

B I L L B O A R D I N S I D E R

# IN THEIR WORDS

## OUT OF HOME

## EXECUTIVES TALK

## ABOUT OUT OF HOME

Billboard  
Insider

THE NATION'S  
PREMIER OUTDOOR M&A FIRM

UNPARALLELED RESULTS  
50 YEARS



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## ■ FOREWORD

When Billboard Insider asked me to write the introduction to this book, I reflected on the importance of their efforts to unify and inform the industry. While healthy competition is important, if you look closely at the comments provided by the contributors, you will note their pursuit of helping others to succeed. A rising tide lifts all boats and improving the collective ability of the participants in this space will help Outdoor continue to grow its market share amongst traditional media, and new age competitors alike. Billboard Insider tackles issues both large and small, and without their constant efforts, cohesiveness between operators may be limited to annual and semiannual association meetings.

As Vice President of Kalil & Co., Inc. and having sold tens of thousands of Outdoor assets over the years, I have been fortunate to work with and personally know most of the contributors to this book. Whether it is helping operators grow their business, and/or assisting them in realizing the fruits of their labor in a divestiture, we are elated to see their desire to continually improve their craft. Having seen many of them in action during critical negotiations, I assure you there are individuals who pass along tips in this book that would be titans of any industry they chose and learning from their invaluable experience is a major advantage for those nascent to the space. Having all that experience in one place to benefit the reader is like handing them a time machine – where they can gather decades of experience simply by reading a book.

Utilizing this knowledge, an operator will immediately be able to upgrade the value of their assets. Whether it is expense compression, digital upgrades, or streamlining their operations, increasing the value of one's assets is paramount to their end game. Be it next year or next decade, the better the asset, the more attractive it will be at sale, or the better shape it will be in when handed off to the next generation.

Thank you again to Billboard Insider for amalgamating this valuable collection of knowledge and insight. We do not see this type of collaboration in the other sectors we serve and are certain it will benefit all who partake.



Max Drachman  
Vice President  
Kalil & Co., Inc.

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## ■ INTRODUCTION

Insider loves the Out of Home (“OOH”) advertising industry. Even more, Insider loves the people in the OOH advertising industry. In considering a topic for this, our second book, Insider thought back to the steady flow of phone calls we receive. The most frequent call is either from people wanting to enter the OOH industry or employees in the industry interested in taking an ownership role.

This book will educate OOH investors and entrepreneurs in the industry on best practices for running an OOH company. Who better to learn from than the leaders in our wonderful industry who already have found success?

Because we never stop learning, this book also can help the experienced OOH operator who wants to learn from what other OOH companies and leaders have to say about the industry and their own businesses.

Many of the comments in this book come from the “Company of the Day” interviews Billboard Insider conducted over the past four years. We added comments from Billboard Insider podcast interviews and public utterances of OOH executives at investor conferences.

Digital billboards are the biggest change to hit the OOH industry in 100 years, so we devote several sections to operator opinions on digital signs and digital sign manufacturers.

The longest section in this book consists, appropriately, of operators telling Insider how they got into the OOH business. They have some amazing origin stories. If you want to take a short course on OOH read John Arnold, Larry Roberts and Justin Powell in Lessons from a Career in Out of Home. John Arnold and Larry Roberts are successful experienced OOH operators and Justin Powell is the among the best of the new breed of young OOH entrepreneurs.

The topics in this book are arranged alphabetically so you can find what you’re looking for quickly. You also will find an index that identifies companies and individuals who provide comments in this book and the page on which their comments/quotes are found.

Insider extends a huge thank you to all of the OOH operators for generously sharing their knowledge. We learn from each other and we are better for it.

**Dave Westburg and John Weller**

Co-Publishers

Billboard Insider

## ■ ACQUISITIONS

### **Mike Wolverton, Arrington Outdoor**

1. Have a good operating platform for running your business. Our opportunities for growth have been enhanced by using Apparitix to run our business.
2. Consider bringing good people on board with the acquisition if possible. We were able to do this with the Faris acquisition and it has helped not only the with the integration but the success of our existing plant.
3. Fill in your existing footprint through acquisitions. Even if it is more costly it is more preferable than cherry picking available inventory outside of your existing market, in my opinion.

### **Jim Matalone, former CEO Ashby St Outdoor.**

First thing, you want to research and know what the market is paying and be realistic in your assessment of your value... Knowing what you're worth. Objectively understanding market multiples for companies of your size and your similar markets and then understanding who made purchases like that and why they made them... A new component is, if you're a big digital player, understanding the age of your digitals. That becomes a factor now... If you have a lot of digital revenues and your digital boxes are starting to age... you're in the second half of the lifespan, you're six years into those things, that's going to impact your deal because someone buying you is going to have to reinvest that capital...



### **Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor**

Yes of course, we are always looking for opportunities. I built my first sign in 2008 so I'm not nervous about investing when times are hard. We are very conservative with our purchases and have kept our debt/income ratio very low to allow us to aggressively build and purchase new assets even during the times we are having now. In a purchase, we typically are looking for [more] problem assets that take a little extra work to figure out and not necessarily the pretty ones that require a high multiple to purchase.

### **Jesse London, TierOne Media**

It was a long process... The idea was to look for businesses or plants which were well run. There were good client relationships, there was good advertising, a good business and one that, let's just say, it had goodwill locally. I've been fortunate to have found those. Then the idea was to get them at a favorable multiple. I was never in the mood to pay too much for a business. I've been very keen on the multiple. We tried to keep it on the lower side but recognize that good assets don't go in the 7's (Insider's note: seven times cash flow. Valuations of OOH businesses frequently are described as a multiple of the operating cash flow of the business, in other words — how money moves into and out of your business. It is common for OOH businesses to sell for seven times operating cash flow.). So, you have to be very judicious and really find businesses that were priced right. But most important, I think, was the opportunity to grow. I can't envision building a business and then saying I'm going to do this much better on rate and occupancy. There really had to be opportunity for development or conversion and the businesses that we bought all had that...We bought in really good stable markets...For instance the Florida operation, which was K2, which is Pensacola and the emerald coast – Ft. Walton and Destin – this area has first of all fantastic tourism. We're not talking about get on a plane and fly here tourism... Solid tourism that really did not miss a beat this summer. There's really an amazing military presence there. There are a number of bases around the area which just brings a level of stability to the market... I think the South and the Southeast are really robust. Montgomery, we bought Mashburn Outdoor...extremely thriving economy. Really jumping. Tremendous retail. High end housing. Country clubs... Being that it's the state capital there just seems to be a big buzz and a lot of business. And the third market, Mobile... we basically bought a lot of development there. The business is healthy. The market looks healthy. There's a lot of activity. There's a lot of opportunity for building. I come from New York. There's no such thing as spacing that allows for more permits...



### **Pat O'Donnell, YESCO Outdoor**

I looked the other day and I know that we've done 63 acquisitions over the years. We approach it the same way for a large or a small transaction. Each department, our sales department, our real estate department, operations and administration... has a checklist associated with each new piece of inventory... It's not in the system until all of those things happen... The physical aspect is very important to us. Branding is very important to us. We want the best possible looking inventory. It's the idea that each structure is an easel for our customer's artwork, and that easel needs to be well-maintained, well-lit, branded correctly. That's really important... The other thing is the personal connection. We want to get to know the landowners and customers. We're looking for a long-term relationship.

## **AUTOMATED SALES PLATFORMS**

### **Kevin Gleason, Adams Outdoor**

Adams Outdoor places a premium on human contact. We understand and support the industry's focus on bringing a more sophisticated and intelligent data base/buying platform to buyers enabling more productive buying decisions. We also recognize a "universal currency" would be helpful in easing the buying process and we feel Geopath is leading the charge on both of these issues. I just hope we don't ignore the intelligence of the OOH sales rep as it relates to their market expertise in this process. Nothing replaces the idea of a buyer and seller sitting down and having a discussion on how to meet an advertisers' expectations and using their collective intelligence to formulate creative solutions.



### **Claude Dicks, Allison Outdoor**

We have Blip and are part of the IBO marketplace through Apparitix... Adomni – we've been hooked in with them for about two weeks now and Vistar we're adding... So far Blip has been our main source... we've been working with them for about two years. We've seen small and moderate revenue from them which certainly does not hurt... Even if its \$125/month when you space it out over 29 billboards it adds to the bottom line.

### **Mike Wolverton, Arrington Outdoor Advertising**

I can't say that it is an important contributor at the moment, but we are still in the infant stages of using programmatic. I think it holds the potential to be much more important especially as static boards become available via programmatic and our inventory becomes more accessible to buyers. We have been working with Blip for several months and connected with Adomni recently.

### **Beau Sonnier, Bass, Ltd.**

We have been with Blip for a year now and we are happy with their program. It has freed up time for our sales team to focus on closing some of the larger accounts. We also plan on completing the transition to Apparitix for January 1.

### **Joe Mancuso, Bella Outdoor**

The addition of Blip to our digital has started to payoff. The Blip program has added revenue and clients from a national level that a small business cannot access.

### **Charlie McIntyre Bullfrog Outdoor**

I will be connecting to the Adomni and Vistar platforms this spring. I don't know if this will increase revenue since my two digital units are located in towns with a population of 10,000 or less and all of the sales are local. I do look forward to the day when programmatic buying is done on static billboards since 99% of the outdoor inventory is static. My friends in larger markets are satisfied with the revenue they are receiving. I do worry about a race to the bottom with rates, that will shake out in the end and we will see.



### **Larry Roberts, Boardworks**

We used Blip with some pretty impressive results. I hear of different platforms as well, but it is very confusing to understand who does what and how. Almost like the Betamax or VHS choice back in the day. It will be interesting to see how it plays out.

### **Brad Tooley, Choice Media**

We have implemented Blip on a few of our boards and have some optimism about this model. We are experimenting with Fuze and looking into Apparitix, but have not made a commitment.

### **Len Carson, DC Marketing**

We partnered with Blip more than two years ago. They have been completely honest about their business model, what we as the supply side platform should expect and in the last year we have seen a significant uptick in national and local businesses using Blip on our boards. And with their recent partnering with Vistar and Adomni, we look forward to the increase in business from this platform.

### **Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor**

Right now, it's a little bit of incremental revenue for us. I'm using Blip. I really like the system that they have. It's really easy to upload ads from my phone. I'm on the go a lot trying to manage all this – myself and one other person – so the ease of their software, the system that they use is great. I believe in the future that's going to be a huge amount of revenue for our industry...

### **Michael Scheid, Image Media**

IMAGE MEDIA is currently connected with AdQuick, DoMedia, and Adstruct. We're very close to implementing the IBO Fuze system by Apparitix.

### **Sean Reilly, Lamar Advertising**

I have tasked our team that's in charge of this – Ian Dallimore and Ross Reilly – with...two rules: number one, control our CPM, and the industry needs to think about this in a rigorous way. We don't want to let our inventory be subject to a pure auction environment, which is what led to a lot of consternation for the digital publishers four or five years ago...number two is make sure that it is an incremental new dollar...This is about growing the pie and if we're going to grow the pie we need to go after that digital pot that otherwise wouldn't come to us... These digital channels actually cost Lamar more than our traditional channels of sales...



### **Maggie Welch, Media Choice**

We have been using Blip for some time. We enjoy the platform and the experience we've had with them. We hope to continue that great relationship!

### **Mike Fitzgerald, Railroad Outdoor**

Adquick.com is a great platform for managing billboard inventory. We use it to provide a map of our signs on our website as well as create email proposals for advertisers.

### **Dave Roland, Roland Digital Media**

We've used Blip for almost a year. We did make some money from several of our available spaces. But ultimately canceled it. The biggest drawback for us was the ads themselves. We rejected more ads than we approved because either the quality wasn't there, or the content wasn't something we were comfortable posting on our boards. We are probably a lot more conservative than most companies. We also struggled having enough open space to give them in our local market. We currently don't use any programmatic companies.

### **Randy Jackson, Venture Outdoor**

We have been using Blip for over a year. I am happy with the results but want to see more transparency. I know there are a lot of players in this space with somewhat different approaches and am interested to see how it shakes out over time.

### **Pat O'Donnell, YESCO Outdoor**

Blip has been an extraordinary partner in our digital business and is responsible for significantly improving our digital revenue. They are bringing a whole new group of customers to Out of Home. We are working to integrate additional programmatic providers going forward.

