically to add more services for customers.

“The drone is truly all about the customer, and showing them a more complete picture of progress or problems allows all parties to be on the same page versus a written report that people may not read or understand in the same way as the writer intended,” said Eberhardt.

For example, let’s say that a customer needs to be informed of an issue with a roof. Customers would not easily or safely be able to get onto the roof to see this problem firsthand. While you can explain the problem to the customer in conversation, not being able to see the issue puts the customer at a disadvantage. With drone technology, though, real-time capturing of close-up stills and video footage of the damage is possible, making the situation transparent for the customers. As the damage is repaired, the customer can be shown footage of the progress, ensuring them that they are involved and up to speed on the project.

Because drones fly, they provide visual perspectives and video that typical ground-based photography would never be able to capture.

“Much of the footage we’ve taken already gives such a bigger view than traditional photography. Buildings that are downtown or in a tight spot become much more viewable from the air. Being able to review roofing problems or wall damage in tall buildings has proven indispensable and helped lead to new business at nursing facilities where mortar on 10-story external stairways had allowed water ingress over years and was easily noticeable with the up-close additional drone perspective.

“The UAV has been a wonderful tool for viewing sitework over time and has been a great recordkeeping tool for showing customers who might not otherwise visit a remote site easily or often. We have been able to track work by subcontractors to help speed up jobs. We’ve also used the drone on-site to assist with our own yard expansion, mapping out plans and keeping a record of progress,” said Eberhardt.

For Lehigh, the perspective and flexibility their UAV offers their customers and the team is invaluable. With drone technology, Lehigh will, quite literally, continue to go above and beyond for customers.

Sources

www.faa.gov

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A Passing of the Lehigh-OSHA Alliance Torch

Farewell to Two Valued Friends

by McKenzie Nalley

Safety has always been one of Lehigh Construction Group's fundamental values. At the core of the company's philosophy is the tenet that everybody goes home safely at the end of each day. As Tom Glomb, Lehigh's former co-owner, put it, "We never cared what it was going to cost, because we never wanted to make that phone call" — "that phone call" referring, of course, to the tragic call that must be made to an employee's loved ones after a workplace accident has occurred.

Right from the start, safety was paramount, and now after nearly 20 years in an education alliance with OSHA — one that's been incredibly fruitful for a private company, a government organization and an industry at-large — it's hard to imagine anything but Lehigh and safety being so perfectly intertwined. That union, and the alliance that embodies and sustains it, is largely thanks to two men: Glomb and his decades long partner in the alliance, Gordon DeLeys of OSHA. These two men were passionate about protecting the people around them and ensuring that everybody always went home safe. Their drive created the alliance and allowed it to reach so many people, making it a shining example among workforce education programs.

Both men have recently retired, and both have recently handed the reins down to their successors. Though the alliance will continue, Glomb and DeLeys' tenure with the program was certainly an era, something that will surely be looked back upon as a foundational golden age.

"Throughout the past several years of the Alliance Lehigh Construction group has met and exceeded OSHA's expectations for outreach to the trade and skill students by establishing a strong safety and health foundation entering their career paths. OSHA looks forward to continuing this cooperative outreach educational partnership with Lehigh Construction Group."

-Nick Donofrio, Compliance Assistance Specialist, New York Regional Office

The alliance began in 2003, though its seeds, the deep passion for safety that Glomb felt he owed Lehigh's employees, predated it. "After we decided to start a company, I started thinking about my responsibility," he said. "As soon as you hire somebody, you change their life. ... They're under my watch now." Lehigh began by attending OSHA safety presentations, which was how Glomb first met DeLeys and many of Lehigh's other contacts at OSHA. OSHA then suggested that they partner with Lehigh in an alliance. As DeLeys said, "A lot of people don't realize that OSHA is more than just an enforcement agency. When we can use folks like Lehigh to be safety ambassadors, that accomplishes OSHA's mission. And folks are hearing it from field people, not just some bureaucrat in Washington. So Tom did a stellar job when it came to that." This evolved into the strength of the alliance presentations, where attendees were given the two perspectives — a government representative and an industry practitioner — effectively hearing both sides of the story.

