

# THE MIRROR

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By Mitch Reitman

## PPP Round Two

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) announced changes designed to reduce delays in the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) approval process. A significant number of applications have been held up by process and system issues stemming from additional validation checks put in place to flag potential fraudulent applicants.

Often the system didn't allow lenders to submit the documentation or directly address other errors, such as data mismatches, that were preventing otherwise acceptable applications from being approved. To address the concerns raised about the PPP process, the SBA said it would allow lenders to directly certify the eligibility of borrowers for first- and second-draw loans and would not require lenders to submit supporting documentation of borrowers with validation errors until they apply for loan forgiveness.

The changes are designed to speed up the flow of funds to PPP applicants while "maintaining the integrity" of the program, according to the SBA. The SBA also said it would create additional communication channels with lenders, including an immediate call with national lenders to brief them on the PPP platform's added capabilities.

Most of our clients are finding that their round 2 PPP loans are quickly approved and funded. If you are having issues, or would like assistance in the application process, please reach out to us.

*Mitch Reitman is the Managing Principal of Reitman Consulting Group, Inc. and is an inductee into the Electronic Security Hall of Fame. He can be reached at MReitman@Reitman.US.*



CAA outgoing President Tim Westphal was presented recognition on behalf of the Board of Directors and members by CAA Past President Roger Westphal.

## TMA's ASAP-to-PSAP Program Marks its 79th and 80th ECCs

The Monitoring Association (TMA) announced the addition of the 79th and 80th municipalities to go live with its expanding ASAP-to-PSAP program. Launched in 2011

*TMA, continued on page 8*

## New California Laws Affecting Alarm Companies

### CAA and Regional Chapter Webinar

An in depth look at new state laws affecting California companies in 2021. Includes update on AB 5 and new law requiring notice to rescind for seniors, status of the insurance market and risk management, and Q & A with industry experts.

### ZOOM Webinar

TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2021

11:30 am. – 12:30 p.m. (Pacific)

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### Presenters

- Lessing Gold, MSK, Partner, CAA Legal Counsel
- Rick Gombar, Bolton & Co., Executive Vice President
- Jeremy Mittman, MSK, Partner



Jeremy Mittman



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THE MIRROR

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## March Madness

For some of us, this stirs up excitement for the CAA SCHOLARSHIPS (see below). For some of us, this stirs up excitement for NCAA College Basketball Tournaments. For some of us, this stirs up excitement for the changing of the seasons. But this year, for ALL of us it, it is a grave reminder of what we have endured for the past year. If you or a family member have not been exposed to, or diagnosed with, the COVID-19 virus, you are the exception. This past year has brought many of us near the end of our wits with cabin fever, depression, confusion, incredible financial distress, and more. And now we are stumbling through the infancy of mass distribution of the vaccines. Hopefully, a turning point is in our near future...



By Mike Salk

Meanwhile, in all of this uncertainty, the CAA moves forward with programs that add value to our members and our communities. We are currently evaluating the possibility of having an in-person Palm Springs convention in May or June. If it is not safe to do so, we will be preparing an excellent online program. We are gathering the data and other information to allow us to make an educated decision and we will keep you posted.

As of the writing of this article, the 2021 California legislative process has begun and the deadline to submit new bills for consideration is closing in a few days. So far, the number of new bills submitted in the Assembly is 142 and in the Senate is 34. We would normally be walking the Capitol halls meeting with legislators to let them know how the proposed legislation will affect our industry, our clients, and our communities. Currently, our State Capitol building is closed due to the pandemic and we are not able to be there in person. You can count on our Government Affairs Committee lead by Dr. Shane Clary to deliver our message via phone calls, emails, and online meetings. We will be reporting our progress along the way.

### DO NOT MISS OUT ON THESE OPPORTUNITIES:

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Michael Salk

President, California Alarm Association



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## LEGISLATIVE WATCH

### \*PAC ALERT\*

## \$30,000 GOAL FOR 2021

*By Don Gilbert, Mike Robson, and Trent Smith*

The Political Action Committee (PAC) is an important part of the CAA governmental relations program. In past years, CAA has raised more than \$30,000 in its PAC to contribute to business-minded legislators. We want to establish this funding level as a goal for 2019 and encourage CAA members to contribute what they can to reach this goal.

