

August 2016 | [commercialintegrator.com](http://commercialintegrator.com)

# Commercial INTEGRATOR

THE BUSINESS HANDBOOK FOR TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS



**Top integration firms earn vote of confidence  
when their customers need tech guidance most. PAGE 28**

**SPECIAL SECTION:  
COMPLEMENTARY  
SELLING – FURNITURE  
& TECHNOLOGY**

PAGE 47

**5 STORIES OF FAILING  
INTEGRATION FIRMS  
BY CHUCK WILSON**

PAGE 24

# MEET THE 2016 CI INDUSTRY LEADERS

CI recognizes the top integrators serving 11 key vertical markets and analyzes what keeps them at the top of their games. **By CI editors**

---

**ONE THING WE**, the editors of *Commercial Integrator*, have learned in our never-ending quest to understand what makes a successful integration firm is that it's impossible to understand what makes a successful integration firm. There are no two firms alike. There are no two customers alike.

That, in a nutshell, is what makes the annual CI Industry Leaders our most satisfying editorial project of the year. At the core, it's based on the premise that apples-to-apples comparisons aren't possible in the integration industry. A firm that is successful serving hotel customers doesn't necessarily have much in common with a firm that kills it in the museum market. So our market-by-market CI Industry Leaders lists pay tribute to firms that completely understand their target customers and have built firms (or segments of their firms) that cater to their unique needs. Meanwhile, in 2016 these industry-leading firms are adapting to how their customers' and markets' demands are changing rapidly.

There are few firms like AVI-SPL and Whitlock, which have managed to build infrastructure and expertise to serve customers across almost every vertical market. Most firms are more like Denmark-based Stouenborg, which is overwhelmingly focused on museum customers — and extremely good at it.

As usual, we provide line-by-line data points on all of the 45 integration firms that participated in our 2016 CI Industry Leaders analysis. We complement the statistical coverage with input from the firms deemed worthy of being followed.

While we'll never attain that goal to identify a formula that leads to success in a particular market, it's easy to note that these 45 firms are customer-focused and take great pride in their processes. The other commonality: We can all learn a lot from them.

Find more 2016 CI Industry Leaders coverage on [CommercialIntegrator.com](http://CommercialIntegrator.com).

# TOP 20 CORPORATE MARKET INTEGRATORS

**AS WORKPLACES CONTINUE** to evolve, the challenges on system integrators to provide the right technology for those customers increases greatly. Most of the companies that applied to be 2016 CI Industry Leaders expressed a proficiency in the corporate space, showing we may never truly be done bringing offices into the future.

**Adtech** CFO Erik Waters says the company has had “increasing success focusing less on the technology itself and more on the benefits of use. Clients are looking for an understanding of what the systems will do to increase their productivity.”

Waters describes Adtech as “process- and system-focused,” noting the company “continually invest[s] in new software and process tools to improve collaboration and efficiency. Inventory management and scheduling are two biggest challenges, especially dealing with changing customer timelines. The biggest opportunity is in service and recurring monitoring relationships.”

**Advance Technology** president Rob Simopoulos sees the shift to open-concept workspaces going strong.

“To work with these environments we have been deploying huddle and conference room technology that provide synergy within the space,” he says. “Our proactive service model allows our remote engineers to detect and react to hardware failures before the customer identifies that there is a problem. Once [the problem is] detected, our remote engineering team is able to diagnose and often able to repair the problem remotely without the need to roll a truck. Our customers are benefiting significantly in the limited system downtime and the quick repair we provide through this program.

**Advanced AV** marketing director Marina Gregory sees strength in the company’s ability “to join with and work in harmony with client design and implementation teams. Post-sales expertise in the AV/IT implementation, experienced project management and technical service support are

all capabilities required to implement technologies across global enterprises. Managed services and our network operations center have provided operational client feedback, which allows us to design better solutions moving forward.”

Advanced AV also offers a Network Operations Center and AV as a service, including cloud-based technology, is a focus as well.



“Clients are demanding a very positive full-project lifecycle experience. From needs analysis and design to project management and installation, commissioning and after-sales service level agreements.”

—TIM ST. LOUIS,  
**SHARP’S AUDIO VISUAL**

**Anderson Audio Visual** VP of operations Chris Bosworth describes the corporate market as “robust and growing.”

“We feel we are strong in this market because we have partnered with the right customers, and built strong relationships with these customers,” he says. “Our single biggest opportunity is in our managed services offerings. We are heavily focused on growing this market segment, specifically the remote monitoring portion of managed services.”

**AVI Systems** marketing communications manager Kelly Perkins finds increased demand in the corporate space for UC integration within the meeting space and utilization reporting and analytics.

AVI’s account base “continues to encourage AVI’s innovation in how people meet and where they meet,” she says. “Decentralization of workgroups and the democratization of video and collaboration tools continue to drive demand for simple, pervasive, room designs that include software-based collaboration tools and platforms.

“Additionally, enterprises are continuing to look to AV and video as a core communications infrastructure and along with the budgets come the responsibility to demonstrate the positive impact of workforce productivity and the need to lower operating costs,” says Perkins. “More and more, AVI is being asked to address these issues with creative and comprehensive applications that streamline workflow integration and provide analytics on knowledge worker utilization, system availability and productivity analytics.”

In short, says **AVI-SPL** public relations specialist Nathan Legg, “the corporate market is hungry to meet their collaboration needs,” including solution and system standards, global delivery capabilities, unifying their collaboration solutions and proactive monitoring, management and maintenance of their solutions.

AVI-SPL’s global team “understand[s] the current and future needs of our customers, are trained on the newest innovations coming to market, and have the advantage of working with an innovative services team generating new collaboration solutions like UnifyME and Symphony,” says Legg.

Dennis Pitzl, owner of **Concepts AV Integration**, says his company is focused on service, starting with accommodating all clients’ service calls on the same day they come in.

“Our strongest market is corporate,” he

says. “We find that the clients are demanding the ability to have extremely simple to operate systems. They want to be able to have a meeting with little to no effort.”

Kevin McKay, national sales manager at **Genesis Integration**, notes, “Genesis is shifting our focus away from equipment and focusing more on the value-added

services that we can provide to our clients. From our initial engagement with our clients, we strive to become ‘outcome-focused.’ The collaboration technologies we provide have become an integral part of the strategic initiatives of our clients therefore we are focused on managing the complete lifecycle of the solutions we offer.”

Bruce Kaufmann, president and CEO of **Human Circuit**, says “our customers demand more authenticity” in their installations so the company’s sales/engineering approach to needs analysis and project programming “makes our project approach unique.”