From the beginning of the program, the goal was to educate the young, the inex-

perienced and the underserved, which led to Glomb and DeLeys giving seminars to numerous high schools, colleges and minority construction programs. And while that still remains the primary goal of the program, over time the scope broadened so that it was able to provide more and better resources for attendees. Initially the program was an awareness clinic: Glomb and DeLeys would spend two hours emphasizing the importance of safety on the job site. However, as they had successes, the program began to take off. "It evolved to the point where some of the instructors or teachers in these programs ended up getting their certifications to be able to be trainers," Glomb said. "Then instead of having a two-hour awareness session, it evolved into getting these students 10-hour and 30-hour certifications. We weren't going for two hours anymore — we're going there for two days, and instead of a student walking away and getting a brief understanding, he ended up having his OSHA card."

The classes became a way to reach more than just the students who attended them, and they became a way to do more for the students than just

teach them about safety. The classes, as they evolved away from their original two-hour seminars, became a way to organically spread a culture of safety in whole communities. As DeLeys said, “We would tell the instructors, ‘The first time it’s on us: We’ll do the presentation. The next time, bring in the principals and administrators, and have them sit through it.’ They become safety ambassadors for us, and we’re growing safety responsibly.”

That, Glomb and DeLeys said, was one of the most satisfying aspects of the program: being able to connect with people on a real level and knowing that they’ve been given something truly valuable. For Glomb, one memorable presentation involved the Seneca Nation, which comprised not only students, but also many older members of the community: “They would really come up and sincerely shake your hand and tell you thanks. It goes a long way when somebody is not just shaking your hand because you’re the instructor, but they come up and ask you particulars. You felt more fulfilled.”

In addition, the programs did more than just give students the basics of safety, like explaining harnesses and regulations; they became a way to give students a framework that they could then apply to their whole careers. “We covered a lot of things outside of the box,” Glomb said. “We try to give them an awareness of what their rights as an employee would be and what an employer’s rights are, but we told them never be afraid to not do something because you’re not sure about it. You have that right to question somebody. And one of my parting shots would always be, ‘When you sit down for a job interview, the first thing you should ask is what their safety program is like, and if the employer doesn’t have a good answer, get up and leave.’” Glomb even

recounted a story where a former program attendee sent him an anonymous letter: “He was asked to go down into an excavation, and he declined and got in trouble. And later the excavation caved in, but with nobody in it.” However, letters like that, from former attendees, were more the exception than the rule, which in this line of work is actually a good thing. As DeLeys said, “We would never know if we saved somebody’s life.” You never find out about the accident that didn’t happen. Like the phone call you never want to make, it’s the story you never want to hear that matters.

Much of the success of the program came from the dynamic partnership that Glomb and DeLeys shared. While they began as just business partners, over the course of the alliance’s 17 years, they became close friends and developed a knack for learning to read crowds and play to each other’s strengths. “Gordy and I would tag team,” Glomb said. “He’d interrupt (well, most of time I interrupted him) with things on the fly.” And to deal with troublesome groups, they used what DeLeys called their “good cop, bad cop” routine. When it was apparent that a class was going to be a problem, Glomb would “wear [his] nasty, contractor, bad guy hat and light them up.” Once a student had to be thrown out of a class for his disruptions. “It turned out the next year he transferred to a different school,” Glomb said, chuckling. “The first thing he did was he came up to me and said, ‘Hey, you remember me? You threw me out.’ ‘Well if you do it again,’ I said, ‘you’re gonna get thrown out today too.’”

Connecting to the crowds on an emotional level, rather than providing rote facts about safety, was crucial to the program’s success. Asking students to raise their hands if they knew someone their age who’d passed away, to breakdown their “16-year-old Superman mentality,” as Glomb called it; asking them to imagine their parents having to come to identify them after an accident; asking them to consider safety equipment in their personal lives, when hunting for example — all of these provided ways to make safety personally important to them. And it’s an approach that could have only come from Glomb and DeLeys, for both of whom safety is a very personal thing, not just one for bureaucracy and litigation.

“Tom and Gordy gave us a great foundation to build on in the future, and Nick and I are looking to impact many more people.”

**-Jim Drzewiecki,
PRO Operations Manager.**

That’s one of the things that troubles both of them about safety today: the focus on litigation, the endless cycle of lawyers and employees seeking retribution, and lawyers and companies “covering their rear ends,” as they put it. While it’s all necessary, it’s better for a company, they said, to invest the time into safety because it cares about its employees being safe. Glomb mentioned companies who’ve had safety problems become discouraged from implementing change by the associated costs, only to then have more problems later down the road because they did nothing. “It costs,” he said. “They’re looking for a silver bullet, and there isn’t one. But safety matters.”