**Shannon Hollenkamp, Zalla Media**

We are certainly open to automated sales. We are more active on DQmedia and Adstruc, however. At this point, we will only use providers that allow us to maintain control of the slots. The automated solutions that want us to give up an entire spot are harder to consider. We are only one of two boards available for some 30+ miles, unlike just across the river in Cincinnati, we have no billboard forms in sight. We also only offer six advertising spots with weekly impressions over 380k and have several customers that buy out an entire year because of our location. To this end, we do our best to protect our category to exclusive customers. However, we are always willing to check out new opportunities to help sell our available space to the right customers.

**BENCHES, BUS SHELTERS AND STREET FURNITURE**

**David Gray, Creative Outdoor**



*Creative Outdoor Bus Bench*

We design and manufacture all of our street furniture with two objectives; they have to be efficient and inexpensive to maintain, and they must be durable so that they are aesthetically and structurally appropriate throughout the entire term of the contract with the City. Our products are so well designed, built and maintained, that many have served more than 20 years.

The street furniture advertising market across North America is very, very competitive. To compete, a firm must be very good at what they do including: municipal service, unit maintenance, and trash and recycling collection. All of this is in addition to serving the advertising client very well. Digital advertising has certainly had an impact on our marketplace and advertising clients are faced with a lot of interesting choices today.

**Jacy and Logan Gamble, Colorado West Outdoor**

We have 120 benches and 80 shelters in the Grand Junction market. We primarily sell in packages of 10 or more because we believe that is the best way to penetrate the market. There are some areas of town where we are not allowed to have billboards, but we are able to have bus benches and shelters. This allows us to ensure that we can reach all major traffic arteries.

### **Tony Tyler, Tyler Outdoor**

From a sales perspective, we are very fortunate to have such great products and placement. One of our long-time coworkers calls our Bus Bench and Shelter Displays, “curb-side billboards.” He says it’s the closest advertising to the vehicle. Transit sales is like bubble gum, you have got to sell a great deal of it to move the needle.

## **■ CANNABIS**

### **Tom Townsend, Emerald Outdoor**

The legalization of marijuana has had a positive dollar impact on the outdoor business. Marijuana stores in Washington State have legal limitations on advertising but outdoor is one of their options. We have taken some marijuana business but have turned some down. My biggest concern is that the industry takes too much marijuana business and the local and state governments see that and enact prohibitions on marijuana advertising on billboards similar to what happened to the tobacco industry 20 plus years ago. I really believe the industry needs to monitor itself so that won’t happen. That will not be good for either industry.

## **■ COLD WEATHER**

### **Joe Mancuso, Bella Outdoor**

Outdoor labor in the winter presents challenges. For one thing productivity goes down as the temperature drops. Bulky clothing, gloves and boots make you slower and less deft. Changing vinyl’s in Montana winter weather can be challenging. At -5 below zero a vinyl will crack along the folds and joints instead of unfolding it just splits into squares. At -25 below it just shatters. At those temps it is dangerous to be outside and it is very hard on equipment. We tell our customers we will have you installed as soon as weather permits us to effectively work outside.

### **Mike Mortenson, Mortenson Outdoor**

Cold weather is more of a hassle for the vinyl hanger than the actual vinyl. Sure, it’s stiffer, but it is amazing what a little sun can do to help the vinyl stretch. Sure, mornings when it is 25 below zero, is a morning when I wish I was an accountant, but that’s fine. I usually put billboards up in the early morning or late evening due to the wind and fabricate during the day.

## ■ CORPORATE CULTURE

### **Sean Reilly, Lamar Advertising**

We have senior leadership that's incredibly well tenured...for most of them, their very first job they ever got was as an account executive with Lamar. And beyond the regional tier of leadership if you look at our 200 general managers around the country, their average tenure is over 15 years with the company. So how does that happen? It starts with a great corporate culture...Number one is the golden rule. Treat other people like you'd like to be treated...Another thing is we should leave it better than we've found it. By this I mean the communities we operate in. We are part and parcel of the communities we operate in. It's a privilege of us to be part of...that landscape. We need to give back. We do that daily, whether it's volunteering or whether it's putting up public service copy...Lamar does almost \$150 million/year in public service copy...That leads to people wanting to be part of a company that they know cares... One other thing we do is we rigorously promote from within. When a position comes open in Lamarland it's going to be filled by somebody within Lamarland....

### **Pat O'Donnell, YESCO Outdoor**

At YESCO our recruiting efforts are always focused at adding employees who are willing to give what we call the gift of employment. We want people who are looking for a career where they become part of our family, hopefully for a lifetime. Often individuals who come from the most impoverished background will be the people who seek that kind of opportunity.

## ■ CREATIVE

### **Claude Dicks, Allison Outdoor**

That was a fun time...I was on a family vacation a couple thousand miles away when everything hit. Our policy has typically been with billboards that might be stretching the bounds...to always run it up the flagpole. Unfortunately, that one never went up the flagpole...it went up and got on social media and started making the news...It was a gun store in Murphy North Carolina and had the picture of the freshmen congresswomen...that started making news. I'm getting texts from my friends saying "hey, is that you guys on the news." I knew we had an issue at that point...We started getting inundated with emails and phone calls for about three days straight. At one point we had to turn off the phones because we were getting so many phone calls...We had been talking with the gun owner. He wanted us to change the billboard very quickly after it went up...I decided on our Facebook page to make a post saying that the board was coming down...We were working on new artwork in the meantime...It took a couple days to get the artwork straightened out...We were squarely in the middle which is not the place you ever want to be like this and were getting beaten up on both sides... The majority of the negative comments on both sides of the aisle were coming from people outside Murphy North Carolina and western North Carolina...Any politically motivated speech has to be run by us first and then we will apply the different steps that we have...The gun store owner had been working with us for five years...we had to have a good conversation about what's going to be going up in the future. He's thrown out some ideas and then we've taken the idea and tweaked it a bit. So far, it's working. We haven't made too much news since then so hopefully we're doing things better.



### **Dick Rhodes, Dusty's Outdoor**

Setback board copy tips: large print, simple, bold.

It is all about controlling the copy. The letters have to be at least four feet tall and the CARDINAL rule of a billboard is not to have more than 7 words in the ad copy. My billboards are easily read and desired because they are not bunched up with a lot of other billboards or on-premise signs distracting the drivers' attention.

### Tom Townsend, Emerald Outdoor



Craig Swapp has been a long-term client and shipped us new copy to install. They had 6 different designs. We put them up randomly. The Church who sponsors the Easter Drama is also a long-term client. We installed them a couple days later and within the 24 hours we got a call from Craig Swapp. We moved the Drama board immediately and Swapp was pleased we responded so quickly. It was completely random and they understood that. The positive was that it got back to them quickly and it proved people were seeing their ads.

### Ike Wingate, Wingate Media

We have a content policy that is family friendly. Are the ads family friendly? The litmus test is if I'm driving down the road with my kids and we see an ad am I going to have an uncomfortable time explaining this to them...that is not a place where people should have to worry as I drive down the road and I see something that creates an uncomfortable conversation that I didn't want to have for a couple more years... We're not pruders. One of the things about billboards is that you can use comedy and provoke thoughts, but you can do it in a positive way...We have to be careful right now as billboard operators because there's a big trend "I'm going to go get a billboard and make a really polarizing statement on it and I'm going to get a ton of earned media out of it. The local station is going to cover it and I'm going to get all this extra publicity because I'm willing to be polarizing." We are being used. We are pawns in their scheme. You've got to be careful about that... We got approached a couple years ago by a SuperPac that wanted to put an ad up that said The NRA Is A Terrorist Organization through the IBO. I'm for gun rights but I'm also for free speech. But we are not going

to put that on a billboard. That is just meant to polarize...people and we didn't want to be a pawn in that. So, they put up an ad up that said "End the NRA" instead. We didn't agree with the message, but it wasn't as polarizing. And what was funny is you put an ad up for one point of view and somebody with another point of view comes back and says I want to advertise as well...We picked up a local gun safe company that got on the other side of the board.

### Brent Porlier, Porlier Outdoor



Over the years we've dabbled in different designs for our available inventory, but historically, we've had the most success implementing consistency in our self-promo ads. In almost 30 years, we've had just three main "Ad Here" designs. The first were hand painted red, white, and grey designs, simply showcasing the words "Ad Here" and our phone number. We moved our headquarters in the midst of the digital printing evolution, so we revamped the layout to include a gradient background, our company colors, and our new phone number and web address. About seven years ago, we decided to freshen our brand further when high quality stock images became more readily available. We began using larger than life, colorful photographs in addition to our standard "Ad Here" verbiage. We've had a lot of fun with these. From a colorful parrot, a roaring lion, a dog with earbuds, and everything in between, you never know what or who you'll see hanging out on our signs. Fresh photos and a consistent layout, paired with an exceptional, high-quality print has assisted in building our brand, which we've carried through to our website. This has been instrumental in helping our potential clients link us to our inventory.

### Jim Moravec, Stott Outdoor

When people don't renew it's generally due to bad creative. If we engage people, they keep using it.

### Bart Thomas, Thomas Outdoor

There are hot potatoes. We probably won't run cannabis ads. We don't take ads for adult stores. On the abortion issue we chose not to take it either way. In Kansas we're very conservative. The landowners talk. We have a good reputation because we don't have those ads on our billboards.

### Ike Wingate, Wingate Media



This was in an election year. Feeling very similar to right now. The Republican convention was happening in downtown Cleveland. This movie called *God's Not Dead Two* was wanting to advertise... They were ready to go to installation and then the company decided to pull the ad because it was too incendiary. They thought it was too provocative. The ad said, "I'd rather stand with God and be judged by the world than stand with the world and be judged by God." There's a whole series of these movies put on by a company called Pure Flix. My family had seen the first one and liked it. I kind of thought it was ridiculous. Of all the offensive ads you could put up there they were pulling it because of that... I posted something on Facebook and a couple of my friends said, "why don't you just run ads for it." I thought, maybe I should. So, I reached out to the film... Two days later I got a call from a reporter for Foxnews.com asking all about it... Some local publications picked it up. I ended up writing an op-ed in a national publication. I got our friends in the IBO to jump on board. The ads were seen all over the country... It got all kinds of publicity.

## DIGITAL BILLBOARDS / ECONOMICS

### Scott Wells, Clear Channel Outdoor

Digital is about a third of our business now... It's higher in airports and lower in roadside... The reality is we're constrained on a regulatory basis... We just got permission to build another 11 digital signs in San Antonio. It actually took us a decade to get that approval... There are a lot of parties interested in this. When we do conversions, the typical economics are pretty compelling. Everyone always asks why you don't do more of them... It's about \$300,000 to convert a large sign. We typically see a revenue uplift of 4-5 times from what was on the sign before. We're seeing IRR's in the high 30's and low 40's...



The maintenance CapEx isn't that bad. The signs keep getting better. When we first started doing this, we thought we were going to get 7 years out of them and we're getting more than 10... there is CapEx but it's a lot less than when you convert them... conversion involves a more robust foundation, a more robust pole, and the head is a third of what the cost is.

### Sean Reilly, Lamar Advertising

The biggest difference is how we manage the real estate under our billboards. Under our total footprint the rent we pay landowners runs about 21%. Under our digital footprint it runs about 9%. So, the margin contribution is going to be your revenue minus your lease costs minus let's call it another 15%. So, your EBITDA contribution from a conversion is going to run about 75%... We oftentimes buy easements or we lock it in for the long term and fix the rent before we do a conversion.... We'll spend about \$180,000 to do a digital conversion. And on average you're probably converting a face that's doing about \$2,500/month in revenue. And when you convert it it's going to do \$14,000-15,000/month... The industry standard is 6-8 slots. Some of our competitors use an 8-slot model. We actually use both. It's a function of market size and demand. I think less is more.

Generation 1 expectation was 8 years useful life. We were able to stretch that to 10. Today we can get warranties in excess of 10 years. Our expectation to stretch that... The cost has leveled out for the foreseeable future until there's a technological change which replaces diodes.