Tim Hennen, president of enterprise

THE CORPORATE TOP TWENTY	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM											
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports/Large Venues	Museums	Transportation
<b>Adtech Systems LLC</b> Sudbury, Mass., <a href="http://adtechsystems.com">adtechsystems.com</a>	4	145	28	\$54,400,000	3%	1,150	49%	8%	35%	3%	—	—	—	—	2%	—	3%	—
<b>Advance Technology</b> Scarborough, Maine, <a href="http://advancetechnology.com">advancetechnology.com</a>	2	35	22	\$8,790,337	DNP	328	75%	2%	5%	15%	—	—	—	3%	—	—	—	—
<b>Advanced AV, LLC</b> West Chester, Pa., <a href="http://advancedav.com">advancedav.com</a>	1	115	31	\$39,500,000	25%	415	35%	—	30%	30%	—	—	—	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>Anderson Audio Visual, Inc.</b> San Diego, <a href="http://andersonav.com">andersonav.com</a>	6	170	18	\$54,000,000	5%	2,100	90%	—	5%	—	—	—	—	9%	—	—	—	—
<b>AVI-SPL</b> Tampa, Fla., <a href="http://avispl.com">avispl.com</a>	35	1,477	37	\$577,000,000	13%	4,900	35%	4%	10%	6%	2%	1%	1%	11%	2%	7%	2%	2%
<b>AVI Systems</b> Minneapolis, <a href="http://avisystems.com">avisystems.com</a>	15	500	42	\$185,000,000	20%	2,000	40%	5%	20%	20%	2%	5%	5%	10%	1%	12%	2%	3%
<b>Concepts AV Integration</b> Omaha, Neb., <a href="http://conceptsav.com">conceptsav.com</a>	2	10	6	\$2,350,000	70%	35	65%	—	20%	5%	10%	15%	2%	10%	—	10%	15%	—
<b>Genesis Integration</b> Edmonton, Alberta, <a href="http://genint.com">genint.com</a>	5	95	26	\$31,000,000	2%	318	33%	5%	8%	12%	2%	1%	—	28%	2%	2%	2%	—
<b>Human Circuit</b> Gaithersburg, Md., <a href="http://humancircuit.com">humancircuit.com</a>	1	32	50	\$15,000,000	15%	60	50%	—	—	30%	—	—	—	20%	—	—	—	—
<b>IVCI LLC</b> Hauppauge, N.Y., <a href="http://ivci.com">ivci.com</a>	4	200	21	\$80,000,000	20%	3,000	65%	—	15%	15%	—	—	—	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>Low Voltage Contractors</b> Minneapolis, <a href="http://lvcinc.com">lvcinc.com</a>	3	117	33	\$24,067,891	13%	371	62%	2%	4%	12%	1%	2%	—	6%	2%	—	2%	1%
<b>Red Thread Spaces LLC</b> Boston, <a href="http://red-thread.com">red-thread.com</a>	10	500	33	\$235,000,000	15%	400	40%	5%	30%	15%	—	—	—	10%	—	—	—	—
<b>Sensory Technologies</b> Indianapolis, <a href="http://sensorytechnologies.com">sensorytechnologies.com</a>	4	91	11	\$27,100,000	25%	720	70%	—	15%	10%	—	—	—	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>Sharp's Audio Visual</b> Calgary, Alberta, <a href="http://sharpsav.com">sharpsav.com</a>	8	140	93	\$52,000,000	10%	1,000	49%	29%	12%	3%	—	1%	—	10%	—	—	—	—
<b>Spinitar</b> La Mirada, Calif., <a href="http://spinitar.com">spinitar.com</a>	4	105	30	\$32,000,000	17%	240	30%	—	30%	5%	5%	—	2%	30%	2%	—	—	2%
<b>Unified AV</b> Atlanta, <a href="http://unifiedav.com">unifiedav.com</a>	8	134	38	\$48,000,000	7%	900	47%	24%	22%	4%	—	—	1%	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>Verrex</b> Mountainside, N.J., <a href="http://verrex.com">verrex.com</a>	6	130	69	\$36,707,706	20%	190	97%	—	3%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Westbury National</b> Toronto, <a href="http://westbury.com">westbury.com</a>	2	160	45	DNP	1%	150	29%	—	4%	—	—	—	—	20%	3%	40%	2%	—
<b>Whitlock</b> Richmond, Va., <a href="http://whitlock.com">whitlock.com</a>	21	800	60	\$271,498,130	50%	2,000	60%	5%	15%	10%	—	—	5%	10%	5%	5%	5%	10%
<b>Yorktel</b> Eatontown, N.J., <a href="http://yorktel.com">yorktel.com</a>	11	382	31	\$106,938,436	50%	2,624	60%	—	—	15%	—	—	—	25%	—	—	—	—

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

sales and engineering at **IVCi**, says corporate clients “are demanding innovative designs that adhere to standard, strong project management skills and ongoing services. IVCi deploys many highly qualified engineers whose job it is to know the technology, to design proven technology into our solutions always with a focus on ease of use and ongoing service.”

Robbie Danko, marketing manager at **Low Voltage Contractors**, notes the corporate market “has always been good for LVC. Unlike most systems companies, we often work directly with the owner or general contractor. There are any examples of how this works for LVC. We were the fire alarm subcontractor on a number of high-rise buildings in Minneapolis and were brought in during the planning stages. LVC produced construction drawings for the owner before the projects were out to contractors for bidding.”

John Mitton, VP of AV group and CTO at **Red Thread Spaces**, says “collaboration solutions” are the company’s greatest strength. “We are an integrated solutions company and are able to integrate space and technology to provide a great experience for our clients,” he says, noting they use LEAN processing and workspace management techniques to succeed.

Derek Paquin, principal at **Sensory Technologies**, says the corporate market is tough but lucrative. “Clients are demanding increased efficiency and productivity through collaboration solutions. Our consultative approach and focus on embracing the technology allows us to partner with the client for success.”

**Sharp’s Audio Visual** executive VP of sales and marketing Tim St. Louis also emphasized client demands.

“Clients are demanding a very positive full-project lifecycle experience,” he says. “From needs analysis and design to project management and installation, commissioning and after-sales service level agreements. We have spent the past year focused at every level of our company developing revenue from services. It is a priority and is engrained in our corporate culture.”

**Spinitar** implemented a new ERP system a few years ago and also self-directed work teams (made up of sales, PM, designer, associate designer, and project foreman)

that are responsible for their own financials, while assuring an exceptional customer experience and implemented a LEAN team, now having two individuals that have gone through formal LEAN training, with the charge to ID opportunities to eliminate waste, redundancy, wait time, duplication of efforts, etc., making for a more efficient organization. The biggest challenge, says principal Jeff Irvin, is remaining relevant. “With many manufacturers developing direct relationships with end-user customers, vast amounts of information available to prospects and customers, and increasing competition from EC’s, consultants, and other low-voltage contractors, relevancy is a huge issue for the future,” he says. “We

pose-built meeting, conferencing and gathering spaces. We’re well positioned because of our substantial in-house engineering and programming capabilities as well as our very responsive service organization.”

**Whitlock** national marketing manager Ellen Hickson says the company is seeing “a continuing demand across the corporate landscape for cloud, mobile and hybrid solutions in 2016, along with increasing interest in Microsoft Surface Hub and Skype.”

“Our Enterprise Delivery Model ensures alignment of business goals with project schedules, expert coordination with the general contractor and other essential trades and a communications framework

## Adtech has seen “increasing success focusing less on the technology itself and more on the benefits of use.”

—**ERIK WATERS, ADTECH**

are focused on strategies that focus on providing value to our customers, outside of traditional AV products and services (i.e. cloud solutions, remote monitoring, solutions addressing virtualization and mobilization, etc.)”

**Unified AV** marketing manager Lea Johnson also focuses on client demands, saying “they want managed services.” The biggest challenge for UAV, she says, is “convincing network administrators to take advantage of technological advances.”

**Verrex** VP of marketing and business development Theresa Hahn says the company has seen a “noteworthy rise in streaming and recording capabilities in corporate communal areas — town hall spaces, cafeterias — as clients focus on uniform messaging across a remote workforce and offices to build a stronger sense of community and engaged culture.”

The past year has been “outstanding” for **Westbury National** in the corporate market, says sales manager Brock McGinnis. It included “a broad mix of complex corporate auditoriums and presentation spaces, divisible/combinable conferencing facilities and hundreds of simple meeting and huddle rooms,” he says. “Clients are demanding ease-of-use, high reliability and BYOD or highly customized, pur-

to keep everybody informed at every step of the journey,” she says. “Our promise and commitment does not stop once an implementation has finished, because we’ve already planned for technology adoption through cloud-based training and in room support.”

With **Yorktel**’s guidance, organizations worldwide have successfully harnessed the full power of this environment, creating ecosystems founded on flexible policies that embrace new business models, transparency, collaboration and community building, diversity, and the consumerization of technology.

Application development, coupled with vertical market integration into UCC platforms has allowed Yorktel to not only extend its footprint into vertical markets, but to also establish a leadership position.