As a reminder, PACs allow citizens with a common interest to join together to participate in the political process. Members of an industry association or employees of a company have an interest in supporting candidates whose philosophy is conducive to creating an environment in which their business can succeed. By donating to the company or association's PAC fund, employees or members help ensure that legislators will be elected who are interested in and responsive to the concerns of the company or industry.

## CAA PAC FUND CONTRIBUTIONS

The California Alarm Association has a very strong government relations program that works on the local, state and national level. In addition to the hundreds of hours of volunteer service from our members, we have a CAA PAC Fund which supports our interests in Sacramento.

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## *TMA, continued from page 1*

**“This is a seamless procedure allowing alarm companies to transfer alarm activations and the data associated directly to our computer aided dispatch system,” said Denise Spingler, Cayuga County 9-1-1 Administrator. “This allows for a more expedited dispatch of emergency services.”**

as a public-private partnership, TMA’s ASAP-to-PSAP service is designed to increase the accuracy and efficiency of calls for service from alarm companies to PSAPs.

“TMA’s ASAP-to-PSAP program experienced nice momentum in 2020 with a new annual adoption record of 18 ECCs across the country,” stated TMA President Don Young. “As the network of ASAP compatible ECCs continues to grow, those not yet using the service are learning firsthand from their



colleagues about the time and accuracy improvements that come with ASAP and therefore the enhanced capability for saving lives in the alarm response process. TMA remains proud to deliver this unique service to its members and accomplish their mission for providing professional monitoring capabilities to help better protect life and property in both residential and commercial settings.”

TMA welcomed its 79th ECC, the Cayuga County NY 9-1-1 Center and the 6th ECC in the state of New York to implement ASAP. Cayuga County first went live with Vector Security and

Rapid Response Monitoring. A second wave of companies including ADT, Amherst Alarm, Affiliated Monitoring, AT&T Digital Life, Guardian Protection, Brinks Home Security, National Monitoring Center, Protection One, Security Central, Tyco (Johnson Controls), Vivint, and Doyle went live with Cayuga County just days later.

“This is a seamless procedure allowing alarm companies to transfer alarm activations and the data associated directly to our computer aided dispatch system”, said Denise Spingler, Cayuga County 9-1-1 Administrator. “This allows for a more expedited dispatch of emergency services.”

The Paradise Valley AZ Police Communications Center is the 80th Emergency Communications Center (ECC) in the United States and 4th ECC in the state of Arizona to implement ASAP. Paradise Valley went live with Affiliated Monitoring, AT&T Digital Life, ADT, Alert 360, Guardian Protection, Brinks Home Security, National Monitoring Center, Protection One, Rapid Response Monitoring (plus A3 Smart Home), Security Central, Tyco (Johnson Controls), Vivint, and Securitas over a two day period in mid-December.

*Learn more online at [www.tma.us/asap/](http://www.tma.us/asap/).*

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### How COVID-19 Leads To 30 Million Solar Homes In 5 Years



By Tony Smith

Last month, we asked the question... "Is solar in the future for your company?" This month, we will try to give you some answers, but they may be different than you might expect.

There is a massive effort underway to create 30 million solar homes as part of our nation's recovery from COVID-19. On February 11, 2021 there was a public launch event of this initiative involving more than 225 organizations from around the country. Most of these entities are non-profit conservation related organizations. The intent, however, goes way beyond the Green aspect. This means jobs, good paying jobs, lower energy costs, and a head start on the transformation of our energy usage from fossil fuels to solar. If done properly, these benefits will accrue first to those who need them the most. 30 million solar homes are equal to approximately 25% of all our homes and would provide 5% of our energy requirements. It would lower energy bills by \$20 billion per year, helping families with the highest energy burdens. Putting solar on the rooftops puts money in their pockets. If we were to focus efforts on the low-middle income communities, that money would quickly circulate back into the economy. The net result would be a 1.5% reduction in annual U.S. emissions.

If this rooftop solar growth is going to happen it will have to include qualified electricians, roofing contractors, and yes, security alarm dealers. Vivint has already seen the light, but if you plan to be there when the Smart Home business really accelerates, you better be able to supply and protect the electricity that will fuel it. There will be a need to extend solar tax credits and provide cash grants along with new and existing solar financing initiatives. We foresee that the upgrading and rehabbing of existing homes will be more than bathrooms and kitchens, but solar rooftops, solar batteries, Smart Home devices, and monitoring all of those on your Smart Phone. The technology is already here... have you seen the roofing shingle that thinks it is a solar cell?