The ROI's have gotten better because the cost has been coming down. When we started doing this, a 14 by 48 digital unit that lasted 7 years and didn't have the same resolution and used a lot more energy costs \$500,000... Today a 14 by 48 costs \$160,000-170,000, weighs a lot less, uses a lot less electricity, has a crisper picture... but I do think we've run the cost down about as much as we can.

**Jeremy Male, OUTFRONT Media**

We're converting pretty much every opportunity we can develop. We're looking to get a minimal IRR of 20%...Digital revenue as a % of our business is around 20%. When you look at other markets around the world digital revenues are 50%. So, I still think we've got some runway.

When we convert a billboard from static to digital, we typically get around 4x revenue from that billboard...We may have 2X rent...When you factor in the \$250,000 cost to convert, we will get great IRR's. We don't do anything unless it's going to be better than a 20% IRR.



**Matt Siegel, CFO, OUTFRONT**

Generally, we get a 4 times lift in revenue by converting from static to digital and our costs go up two times...The costs go up because we want to extend the lease when we do these conversions...and we're paying for more electricity...

**DIGITAL BILLBOARDS / LARGE VERSUS SMALL**

**Stephen Johnsen, Waller Outdoor**

I have two, back-to-back. And they're 10' by 20'... One of the requirements for our municipality was they had to stay pretty close to what their original on-premise sign ordinance said. That sign ordinance said 200 square feet... Second to that I had done quite a bit of research on 35 mile an hour speed zones. The 10' by 20'...was what was a trend... At a 35-mile speed limit you can read it... For me being in that business district, matching the ordinance, the cost, it all fell into place easily.

**Ike Wingate, Wingate Media**



*6'8" by 15' Lightking digital billboard owned by Wingate Media*

A lot of it comes down to the local regulations. Sometimes I come across regulations that say, OK if you're going to build over this size you're going to have to be 50 feet off the right of way... We've experimented with the small digital size in a case where I can get right up next to the road as long as I'm under a certain square footage... I've got great friends in the business that might say that's crazy... especially some of my friends that sell structures for a living. I understand their point of view. But the numbers would disagree with that. In some cases, you can build a great sign and still be under 100 square feet and be close to the road... We used Lightking in this particular case because of the way they light up. They don't do a triangulated pattern. They do them in a straight line. So, it made them better quality, better resolution than a 16 millimeter that was separated... I actually saw some other signs by the same manufacturer in person before we decided to buy... It's going to pay for itself in the first 12 months... Sometimes in business the obvious things aren't obvious. It comes down to can you get someone on there and keep them on there. If you're having to churn people constantly that takes time. What value does your time have? If I can build a smaller sign and get 80% of the revenue but always have it full... that's delivering the other 20% of value back to me in time.

## ■ DIGITAL BILLBOARDS / MANUFACTURERS

### **Claude Dicks, Allison Outdoor**

We just put our 28th and 29th Digital in the ground last Friday in Blairsville, GA. We are keeping fingers crossed we can get it powered up to get late September billing. We currently have 15 Digital's in NE. Georgia / Western North Carolina and 14 up in the Tri-Cities. We've invested heavily over the last 5 years. The bulk of our boards are Formetco and we have some Prismflex boards that we picked up in an Acquisition.

### **Nate Sterner, President, Apple Outdoor**

We use Daktronics, exclusively, and they have been a very good business partner to us. We have had the good fortune of working with some very talented and helpful people on their team. It's a common theme in the outdoor industry that these are high ROI units, but for the customer, who is our most important partner, these displays can be current, timely, flexible and provide alternative value adding another tool in their "advertising toolbox" for their varying marketing needs.

### **John Arnold, Arnold Outdoor**

We have three digital signs. Two from Watchfire and one from Formetco.

### **Doug Robertson, Atomic Enterprises**

Atomic operates a hybrid digital billboard network with equipment from various vendors including: Hyoco, Optec, NextLED and others. We have created single view scheduling platform using Omnivex's Moxie player and a home-grown system.

**John Barrett, Barrett Outdoor**



*Barrett Outdoor Daktronics billboard in Connecticut*

We started out using ADTI because they were the only ones doing 16 mil. We switched to Daktronics once they provided 16 mil. They're much better. My feeling is that there's a difference between what the eye sees and what the brain can distinguish... People would drive by my 16 mil signs and say they like them better although they didn't know why.

**Mark Becker, Becker Boards**

We use both Watchfire and Samsung/Prismview. Both have been great.

**Joe Mancuso, Bella Outdoor**

I use Watchfire... They are an outstanding organization and provide great service.

**Keith Howell, Blanning Outdoor**

Have 3 digital locations. We use Formetco and have been very happy with them. We plan to convert two of our new locations to digital. We are going to be careful with this because digital sign management is a lot of work!

**Danny Faulkner, BB Outdoor**

We are having our second Watchfire digital billboard installed next month.

**Dunkin Allred, Blackbelt Outdoor**

A close family friend, who was nice enough to share some advice, recommended that I give Formetco a call, so I did. I spoke with a couple of other manufacturers but ended up deciding on Formetco for my first project and each one since. We have had very few service calls on the F4X series that have been in service for three years now. We

just recently put up three of the new FTX series and have been very pleased with the performance of the boards. The folks at Formetco offer great customer service and are great to deal with.

We continue to purchase our digital boards from Formetco. They offer a great product and their service is second to none.

**Larry Roberts, Boardworks**

We currently have Formetco and Watchfire faces in service. Both companies are putting out a first-class product and both service teams are taking care of diagnostics and keeping the faces running and looking good. Monitoring, service, parts and service times are pretty important factors to think through when considering a digital manufacturer. Our last few purchases have been with Formetco and Britt McConnell and we are pleased with the product, support and customer service provided.

**Beau Burkett, Burkett Media**

I'll have 13 digital units in the air once these are done this week. 12 units are Watchfire and I have one Daktronics unit. I've been very happy with Watchfire and like how they cater to smaller billboard operators. Their online ignite software is very user friendly and any issue gets resolved immediately with their service team. Lastly, John Carter is awesome to work with on the sales end and always does everything in his power to get a deal done.



**Charlie McIntyre, Bullfrog Outdoor**

Formetco installed our digital. They have provided excellent customer service.

**Todd Sanders, Chicago Billboards**

We are still exclusively working with Watchfire. We are excited about the expansion of their marketplace to allow for more programmatic opportunities.

**Brad Tooley, Choice Media**

We built one of the first digital billboards in Texas (maybe the first) in our Waco market. We use Watchfire primarily but are also purchasing some Formetco. These are both great companies.

**Dave Goldberg, Compass Billboards**

Primarily WatchFire products. We have been very satisfied with the consistent quality and low maintenance.

**Eddie Saunders Jr, Comstor Outdoor**

We used Watchfire. We toured Watchfire and Daktronics. Watchfire just provided more references when it came to their happy customers that were having great experiences with their digital units. I called a ton of digital owner/operators to pick their brains. Daktronics also built a great case, and it was a very close call. At the end of the day, Watchfire was chosen, but I would highly recommend either. Both great companies.

**Jessica Connell, Connell Outdoor**

Our current digital platforms are with Daktronics and Formetco. Digital has been a great addition to the Las Vegas market for events, concerts, and conventions.

**Len Carson, DC Marketing**

We have purchased (3) Formetco digital billboards, (1) Ebsco digital sign and the location we acquired from a competitor in 2019 has a Surefire digital billboard. We met with Matt Leach and Jock Gibb at their Duluth, GA plant prior to purchasing our first board and were extremely impressed with the family atmosphere they have created there. Formetco has treated us with a level of customer service as if we owned 100 digital billboards and they have helped us along the way as our business has grown.



**Vince Miller, DDI Media**

We have self-developed 21 faces solely utilizing Watchfire. We started with them and have had so few issues it is tough to want to try someone else until we have issues.

**Bennett Rinaudo, Digivision Billboard Networks**

DigiVision Billboard Network is powered by Daktronics. We love the service from Daktronics. Robert Dedmon, our Daktronics rep, cares that we are successful and Robert is easy to reach and an excellent consultant.

**James Martinez, Discover Outdoor**

I use all Formetco Products.

**Rodney Driggers, Driggers Outdoor**

In 2008 my company make an entry into the market by selling Chinese manufactured signs. These were smaller signs that would normally be sold to auto dealers, churches, schools, etc. This turned out not to be such a good idea as the replacement parts were so hard to get as well as the time delay. My company also provided our structures for another company to install three of their 14' X 48' digitals on Interstate 20 and I-49. These were also Chinese and after a year or so, they decided this was not providing the necessary income that they were anticipating and removed the digitals.

**Travis Rhodes, Dusty's Outdoor**

Watchfire. A great product and their office is located near us.



**Andrew Greenwald, Gigantic Media**

Formetco. We liked the technology/resolution of the digital board, plus the back-scheduling software is easy to use and very flexible to allow us to maximize revenue.

**Tom Giesken, Giesken Outdoor**

I have used Watchfire Digital Signs exclusively to this point because of the customer service provided to smaller companies like mine as well as the great product they produce. However, other LED companies have some great products and some unique and pertinent applications for specific construction situations that would be desirable.

**Jeff Gordon, Gordon Outdoor**

Formetco provides my digital billboard panels at this time. They have been terrific to work with.

**Bryan Mack, Great Outdoors**

Yes, we built the first digital in the market about 3 years ago, and another about a year ago. We use Daktronics, and this came after an exhaustive research process. The dynamic of the decision-making process of people like Outfront, Clear Channel, and Lamar probably differ from smaller operators like Great Outdoors, but for us the choice became very clear, and we have never regretted it. Has there ever been a problem?...

Yes there has. When there is a problem that's when you really find out that you made the right decision. You can have a problem on Sunday afternoon, and when they get word that you need assistance (which sometimes is before you even know about it) they get to the site faster than ants to a picnic, and like ants, they are all over it. This results in extraordinarily quick resolutions in the rare instances when problems occur.

**Joe Mancino, GreenSigns**

We use digital signs from both Watchfire and Formetco. We have learned that not all products are the same, and that LED technology is changing so rapidly you can never keep up. We are constantly seeking the best looking/performing product, while keeping true to our green roots – energy efficiency. We have also learned that third party operating software is key in customizing our operations and creative execution on the signs.



**Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor**

I've got some Formetco and Watchfire. We like both of them... Formetco's been really good to us and Watchfire has a really good product as well. We've had very little issues with both of them.

**Billy Harvin, HB Outdoor**

Watchfire and Formetco are quality boards, and digital is providing fresh content.

**Michael Scheid, Image Media**

We currently have (4) Watchfire Digital Screens, with an additional (6) Digitals in development. We like working with Watchfire, and with near zero maintenance issues no complaints.

**Matthew Diroberto, IMM Media**

We use Daktronics.

**Randall Smith, Insite Mediacom**

We have units primarily from Daktronics and Formetco. Quality has improved dramatically and operating costs, primarily electricity, have fallen significantly. We are looking to convert existing static boards to digitals where workable.

**Kevin Joyce, Joyce Outdoor**

We have both Daktronics and Formetco displays. Both manufacture great products, supported by great service. I've learned that they are striving to make their systems as user friendly as possible, often saving time. That's certainly a commodity for small operators.

**Rick Rendon, Juggernaut Outdoor**

Watchfire is our premier provider of our digital faces. We have learned that software support and vivid resolution are the cornerstones of the industry and set you apart in a market.

**Brett and Lane Keenan, Keenan Media**

After careful consideration and multiple facility tours, we decided to go with Daktronics. Their product manufacturing and testing, as well as their dedication to research and development were second to none and they were exceptional to work with throughout the entire process. Our sales representative was always available when we had questions and was a pleasure to work with. With this being our first digital we really wanted to ensure we had the best product in the market for longevity that was backed by impeccable customer support and we felt Daktronics provided the best fit for us.

**Natalie Kessler, Kessler Outdoor**

We currently use Watchfire for all of our digital billboards. We have had great success with them. We are always looking for the right opportunity to add digital locations.



**Kathy Oertel, Lakeland Outdoor**

I currently own two Formetco panels and my experience has been flawless and so far, so good. We are enjoying the fun side of digital.

**Chad Harris, Las Vegas Billboards**

Currently, we exclusively use Daktronics for our digital panels. We have experimented with multiple digital panel providers, both foreign and domestic. We have found that Daktronics provides the complete package that we demand for our customers. From the quality of the equipment to service, support and software, we feel Daktronics has the best product.