“Several years ago, when video communications began earning widespread acceptance, we realized that it was only a matter of time when video would no longer be used solely for traditional calls from behind a desk or conference room, but rather for practical business applications such as remote patient care,” says Michael Beaudoin. **CI**

Reported by D. Craig MacCormack

# TOP 5 HOTEL MARKET INTEGRATORS

IT TAKES A SPECIAL KIND of integration firm to serve hotel customers — it must because many integration firms keep the sometimes confusing market at arm's length. The vast majority of hotel integration opportunities stem from large corporate chains. There are boutique hotels with technology needs, of course, but it's difficult to build a business model around a boutique opportunity.

Those integration firms that do find their stride in the hotel market seem to embrace it. It's noteworthy that *CI*'s 2016 Top 5 Industry Leaders in the hotel category all enjoy better-than-average percentages of recurring revenue. That's partly because hotels find value in managed services and service agreements.

Although it's difficult to find common denominators between these five firms, let's sample some of their insight on what they say makes them successful:

**CCS Presentation Systems'** Julie Solomon on company culture: "Internally, CCS encourages a safe, competitive work environment through its Beyond Better program that enhances high company



*CI*'s 2016 Top 5 Industry Leaders in the hotel category all enjoy better-than-average percentages of recurring revenue. That's partly because hotels find value in managed services and service agreements.

engagement. Within the office, employees complete monthly ballots to reward other employees' performance with regards to customer service. The more

"points" one receives only enhances their chances at winning a cash prize at the end of each month. CCS believes work should be rewarding, mentally and physically. CCS has extended this program to clients through a customer service survey, which further ranks employees on the board."

**RPAV's** Ron Prier on important priorities: "Being nimble and the ability to adapt to market conditions."

**Concepts AV Integration's** Dennis Pitzl on commitment to service: "We are a service-oriented company. We give the best service possible. We try to accommodate all clients' service calls on the same day they come in."

**SVT's** Kyle Gravelle on vital challenges: "Hiring new technicians and qualifying opportunities."

**Edwards Technologies Inc.'s** Roberta Perry on unique focuses: "Convincing potential clients to adopt subscription-based, scalable content management. Issues are addressed in face-to-face meetings and road shows." **CI**

Reported by Tom LeBlanc

THE HOTEL TOP FIVE	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM											
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports/Large Venues	Museums	Transportation
<b>CCS Presentation Systems</b> Scottsdale, Ariz. ccsprojects.com	27	350	25	\$104,995,913	15%	5,100	75%	25%	15%	10%	20%	5%	5%	30%	5%	15%	5%	5%
<b>Concepts AV Integration</b> Omaha, Neb. conceptsav.com	2	10	6	\$2,350,000	70%	35	65%	—	20%	5%	10%	15%	2%	10%	—	10%	15%	—
<b>Edwards Technologies Inc.</b> El Segundo, Calif. edwardstechnologies.com	3	60	32	\$18,000,000	22%	145	20%	—	—	—	20%	20%	—	5%	25%	5%	10%	—
<b>RPAV</b> Bowersville, Ga. rpav.net	1	14	15	\$3,800,000	35%	300	5%	5	10%	—	15%	15%	25%	5%	20%	—	—	—
<b>SVT</b> Brighton, Mich. gosvt.com	1	55	61	\$15,000,000	30%	214	59%	—	—	1%	12%	5%	—	—	4%	—	—	—

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

# TOP 5 HOUSE OF WORSHIP MARKET INTEGRATORS

**IT'S NOT THAT** flexibility and relationship building aren't important in every vertical market, but the strength of those abilities seems to pay even more dividends for integration firms working in the house of worship sector.

Look at **Mankin Media**, which won a 2016 CI Integration Award for its work at Water of Life Community Church. It was the integration firm's previous work with the church that led the customer back to it when tackling a major renovation of existing facilities along with construction of a worship center, children's space, parking structure and outdoor gathering areas.

The new worship center, in particular, was three times larger than the church's previous space. Mankin had to fulfill all of the technology needs sought for the space, while maintaining a great deal of flexibility, to support the church's dynamic worship experience on weekends, while allowing them to transition to other activities during the rest of the week.

It's a unique kind of flexibility that's needed in the house of worship market. That's one reason why *CI*'s 2016 Industry

Leaders in the house of worship market are relatively specialized. "Our team is highly experienced and invested in the house of worship market, positioning our firm as the trusted leader to guide clients through the integration process," says Mankin Media's Jonathan Frazier. "Oftentimes, our clients are communicating their ideas and desires through emotional language. Our team's ability to convert ideas, feelings, and dreams into long-term technical solutions continues to put us in a position to thrive."

Indeed, says **iVideo Technologies'** Tim Czyzak, customer service prowess is vital. "An extreme consultative approach early on in our process helps set us apart from our competitors. In addition, using financial analytics to thoroughly review our business operations helps ensure we are at the performance levels needed."

There is an expectation by house of worship customers of strong commitment by their contractors, so integration firms need to be extremely services-oriented. That has always been the case for **Infinity Sound**, says Max Curry. "Our quality and methods clearly sets us apart. In fact, we have never missed a deadline in 12 years



"Our team's ability to convert ideas, feelings, and dreams into long-term technical solutions continues to put us in a position to thrive."

—**JONATHAN FRAZIER,**  
**MANKIN MEDIA**

of operation. We work off a zero punch list principle and we are the preferred vendor in a large market." **CI**

Reported by Tom LeBlanc

THE HOW TOP FIVE	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM												
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/ Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports/Large Venues	Museums	Transportation	
<b>Infinity Sound, Ltd.</b> Grand Prairie, Texas <i>infinity-sound.com</i>	12	28	1	\$6,000,000	1%	42	6%	30%	2%	1%	–	–	21%	24%	1%	3%	1%	1%	
<b>iVideo Technologies</b> Cleveland <i>ivideo.com</i>	3	30	48	\$10,000,000	4%	245	10%	3%	31%	24%	1%	–	13%	3%	–	13%	–	–	
<b>Mankin Media Systems</b> Franklin, Tenn. <i>mankinmedia.com</i>	4	15	15	\$10,000,000	DNP	35	5%	–	10%	–	–	–	80%	–	–	5%	–	–	
<b>OMEGA Audio Video</b> Acworth, Ga. <i>omega-av.com</i>	1	4	15	DNP	5%	35	50%	–	–	10%	–	20%	15%	5%	–	–	–	–	
<b>RPAV</b> Bowersville, Ga. <i>rpav.net</i>	1	14	15	\$3,800,000	35%	300	5%	5%	10%	–	15%	15%	25%	5%	20%	–	–	–	

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

# TOP 5 RETAIL MARKET INTEGRATORS

**BRICK-AND-MORTAR STILL EXISTS.** But because so many people enjoy the ease of shopping from their couches, retailers need to make it more attractive for them to shop in their stores, and technology can play a key role. Our Industry Leaders in the retail market stand out in the crowd, which is exactly what they hope their customers will do with the solutions they install.

**DGI Communications** uses the power of its two interrelated divisions — DGI Technologies and DGI Invisuals — to create the solutions their customers want, says account manager Darby DeChristopher.

The technology division offers AV and structured cabling systems and “can design, implement and continually support presentation systems, integrated audio systems, streaming media and unified communication solutions,” she says.

DGI Invisuals offers large-format printing for retail, corporate, hospitality, health care, higher education, government and architectural firms and can wrap a vehicle or fleet.

“Together these divisions provide an array of products and services that allow clients to deliver clear messaging both internally and externally,” says DeChristopher. The goal, she says, is helping DGI’s customers understand the power of doing

both to attract more customers.

Roberta Perry, VP of business development at **Edwards Technologies**, says the biggest challenge is “convincing potential clients to adopt subscription-based, scalable content management. Issues are addressed in face-to-face meetings and road shows.”