Here in California, the Big Boys, by that I mean unions and the major utilities, are all aflutter over a plan to place exceptionally large windmills

off the California coast and connect them with a 200-mile undersea cable to carry the electricity to various points along the coast. These are the same folks who built enormous gas generators and coal plants in other states, and who now must find a way to meet the California commitment to 100% clean power by 2045. Big, ugly, lesser efficient ocean wind turbines are purportedly able to generate electricity into the night, but no one seems to know how reliable that is. Battery power added to every rooftop solar unit will lessen the need for extensive high power grid transmission towers, which require significant maintenance and will continue to cause wildfires as long as they are there.

Governor Newsom has complicated the issue by setting a goal of 2035 to ban the sale of Oil-powered cars. That followed his pledge to fast-track the state's climate efforts after all the Northern California wildfires this past summer.

Bureaucratic politics will continue to play a major role in the decision making, but the move to rooftop solar is ongoing. The secret will be the incentives. If those incentives last for more than 5 years, there will be an excellent opportunity to put rooftop solar on virtually all of the homes in California and the west. In particular, if local utility districts and the big utilities begin installing rooftop solar, even if only reluctantly, we will not need offshore windmills or to continue the building of transmission lines.

Players in the alarm industry need to take a long term look at their companies and decide if they want to make the investment. The hiring and training of new employees, and the development of relationships with roofers and electricians will all take time. I like to think of the customer a few years from now and whether he wants to deal with a roofer, an electrician, or a qualified professional alarm dealer who will help him manage the process of adding solar and learning how to monitor and manage it.

*Tony Smith is a Past President of the CAA and a former member of the Board of ESA. He is the Founder, President and CEO of Security Funding Associates, a leading industry financial services firm. He may be reached at [tsmith@securityfundingsolutions.com](mailto:tsmith@securityfundingsolutions.com) or (855) 723-2229.*

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#### EDITORIAL

### You're Too Cool Not to Be in This Club

The California Alarm Association Technology Committee is looking for new members. We are a committee that is a cross section of the industry. With members coming from different perspectives from being national integrators to sole operators, monitoring centers, manufacturers, and even the occasional end user.

We have an open call for anyone who is interested in becoming a member of the committee. The commitment to serve on the committee is as little as joining an hour conference call on a monthly basis. There are added opportunities if you would like to become more involved in the publishing and presentation of our semiannual report. This report covers five to ten of the hottest technologies effecting the future of our industry.

Please reach out to the Technology Chair to request an invite to join today!

Deric Morrow - [Deric.morrow@amag.com](mailto:Deric.morrow@amag.com)  
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# ASSOCIATES NEWS

**UNITED CENTRAL CONTROL (UCC)** announced the retirement of 40-year industry veteran Sonny Sampson. Sonny began his career as an alarm installer and later made a transition into security distribution and finally into security sales where he realized his greatest potential. During his tenure, Sonny has been known for his extensive involvement with numerous security events along with several alarm associations across the country and he was named the "Security Person of the Year" by the Texas Burglar & Fire Alarm Association in 2017. "There's no doubt of the value Sonny brought to UCC," said UCC's Director of Dealer Services Ron Bowden. "Sonny has definitely left his mark of uncompromised commitment on many of our dealers, employees, and the security industry as a whole".

**UNITED CENTRAL CONTROL (UCC)** announced the promotion of Sarah Salazar to Account Executive. Sarah began her career at UCC as an alarm dispatcher. Through her hard work, dedication and commitment to upholding UCC's high standards, She has progressed through a variety of key positions at UCC over the past 20 years. Since 2014, Sarah has served UCC dealers as an Account Manager and conducted CE Training to hundreds of dealers through UCC's exclusive Grow Your Business ("GYB") program. In 2016 Sarah was awarded the False Alarm Reduction Association (FARA) W. Rex Bell Associate Member of the Year Award for her outstanding commitment and support. "I am extremely proud of Sarah and her important contributions over the past two decades," stated Teresa Gonzalez, President of UCC. "Her extensive knowledge, experience, and thorough knowledge of our company's solutions coupled with her direct relationships with our dealers made Sarah a natural choice for the position." For more information visit [TeamUCC.com](http://TeamUCC.com) or contact [kschultz@teamucc.com](mailto:kschultz@teamucc.com).