**Steve Snyder, Legends Outdoor**

We now, exclusively, use Formetco for all of our digital signs. We have found they have the best product, prices and service. They have been very important to our growth into digital signs.

**John Siegenthaler, Lind Media**

We are currently using Watchfire and just placed an order for two more units. We’ve been very happy with their service and in doing research I’ve also learned that the other major vendors also have a very strong record of client satisfaction.

**Trent Lindmark, Lindmark Outdoor Media**

They have all been Formetco units.

**Alyson Goldberg, Logan Outdoor**

Daktronics.

**Sandy Jones, Mahalo Marketing**

Over the years we have purchased Formetco digitals primarily because of their product reliability and service capability. Because they are local and have on staff technicians here in Atlanta, we have found their response time and quality of work to be excellent. Additionally, Formetco is a good corporate citizen here in the Atlanta market and staunch supporter of the industry.

**Maggie Welch, Media Choice**

We use Watchfire and Daktronics signs. We’ve definitely learned that a friendly voice on the other line is always the avenue to problem solve effectively!

**Steve Richards, Mile Hi Outdoor**

Actually, we have 9 digital screens now, all have been purchased from YESCO and Watchfire who have both been great partners.

**Denny Orsinger, Mixed Media**

We use Watchfire and work closely with their software people to maximize client’s needs.

**Matthew Mollman, Mollman Outdoor**

I used Daktronics and the crew—from top to bottom—was great to work with.

**Anne Jernigan, Myrtle Beach Outdoor**

We have a digital location in the heart of Myrtle Beach. Formetco product. We have a two-sided digital unit in Whiteville, NC – Daktronics. Both excellent products.

**Mike Norton, Norton Outdoor**

Although there are several very good digital billboard providers, all but one of our digital displays are now provided by Watchfire Signs. We actually just replaced our first 4 digital billboards with Watchfire’s DMX displays, which are the most technologically advanced digital billboards in the market.



**Devon Wagner, Oaktree Outdoor**

The majority of our units are Watchfire, however, we do have Media Resources units as well.

**Ben Harbaugh, Ohio Outdoor**

We utilize Electro-Matic Visual out of Farmington Hills, MI for our digital needs. We have learned that utilizing digital technology in rural markets has a higher demand than we anticipated. The ability to change ads frequently or feature multiple messages is a game changer for our clients.

**Brad Sourbeer, Parker Outdoor**

We have used YESCO (not Samsung) for both of our digital signs. Both units overall have worked very well for us.

**Larry Lipscomb, Pioneer Outdoor**

We currently have both Watchfire and Formetco units. We have a great relationship with both companies.

### **Brent Porlier, Porlier Outdoor**

We met with a few companies and viewed many digital billboards in the market when we were shopping for a digital supplier. After a lot of consideration, we selected Formetco as our supplier. We found their product to be superior in terms of brightness and clarity, and the edge-to-edge technology really gives the faces a sharp, clean look. Offering the longest warranty in the market, Formetco confidently stands behind their product and they've been fantastic to work with. Skyline Outdoor, Inc. modified our structures as needed and installed the digital screens. We have a great time-lapse video showcasing the installation on our website.



### **Dominick Vastino, Premier Outdoor**

It made sense for us to streamline our portfolio with one company and we chose Watchfire. We will continue to use them as we build and grow.

### **Nick Aakhus, Premier Signs**

We have two Daktronics displays and one Formetco. The mix of static and digital options that we have to offer our customers has been key. We look forward to continued growth!

### **Lisa Shaw Atkinson, Premium Outdoor**

Our inventory consists of three different Digital manufacturers, Daktronics, Watchfire, and Samsung.

### **Bob Klausmeier, Prime-Site Media**

We use Watchfire digital outdoor products exclusively. As an operator, I have found that the single, most critical element of a digital purchase is the dependability of the product, followed immediately by the service response time. Downtime costs money. I investigated the top five digital suppliers in the US and found that Watchfire had the longest mean-time-between-failures. Secondly, Watchfire has a diagnostic support mechanism that is better than any I have seen. When there is a technical failure in a sign, the operator receives a series of notifications from Watchfire. The first alerts to the nature of the problem, the time it occurred and the action plan to remedy the problem. The second alert tells you which service vendor has been engaged and when they intend to be there. The final alert tells you that the issue has been resolved and the amount of time that the error existed on the sign.

### **Mike Fitzgerald, Railroad Outdoor**

We decided to take the plunge into digital advertising and have converted 3 faces to digital so far with another face conversion planned for this Summer. Digitals are still relatively pricey, so we remain very conservative about which faces to convert to digital. We use Watchfire digitals and have been happy so far.

### **Ben Ralston, Ralston Outdoor**

We have a Formetco unit and a Daktronics unit; they both are well engineered and fairly easy to operate. Two of our digital units are subleased by a national company and the third is operated by us. We tend to package digital space in with our traditional vinyl locations.

### **Bill Reagan, Reagan Outdoor**

We use two vendors due to the market conditions. You should choose a sign vendor based on local weather conditions. All the vendors are good but certain signs perform better in certain climates.

### **Robert Moore, Riley Outdoor**

I come back as a repeat customer for the same reason I purchased from Daktronics the first time — the people and the product...The reason I like working with Daktronics is they always find a way to solve any problems that arise. Any company is easy to work with when there are no issues, but it takes a good company to find a resolution when there is a problem. Daktronics has found a way to solve every problem that has come up over the last 10 years. I always have good memories of the people at Daktronics and I usually see them a couple of times a year at outdoor advertising meetings, including Matt Newton, Jesse Ulrickson and Collin Huber.



### **Dave Roland, Roland Digital Media**

We did about three years research before deciding to go with Watchfire in 2009. Reliability, minimum downtime, technical help, overnight shipping on parts and ease of use are the most important factors as most of our business model is based on digital. We have 35 digitals and counting, all from Watchfire. Up front cost is least important... A less expensive display is useless if you can't keep it running.

**Chad Shipp, Shipp Outdoor**

We just ordered three new Watchfire 14 by 48 digital screens bringing our total digital sign count to 18.

**Mitch Fowkes, Steel City Billboards**

Our digital manufacturer that we use is Formetco. The things that we've learned along the way is understanding how DOOH really works and how companies can benefit from its overall sophisticated ability to drive and connect new customers with their brand. Their software is extremely user friendly and one feature that our team loves the most is being able to view each digital from our phones. Formetco customer service is available 24/7 and is always there when you need them.

**Stuart Stein, Stein Sign Displays**

Daktronics was used for our digital billboard. They are the best in the world, and we will always use them for any future purchase.

**Bart Thomas, Thomas Outdoor**

We have one digital. We use Watchfire. I had to be talked into it. I had fears but they've dissipated.

**Jim Troy, Toby Outdoor**

I have one digital. It does OK. I built a 10.6 by 36 digital billboard. It could have been smaller given the market. I used Formetco. It's been flawless. Formetco has treated me well.

**Mark Gamble, Transformation Media**

We currently own seven digital units manufactured by Formetco and Watchfire with plans to add more in 17. We have several units in high-demand areas, but we plan to reposition some of the displays to more advantageous areas to develop networks that will provide our clients with broader market coverage.

**Matthew Trotter, Trotter Outdoor**

Thus far Formetco. We have purchased hardware from Formetco for almost 20 years. Formetco has been a good company to deal with from a hardware standpoint and hasn't disappointed in the digital phase. We are on our 6th digital in over 2 years and have had great results and service. Although, our oldest unit is 2.5 years and hasn't had

a service call. I toured other plants and met a lot of nice folks but Formetco's proximity to our office was the ticket. My thought was – worse case I can be at their doorstep in 3 hours to get a replacement part if needed.

**Tony Tyler, Tyler Outdoor**

Because we have a commercial sign shop, we began making our own digital boards. After trying this for a few years, we have moved to another local vendor here in OKC and Watchfire. Both are excellent products with great service

**Randy Jackson, Venture Outdoor**

Currently we have six digital faces in our plant. One is an ADTI, four are Watchfire, and one is a Formetco.

**Dave Moran, Viscom Outdoor**

Watchfire has been our supplier and the product to date has been very reliable. Another strong benefit is the software is very user friendly which makes it very easy to manage.

**Justin Booher, Vital Outdoor Advertising**

We have all Watchfire units thus far. They've been super reliable. I drove past our first unit we put up almost 11 years ago and the whites still look white..... I have not found another unit this old where it looks this good. Kind of hard to change when we've had this great product and service. I wouldn't change to save 10 grand on a sign. I like to sleep at night.

**Bonnie Weissinger, Wagner Outdoor**

We use Formetco and they have been very easy to work with since we are new in the digital market.

**Stephen Johnson, Waller Outdoor**



*Waller Outdoor Daktronics billboard in Waller, Texas*

We chose Daktronics for several reasons. They were always available for any questions we had; since it was our first venture into OOH, we had a lot of questions. Our salesperson and PM were super helpful and treated us like family. We also had a clear view of what we expected with our product after installation and that was having someone on board that could help us with anything that came up, from technical support on the scheduling software to monitoring support with the displays themselves. We were new at this and we wanted to make sure our chosen dealer would be there with us when and if needed. We also wanted to go with a reputable industry leader and our research showed that Daktronics was heralded as the titan in the industry, so we chose them.

**Pat O'Donnell, YESCO Outdoor**

We own digital product manufactured by Daktronics, Media Resources, Prismview & Watchfire.

**Shannon Hollenkamp, Zalla Media**

Zalla uses Watchfire equipment and software. Our experience has been positive and we plan to use them again when it's time to update our sign.

## **DIGITAL BILLBOARDS / REFURBISHING**

**Neil Bell, New South Outdoor**



*New South Outdoor refurbished Watchfire Digital Billboard*

I just replaced two 11-year-old Watchfire units with their "Reface" program. It was a great experience. They swapped out the LED modules and replaced the controller. It did save a considerable amount of money as compared to a new unit. Watchfire sent their own people who came and swapped out the parts so there was no need for a crane or install crew – which was also a savings. Also, it is great that I didn't have the headache of finding somewhere to scrap the old cabinet...It cost about two-thirds of the cost of buying a new digital billboard...In my experience, Watchfire has always done things right. I think it was smart of them to go to a standard module size a decade ago. Being able to replace only the modules and controller reduces the cost of ownership of their boards over the long haul. I've noticed that some other LED manufacturers have frequently changed things up over the years and this type of refacing probably won't be possible with their older units.

## ■ DIGITAL BILLBOARDS / WHAT I'VE LEARNED

### **Claude Dicks, Allison Outdoor**

If we have two digitals in the market already... we may need one or two more... because we're generally sold out. If we go into a market where our rates are lower than in other areas, we may end up doing a smaller digital...to help our return on investment...In some of our more traditional markets we've built out pretty well and there's a few markets that are not open for digitals right now... Some markets that are politically against digitals we went in and we told the city or county look, we'll give you a free advertising slot on the digital if we can have a variance. And that has gone over really well.

### **Maryjane Shackelford, Barnes Outdoor**

Customer advertisements can be changed and updated immediately. All digital graphics are created and published in-house by our skilled graphic designers who use a software program to develop the graphics that are instantly posted to the billboard. With this type of board, there is no need for our trucks to leave the office to install a new poster, burn gas, or for our billposters to endure intensive and dangerous labor to change a poster or vinyl billboard...With digital billboards, we are able to show multiple advertisements in one day, while also being able to sell day and evening posting spots to many of our clients. This type of board gives us the option to post advertisements on select days, as well as providing more customer exposures on a single board...Digital billboards allow customers to cast a live stream of information from their social media accounts directly to the board. Digital billboards are also great for public service announcements. In 2007, a downtown bridge on I-35 in Minneapolis collapsed, creating a dangerous situation for drivers. Within minutes, a digital billboard informed drivers so that they could take a different route.

### **Matt Richman, Billboards for Education**

I consider myself a digital billboard company first and foremost. I love the millions of unique ways that businesses can engage the community through dynamic, timely, digital OOH ads. I currently have ten sign faces across two markets, and six of those are digital.