Kevin Goldsmith, chief technology officer at **Ping HD**, says “cost is a huge factor” in providing solutions both he and the customers want. “Our agile development on our core CMS ensures that we provide all the features required for digital signage projects. Having an in-house content design team allows us to provide a complete turn-key integration service,” says Goldsmith.

Ron Prier, owner of **RPAV**, says the company is “always exploring new opportunities” and is able to achieve success by “being nimble and the ability to adapt to market conditions.”

**Serious Audio Video** uses “strategic planning and unique designs to set us apart from our competitors as well as our customer service and marketing strategy,” says VP of marketing Joe Lipari. “We build long-lasting relationships with our customers and position ourselves as experts in the field.”

The biggest obstacle for future growth,



The biggest challenge, says Edwards Technologies’ Roberta Perry, is “convincing potential clients to adopt subscription-based, scalable content management.”

says Lipari, is what he calls “the race to zero. Every day, there’s a cheaper solution. We’re expensive, but our systems are reliable and our design is sleek. We have to accept that we’re not for everyone and not get frustrated when we lose a job to someone who underbids.” **CI**

Reported by D. Craig MacCormack

THE RETAIL TOP FIVE	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM											
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/ Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports/Large Venues	Museums	Transportation
DGI Communications Billerica, Mass. dgiusa.com	3	90	22	\$20,000,000	10%	400	20%	10%	10%	15%	—	5%	5%	10%	15%	10%	5%	—
Edwards Technologies Inc. El Segundo, Calif. edwardstechnologies.com	3	60	32	\$18,000,000	22%	145	20%	—	—	—	20%	20%	—	5%	25%	5%	10%	—
Ping HD Denver pinghd.com	4	25	9	\$6,000,000	20%	100	5%	—	5%	5%	5%	20%	—	5%	10%	45%	—	—
RPAV Bowersville, Ga. rpav.net	1	14	15	\$3,800,000	35%	300	5%	5%	10%	—	15%	15%	25%	5%	20%	—	—	—
Serious Audio Video Union City, N.J. seriousaudiovideo.com	5	10	9	\$1,500,000	DNP	DNP	10%	5%	—	—	—	50%	—	—	15%	—	—	—

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

# TOP 5 MUSEUM MARKET INTEGRATORS

WHILE THE FOCUS for integration firms serving many vertical markets is on how to create scale and bring solutions to more customers more quickly and in higher volume, the museum market is much different. The 2016 Top 5 museum market CI Industry Leaders might take the scalable approach with their customers in other markets, but they know it won't fly with museum clients looking to stand out with immersive and customized experiences.

Take **Electrosonic**, which earned a 2016 CI Integration Award for its work at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Manitoba, for example. The award-winning project required kid gloves. Electrosonic coordinated relationships with 11 media partners that were involved in the build-out of the museum. There were also challenges related to the building's unique architectural profile.

The integration firm overcame the obstacles the old-fashioned way — it spent a ton of time with the owners and architects during the two years leading up to the project and then, despite that, rolled with all the redesign required during implementation as the customer's requirements evolved. That's how you have to roll in the museum market.

A recent *CI* Profile on **Westbury National** explores the Canadian firm's willingness to own its identity as a "custom integrator." While many firms are focused on high-volume solutions, Westbury sees its bread-and-butter as remaining custom — a trait that serves it well in the museum market. "Westbury National focuses on larger and more complex projects requiring our advanced engineering, programming and project-execution experience and expertise," says Brock McGinnis. "Our focus is meticulous engineering and quality execution."

Museum projects tend to have extremely long lead times and require a high level of focus. Fewer firms seem to brand themselves as museum integrators than in years past. Across the Atlantic Ocean, Denmark-based **Stouenborg** has so embraced the museum market that the small firms' design and consultative services are sought by museums across Europe. "We help them as advisors and give them the option to purchase the complete integration and advisory from our company, and many museums see the benefits from this model," says Anders Jorgensen.

"They are able to secure the budget with us, and the market in Denmark is compa-



While these firms might take the scalable approach in other markets, they know it won't fly with museum customers looking to stand out.

able to the Bay Area in California. So if we do one bad job, we are out. Therefore, we play by the book and the key word here is trust. This year we have now seen that this model works in other Nordic countries and we have moved into Sweden. The plan is to extend this into Germany and the Netherlands during the next years." **CI**

Reported by Tom LeBlanc

THE MUSEUM TOP FIVE	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM												
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/ Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports/Large Venues	Museums	Transportation	
Concepts AV Integration Omaha, Neb. conceptsav.com	2	10	6	\$2,350,000	70%	35	65%	—	20%	5%	10%	15%	2%	10%	—	10%	15%	—	
Edwards Technologies Inc. El Segundo, Calif. edwardstechnologies.com	3	60	32	\$18,000,000	22%	145	20%	—	—	—	20%	20%	—	5%	25%	5%	10%	—	
Electrosonic Burbank, Calif. electrosonic.com	14	435	52	\$61,000,000	25%	450	20%	—	—	—	—	—	—	18%	—	—	20%	1%	
Stouenborg Taastrup, Denmark stouenborg.dk	2	6	9	\$6,000,000	25%	11	18%	3%	5%	5%	3%	3%	—	20%	—	14%	75%	—	
Westbury National Toronto westbury.com	2	160	45	DNP	1%	150	29%	—	4%	—	—	—	—	20%	3%	40%	2%	—	

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

# TOP 5 BARS & RESTAURANTS MARKET INTEGRATORS

**GONE ARE THE DAYS** of *Cheers*-style bars, when all most customers wanted was a frosty brew and conversation with familiar faces. Technology — from TV screens everywhere you turn to zoned audio systems that bring you to another part of the world or perhaps transport you to another time in your life — are more popular than ever and our Industry Leaders share their secrets for succeeding in this space.

Dennis Pitzl, owner of **Concepts AV Integration**, says his company is focused on service, starting with accommodating all clients' service calls on the same day they come in.

The biggest challenge, he says, "is the competitors' race to zero," a term that others in the space used as well.

"The race to zero is an expression I use when referring to companies that sell product at or below cost just to win the project or sale. This practice does no one any good," says Pitzl.

Roberta Perry, VP of business development at **Edwards Technologies**, says cloud-based content management and ongoing support services through Videro software enable the company to have great success. ETI's 24-7 support service and global cover-

age are other pieces that make it stand out.

The biggest challenge, says Perry, is "convincing potential clients to adapt subscription-based, scalable content management. Issues are addressed in face-to-face meetings and road shows."

**Omega Audio Video** recently started offering full IT services, says Fiona Scott. "We have begun offering complete IT solutions in addition to our AV offerings to be able to provide our clients with a complete end-to-end technology solution," she says. "We've found that this really allows us to become that true full service technology system."

Omega Audio Video also focused on "supplying solutions that are accessible to younger users," says Scott. "As our clients' workforces evolve and continue to shift to younger demographics, we've noticed a trend in changing workplace practices and uses of technology," she says. "The biggest challenge we're looking forward to addressing in 2016 will be security of our AV systems and IT systems. We're seeing more and more connected devices and IoT that will continue to evolve and place a premium on the security of our systems."

Kevin Goldsmith, chief technology officer at **Ping HD**, says "cost is a huge factor" in providing solutions both he and the customers want.

"Our push towards System on a Chip (SoC) technology eliminated the need for external media players," he says. "This reduced our solution cost and improved the reliability of the solution. The solution architecture is probably the most significant part that sets Ping HD apart from the competition. SoC technology allows us to compete aggressively while maintain solid margins."

"Our agile development on our core CMS ensures that we provide all the features required for digital signage projects. Having an in-house content design team allows us to provide a complete turnkey integration service," says Goldsmith.