**DMP** now manufactures a wireless translator that allows alarm companies to upgrade their customers' existing wireless sensors, and do so without wasting a lot of time and money. The new 1100 Wireless



Translator is designed to translate various one-way, low-frequency wireless transmitters, specifically DSC — 433 MHz, • Interlogix — 319.5 MHz, • Honeywell 5800 — 345 MHz, and 2GIG Series — 345 MHz. Any one of these systems can

now be upgraded to DMP panels, receivers and software management tools. Also, the new translator is certified for commercial and residential smoke detection and is therefore compatible with life safety devices. For more information, contact Mark Hillenburg at [MHillenburg@DMP.com](mailto:MHillenburg@DMP.com) or visit [DMP.com](http://DMP.com).

For access-only applications, security companies can now get



exactly the features and functionality they need without wasting money on a more complicated system. **DMP's** new cloud-based X1 Series delivers a solution that's simple to program, fast to install, easy to use and most important, it's very reasonably priced. "If you're using Brivo, Prodatakey, OpenPath, Feenics or any other access control product, you owe it to your business to give the X1 a closer look," says Jon Adams, executive director of business development. "The X1 is uniquely designed

with combined features you can't find anywhere else." This stand-alone system offers network and cellular-based connectivity so customers' access control functions are never vulnerable to normal network outages. The X1's optional cellular module can be used as the primary or backup for an entire system to ensure constant communication with the cloud. Those who are interested in learning more about the X1 Series should call 877-757-4367 to speak with a member of DMP's dedicated X1 sales team or visit [DMP.com/X1](http://DMP.com/X1).

**OPTEX** is expanding its Intelligent Visual Verification solution by introducing a 12 Channel Visual Verification Bridge (Model: CKB-312). This powerful gateway is the new hardware device that allows security professionals to connect ONVIF compatible cameras and alarm sensors to the Cloud based Visual Verification Portal powered by CheKT. Aimed primarily to monitored alarm systems, the solution provides central station operators the ability to visually verify alarm threats within seconds, and respond accordingly. The solution allows the operator to share video alarm event with the site emergency contacts to validate

*Associates News, continued on page 14*

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**NEW!**



### OPTEX Bridge: 12 Channel Model

The new CKB-312 OPTEX Bridge is a 12 channel device that allows you to connect up to 12 cameras & sensors to create a visual verification option for your customers. It simplifies installations; no need to add multiple Bridges on medium size applications. For larger systems, multiple CKB-312 or CKB-304 can be used. The CKB-312 Bridge can elevate any standalone, self monitored security applications by utilizing a simple app on your smart phone.

### OPTEX Bridge: 4 Channel Model

Choose the CKB-304 OPTEX 4 Channel Bridge for easy and cost-effective visual verification. The 4 Channel OPTEX Bridge is a perfect choice for small to medium sized visual verification projects. You can use the 4 Channel Bridge for professional applications or as a standalone monitored security solution.

CKB-304



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# ASSOCIATES NEWS, continued



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or dismiss the alarm. The CKB-312 allows the integrator to pair up to twelve cameras with twelve sensors for visual verification of events. It simplifies the installation for larger sites using a single device to transmit twelve event driven cameras feeds. "The 12 channel Bridge perfectly complements the existing 4 channel Bridge and gives more options to the installer," says Rob Blair, CEO of Optex Inc. "Offering a cost-effective solution to add video to monitored alarm systems increases the benefits significantly to the end users. Integrators can confidently bring the security solution outside by adding external intrusion sensors to deter any break-ins/" For more information visit [www.optexamerica.com](http://www.optexamerica.com) and [www.chekt.com](http://www.chekt.com)

**POTTER ELECTRIC SIGNAL COMPANY** announced the hiring of Tim Baechle to the position of Senior Vice President of Operations and Supply Chain. Baechle is joining Potter after previously serving as Vice President of Fulfillment, Inventory, and Logistics at Clarios in Milwaukee, WI. Prior to his time at Clarios, He is taking over for the current Executive Vice President of Global Operations & Supply Chain, Jon Veldman, who will be moving into a part-time role with Potter later in the spring. Gerry Connolly, Chief Executive Officer at Potter, said, "Jon has done an exceptional job updating our operations and supply chain functions. Under his leadership, our operations and processes have improved dramatically, and we are grateful for his time and dedication over these past three years. I am very excited that we have hired an excellent successor for him in Tim Baechle, whose operations expertise and focus on manufacturing excellence will be a great asset to Potter in its continued growth."