### **Dunkin Allred, Blackbelt Outdoor**

It is a constant process and can be challenging at times. Static is pretty straightforward for obvious reasons, but I am surprised by the number of folks that we speak with that are unaware of all the capabilities of digital.

### **Charlie McIntyre Bullfrog Outdoor**

Originally, I was not interested in installing a digital display and then I started coming around to the idea. Bullfrog installed a digital display in Angola, Indiana and it has been well received. It also has opened up opportunities with advertisers that were not customers and would not respond to my emails or calls. They since have leased space on the digital and have additional billboards with Bullfrog.

### **Ben Buckland, Ben Buckland Media (sold to Tyler Outdoor in 2020)**

I love digital because you can make changes anytime and the changes are immediate. You can even day part with digital boards doing your advertising just like you do on radio and TV. For example, a fast-food place might have a breakfast ad running in the morning, a lunch special from, say, 11am to 2pm and an afternoon drive time special from, say, 3pm to 8pm. We have a 24-hour restaurant that runs after midnight specials. There are, however, 2 distinct groups of billboard advertisers. Those that prefer digital and those that prefer static faces and they don't really cross over.

### **Leonard Busby, Busby Companies**

We have been in digital advertising in some form or fashion since 2004 including all kinds of digital media forms. This experience has changed our operations in numerous ways and expanded our knowledge greatly. We believe digital billboards are still in the infancy stage, there will be growth in this market, along with customer interaction, and the ability to reach consumers is improving tremendously. You have to stay ahead of the changes made by our environment. New techniques such as capturing consumer data, to smart screens and interacting with the traveling public, is really cool and effective for numerous reasons. Combine that with being able to offer customers the ability to market their message in different media forms and prove ROIs, there you have the key to a successful ad campaign.



### **Brad Tooley, Choice Media**

Selling digital is more like selling radio and tv. The buys are shorter and we can give our customer "same day" service. Digital is not for every customer, but it's a dynamic for customers that understand it and want to display a number of different messages.

### **Rodney Driggers, Driggers Outdoor**

What have I learned regarding digitals? Don't buy direct from the Chinese. Use a US manufacturer. Digitals are great along heavily traveled routes that have traffic lights, but you should be careful as to the location chosen for digitals along interstates with high traffic speeds.

### **Dick Estus, Estus Outdoor**

Digital has been kind of fun. I was reluctant to do digital and sold a lot of billboards when digital was coming out. I decided to convert one of my billboards to digital. Formetco was very helpful. They put me in touch with Leslie at SkyDragon Designs to help manage the digital billboard. She was a breath of fresh air. She said focus on selling and I'll handle the artwork and scheduling... I try to sell my digital on 12-month contracts. I have a 4-month minimum. I find that having a flip available allows me to run special content like a billboard honoring George W Bush or a billboard highlighting the temperature. It's like having your own local newspaper or TV station.

### **Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor**

Don't put a digital where a static board should be. You want something where the traffic can kind of slow. You can put a digital in a high demand area, but if you can only see one or two flips on the digital...you're going to have a hard time keeping advertisers on it...they want that long open read...Intersections are the best. Everybody knows that because people just stop and they have nothing else to do but just sit there...Just because you can put up 2 digitals doesn't mean you should put up two digitals. I've had to learn that myself, but the hard way. And now, most of the new digitals we're going up with I'm going up with one digital. I did notice that I might have a 2 sided digital – and could be bringing in the same revenue with one digital right there...There's not going to be as much directional as a static board. The directional are not going to be as prevalent in digital...Start with one, make sure you can fill it up and then go to your second one.



### **Justin Houck, Houck Transit**

We deployed our first digital screens inside high frequency and high ridership buses last year and the reception they are receiving from our advertisers and the transit system has been fantastic. It has given us another way to provide value and service to our clients and revenue to the transit systems we partner with. We are exploring additional DOOH opportunities inside and outside of vehicles as we move forward in our current markets as well as new markets.

**Jeff Gordon, Gordon Outdoor**

There’s a place for digital and there’s a place for non-digital. Digital is a game changer. It eliminates artwork printing and installation expense and clients can change ads on the fly. Advertisers get the best results when we work with them and encourage them to take advantage of the options. Sometimes you have to help them understand the options more clearly, so they fully appreciate the advantages of digital. In a sense digital creates a more interactive relationship with advertisers.... I have noticed that many digital boards have been built in locations that simply do not make sense. In these cases, ROI is just not where it should be. There are many factors that need to be taken into consideration when making these decisions. This is something you come to understand more clearly after being in this business for a while.

**Shannon Graham, Graham Outdoor**

Digital is different. I feel it takes a little more selling for digital. Most bigger clients seem to gravitate toward static and renew yearly. With digital boards you may have clients that advertise a few months then stop. You may find a customer or two that sticks with digital long term but nothing like the statics. You may have the availability to make more money with digital, but you have to put twice the work into it.

**Billy Harvin, HB Outdoor**

There is a misunderstanding of pricing by general public. Some folks think digital is cheaper and other believe statics are cheaper, but we know location and ability to attract public attention is the value. It is fun to converse with customers about the advantage of each and which would be best for their business. Digitals are fun to sell to the fresh content guys who really like to take advantage of the digital schedule flexibility. The digitals allow for quick sales “we can have you up today”, which allows for quick contracts and immediate income. Customers appreciate and like the quickness of digital. Static requires more planning to line end of contracts up with new contracts.

**Bill Ripp, Lamar Advertising**

The number one reason we need to reposition digitals is a mistaken belief that if one digital face is good, two will be better. There’s a tendency to want to put two digital faces on every structure. Oftentimes it’s hard to get the permit. Financially sometimes negotiations are tough. Yet not every location justifies two digital faces. In a large market, left hand reads can be harder to sell. For local sales, a digital sign performs better with traffic moving in the direction advertiser’s want. For example, if advertiser’s prefer inbound traffic, outbound



traffic will be a harder sell.... Another reason is unanticipated road modifications. Road projects take years and a fraction of the traffic goes by the board. This creates underperformance. A digital billboard is a perishable inventory. It won’t last forever. A major infrastructure spending initiative by the federal government could impact digital billboards by impacting traffic.... Development. Someone builds a building in front of a digital billboard. The billboard’s performance suffers because it is blocked. You need to carefully review development risks when you are evaluating a new digital billboard.... First-to-market digitals do very well but will inevitably attract competition which can impact the market. Three digital billboards within a mile can be a problem. Often, It’s the middle board which suffers. If it’s three boards in 5 miles you’re probably OK.

**Trent Lindmark, Lindmark Outdoor Media**

I forget the power of the new. They are so hot for the first 6 to 12 months and then they start cooling down.

**Sandy Jones, Mahalo Marketing**

We own and manage digital billboards in the Atlanta market and therefore have extensive experience with most of the digital manufacturers serving the billboard industry. When digital first hit the Atlanta market we were intrigued with the possibilities being made available to local and national clients alike. What we have learned is that if embraced by the client, the options available with the digital technology can provide tremendous capability and results. The digital OOH also provides local businesses an affordable option to market themselves to their communities without the barrier of traditional OOH production costs.

**Chris Zukin, Meadow Outdoor**

We learned that we want more digitals. We put up number 4 in Hermiston, Oregon last month and have numbers 5 and 6 on the drawing board.



**Matthew Mollman, Mollman Outdoor**

The first is to conduct Due Diligence. There are a few suppliers out there that do not have the operators’ best interest at heart. Even if it’s a competitor, reach out to discuss any issues they may have experienced. Secondly, spend the money on a quality display. Lastly, lean on the supplier for guidance. I used Daktronics and the crew— from top to bottom—was great to work with.

### **Denny Orsinger, Mixed Media**

Doing our own lobbying on governmental issues have closed the communication gap between planning/zoning and the outdoor industry. Being extremely pro-active is important.

### **Jerod Norris, Norris Outdoor**

Digitals are great. However, our initial experience was really bad. We bought the display from a 3rd party overseas with little to no support for any of it. I had this really nice, 10mm digital billboard, but had no idea how to run it or even turn it on...Through a referral I found Skyslate Digital Signs out of Oklahoma City, they got us up and running in no time. We've been over-the-top happy with them. Our relationship with Skyslate has allowed us to begin manufacturing digital signs for other Out of Home as well as on premise businesses. All designed, engineered and manufactured in the United States. Going digital does not have to be as difficult as I made it on our company, but we learned a lot from it and will be adding more digitals in the near future.

### **Mike Norton, Norton Outdoor**

We continue to grow and evolve the digital billboard offering. Advertisers are starting to use the dynamic capabilities in better ways, which allows them to provide messaging that is more contextually relevant, in terms of almost anything going on at the time (time, weather, news, trends, etc.). It's an exciting medium, which still has untapped potential for advertisers.

### **Brad Sourbeer, Parker Outdoor**

The most common objection we get on digital is having to share with other advertisers. We have found though by stressing the ability to quickly change ad copy as well as timing ads to meet their promotion schedules is an asset. We also are doing more short-term campaigns of 1 to 2 months. It means a little more work and planning to keep everything filled, but I am OK with that as we are keeping our slots booked up.

### **Brent Porlier, Porlier Outdoor**

Our experience has taught us that the location of a digital billboard needs to be well thought out. We've also learned that selling digital space is different than selling static space; there are many advantages to digital in terms of on-demand, real-time advertising, but the space needs to be sold as such to really get the full effect and wow factor of the medium. We're excited about the addition of our two new digital faces and both are performing very well.

### **Lisa Shaw Atkinson, Premium Outdoor**

Converting a site to Digital requires more than rolling the dice. It takes the proper location, traffic count, moderately posted speed limit and/or a traffic light.

### **Bill Reagan, Reagan Outdoor**

We have found that the digital market is thin. If you get too many digital billboard pricing erodes. When we install new digital billboards, we get 75% new revenues from advertisers and 25% cannibalization of existing revenues...Digital buys are generally shorter. It might be a case that there's no production costs.

### **Chadd Shipp, Shipp Outdoor**

I have learned that size matters. We don't build postage stamp size signs because it's not all about yield to me. My name is on these signs and they will always look better than my competitors. Local customers especially are more likely to buy signs that are grand and impressive with unique structural features than small screens on a steel stick. It's also important to have a large network so you can place ads in more locations since most digital is branding and not directional.

### **Mitch Fowkes, Steel City Billboards**

When we first spoke in 2017, we were in the middle of purchasing our first digital billboard. Since then, we've added a total of four digital posters and one stacked bulletin that consists of a static on top and a tri-vision on the bottom. Within two years we've been able to double in size and provide more coverage for advertisers. We've created a unique way for those who typically don't advertise using outdoor and have given them an opportunity to incorporate OOH into their marketing plan. This method that we use has been very successful and allows us to acquire additional clients. It's not a one size fits all anymore. Something else we've added is BLIP. They have helped us fill last minute gaps that we'd never end up filling. It's been great!



### **Stephen Johnsen, Waller Outdoor**

Number one, don't go the cheapest route...If I can give you an example there's an on-premises sign in our area that did not go with a US manufacturer. He's been in operation a month longer than we have...His sign – you can see where the different modules connect – it's a terrible example of not going the most professional route. Secondly, getting the right lender. That can be the biggest burden...it helps to have a lender that understands the business and can comfort you...In your case,

Billboardloans.com told me early on that you'd only finance a reliable manufacturer. The third thing would be...you've got to put a lot of value in your community relationship. Because without the community you are not going to do it. We're not going to make it...You have to include them, make them feel like there's value in it for them...be an integral part of the community.

## DRONES



Picture of Formetco digital billboard taken with a drone. Courtesy of Formetco

### Tom Giesken, Giesken Outdoor

A guy had put some drone videos on Facebook and I messaged him and asked if he could do some drone shots of billboards. He did a great job and was amazingly cheap. I have a couple guys for backup that are a little more expensive in case he quits but he is my guy for sure...Has it been help marketing signs? Yes, especially with agencies. They seem to really like them and like to show the clients. It gives a much better feel of the area and traffic content than just a close up and approach pix.



### Kevin Joyce, Joyce Outdoor

Yes, I've had drone photos taken. It was primarily done to obtain some high-resolution photos of a very large wallscape we were working on. We needed a close-up of the condition of the brick & mortar, to see if it would be safe to anchor onto the wall, for not only the sign, but for the installers to repel down. It was incredibly helpful and gave us great perspective that otherwise would have been expensive with an on-site inspection by installers.