**Serious Audio Video** uses "strategic planning and unique designs to set us apart from our competitors as well as our customer service and marketing strategy," says VP of marketing Joe Lipari. "We build long-lasting relationships with our customers and position ourselves as experts in the field." **CI**

Reported by D. Craig MacCormack

THE RESTAURANTS & BARS TOP FIVE	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM											
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports/Large Venues	Museums	Transportation
<b>Concepts AV Integration</b> Omaha, Neb. conceptsav.com	2	10	6	\$2,350,000	70%	35	65%	—	20%	5%	10%	15%	2%	10%	—	10%	15%	—
<b>Edwards Technologies Inc.</b> El Segundo, Calif. edwardstechnologies.com	3	60	32	\$18,000,000	22%	145	20%	—	—	—	20%	20%	—	5%	25%	5%	10%	—
<b>OMEGA Audio Video</b> Acworth, Ga. omega-av.com	1	4	15	DNP	5%	35	50%	—	—	10%	—	20%	15%	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>Ping HD</b> Denver pinghd.com	4	25	9	\$6,000,000	20%	100	5%	—	5%	5%	5%	20%	—	5%	10%	45%	—	—
<b>Serious Audio Video</b> Union City, N.J. seriousaudiovideo.com	5	10	9	\$1,500,000	DNP	DNP	10%	5%	—	—	—	50%	—	—	15%	—	—	—

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

# TOP 10 HEALTH CARE MARKET INTEGRATORS

**RETURN ON INVESTMENT (ROI)** is usually a major consideration in technology purchases, but not so much in the health care market. Only 21 percent of health care purchasing decision-makers say that ROI is an important factor in their AV technology purchases, according to InfoComm's End-User Perspective Studies.

That's because there is a lot more than money at stake in health care integration. The integrators that serve the market are extremely focused on innovative solutions as well as high-level support and service.

Let's sample some of the 2016 CI Industry Leaders Top 10 health care market integrator's formulas for success:

**Advance Technology's** Rob Simopoulos on remote service: "Our proactive service model allows our remote engineers to detect and react to hardware failures before the customer identifies that there is a problem. Once detected, our remote engineering team is able to diagnose and often repair the problem remotely without the need to roll a truck. Our customers are benefiting significantly in the limited

system downtime and the quick repair we provide through this program."

**Beacon Communications'** Brad Walsh on health care market trends: "The primary demand we're seeing is based around workflow and the overall patient experience. Our strong presence in the areas of IT and clinical workflow put Beacon in excellent position to succeed ... Having a clinical presence within our organization has given us the opportunity to have a different conversation with our clients."

**All Systems Designed Solutions'** Scott

THE HEALTH CARE TOP TEN	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM											
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports Venues	Museums	Transportation
<b>Advance Technology</b> Scarborough, Maine <a href="http://advancetechnology.com">advancetechnology.com</a>	2	35	22	\$8,790,337	DNP	328	75%	2%	5%	15%	—	—	—	3%	—	—	—	—
<b>Advanced AV, LLC</b> West Chester, Pa. <a href="http://advancedav.com">advancedav.com</a>	1	115	31	\$39,500,000	25%	415	35%	—	30%	30%	—	—	—	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>All Systems Designed Solutions, Inc.</b> Kansas City, Mo. <a href="http://allsystemsdesign.com">allsystemsdesign.com</a>	3	58	42	\$12,800,000	16%	100	10%	20%	—	65%	—	—	—	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>AVI Systems</b> Minneapolis <a href="http://avisystems.com">avisystems.com</a>	15	500	42	\$185,000,000	20%	2,000	40%	5%	20%	20%	2%	5%	5%	10%	1%	12%	2%	3%
<b>Beacon Communications, LLC</b> Englewood, Colo. <a href="http://beaconcom.com">beaconcom.com</a>	2	70	18	\$16,000,000	13%	200	20%	20%	1%	55%	2%	—	—	20%	—	—	—	—
<b>CompView</b> Beaverton, Ore. <a href="http://compview.com">compview.com</a>	7	150	29	\$70,000,000	5%	2,500	40%	1%	27%	20%	—	—	—	1%	—	—	—	1%
<b>DGI Communications</b> Billerica, Mass. <a href="http://dgiusa.com">dgiusa.com</a>	3	90	22	\$20,000,000	10%	400	20%	10%	10%	15%	—	5%	5%	10%	15%	10%	5%	—
<b>Human Circuit</b> Gaithersburg, Md. <a href="http://humancircuit.com">humancircuit.com</a>	1	32	50	\$15,000,000	15%	60	50%	—	—	30%	—	—	—	20%	—	—	—	—
<b>Lone Star Communications, Inc.</b> Grand Prairie, Texas <a href="http://lonestarc.com">lonestarc.com</a>	2	78	25	\$18,900,000	5%	112	—	24%	—	76%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Yorktel</b> Eatontown, N.J. <a href="http://yorktel.com">yorktel.com</a>	11	382	31	\$106,938,436	50%	2,624	60%	—	—	15%	—	—	—	25%	—	—	—	—

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

Lord on elevated communication needs: "The health care market is by far the strongest for nurse call and emergency communication applications. The greatest demand from the industry is integrated alerts to multimedia devices as well as quality reporting of alerts and events."

**Compview's** Tami Zeidlhack on internal processes: "[Growth in markets including health care] has required us to build systems and training programs focused on the development of our human capital. A key program for our success has been the establishment of a Project Management Office in our Systems Integration group. This function develops processes, systems, training, and provides auditing for our major projects. It is an investment in building our culture, focused on our people and systems, to drive project success and outstanding customer service."

**AVI's** Kelly Perkins on training: "Human capital development is a huge initiative for AVI in 2016. We're building a learning cen-



"The primary demand we're seeing is based around workflow and the overall patient experience."

—BRAD WALSH, BEACON COMMUNICATIONS

ter in the space next to our headquarters in Minneapolis and implementing an internal LMS [learning management system] ...

We've licensed the entire InfoComm curriculum and will have it hooked into our LMS systems. A mentorship program is also in the works."

**Advanced AV's** Marina Gregory on choosing paths to success: "[We're focused on] strategic planning of which specific clients we should pursue by matching up our employee experience and strengths to meet those client needs. By evaluating opportunities and placing an emphasis on the proper match of projects, the Advanced AV teams can appropriately provide value to the client."

**DGI Communications'** Darby DeChristopher on its unique approach to health care: "[DGI] offers audio/visual, hospital communication systems and structured cabling systems. Our team can design, implement and continually support presentation systems, integrated audio systems, streaming media and unified communication solutions." **CI**

Reported by Tom LeBlanc

Whatever your information needs...

**WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED.**

**Commercial Integrator newsletters**

*Commercial Integrator* offers weekly email newsletters each dedicated to delivering the latest news and in-depth business information plus updates on the newest products and applications like digital signage, BIM, speaker systems and more all delivered straight to your inbox.



Whether you are a systems integrator, contractor, VAR, or consultant, *Commercial Integrator's* free newsletters will help you keep up with what's happening when it's happening.

**Subscribe online now at:**  
**[www.commercialintegrator.com/newsletters](http://www.commercialintegrator.com/newsletters)**

**Littlite®**  
**Purposeful Illumination**

For over 30 years Littlite has manufactured high-quality, rugged, compact gooseneck task lights for any lighting requirement. Over 300 standard configurations are available.

- Made in the USA
- 12, 18 or 24" Goosenecks
- Limited Lifetime Warranty
- Dozens of Mounting Options
- LED and Halogen Models.



[www.littlite.com](http://www.littlite.com)  
[www.littlitedirect.com](http://www.littlitedirect.com)  
PH 888-224-5828  
[sales@littlite.com](mailto:sales@littlite.com)

# TOP 10 GOVERNMENT MARKET INTEGRATORS

## EACH OF THESE 10 INTEGRATORS

bring different talents and take different approaches to meeting their clients' needs. Even though **Alpha Video & Audio** is more than 45 years old, "we still operate with an entrepreneur spirit," says Jerry Gale, professional services marketer. "Employees who see an opportunity in the market are giving the time and resources to pursue their idea."