**TANE ALARM PRODUCTS** adds two New Wireless Door & Window Alarm Contacts, and an Interior PIR Motion Detector to our product assortment. Our New TWC 345R Wireless Door & Window Alarm Contacts are compatible with most Honeywell® and 2GIG® systems. Our New TWC 319.5R Wireless Door & Window Alarm Contacts are compatible with most Interlogix® and Qolsys® systems. Our New TWC PIR345 Wireless Interior PIR Motion detector, compatible with most Honeywell® and 2GIG® systems, is FCC and ISED certified for installations throughout the USA and Canada. Since 1984 Tane Alarm Products has been a leading manufacturer and distributor of the highest quality hard-wired alarm contacts to alarm installers, distributors and integrators located throughout the world. Our Tane alarm contacts are designed and engineered to American standards, and shipped from either our headquarters in New Hyde Park, NY or from our wholly American owned and managed factory located in Suzhou, China. Our products are featured in advertisement in this magazine or visit [WWW.TANEALARM.COM](http://WWW.TANEALARM.COM) or call 516-328-3351.

**ALARM LOCK SYSTEMS**, a division of **NAPCO Security Technologies, Inc.**, announced Peter Lowenstein as the new Alarm Lock Vice President of Sales. Peter comes to Alarm Lock with a proven track record of driving sales and growing revenue in all facets of locking, including distribution and other top manufacturers in security and access control. Peter will be responsible for energizing and driving sales in the Alarm Lock Division, overseeing the Alarm Lock sales team of Regional Sales Managers, and Independent Reps, reporting to Stephen Spinelli, SVP of Sales for all NAPCO divisions. Based in Arizona, Peter's accomplished career includes 20-years in sales management with 18-years in the security industry and a B.S. from Arizona State University. Feel free to reach out to Peter Lowenstein at [PLowenstein@napcosecurity.com](mailto:PLowenstein@napcosecurity.com) or cell 631-263-4049.

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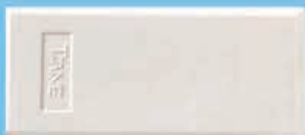
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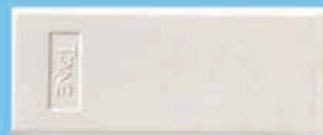
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*William Watson, President*

IEAA is a professional association of alarm companies and leading industry specialists, focusing on bringing together the best resources possible for the mutual benefit of all members and associates. It is our goal to bring knowledgeable people together as a resource to better protect your business and your customers' safety. Please make time to come out and be a part of what I believe is the future of the alarm industry in California. Professional, Beneficial, Informational.

### IEAA Membership

If you would like to become a member or have any suggestions on ways to increase our membership, please us a call at 800-559-9060.



## GREATER VALLEY ALARM ASSOCIATION

*Joe Castro, President*

### GVAA MEETINGS

Our meetings are held at Custom Electronic Supply, 1324 Dupont Court, Manteca 95336 and they start at 11:30 a.m. GVAA meetings are held on the second Thursday of every third month (once a quarter) at the above location. Please contact Joe Castro at 209-384-3305 or by email at josephc@alarmwatch.com for more information.

## GLASAA

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*David Michel, President*

New members are always welcome at GLASAA. Every local company in our industry should attend our meetings. We always have great people and informative topics. This is a fantastic opportunity to network with your peers and industry experts and to discuss what's going on in the business.

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## EAST BAY ALARM ASSOCIATION

*Tim Westphal, EBAA President*

### EBAA Meetings

For questions, please reach out to Treasurer Deric Morrow 510-432-8130 [deric.morrow@amag.com](mailto:deric.morrow@amag.com).

RSVP to 800-437-7658 or [info@caaonline.org](mailto:info@caaonline.org).

### Richmond Ordinance

Alarm users are required to have an alarm permit, and failure to obtain one will result in a \$250 fine to BOTH THE ALARM /MONITORING COMPANY AND ALARM USER. Permits can be obtained now by the alarm user or alarm company online here: [www.crywolfservices.com/richmondca/](http://www.crywolfservices.com/richmondca/). Click on "new Users" for the permit application. The permit fee is \$30 for a two-year alarm permit. Renewals will be the same fee and term. A list of your newly installed, and newly cancelled alarm customers must be submitted on a monthly basis to [richmondca@publicsafetycorp.com](mailto:richmondca@publicsafetycorp.com).