### **Neil Bell, New South Outdoor**

I bought a drone. I had a local guy who was going to do a one-time shoot for \$1,200. I did some research and found a great drone for under \$1,000. Now I can shoot my boards whenever I want. It is a great marketing and POP tool that I would recommend every outdoor operator look into getting.

### **Shannon Hollenkamp, Zalla Outdoor**

Our board is in such a high traffic area that anytime we want to take photo/video, it requires some effort including a police escort and notifying the state traffic board. We appreciate you recognizing this. Yes, we used a drone as well as a go-pro camera on a car, and a still photographer to put the video together. We are happy with the end result that showcases what a great spot the billboard is in and the potential it has for any advertiser!

## **EASEMENTS**

### **Claude Dicks, Allison Outdoor**

My grandfather always said you can't control sales, but you can control expenses...Our goal is to not have our expenses increase as much as our revenue...We're setting some pretty strong goals for the upcoming year. We're working on one that pretty much fell into our laps. Our rent with this one gentleman doubled and he wanted to sell the property and he wanted the money from the easement...We feel over time we can create a better bottom line...

### **Sean Reilly, Lamar Advertising**

My job as CEO of Lamar is to assertively deploy capital on behalf of our shareholders. And one of the ways we do that is purchasing easements under our structures. To that degree Landmark is actually a competitor. And so, we have decided that their services and offering is not something that is helpful to Lamar or Lamar's shareholders. It doesn't mean that they can't be helpful to other capital constrained members of our industry, but Lamar is not capital constrained. We have a very strong balance sheet and we're always looking to deploy capital...and purchasing easements is one way we do that.

## **EXPENSE CONTROLS**

### **Sean Reilly, Lamar Advertising**

There are several things to talk about...first, we run a tight ship, year in and year out our expense growth is kept at or below 2%. We're well known for that. So, if you have expense growth that you keep below GDP and you grow your top line slightly better than GDP you're going to get margin expansion...We think our margins after everything...corporate EBIDTA should be approaching 45%...We compensate our GM's slightly differently than the other companies. They are treated as complete businesspeople. They hire, they fire, they turn on the lights, they turn off the lights, they have complete control of their P&L...That philosophy of being flat, decentralized business units...makes a huge difference...Now we do have some structural advantages. We have lower ground lease expense because of our middle market focus. Our ground lease expense runs give or take 20%...That the difference in running outdoor companies in places like Little Rock, Arkansas...versus places like Manhattan. And then we have an advantage in our mix of businesses. We are more traditional Out of Home and less transit and airports and those have lower margins to begin...

## ■ FAMILY-OWNED BUSINESSES

### **Mike Norton, Norton Outdoor**

The challenges are growing and evolving wisely. We are not operating with investor funds, but rather money that we are reinvesting into our future. The ability to grow organically is often challenged due to zoning regulations, etc. It is my hope that communities continue to see the value of our medium to their businesses and their communities as a whole, which will allow us to grow and help them...The rewards of a running a family business are many. I get to work with my dad and my sister, as well as my uncle and one of my cousins. We all have complementary skill sets, which is fortunate in this business. Although it's all I've really known, I appreciate how unique this really is. Sure, there can be negatives involved when you work with family, but the ability to work to improve, evolve and grow with family members is something that we all value and enjoy.

### **Matthew Sapp, Sapp Outdoor**

Neal serves as President and I run all operations on billboard locations as well as heading up the sales and accounting departments. My brother Zachary Sapp is a sophomore at Georgia Southern University here in Statesboro, and he handles the graphic design aspect for new and existing clients. We are all well connected to Georgia Southern as both Neal and I graduated from the Universities Parker College of Business.

### **Mitch Fowkes, Steel City Billboards**

Like any small OOH company, we wear many hats on a daily basis. My dad Jim is a spreadsheet guru. He focuses on many things like scheduling, designing ads, managing accounts, payroll, project management, technical problems, landscaping and maintenance. He is 68 and still climbs up to change ads! My mom Bonnie is a go-getter and loves being on the front lines. Now that we're growing, she's actively cold-calling, sending emails, and going door to door and making appointments to meet with ad agencies and co-workers in the industry. I focus on things like selling, designing, hanging ads, real estate development, client management, landscape, site maintenance and growing our social media accounts like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

## FINANCING

### Jesse London, TierOne Media

Metro Phoenix Bank is the bank in our space. They're well known. Basically, I just reached out and introduced myself to the bank. I spent some time with them. I worked with Rico at Metro Phoenix Bank for a couple of months. We would speak and I would bring him ideas and helped me think about the financial side of the deal... He came in with the President of the bank and we had lunch in Times Square. They were looking at something in Times Square... When the time came to ask for the loan it was sort of a quick meeting. Everything had been set in motion before we got in front of the loan committee.



At one point I looked at the money I was putting in and I looked at the money they were going to lend me, and I called Rico and said "wait a minute, I'm coming up short." And he said..."you got to find an equity partner." And he suggested Ken Anderson. Ken was looking for an operator. Boy, I really hit it off with Ken on the first phone call...We'd spend an hour a day every day looking through the plan...His group is terrific. They were easy to work with... They complement the areas that I'm weak in...I know how to run billboards. I know how to build billboards. I know how to sell ads on billboards. But I was a little weak when it comes to putting together financial statements... and that's where these guys come in...The other think about Directtech is I share their vision for the digital future. I have a big background in place based digital out of home... I believe in that business. These buys are reinventing that business... I think that once we have good billing and a good foundation without big format we can start to develop some small format...

## ■ FINDING LOCATIONS

### **Sharrod Delia, Delia Outdoor Advertising**

First, let me say that we are very selective with our locations. I truly believe in the saying “just because you can, doesn’t mean you should.” With that said, Regulations, competition & Mother Nature are our biggest challenges. The regulations are getting stricter with the local municipalities and parish governing authorities. Some are even implementing moratoriums making locations a little harder to find or obsolete. There seems to be more and more people getting into the billboard business. With this comes more regulations and the moratoriums. I do believe regulations are important even though I don’t agree with all of them. Lastly, Mother Nature. After we finally get the green light to build, it’s just been too wet, making some locations near impossible to get equipment into the site. All in all, the challenges faced within the industry are fun and I love seeing it all come together.

### **Dick Estus, Estus Outdoor**

You can always find a couple of good sites. As I drive around, I see sites in every community which are in a commercial area and which have potential to be developed. You’ve got to be creative and persistent.

### **Bruce Thomas, Fluhman Outdoor**

Fluhman Outdoor has focused on growing the company organically as opposed to acquisitions. We have a “find ‘em, grind ‘em, and bind ‘em” strategy (leasing, building, and selling all of our boards internally). We fabricate and install all of our billboard structures using our own building equipment and crew.

### **Hal Stevenson, Grace Outdoor Advertising**

You’ve got to start with politics. You’ve got to understand the way the ordinances have evolved over time, who the players are, what you might be able to do...I’ll give you a quick example. Indian Land, South Carolina is a suburb of Charlotte...which is growing tremendously. And I had a guy call me...who said can you get me a billboard. And I went up there and there were no billboards...except for one. And it was an old poster panel, looked like it was going to fall down. And I just kept getting calls from people looking for something in that area...we converted that billboard to a double digital...and it’s probably our highest occupancy most successful sign and the Indiana land council president called after we had put it up...and she said, “Hal that’s the best thing that’s happened in our community in years.”



### **Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor**

First thing is to just believe you can do it. We have gotten some of our best locations by thinking outside of the box. I like to build where it sometimes isn't currently allowed and that takes a lot of determination and persistence to make that happen. Understanding the laws and our rights and reading ordinances carefully are some of the keys to doing this. I also believe having a positive attitude, being friendly, and being honest contribute to success in finding and permitting new locations. When applying, having all of the appropriate information (site plans and site-specific engineering plans) that is necessary for approval is one of the most important steps. We prefer to own the land or easements where the signs are located. We just recently purchased a property with a billboard on the lot then turned around and listed the property and had a contract to sell the next day for a higher price than we paid for the sign and the land. Hard to beat getting paid to own a sign and easement. Those deals are hard to come by.

### **Justin Powell, Huntington Outdoor**

How do you find winners? I came up with a little system that's easy to remember and might help you. First, unless it's a very special case, don't bother with a location with less than 5,000 a day traffic count. Obviously, more is better. Second, look for what I call "CISD" locations (I always say "KISSED locations"). Here's what that stands for: you want locations that are either at the end of a Curve, at an Intersection, Slow traffic, or you have Demand from advertisers wanting a billboard at a certain location.

### **Jeff Joaquin, Marquee Media**

1. We are very tenacious
2. We are Creative and look at everything from a long term NOT short term 360-degree approach. We try to anticipate where the market is going in 5 years not necessarily where it is today.
3. Nimble... speed is key!
4. Have unique and varied experience that allows advantages
5. We provide our partners and clients opportunities and creative solutions in ways not contemplated in the past.
6. We are very involved in the community and give back proactively to local non-profits in town.
7. The buck stops with the two co-founders, me and Michael Wagener... we are very responsive to the market's needs.

### **Grant Leschin, MV Outdoor**

We have found our commercial real estate development experience to be an invaluable resource in operating and developing our outdoor plant. There are many similarities between the two and our extensive development experience in California has opened up many opportunities for us. There are also certain "cross pollination" effects. Our shopping center tenants have been some of our best clients in the outdoor business. On the development side, our expertise in navigating complex entitlements and land use issues has been extraordinarily helpful. We pride ourselves on being skilled deal makers and consummate negotiators. There's always something new and exciting, even after 27+ years. We love the outdoor advertising business!

### **Neil Bell, New South Outdoor**

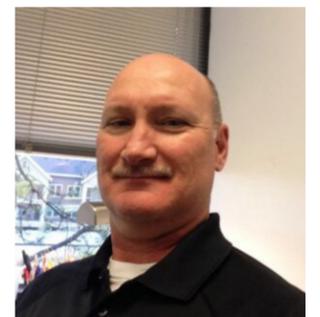
I love it... It's like a puzzle, right, cause there's state and local rules and height restrictions and what I've found is that restraints make you become more creative... I've learned that creativity is a big part of leasing... Another thing I've learned – I don't really care to buy leases from folks that are just out there leasing. I'll tell you a story. One of the first one's I bought. I bought the lease. The sign crane showed up to put the sign up. And the landowner says, "Hey, great to meet you, when are you guys going to build my fence? The guy who leased me the property said you were going to build me a fence with the sign."... New site locations, finding and leasing and building is the best part of this business for me.

### **Robert Wallace, Southeastern Outdoor**

I have my requirements. It's got to be at a stoplight. It's got to be on a four-lane road. And it's got to be going in towards where all the retail is at... and hopefully a right hand read.

### **Stephen Johnsen, Waller Outdoor**

I actually did not choose the location...I began researching the Texas code...I found out that our community had outlawed billboards 10-12 years before that. I started looking at all these adjoining communities. One day someone approached me locally and they talked about expanding into other types of advertising like a digital billboard because some of these businesses can do these on-premises boards. I said no the local city doesn't allow them. And they said...it doesn't hurt to ask. I did approach them...So I presented my idea to them and they said they thought it was fantastic...So we got before the governing body and they approved a waiver...They also required that we do it on our property. It had to be our property and it couldn't be leased...It just so happened that



I owned two parcels of land in the central business district...As it turned out...a 35 mile per hour speed limit and a red light right in the middle of town were perfect for digital billboards.

#### **Ike Wingate, Wingate Media**

I look for places that otherwise couldn't be used for anything else. A little strip of grass between two pieces of property...Before I do that, I make sure I understand the local regulations. What I can and cannot do...I made the mistake early on of calling the local planning office and asking some advice on some things. They never want to help you with that kind of stuff and will give you bad information on purpose...You look at visual clutter. See what's around. You look at traffic speed. I'm OK with big billboards but you don't always have to put a tall billboard there. And so, if I can build a great billboard without having to go 50' in the air and it's right in the windshield of the viewer I'm going to do that. 9 times out of 10 in the places we've done that we've been able to charge very close to the rate we would be able to charge if it was twice as big...The return I get on smaller signs is fantastic.