Alpha Video uses "improved project management processes, including the implementation of a project portfolio management software platform and a real-time dashboard with key performance indicators for all projects" to meet client demands in a

variety of vertical markets, says Gale.

Brad Walsh, president and COO at **Beacon Communications**, says the company's biggest challenge this year is "continuing to bring in the right people as we grow."

"The Colorado market is thriving, and finding quality talent is becoming more of a challenge," he says. "We continue to entertain new avenues for talent acquisition; I don't believe there's a silver bullet. It's an ever-changing process."

Video walls and wireless presentation are two very in-demand solutions, says Julie Solomon, manager of marketing and training at 2013 *C/Integrator* of the Year **CCS**

## Presentation Systems.

"We can do it all — design and engineer the hardware, procure and install, provide and develop the content, service and maintain it for the life of the system," she says. "Most organizations are looking to make implementation of a complicated solution as easy as possible."

Internally, CCS encourages a safe, competitive work environment through its Beyond Better program that enhances high company engagement. Within the office, employees complete monthly ballots to reward other employees' performance with regards to customer service. The more

THE GOVERNMENT TOP TEN	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM											
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/ Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports Venues	Museums	Transportation
<b>Alpha Video &amp; Audio, Inc.</b> Eden Prairie, Minn. <i>alphavideo.com</i>	2	110	46	\$45,000,000	10%	350	10%	10%	10%	5%	20%	—	—	15%	—	26%	—	—
<b>Beacon Communications, LLC</b> Englewood, Colo. <i>beaconcom.com</i>	2	70	18	\$16,000,000	13%	200	20%	20%	1%	55%	2%	—	—	20%	—	—	—	—
<b>CCS Presentation Systems</b> Scottsdale, Arizona <i>ccsprojects.com</i>	27	350	25	\$104,995,913	DNP	5,100	75%	25%	15%	10%	20%	5%	5%	30%	5%	15%	5%	5%
<b>Electrosonic</b> Burbank, Calif. <i>electrosonic.com</i>	14	435	52	\$61,000,000	25%	450	20%	—	—	—	—	—	—	18%	—	—	20%	1%
<b>Genesis Integration</b> Edmonton, Alberta <i>genint.com</i>	5	95	26	\$31,000,000	2%	318	33%	5%	8%	12%	2%	1%	—	28%	2%	2%	2%	—
<b>Human Circuit</b> Gaithersburg, Md. <i>humancircuit.com</i>	1	32	50	\$15,000,000	15%	60	50%	—	—	30%	—	—	—	20%	—	—	—	—
<b>Infinity Sound, Ltd.</b> Prairie, Texas <i>infinity-sound.com</i>	12	28	1	\$6,000,000	1%	42	6%	30%	2%	1%	—	—	21%	24%	1%	3%	1%	1%
<b>Spinitar</b> La Mirada, Calif. <i>spinitar.com</i>	4	105	30	\$32,000,000	17%	240	30%	—	30%	5%	5%	—	2%	30%	2%	—	—	2%
<b>Westbury National</b> Toronto <i>westbury.com</i>	2	160	45	DNP	1%	150	29%	—	4%	—	—	—	—	20%	3%	40%	2%	—
<b>Yorktel</b> Eatontown, N.J. <i>yorktel.com</i>	11	382	31	\$106,938,436	50%	2,624	60%	—	—	15%	—	—	—	25%	—	—	—	—

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

'points' an employee receives, the better their chances at winning a cash prize at the end of each month.

"CCS believes work should be rewarding, mentally and physically," says Solomon. "We have extended this program to clients through a customer service survey, which further ranks employees on the board."

Most of *C/2014 Integrator of the Year Electrosonic's* projects, says president and CEO Jim Bowie, fall into the category of "mission-critical," whether that means they're actually in a control room or in another space that has a specific deadline date for its opening.

"We like to be involved in the design and concept of a project," says Bowie. "Things can vary dramatically on labor and you can tell pretty quickly if someone doesn't understand the scope."

"One of our major skills is project management. We know how to do very large projects over a long period of time in very difficult places. This job is about integrating different components and having a happy client at the end."

Kevin McKay, national sales manager at **Genesis Integration**, says "clients are demanding cost-effective collaboration solutions for their small- and medium-sized conference and meeting rooms. Genesis is looking at delivering packaged solutions bundled with managed services."

"Genesis is shifting our focus away from equipment and focusing more on the value-added services that we can provide to our clients. From our initial engagement with our clients, we strive to become 'outcome-focused.' The collaboration technologies we provide have become an integral part of the strategic initiatives of our clients therefore we are focused on managing the complete lifecycle of the solutions we offer," he says.

"The biggest challenge is to continue to wage war against the commoditization of our industry as a whole," says McKay. "Encroachment will continue from cabling and electrical contractors as well as IT services providers. We must continue to differentiate ourselves and leverage our experience and expertise to create a compelling reason why clients should choose Genesis as a strategic business partner."

Bruce Kaufmann, president and CEO of **Human Circuit**, says "our customers demand more authenticity" in their installations so

the company's sales/engineering approach to needs analysis and project programming "makes our project approach unique."

Kaufmann sees "further commoditization of the market and lack of manufacturer innovation" is the most significant challenge.

Max Curry, owner of **Infinity Sound**, says his company is "now poised to grow rapidly on the substantial foundation we have created. We have been meticulous in developing our procedures from ordering to training the end user. We are already rapidly growing and taking on more projects than before. We felt that the foundation development that we have worked on is ready to support this type



"Genesis is shifting our focus away from equipment and focusing more on the value-added services that we can provide to our clients."

—KEVIN MCKAY,  
**GENESIS INTEGRATION**

of growth. All the people are in place and very motivated to achieve this growth goal."

**Spinitar** implemented a new ERP system a few years ago "that gives us the business intelligence and central portal to gather and share all information needed to simplify our employee experience while executing for our customers," says principal Jeff Irvin.

The company also implemented self-directed work teams (made up of sales, PM, designer, associate designer, and project foreman) that are responsible for their own financials, while assuring an exceptional customer experience and implemented a LEAN team, now having two individuals that have gone through formal LEAN training, with the charge to ID opportunities to eliminate waste, redundancy, wait time, dupli-

cation of efforts, etc., making for a more efficient organization.

**Westbury National** "focuses on larger and more complex projects, requiring our advanced engineering, programming and project-execution experience and expertise," says sales manager Brock McGinnis.

"We're the first choice of facility operators (including sports, entertainment, gaming and corporate customers) whose businesses rely heavily on the reliability and performance of the systems we provide. Our focus is meticulous engineering and quality execution."

More than 50 percent of 2015 *C/Integrator of the Year Yorktel's* global revenue is derived from recurring managed services contracts, says marketing manager Michael Beaudoin. The company is proud of its "strength in enabling *Fortune* 1000 and federal government clientele leverage unified, video communications to collaborate seamlessly and without complexity-derived hiccups."

"Enterprise customers need a partner that understands both their unique situation, as well as the bigger picture perspective of moving to the cloud," says Beaudoin. "Among the prevalent concerns our sales team hears from executive management is the need for assurance that their internal IT teams are approaching collaboration properly. They need to know their communications tools are reliable, scalable, and secure, as well as assurances that it solves use cases specific to their workforce."

Application development, coupled with vertical market integration into UCC platforms has allowed Yorktel to not only extend its footprint into vertical markets, but to also establish a leadership position.

"Interoperability and QoS have become significant hurdles for enterprises that must now adapt business practices to employees connecting from myriad devices, on various operating systems in settings not always conducive to secure communications," says Beaudoin. "In-house IT has neither the time nor the specific video skillset to stay current with new technologies, whereas Yorktel has more than 30 years' experience making video work for customers, and is on the forefront of next-generation communications."