*Deric Morrow, President*

### SVAA Information

If you are not on our e-mail list, please contact Deric Morrow at 510- 921-3987 or [deric.morrow@jci.com](mailto:deric.morrow@jci.com). It is so important to get involved with your local associations more than ever and to keep up to date on all the new information.



## ORANGE COUNTY ALARM ASSOCIATION

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### OCAA Officers

President .....Elizabeth Courtney, Beacon Security  
Vice President.....Lisa Beale, American Alarm Systems  
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### CITY OF IRVINE PERMITS

The City of Irvine requires all alarm users to register their systems with a no fee permit. Alarm users may obtain an alarm permit application at the Irvine Police department website at [www.irvinepd.org](http://www.irvinepd.org). The City also offers quarterly Alarm Awareness Classes to help defray the cost of false alarm fines.

For more information about OCAA activities, contact the OCAA office at 800-437-7658 or email [OCAAlarmAssoc@aol.com](mailto:OCAAlarmAssoc@aol.com). Visit our new website at [www.alarmassociation.org](http://www.alarmassociation.org) for meeting information and registration forms, training opportunities, members list and a whole lot more.





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## GOLDEN GATE ALARM ASSOCIATION

Paul Wassem, President

**Meetings to be held at:** Chevy's Fresh Mex, 141 Hickey Blvd,  
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### Meetings 2020

For further information, contact the CAA at [info@caaonline.org](mailto:info@caaonline.org) or  
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### City of San Diego Permit Process

The San Diego Security Association and SIAC have been working cooperatively with the City of San Diego to assist with their fire alarm program, and now their burglar alarm program. The police are requesting alarm companies to submit their active burglar, panic and holdup alarm customer lists to the San Diego Police Department. The preferred method is to send your excel customer list electronically by email to Hilda Gonzalez-Reed at [hgonzalezreed@pd.sandiego.gov](mailto:hgonzalezreed@pd.sandiego.gov). If you have any questions, please contact Hilda Gonzalez Reed at [hgonzalezreed@pd.sandiego.gov](mailto:hgonzalezreed@pd.sandiego.gov) or 619-531-2247. Visit our website [www.sandiegosecurityassociation.org](http://www.sandiegosecurityassociation.org).

The San Diego Police Department Permits Division reminds all alarm companies that they are required to have a valid alarm permit for the premise being installed, prior to the installation of an intrusion or fire system. The alarm company is responsible for obtaining or verifying the existence of an existing alarm permit for the premise. For information please contact SDPD Permits Division – Frank Dragula 619-531-2364 [Fdragula@pd.sandiego.gov](mailto:Fdragula@pd.sandiego.gov)



## SACRAMENTO AREA ALARM ASSOCIATION

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Mark Simpson, President

## MID-CAL



## MID CAL ALARM ASSOCIATION

Mike Tarin, President



## REDWOOD ALARM ASSOCIATION

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### Meetings

For questions about the association, please contact Sean Cooke at [scooke@allguard-systems.com](mailto:scooke@allguard-systems.com) or 800-255-4273.





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The NSA 2021 Youth Scholarship application is now available through the NSA website [www.nevadasecurityassociation.org](http://www.nevadasecurityassociation.org)/scholarships.

As with everyone, COVID-19 continues to wreak havoc on our meeting schedule. Keep an eye out for updates in your inbox. Contact us at [admin@nevadasecurityassociation.org](mailto:admin@nevadasecurityassociation.org) or check our website for membership applications.

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## CBFAA Had a Great Member Meeting in February!

Tatiana Abramek of Nation Monitoring Center was our Sponsor. She spoke to members about how NMC can provide companies with the latest monitoring technologies and great customer service.

#### Our Guest

Speaker was Lonny Chizen of Resideo.

He spoke to our members about the 3G/4G sunset; how it will affect

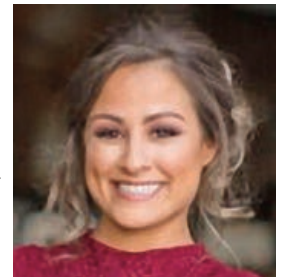
members and how they can set plans so their company can best handle the changes ahead.