## **GETTING STARTED**

#### **Glenn Merone, 718 Outdoor**

I was a hotel guy for 10 years. I'm a hotel guy. Born and raised in New York. I had no history in Out of Home. I only got into Out of Home 6 years ago accidentally...I was sitting in traffic staring at a billboard and I got curious...Got interested, studied the municipalities for two years...the two industries are super similar – hotels and advertising...Here we are six years later, I would say I have the largest boutique billboard company in Brooklyn and in New York...

#### **Missy Wells, Admiral Outdoor**

Our owner, Pete Murphy, was in need of billboard advertising for his family's hotel, restaurant and convenience store located off of I-40 at Exit 385 in Wallace, NC. When he started pricing the rates for billboard advertising, he soon discovered it was more beneficial to own his billboards rather than rent them. So began Admiral Outdoor Advertising, LLC in 2006.

#### **David English, Ad-Trend**

I started in OOH in 2004 as an Account Executive with Lamar Advertising in Kansas City. I started out selling in many of their outer markets, I was a road warrior, to say the least. The General Manager there took a leap of faith on a young twenty-three-year-old kid, one that I look back on and really appreciate. I was at Lamar for four years, eventually moving out of the outer markets and into metro sales, eventually being part of the sales group who brought the first digital billboards into Kansas City. While at Lamar, I attended both their sales and sales management school. I was fortunate to learn from some icons in the OOH Kansas City market. Lamar was an incredible experience and one that I'm grateful for. It didn't take long for me to realize that OOH is the right place for me.



#### **Claude Dicks, Allison Outdoor**

I'd always grown up wanting to be a sports broadcaster like Jim Nance...I pursued it all the way until I was 31 years old. I went to school, got a journalism degree, became a broadcaster and then did a number of minor league baseball and college sports and made my way down to Charleston South Carolina and was working for a radio station down there...Everywhere I went I had to sell advertising...By the time I got into

the billboard business I'd had 12-13 years of sales under my belt...My grandfather... he started newspapers, he started radio stations, then he got into billboards...By the time he was 62 in the late 80's he'd sold everything off except for the Allison Outdoor portion which is the western North Carolina, northeast Georgia section...He had a sales position opening. He said, well, we have a great opportunity for you...he laid the groundwork...I moved into one of the markets that Allison was serving and did that for a couple of years and then held the sales managers sport for 7 years and just this past year took over the reins running the company.

#### **Robert Kennerson, Arena Outdoor**

About 15 years back while living in Hollywood, I saw a long-vacant 30-sheet sign on Sunset Blvd which I was interested to rent. I called the owner and he wanted \$5000/month. I don't think he ever got it, but from that conversation I realized the billboard business must have very different economics than businesses I was familiar with. I started studying the industry, paying attention to the outstanding billboard ads and structures around SoCal, pouring over the sign codes of local cities and counties, and researching whatever data I could find. Eventually I learned enough to get started and purchased my first billboard, a monopole in a town outside Las Vegas.

#### **Jim Delucia, AR James**

Long story short... We had a friend who was an account rep for a billboard/bulletin company, and we became intrigued with the Out of Home Advertising space. Around the mid 1990's, we noticed an explosion of bulletins along the highways of New Jersey and the same time there was a huge void of Out of Home advertising in NJ's urban areas. These were densely populated areas in desperate need of an advertising medium and a need to protect their residents from the elements while waiting for a bus. We had seen transit shelters advertising before, so we filled that void.



#### **John Arnold, Arnold Outdoor**

I wanted to be a rock n roll DJ when I was in school. Shortly after college I went to work for a guy that had a country music station and billboards. I was intrigued by billboards and ended up at the billboard company. Worked there 11 years.

#### **Jim Matalone, former CEO, Ashby St Outdoor**

Before Ashby St I had been running Next Media Outdoor which was owned by a radio platform...while we were building an outdoor platform and growing value the radio platform was slowly declining. From that experience I learned that I needed to go out of my own and start an outdoor company where there was nobody but me and the investment money to worry about...I started looking for money...It's easier said than done...PE firms want to see a deal first...the people that are selling want to see that you have money behind you. It's a little bit the chicken and the egg story....I cold called Ryan Fowler who had a company in Northwest Arkansas called Fowler Media. It was a nice really well-built outdoor plant, very strong real estate portfolio. And what caught my attention was...when I heard the average rates he was getting for static faces was 20% higher than I was used to...that stuck out...we negotiated a price point pretty much that first day. Getting the money and getting the deal together took another three or four months.

#### **Danny Faulkner, BB Outdoor**

We bought our first billboard in the early 80's it came with a piece of property we bought. We quickly figured out that billboards were awesome. So, we started building billboards on any land we could on the interstate. We are a family run company. My mom and sister work in the office with me. My oldest son helps me solicit new business, does artwork and helps hang vinyl's.

#### **Mark Becker, Becker Boards**

I backed into it as a landlord to OUTFRONT on a commercial building that I owned on I-10 in Phoenix

#### **Joe Mancuso, Bella Outdoor**

I got into the outdoor business over 20 years ago with Obie Media. I started Bella Outdoor almost 10 years ago.

#### **Don Wright, Billboard Consultants**

I started in billboard construction in 1968 during the summer with Waller-Wright Advertising; then to bill posting in 1970; then to scheduling and handling national sales in 1971. Before long I was doing local sales. Much has changed through my career – poster paper to poster flex; handed painted bulletins to flex vinyl; now the LED Digitals. OAAA's convention was almost a family reunion with many of the vendors being independent. We hosted the OAAA Convention in Nashville in 1975 and I believe

had over 900 attendees – I think my Dad, Fred Wright, knew just about all of them. My father spent over 50 years in the Out of Home business, and now I have accomplished the same. Must have been something in the blood line.

### **Matt Richman, Billboards for Education**

I grew up in a family of entrepreneurs. My grandfather started the first pizza delivery company in the Midwest and in 1995 my parents brought Steak 'n Shake to the Chattanooga, TN market. My mother is still one of the largest and most successful Steak 'n Shake franchisees in the country. While I always knew I would end up starting something, I never would have imagined myself in the outdoor business. I originally studied to become a high school history teacher and a Christian minister in order to serve and help people. After finishing my Master of Education degree at Vanderbilt I went straight into ministry. I served churches full-time in Kentucky, Florida, and Ohio. While in Ohio I began to see that business, if done well, can have a tremendous positive impact on people and communities. I decided to join my mother's Steak 'n Shake franchise (Debo's Diners) in order to begin learning how business can do good and serve more than its bottom line. While overseeing marketing for the company, I befriended Ken Hall of Hall Outdoor in Chattanooga. As we drove around and looked at his inventory for Steak 'n Shake to advertise on, I bombarded him with questions about the industry and his business model. As a young man, I saw an opportunity to enter an industry that seemed to be dominated by much older, and much larger, companies whose main focus was the maximize the bottom line at all costs. I had a hunch that if I focused on people before profits, that profits would follow. I installed my first digital billboard on my family's Steak 'n Shake property in 2015, which gave me my start serving local businesses and local schools. I am thankful to have grown that to five locations with many more coming in the next 12 months.



### **Ryan Adcroft, Birdhouse Outdoor**



*Birdhouse Outdoor Wallscape*

For the past decade, I have co-owned Tribal Media, which is a full-service digital marketing agency, with my wife Krysty. I've always had an interest in the OOH industry and knew that our existing client relationships at our agency would benefit us if we decided to get into the space. A few years ago, I began to recognize the opportunity in large format wallscape in my market and in 2018, we launched Birdhouse Outdoor and began acquiring our first few signs. After about a year and a half we now have leases for over 50 walls in the market. Our inventory consists of wallscape in high profile outdoor locations to frequently trafficked areas in parking garages of malls and large complexes in our downtown areas.

### **Dunkin Allred, Blackbelt Outdoor**

Growing up in a family business I had always wanted to work for the family business or start my own. After graduating from college, I went to work full time on our family cattle and row crop farm in Marion Junction, AL. While working on the farm I became interested in the billboard business. After some thought and consideration, we built our first sign in Selma, AL in the heart of the "blackbelt" (an area in Alabama noted for its black topsoil). Since then, we have expanded into five counties across central Alabama.

**Larry Roberts, Boardworks**

In 1988 I was living in Orlando, FL and a buddy I grew up with suggested we look at outdoor advertising as a business opportunity. We researched, gathered info and talked to anybody in the industry we could find for about 6 months and finally decided to start leasing and building signs in small central Florida towns like Wauchula, Arcadia and Okeechobee. We developed and sold locations in the beginning and, at some point, figured out that steel prices are the same in a small town as they are in a large city and decided to move to Atlanta in 1996 to concentrate solely on metro locations.

**Jarrett Brown, Brown Outdoor**

In 2002 I built a small wood billboard on family land to advertise a construction company my father owned. After the billboard was up, we started getting calls from other companies wanting to rent the board. Seeing the potential for the business we built another board on the same property.

**Ben Buckland, Ben Buckland Media**

Very much by accident and I'm really glad it happened. I have always sold against outdoor and I never really took a hard look at what a cost efficient, dynamic business it is, and I certainly didn't know how flexible it is for the advertiser or how enjoyable it is to be in. We book longer contracts in outdoor as compared to living and dying by rating books and selling short term ads in radio and TV. Outdoor is a much more laid-back industry. It's kind of advertising for grownups.

**Robert Sykes, Capital Outdoor**

Capital Outdoor Advertising actually began back in the '80's after Steve Bryant re-entered the business for the second time after a stint as the Regional G.M. for National 3M. I was with Whiteco at this time in about my 12th year as Regional Manager of the South Atlantic Region (NC/SC/VA)...Steve and I competed, served together on the NCOAA Board of Directors, fought very bad legislation, and became friends. After Whiteco sold I joined Steve as company President in 1999. Capital was soon acquired by Lamar in 2001. We then started over (again), and currently have approximately 800 faces in NC/VA.

**Peter Carlson, Carlson Outdoor**

My grandfather purchased an existing business in 1948.

**Duane Fredrickson, Circle City Outdoor**

I got into the outdoor advertising business in a rather unusual way. I was just a kid and working behind a counter at a lumberyard. I knew that I wanted to own my business and I wanted it to meet certain criteria. I wanted it to be business to business, have no moving parts, very little or no warranty work, and a whole page of other criteria. I narrowed it down to cement burial vaults and outdoor advertising. The barriers to entry with cement burial vaults was too high and so I chose outdoor advertising. I got in my car and wrote down the location of a number of grassy hills on major roads. I soon found out that there was a whole lot more to the business. I figured out the regulatory landscape and started building sites in 1982. Circle City hired me to run its plant after purchasing some of my billboards during 2018.

**Frank Nataro, Coastal Outdoor Advertising**

After graduating college and after basic training with the Army National Guard, my first job was with Winston Network (TDI) as a Lease Representative in the New York market. Also worked for a company called Criterion Advertising and started my own Outdoor Advertising companies from that point on.

**Kelly Peppers, Colossal Media**

It was a bit of luck, good timing, and a lot of persistence. Our founders had very different backgrounds, Adrian was the owner of Mass Appeal magazine living in NY and Paul was a "walldog" living in LA. In 2004 they combined their experiences and created the model for what you see here today. In the early years it was a huge challenge since the OOH world was so used to cheap and easy options. Hard work paid off since now Colossal is in really high demand and considered both a trusted traditional media platform and exciting experiential provider.

**Jessica Connell, Connell Outdoor**

Riding in a car seat over 30 years ago...I was brought on for servicing local and national accounts along with business development for the company in 2009.

**David Gray, Creative Outdoor**

I was fresh out of University and had always been interested in going into business for myself. My early jobs had for the most part been with small businesses, so I had some exposure to the challenges that many small businesses face. And certainly, the most obvious of those challenges, was cost efficient marketing.

### **Len Carson, DC Marketing**

In 2011, friends of mine who are small business owners, were complaining about their market share, and with no advertising experience I suggested they should advertise more. Their response was, "Do you know how much that costs?" I said no, and they went on to explain the cost of print, radio and tv within our market. This response caused me to ask, "how does a small business afford these advertising mediums when the cost represents a significant portion of their profits?" As entrepreneurs do, I saw an opportunity, but wasn't sure of the answer until more than 1,000 hours of research later, when my solution was DOOH. So, the next steps were finding a location on I-88 where the highest traffic count in our Oneonta/Cooperstown market is, convincing my wife that investing my retirement on a location with a dilapidated home and 25 +/- trees that needed to be razed and install the first digital billboard on the 120 mile long I-88. Yes, she thought I was crazy, but trusts me and has been fully supportive of our Out of Home business.