"What other service providers view as challenges, we view as opportunities," says Beaudoin. **CI**

Reported by D. Craig MacCormack

# TOP 5 SPORTS & LARGE VENUE MARKET INTEGRATORS

**THERE IS AN EXPECTATION** when attending a sports stadium or concert venue that the speaker system and giant scoreboard never fail, among other client rigors. "We have found the people who run professional and major college sporting venues to be demanding clients because the projects have an inflexible deadline: opening day," says Jerry Gale, professional services marketer at **Alpha Video & Audio**. "Alpha Video's broadcast engineering expertise and our professional project managers allow us to integrate and install complex systems that are fully functional — and employees are fully trained on how to use the systems — on or before the opening day of the season."

The biggest challenge Alpha Video faces, says Gale, is "satisfactorily installing the large number of education and sports venue systems that Alpha Video's clients schedule during the extremely busy summer months." They address that through "improved project management processes, including the implementation of a project portfolio management software platform and a real-time dashboard with key performance indicators for all projects."

Michael Hopkins, VP of external commu-

nications at **ANC**, says the sports market is among those "seeking operational perfection. However, it is possible technology can experience outages. We believe our turnkey technology service model will enable these venues to realize the best operations possible by being able to quickly resolve any such issues without disrupting the overall venue experience. ANC's operating systems are capable of providing automatic failover options, while our onsite teams can immediately address any potential hardware concerns."

ANC's team is prepared to help clients choose the technology that best fits their needs, says Hopkins. "We create visual environments which demonstrate how a particular technology can impact different locations. This enables venues to understand how a particular technology can drive revenue, provide information or create an immersive atmosphere before making a final purchase decision."

Video walls and wireless presentation are very in-demand solutions, says Julie Solomon, manager of marketing and training at **CCS Presentation Systems**. "Most organizations are looking to make implementation of a complicated solution as easy as possible."

Internally, CCS encourages a safe, competitive work environment through its Beyond Better program. Employees complete monthly ballots to reward other employees' performance with regards to customer service. "CCS believes work should be rewarding, mentally and physically," says Solomon. "We have extended this program to clients through a customer service survey, which further ranks employees on the board."

Kevin Goldsmith, chief technology officer at **Ping HD**, says "cost is a huge factor in the sports market, as is the case in all markets, really" in providing solutions both he and the customers want.

**Westbury National** "focuses on larger and more complex projects, requiring our advanced engineering, programming and project-execution experience and expertise," says Brock McGinnis. "We're the first choice of facility operators — including sports, entertainment, gaming and corporate customers — whose businesses rely heavily on the reliability and performance of the systems we provide. Our focus is meticulous engineering and quality execution." **CI**

**Reported by D. Craig MacCormack**

THE SPORTS & LARGE VENUE TOP FIVE	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM											
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports/Large Venues	Museums	Transportation
<b>Alpha Video &amp; Audio, Inc.</b> Eden Prairie, Minn. <a href="http://alphavideo.com">alphavideo.com</a>	2	110	46	\$45,000,000	10%	350	10%	10%	10%	5%	20%	—	—	15%	—	26%	—	—
<b>ANC</b> Purchase, N.Y. <a href="http://ancsports.com">ancsports.com</a>	2	195	19	\$50,000,000	16%	39	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10%	85%	—	5%
<b>CCS Presentation Systems</b> Scottsdale, Ariz. <a href="http://ccsprojects.com">ccsprojects.com</a>	27	350	25	\$104,995,913	15%	5,100	75%	25%	15%	10%	20%	5%	5	30%	5%	15%	5%	5%
<b>Ping HD</b> Denver <a href="http://pinghd.com">pinghd.com</a>	4	25	9	\$6,000,000	20%	100	5%	—	5%	5%	5%	20%	—	5%	10%	45%	—	—
<b>Westbury National</b> Toronto <a href="http://westbury.com">westbury.com</a>	2	160	45	DNP	1%	150	29%	—	4%	—	—	—	—	20%	3%	40%	2%	—

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

# TOP 5 K-12 MARKET INTEGRATORS

**WHAT CAN YOUR** integration firm bring to the table for K-12 school customers?

When it comes to affording new technology and integration services, K-12 schools often work on a tight budget. Schools want the biggest bang for their buck, and these five K-12 integrators know the importance of providing valuable, reliable and continued service to their valued customers, helping them all make a name for themselves in the K-12 market.

Specifically targeting the performing arts spaces, **Infinity Sound's** methods for providing consistent, reliable service has helped the company grow, and stand out, in the K-12 sector.

"We have always been a service-based integration firm," says Max Curry. "We intentionally executed an organic/controlled growth and are now poised to grow rapidly on the substantial foundation we have created. We have been meticulous in developing our procedures from ordering, to training the end user."

In the past year, **Sharp's Audio Visual** has concentrated on developing revenue from services. This focus on services not only improves' clients experiences, but also

creates a stronger relationship between Sharp's and its clients.

"The more we can attach services to the customer the better the experience the customer has and the more sticky our relationship becomes. Service includes ad hoc callouts for service, design consulting, end-user training, after-sales service level agreements, onsite (embedded) white-glove personnel, monitoring and cloud-based digital signage offerings," says Tim St. Louis.

Jessica Madsen, marketing coordinator for **Tierney Brothers**, says clients are in need of technical and instructional support and training once their systems are in place. Madsen says Tierney not only offers these services, but also installation, design, and IT services, with more becoming available soon.

In 2015, **Lone Star Communications** said they were challenged with finding people to provide the level of service that would meet customers' expectations. Since then, the company has focused on training.

"We have addressed this by providing training from the day an employee starts and to continuously train," notes Raymond Bailey.

**Unified AV** is also no stranger to overcoming challenges, as Barry Goldin, Mark

Fennell, Tom Taylor, Scott Wood and Ken Colson discussed in *CI's* profile (see May 2016 issue) of the company's struggle in 2014 to find a way for its project managers to meet and fulfill demands.

"It's become a bit of an industry epidemic that technical people are promoted to project managers because it seems like a logical next step," said Goldin. "We decided to look at the lifecycle from cradle to grave and realized we had to do things a little differently. It became clear our project managers had a lot of things they needed to do, but they weren't able to do all those things because they were out in the field on jobsites."

This led Unified AV to open a search for non-AV people to fill its project management roles, enhancing them with the company's technical support team. Today, about half of Unified AV's project managers are from outside AV, including construction and other low-voltage trades.

Goldin called the new approach "a dramatic new way for us to manage the process and provide information to our customers." **CI**

Reported by Rachel Quetti

THE K-12 TOP FIVE	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM											
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/ Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports/Large Venues	Museums	Transportation
<b>Infinity Sound, Ltd.</b> Grand Prairie, Texas <i>infinity-sound.com</i>	12	28	1	\$6,000,000	1%	42	6%	30%	2%	1%	–	–	21%	24%	1%	3%	1%	1%
<b>Lone Star Communications, Inc.</b> Grand Prairie, Texas <i>lonestarcom.com</i>	2	78	25	\$18,900,000	5%	112	–	24%	–	76%	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
<b>Sharp's Audio Visual</b> Calgary, Alberta <i>sharpsav.com</i>	8	140	93	\$52,000,000	10%	1,000	49%	29%	12%	3%	–	1%	–	10%	–	–	–	–
<b>Tierney Brothers Inc.</b> Minneapolis, Minn. <i>tierneybrothers.com</i>	2	150	39	\$76,363,398	DNP	1,207	21%	67%	5%		–	–	1%	6%	–	–	–	–
<b>Unified AV</b> Atlanta <i>unifiedav.com</i>	8	134	38	\$48,000,000	7%	900	47%	24%	22%	4%	–	–	1%	5%	–	–	–	–

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

# TOP 20 HIGHER ED MARKET INTEGRATORS

**AVI-SPL IS HOSTING** a series of customer-facing "Technology Day" events at its regional offices throughout 2016 at which I'm thrilled to get a chance to present. I'm

always interested to know what motivates professionals to leave their office for a day, so I like to turn the tables and get the audience to discuss some of their challenges.