CBFAA is accepting applications for its 2021 Youth Scholarship Program. Let your police and fire contacts know about this great

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Tatiana Abramek



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Make this the year you make a difference for your business and your industry by joining CBFAA! Your membership allows your voice to be heard. CBFAA has a new easy flat rate dues structure for 2021 that makes membership easy! Membership applications are available on our website [www.cbfaa.org](http://www.cbfaa.org). Due to Covid-19, the CBFAA is carefully considering its next meetings. Watch your inbox and newsletter for continued updates.

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## Digital Marketing Insights



By Brian Plant, Ignite Marketing Group

Digital marketing trends are constantly changing. Each year, there are new strategies being introduced as “the next big thing” every business needs to implement in order to maximize their online marketing budgets. Of course, the bottom line of all these strategies is to improve the business’s website visibility and online leads.

Here are some of the most current strategies for boosting online leads this year.

### 1. Optimize your email strategy.

Email marketing is nothing new – but it’s not on its way out, either. Marketing experts report that close to 80% of business owners have realized an increase in email engagement over the past year. That means businesses should keep email in their toolkits and optimize their current email efforts. Take a little time to revisit the text of your emails; is the message clear, concise and delivered in an engaging way? After making sure that it is, consider adding on these simple strategies: segmenting your emails to match your customer base, offering incentives, and creating discount codes. These are home runs when it comes to email strategy.

### 2. Rely on the AIDA formula.

AIDA is a timeless marketing formula that stands for “attention, desire, interest and action.” Using this model means grabbing the reader’s attention, creating an urge for your product or service, giving them more information to strengthen the connection, and presenting a solution to their problem. The fact is, the simplicity of the AIDA formula works as well today as it did when it was first coined in 1898. But like any online marketing strategy, it only works if you use it.

### 3. Incorporate video marketing.

Video continues to be a driving force for digital marketing. If you’re unsure about using it as a strategy, rest assured that video is here to stay. When Cisco released its annual Internet Report in 2018, there was a prediction that videos would make up 82% of consumer internet traffic by 2021. Now that we’re in 2021, it’s time to embrace that by experimenting with both live videos and produced, branded videos. Both are popular trends for video content that prove to be highly effective lead generation tools. You can optimize your video with relevant keywords to make it more visible (this is especially important on YouTube). But whether your video is going on YouTube or a more fluid social media channel, the key is to make your videos highly informational and solutions oriented.

### 4. Create innovative, unique content.

Content is like marketing currency. Blog and article content is good for generating traffic, but it’s the bare minimum. We’ve already addressed videos, so consider other content you can use to truly engage the audience: polls, quizzes and contests. Audiences enjoy voting, sharing opinions and other types of participation. But just as your videos should be purpose-driven, this content does too. Make sure all these engagement opportunities are relevant to your business. ROI should always be the end game.

### 5. Distinguish marketing from branding.

Sometimes, these two terms are used interchangeably, but it can be a little misleading. From a consumer standpoint, your brand is not your product or service; it’s everything you use to present your business to the public. That means your logo, website design and messaging. In other words, branding is how the audience will perceive your business. Marketing is what you use to reinforce your branding efforts; they enhance your brand’s message and build the audience you will present your branding to. In 2021, effective digital marketing is less about promoting a product or service, and more about building the audience that will come to know your brand.

### 6. Try using local services ads.

Similar to Google ads, local services ads (LSAs) are pay-per-lead ads that appear at the top of Google search results. Although they’ve been an option since 2017, LSAs took some time to catch on. Now, they are a great way for service providers in the home improvement space to reach a local audience of qualified leads. With LSAs, you can set a weekly budget based on the average amount of leads you expect to receive. As you are served the leads, you can accept or dispute them based on their usefulness. If successful, the leads are credited back to you later. LSAs are great to try if you are using an established marketing strategy and ready to try something new.

### 7. Update your SEO.

Search engine optimization is more important than ever when it comes to making your website visible. If it’s been a long time since you adjusted your SEO strategy, now is the time to revisit it. For example, Google now differentiates between search and intent. When someone enters a queries, Google can now tell when the user is searching for a service provider versus a job. By segmenting queries, you want to rank for and competing for the terms your competitors are using, you can make a big difference in your SEO.

Trends change, but one thing remains true: Simple digital marketing strategies still work. Begin incorporating these now, and you can see major improvements in your digital marketing ROI throughout 2021.

Brian Plant is Founder/CEO of Ignite Marketing Group and can be reached at 877-655-3779, ext. 1. or bplant@igniteleads.com.



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