

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It's September; autumn and cooler weather arrives, football season kicks off, school is back in session, and everyone is preparing for Q4. Yes, believe it or not two-thirds of 2019 is gone and all important Q4 is 30 days away.

At the recent RTO World Convention and Trade Show, both dealers and vendors were very forward on product and marketing for the coming months. It was the perfect venue and time to place orders for products at extremely good prices. It was also the perfect place to look for new items to offer customers this upcoming holiday season. Dealers networked and discussed what was working and shared many ideas to increase business the balance of this year. For those that could not attend, you truly missed **opportunities to help your company. I encourage you to attend next year's Meeting of the Minds in February as well as RTO World in August.**

Per the below article, I want to sincerely thank Karl Wicker for the fifteen plus years he has served our members and vendors. He is a dedicated staff member and I am very appreciative to have him be my right hand guy and to put up with me all these years. Hope to see many of you this month at State meetings in Oklahoma, Florida, and Ohio. Enjoy the cooler weather and have a wonderful September!

— Dennis

TRIB GROUP HONORS KARL WICKER ON HIS 15TH YEAR

If you were at RTO World in Louisville, you were on hand to congratulate Karl Wicker who received a beautiful engraved crystal wine decanter to celebrate his 15th year working for TRIB Group. I asked Karl a bit about his history with TRIB, and what experiences he remembers most.

So tell me about how you started at TRIB Group? I worked for a company that was an associate of AVB/ Brand Source specializing in high end audio/video and custom install

for home product distribution. We with Brand Source started Home Entertainment Source which is now the Prosource division of Brand Source. Brand Source purchased that company and absorbed the management to their headquarters in California. I was retained as a contract sales manager for the Southeast sec-



Calendar of Events

Oklahoma Rental Dealers Meeting
September 10—11
Tulsa, Oklahoma

Florida Rental Dealers Annual Meeting
September 17—18
Tampa, Florida

Ohio Rental Dealers Assoc. Midwest Training Expo
September 24—25
Columbus, OH



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CURRENT MEMBERSHIP

190

"The game of life is a lot like football. You have to tackle your problems, block your fears, and score your points when you get the opportunity."

-Lewis Grizzard

Karl's Korner

Transitions

I watched Andrew Luck announce his retirement from football. It was tough seeing him get through it; the words seemed strained. Here after most of his life the thing he had been doing, that he enjoyed doing, was at an end. He was experiencing the anxiety of transition. After 20 years, I recently retired from my job as a staff singer at a local Episcopal church. Before that I sang at the Metropolitan Opera as an auxiliary chorus member, church staff singer in New York and with the Atlanta Symphony Chorus under a world-renowned conductor. At 63 it was time to stop singing at the professional level. It was increasingly difficult to get my **voice to the control as I'd been accustomed.** I was beginning to sound

like an old man; something I promised myself I'd stop when I had come to singing like that. The transition has been tough, but I am good with my decision. Luck has **his degree in engineering, and I'm** sure there will be other things to keep him occupied. I do high end audio recordings of orchestras, ensembles, choirs and such in my outside of TRIB Group time. I have plenty to keep me connected to music. You see transitions need something to transition to; something to keep you engaged and relevant, (at least relevant to yourself). So, as many of us go through transitions; be it retirement, a career move or personal situations remember to leave yourself something to transition to, something that keeps you engaged and connected.

Karl Wicker Continued....

tor of the country. After about a year Home Entertainment Source reorganized and I was without **work. One of TRIB's vendors** who also worked with Brand Source heard of a new position with TRIB Group and the job was in Lawrenceville, 7 miles from where I lived. I met with Dennis and then with the board president Cynthia Baber-Strunk and was hired.

How has the group changed?

When I started there were 80 or so member companies. The major means of communication was snail mail and fax. The first order of business for me was to gently nudge our membership into receiving information by email (about half of our members did NOT have email). Also, we transitioned from doing quarterly reports by hand and receiving them by mail or fax to doing them

online. We've since grown to about 190 companies and management of communications could not exist without email and social media.

What were some of your favorite shows over the years? I think my favorite show was in San Antonio, TX. Our gala reception was a ranch where we attended a rodeo and our then president John Spangle rode in on a horse at the opening of the show.

What do you enjoy most about working at TRIB? The people of TRIB Group, members and vendors. **I've enjoyed the conversations and the comradery.** I've grieved when members and vendors have passed away and have celebrated when there has been recognition of members and vendors with awards and acknowledgement of achievement.



The Winter Market will be here before you know it, and your inventory of furniture may need a refresh. Once again TRIB Group will be hosting at the Las Vegas Market our annual Think Tank meeting. **If you have never attended a market, it's a spectacular buying experience.** Our vendors showrooms in this venue offer a the best chance to see the full line of available product. Additional details will be available soon.

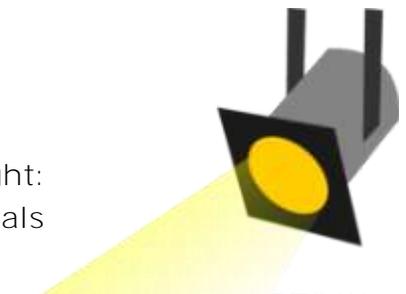
Blackmon's Furniture and Appliance named BrandSource's Southeast Dealer of the Year

Blackmon's Furniture and Appliance of El Dorado, Ark., was named the 2019 BrandSource Dealer of the Year for the Southeast Region on August 25 at the BrandSource National Convention & Expo at the Gaylord Texan in Dallas. Co-owners Ken and Dolores Blackmon were honored at the buying group's annual awards ceremony, which was held amid the hoopla of its four-day convention.

Family-owned **Blackmon's offers a wide assortment** of premium furniture, appliances and home accents for every style, and all at affordable prices. The company operates out of two showrooms, in El Dorado and Camden, Ark., serving customers from South Arkansas to Northern Louisiana with a knowledgeable sales staff and same-day delivery and haul-away.

Now nearing its 25th year in business, **Blackmon's prides itself on being a name that customers** have come to trust for its exceptional service, great value and competitive prices. The BrandSource Dealer of the Year awards are presented annually to a member who has shown continued support of BrandSource and its direct suppliers.

Vendor Spotlight: Living Essentials



Two of the most frequent questions at RTO World in Louisville were: **"Where is Innovex" and "who is Living Essentials?"** Well they are both, they're the old known vendor and a new company with new products. Living Essentials has expanded from the patented easy assembly TV Stands and Consoles and debuted their new Motion Upholstery collection in Louisville. Many of our members got to touch and feel the new product and gave positive feedback.

Living Essentials is also excited to share the news about their new Savannah, GA warehouse. With the new warehouse they will be able to deliver product to member stores quickly and efficiently. In some cases, orders received on Monday can be delivered by Friday. In addition to the new motion product, they have added high quality mattress encasements to the product assortment. Contact: Andrew Perez: andrew@livingess.com



TRIB Group welcomes the following new members:

Ric Parker and
Becky Maples
Synergy Sales & Lease
d/b/a Modern Home
Greensboro, NC

Mike Weir
TUR Inc.
d/b/a Aaron's
Cortez, Co

Todd Wilkins
Fairway Leasing, LLC
d/b/a Aaron's
Crescent Springs, KY

Duffy Heath
Heath Investment Group, Inc,
d/b/a Aaron's
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