My expectation going in was that most of the attendees would be from corporate market customers, but I'm finding that almost as many represent universities. It's

THE HIGHER ED TOP TWENTY	No. of Locations	No. of Employees	Years in Business	Total Commercial Integration Revenue	Revenue Under Contract Percentage	Number of 2015 Installs	PERCENTAGE OF REVENUE* DERIVED FROM											
							Corporate	K-12	Higher Ed	Health Care	Hotels/Casinos	Restaurants/ Bars	HOW	Government	Retail	Sports/Large Venues	Museums	Transportation
<b>Advanced</b> Mississauga, Ontario, <i>advanced-inc.com</i>	2	70	20	DNP	DNP	2,025	43%	23%	23%	—	—	—	—	8%	1%	—	—	—
<b>Advanced AV, LLC</b> West Chester, Pa., <i>advancedav.com</i>	1	115	31	\$39,500,000	25%	415	35%	—	30%	30%	—	—	—	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>Adtech Systems LLC</b> Sudbury, Mass., <i>adtechsystems.com</i>	4	145	28	\$54,400,000	3%	1,150	49%	8%	35%	3%	—	—	—	—	2%	—	3%	—
<b>Alpha Video &amp; Audio, Inc.</b> Eden Prairie, Minn., <i>alphavideo.com</i>	2	110	46	\$45,000,000	10%	350	10%	10%	10%	5%	20%	—	—	15%	—	26%	—	—
<b>AVI-SPL</b> Tampa, Fla., <i>avispl.com</i>	35	1,477	37	\$577,000,000	13%	4,900	35%	4%	10%	6%	2%	1%	1%	11%	2%	7%	2%	2%
<b>AVI Systems</b> Minneapolis, <i>avisystems.com</i>	15	500	42	\$185,000,000	20%	2,000	40%	5%	20%	20%	2%	5%	5%	10%	1%	12%	2%	3%
<b>CCS Presentation Systems</b> Scottsdale, Ariz., <i>ccsprojects.com</i>	27	350	25	\$104,995,913	15%	5,100	75%	25%	15%	10%	20%	5%	5%	30%	5%	15%	5%	5%
<b>CompView</b> Beaverton, Ore., <i>compview.com</i>	7	150	29	\$70,000,000	5%	2,500	40%	1%	27%	20%	—	—	—	1%	—	—	—	1%
<b>Concepts AV Integration</b> Omaha, Neb., <i>conceptsav.com</i>	2	10	6	\$2,350,000	70%	35	65%	—	20%	5%	10%	15%	2%	10%	—	10%	15%	—
<b>IMS Technology Services</b> Garnet Valley, Pa., <i>imstechnologyservices.com</i>	2	91	22	\$23,000,000	8%	185	60%	1%	24%	5%	—	—	—	5%	—	5%	—	—
<b>IVCi LLC</b> Hauppauge, N.Y., <i>ivci.com</i>	4	200	21	\$80,000,000	20%	3,000	65%	—	15%	15%	—	—	—	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>iVideo Technologies</b> Cleveland, Ohio, <i>ivideo.com</i>	3	30	48	\$10,000,000	4%	245	10%	3	31%	24	1	—	13	3	—	13	—	—
<b>Red Thread Spaces LLC</b> Boston, <i>red-thread.com</i>	10	500	33	\$235,000,000	15%	400	40%	5%	30%	15%	—	—	—	10%	—	—	—	—
<b>Sensory Technologies</b> Indianapolis, <i>sensorytechnologies.com</i>	4	91	11	\$27,100,000	25%	720	70%	—	15%	10%	—	—	—	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>Southtown Audio Video</b> Hamburg, N.Y., <i>southtownav.com</i>	1	4	42	\$763,000	DNP	47	25%	10%	65%	20%	5%	5%	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Spinitar</b> La Mirada, Calif., <i>spinitar.com</i>	4	105	30	\$32,000,000	17%	240	30%	—	30%	5%	5%	—	2%	30%	2%	—	—	2%
<b>Synergy Media Group</b> Pittsburgh, Pa., <i>synmediagroup.com</i>	2	17	8	\$4,200,000	8%	46	45%	—	45%	—	5%	5v	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Unified AV</b> Atlanta, <i>unifiedav.com</i>	8	134	38	\$48,000,000	7%	900	47%	24%	22%	4%	—	—	1%	5%	—	—	—	—
<b>Whitlock</b> Richmond, Va., <i>whitlock.com</i>	21	800	60	\$271,498,130	50%	2,000	60%	5%	15%	10%	—	—	5%	10%	5%	5%	5%	10%
<b>Zdi, Inc.</b> Normal, Ill., <i>zdiinc.net</i>	5	90	9	\$18,500,000	10%	200	50%	5%	20%	20%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

\*Percentages provided by firms and may not add up to 100. DNP = did not provide.

also clear that the university IT and technical staff members are the ones with the most probing, action-oriented questions.

After all, there are few markets in which technology is moving as quickly as in higher education. Meanwhile, no market's customers have higher expectations, in my opinion, than the 18- to 22-year-old students and engaged professors have for their user experiences.

Collaboration is often thought of as a corporate application, but walk through any college campus. You'll find students sitting on the lawn, huddled in student unions, gathering wherever food is sold ... gathered around a phone. In many cases, they're just watching something from SnapChat, but they're also often collaborating about something related to their studies. In **Red Thread's** Boston office the integration firm uses a chameleon-like training facility that enables collaboration formats internally, but also serves to showcase evolving classroom formats to visiting higher education customers.

**Whitlock** cites collaborative learning and streaming as among its biggest focuses in the higher education market.

Students expect to be able to collaborate with a screen and they bring those expectations to the classroom or lecture hall.

Speaking of those physical lecture halls, they have a much different role than they once did. It's increasingly important for higher education integration customers to stream classroom content and secure classroom capture solutions. **Alpha Video & Audio** is a firm that leverages its strength in providing broadcast solutions to customers in other markets by solving higher education's evolving video needs.

**Synergy Media** is another example of a firm that brings tools that are important in other markets to help it solve university customers' needs. "In higher education, we've focused on innovation centers and distance learning facilities," says Bill McIntosh. "In the corporate space, we've found a niche in fast-growth tech companies that are very similar to the innovation centers we've been completed for universities. The ability to cross-pollinate between higher education and corporations looking to attract young talent has allowed us to successfully service both markets."

Additionally, universities are under-

standably focused on their mass notification emergency communication (MNEC) strategies.

Being a higher education integration firm requires being a jack of all trades, but one that provides specialized services in each one of those trades, says Tim Czyzak, **iVideo**. "We've developed a service offering in the higher education market where clients are recognizing that our company has an ingrained knowledge base for that market."



Whitlock cites collaborative learning and streaming as among its biggest focuses in the higher education market. Students expect to be able to collaborate with a screen.

**Southtown Audio Video** isn't a large firm but it benefits from the focus that is so essential in the higher education market. "Our strongest market is higher education as we have the largest state school within 30 miles from our location," says Heather Sidorowicz. "This provides us the opportunity to be hands on to provide the client with the right solutions. We are all about relationships."

Those relationships are extremely important, adds **IMS Technology Services'** Michael Shinn. "Our sales strategy is highly customer-focused. We take a complete design-build approach where we take on complete accountability for our design work and are the single point of coordination for all trades and customer. This minimizes or eliminates costly change orders." **CI**

Reported by Tom LeBlanc

## 4K Video Distribution

Without the Cost, Limitations, and Hassles of Proprietary Technology



ZyPer4K™ by ZeeVee is the only 4K solution today using off-the-shelf 10Gb Ethernet switching technology.

- Switches and distributes uncompressed 4K/UHD video
- Available in Fiber and CATx versions
- Unsurpassed scalability – no fixed input/ output restrictions



Any Source. Any Network. Unlimited Displays.

+1.347.851.7364  
zeevee.com