And the alliance created by OSHA and Lehigh matters too. Over its nearly two decades, it’s reached more than 10,000 people, although even that number is certainly a low estimate, as it was calculated some years ago and only includes the people reached directly by the program, not including those who were influenced and later taught by people who finished their classes with teaching certifications. According to DeLeys, the program even constituted a surprising success for OSHA: “When we do an enforcement inspection, we’re impacting one employer. But with cooperative programs and the alliance, with one presentation we can reach hundreds of people.”

So now, after 17 years, it comes to the passing of the torch. New partners Jim Drzewiecki from Lehigh and Nick Donofrio from OSHA will continue the tradition of safety collaboration. The alliance won’t be the same — it’s hard to imagine anyone coming close to this duo, who are leaving behind some truly gargantuan shoes to fill — but its success will undoubtedly continue. Asked if there was any advice for their successors, Glomb said, “We built the foundation, they just have to run with it. I just want to see it flourish.” Because for Glomb and DeLeys, safety matters. It’s from the heart.





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Ask the Expert:

Robert Metzger

Director of Lehigh Information Technologies

Lehigh IT was started in 2000 to manage the growing technology needs of Lehigh's business systems and employees. A natural extension of this expertise was to make it available to associated companies that shared a similar need from a trusted partner. Bob holds numerous industry technology certifications, including MCSE+I, A+, Network+, i-Net+, CCNA and CCDA.

Q: Bob, you have been overseeing the Lehigh IT division for more than 20 years. How did you get started?

A: Lehigh IT started out as a concept by Dave Knauss. The idea was simple. As a general contractor, Lehigh relies as much on its own employees as they do their partners and subcontractors. The more efficient the communication between the subcontractors and Lehigh, the better the job outcome. Dave's idea was to offer the services of Lehigh IT to its subcontractors to make this coordination more streamlined for all parties involved. Even the smallest companies Lehigh works with seem to appreciate the help of our professional consulting services.

Q: What services do you currently offer?

A: Besides our ongoing consulting and administration services, we offer full "from the ground up" network planning as well as all Microsoft Enterprise Corporate solutions such as Microsoft Exchange Server and Microsoft SQL Server. We also have a full range of equipment purchasing options from our partners.

Q: What are some of the biggest challenges for your customers today?

A: A lot of smaller companies I've had experience with have struggled with trying to maintain everything on their own. While it is certainly possible to some extent, you really need a professional consultant to monitor and administrate your network.

Education is another key issue especially when it comes to security.

Being on top of the latest cybersecurity threats is not something that say an accountant would research on a regular basis.

Q: Cybersecurity has changed dramatically. What are some of the things you are currently doing at Lehigh?

A: For years we have relied on some of the same technology to keep us safe like our email filtering (Vipre Email Security) and our on-premises antivirus solution (Malwarebytes Antimalware), but just recently we have evolved to include two-factor authentication for remote logins and office computer access. Our next step is our education initiative designed to keep everyone informed and vigilant.

Q: Do you offer a custom approach for each customer? Are all customers equal?

A: When it comes to IT and infrastructure, all companies are generally the same. It is what they do with the technology that makes them different. For example, even though an architect firm and a CPA firm might require the same workstations, servers, etc., they rely on different proprietary software to help them do business. In that sense every company is different because their software needs are different.

Q: Improvements in IT technology

A: It's funny because back in the day when hardware was slow and expensive, it was the software and operating systems that were way ahead of their time. In the past

decade manufacturing techniques have become more efficient and robust. Nowadays it's not unusual to see a computer still in operation after 10 years if it is maintained properly. In the past, any computer over 5 years old was considered outdated technology.

Internet broadband has also become considerably faster and more reliable. In my wildest predictions I would have never dreamed 10 years ago that a 1Gbps internet connection would be available and affordable.

Q: It seems like Zoom and MS Teams have taken off with the pandemic. Will that continue as things return to normal? What will be the next hot thing?

A: I believe remote technology is here to stay. Now that companies have been forced to invest in remote technology, they are just now seeing the benefits and how it has changed their day-to-day workflow. Working from home I predict will be the next big trend. While it was not the norm in the past, I think you will see more and more companies hiring people that will never step foot inside a corporate office.

Q: How can people get in touch with you? What is your preferred method of communication?

A: I work with clients on whatever form of communication is convenient for them, be it cell phone, text messages, voice-mail, but my preferred method is email rmetzger@lehighone.com.

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