### **Vince Miller, DDI**

The Drury family used billboards for their hotels. When they started building hotels in St. Louis, they thought the prices were too high so they started developing sites. They planned to use one face and sell the outbound to another advertiser. They offered an operator a chance to manage the faces they didn't need, and the operator started playing permitting games on sites they were trying to develop. The Drury's got mad and it became personal. The rest as they say is history.



### **Sharrod Delia, Delia Outdoor**

This all started in 1999- Driving Roads back and forth to college. My wheels were always turning with the curiosity of the how, what & why of the billboard industry. My first company was named Global Outdoor years later it became SanDelia Outdoor. We were a junior panel company which was sold out and dissolved operations. Delia Outdoor Advertising is what my new company name is which up couple years later with only BIG AD signs in mind. Hence our slogan...We Have "BIG AD" Signs.....

### **Leslie Benson, Departure Media**

I was looking for employment after graduating from UNC-Chapel Hill and saw an advertisement in the Charlotte newspaper for a marketing position at the Charlotte Douglas International Airport. I applied and was offered the position to work with the Charlotte Airport, Columbia Metropolitan Airport, Fayetteville Regional Airport,

Wilmington International Airport, Charleston International Airport, and the Asheville Regional Airport. That was a long time ago! After 10 successful years working with the large national firm, I launched Departure Media Inc.

### **Bennett Rinaudo, Digivision**



*Digivision Partners Steve Keene (left) and Bennett Rinaudo (right)*

I've been in advertising for 28 years and owned my own advertising agency for the past 18 years. The ad agency was so successful that I secured funding from my agency clients to launch the Northwest Louisiana market and deliver proof of concept for the paradigm shift that is DigiVision Billboard Network. I partnered with Steven R. Keene, former businessman of the year for Northwest, Louisiana. His background was in project development. He built over 4,000 homes, strip shopping centers and apartment complexes. His strength is business and land. My strength is in advertising, promoting and media buying. Together we are a dynamic duo ready to take on a big piece of the USA map.

### **James Martinez, Discover Outdoor**

I started in the business as a land lease person, then went to sales. I took over managing the company within 2 months after my sales exceeded any records and goals ever achieved.

### **Rodney Driggers, Driggers Outdoor**

In 1984 purchased a piece of real estate along interstate 20 which is adjacent to rental property that I owned. The purchased property was 100' wide and a quarter mile long. In trying to come up with how to make the property income producing to pay for it, I realized that billboard was not very wide and upon checking out regulations, I found that I could place three structures along the strip of property. I then went through the learning process of DOTD, how to build structures, what contracts should state and city permitting. Then I started getting contractors together to complete the project. I rented the faces without too much trouble and started buying other lands and duplicating the process. Then leasing property seemed to work better without taking up as much capital and borrowing from banks. In my attempt to keep down the cost of the first three structures, I purchased the abandoned Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Railroad through Louisiana for creosoted timbers. These poles provided me with adequate supply of materials to build several of my first billboards as I entered the market. I then began to try and buy land, build structures, and then flip the land. This worked out okay until the recession started.

### **Dick Rhodes, Dusty's Outdoor**

I had a business partner that wanted me to buy a restaurant building as investment property we could lease. We bought the building which came with seven interstate billboards. We quickly realized that the billboards were worth more than the property, so we sold the building after 3 years and kept the billboards.

### **Dick Estus, Estus Outdoor**

I spent 6 months in the service after graduating from Bucknell. I wanted to be in advertising. A brother-in-law who worked for General Outdoor suggested I apply for a job. I went to work for General Outdoor in sales in Philadelphia and later in Harrisburg, Utica and Atlanta. I ended up working for Ted Turner in Atlanta for 15 years after the Turners took over the Atlanta portion of General Outdoor.

### **Dan Franklin, Franklin Outdoor**

I got into the billboard business when I was 13 sanding and blocking out panels for the paint shop to reuse for painting the next sign. A few years later I moved into installing and posting in the summers through high school and college. After graduation I started full time for the business in the operations side of the business. I have been focusing more on the acquisition and growth of the company the last few years.

### **Kyle Glover, Glover Media**

My father, LaDon Pate, started out in the electrical sign business in Birmingham, Alabama. He moved the family to Prattville, a suburb of Montgomery in 1977. In 1981, he built his first billboard. I have been so fortunate to have learned the business from his experiences. When he passed away, in 2008, I took over the day-to-day operations of his company. He had 30 static faces along I-65 in Central Alabama. In 2013, my wife and I started Glover Media Group. We built the first structure in Prattville, Alabama. It was a 10'6 x 36 digital unit/ static on back side at the main intersection in town. We have been very blessed as that it is still, to this day, our strongest location.

### **Jeff Gordon, Gordon Outdoor**

I started with some small structures in downtown Tulsa 17 years ago. Within the next year I started constructing large billboard structures.

### **Bryan Mack, Great Outdoors**

I lost a bet. Seriously, I sort of got into the business because I heard of this high school football star named Dennis Weller, from my high school who was making six figures, and this was back in the 80's. I'm not saying he didn't try hard in class, or that he couldn't bench press 400 pounds, but he was a C student, and so was I (actually C-). When I heard he was making over \$100,000 per year, I decided to put in an application down at Rollins Outdoor Advertising in Washington DC, and Dennis was promoted to Sales Manager and became my boss.

### **Joe Mancino, GreenSigns**

It was 1986 and I was selling business telephone systems after the mandated Bell breakup. I was attending college at night, working sales during the day. One week I watched as a billboard was being constructed on the property where my office was located. Once it was completed, I decided to call on the company who constructed the billboard – 3M National Advertising. After spending 3 months or so selling them a phone system for their offices, I was asked by the regional manager if I would ever consider selling billboard advertising. A couple of interviews later I was hired, and 31 years later I am still in love with this business.

### **Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor**

It was 2007 and I was buying and selling properties when I met a neighbor on Wrightsville Beach who knew about the sign business from his dad. With his sign knowledge and my business knowledge, it was a good pairing to start a sign company

together. However, it wasn't a convenient time to start a billboard company at the start of the recession. I had some money from selling some of the properties and land I had acquired, but basically, we ended up running out of money getting the company started. I was able to renegotiate the loans to interest only and we started building signs out of used wood poles from power companies. I remember some of the guys at the big companies saying there was no way we would make it. However, we successfully ran Waterway Outdoor until the company was split up in 2016. I got about 40 or so structures out of the old company and started building up Grey Outdoor.

#### **Andrew Greenwald, Gigantic Media**

I have been in the traditional and digital agency business for over 15 years in Cleveland, OH. When the Cleveland Cavs drafted LeBron James, my agency was hired to manage radio and VIP events for NIKE in the Cleveland market. LeBron had two breakout seasons and NIKE needed something "BIG" to celebrate what the NBA fans were witnessing. I partnered with David Sternberg, the owner of Metro Space Realty, a real estate brokerage firm, to locate a wall in Cleveland to erect a large billboard. David identified a vacant brick wall facing the "Q" (Quicken Loans Arena) which happened to be the side of Sherwin Williams Headquarters office building. We licensed the wall, worked with the City of Cleveland, Sherwin Williams and Nike to create one of the most iconic billboards in NIKE's history and Gigantic Media, LLC was born.

#### **Tom Giesken, Giesken Outdoor**

I started working in outdoor with a well-run family-owned operation based in Toledo Ohio around 1996 called Root Outdoor. They trained me as a Leasing Agent and how to manage billboard leases and basic operations until they sold to Lamar in 2000. Soon after being let go I started my own company and began adding new locations with Retrofit Poster panels from Tiffin Metal which no one was doing at the time... I started building digital billboards in Detroit back in 2009 when hardly anybody was doing it.

#### **Hal Stevenson, Grace Outdoor Advertising**

I met a gentleman in college... he had a company called Omni Outdoor Advertising. He took me under his wing a little bit... one of my jobs was to come back to South Carolina and help him with some plants he had here. Diana was in college at USC... We fell in love. I asked her to marry me and go in business together. We've been working together ever since.

#### **Shannon Graham, Graham Outdoor**

I got involved in OOH by purchasing some hunting property in GA back 16 years ago along I-16. My wife and mother-in-law had the idea to utilize it by putting a billboard up. Started with one and now have 20 in GA., several which I own the property as well.

#### **Billy Harvin, HB Outdoor**

My background is shopping center development, and my brother introduced me to the outdoor business in 2008. I did my first digital board in front of one of our existing shopping centers in 2008. I have enjoyed the outdoor business meeting the many people and local/national businesses and brainstorming advertising strategies and then implementing these advertising strategies. I have found that not too many businesses out there don't like outdoor. I will continue to grow our inventory and business.

#### **Mark Herring, Herring Outdoor**

Straight out of college with a marketing degree, I was blessed to have been hired as a market manager for Headrick Outdoor which eventually was bought out by Lamar. Headrick Outdoor was a great place to work and learn all aspects of market development. Richard Headrick instilled a great amount of entrepreneurism in Market Managers and I was fortunate to be able to learn my role every day. However, Lamar made the acquisition and I found myself laid off. So, I got up, dusted myself off and made lemonade out of the lemons and started my own company. 21 years later, we are still a humble, family-owned company providing the best locations and best service in the industry.

#### **Greg Hicks, Hicks Outdoor**

We started the business in 1985 as a buyer of outdoor advertising for the hospitality business. We are still in the hotel business in Charleston.

### **Dean Koby, Hispanic Indoor Media**

Straight out of college, I spent my first 10 years working in Account Management and Business Development at large agencies in NY and San Francisco — Ogilvy & Mather, Young & Rubicam, Kirshenbaum, Bond & Partners and Age Wave Communications. While working on the Agency-side on major brand accounts like American Express, Citibank, Guinness Import Company, Bristol Myers Squibb and Blue Cross & Blue Shield, I became passionate about geo-demographic targeting and the ability for brands reach individuals and niche groups inside their communities. Coupled with the fact that I've always had an affinity for the Hispanic and Latin American culture and language..... we recognized an opportunity for major brands to increase market share by reaching consumers within their communities throughout their daily activities with relevant "in-language" messaging. By 2006, we began to run large, multi-marketplace-based campaigns for brands like Procter & Gamble's Crest, Tide, Downy, Kraft Foods, Nestle, Western Union, Moneygram, T-Mobile, AT&T, Astra Zeneca, to name a few. By 2010, HIM was executing large scale national campaigns for major brands targeting all demos, including African American and General Market audiences.



### **Justin Houck, Houck Transit**

My Great Grandfather and Great Uncle started in 1919 by placing advertising inside two buses that ran between Minneapolis and St. Paul, MN. At that time and continuing through the 1950's transit services were privately owned, and multiple bus companies operated throughout the Twin Cities metro area and surrounding suburbs. They slowly expanded beyond the metro area and partnered with the transit systems to sell advertising on buses in Rochester, Mankato, and Duluth, MN. Through the 1960's, 70's, 80's and 90's we added a few new markets but mainly focused on serving the markets we had established decades earlier. In the mid 2000's we began a more aggressive approach to expanding into new territories. In 2000 we were serving roughly 15 transit systems in four states and we are now partnered with 40 transit systems in 12 states throughout the country!

### **Justin Powell, Huntington Outdoor**

I started Huntington Outdoor in 2008. I wasn't really looking to get into the billboard business. I was just out of college and looking for a job. The recession was in full swing and jobs for 20-year-old college graduates were not plentiful. It was at this point I decided to "create" my own job. I had no experience, no idea what "job" I wanted so I started doing some research: restaurants, insurance, real estate, car washes, internet sales, and so on...Before I started searching, I created a checklist of what I wanted from a business. None of the businesses I researched matched the items on my checklist until I stumbled upon billboards. A friend of mine suggested billboards. He said they seemed like they were a good business. I continued my research and decided to look into buying a billboard company. While looking for a company to purchase, I realized quickly that either people didn't want to sell or if they did, they were overpriced so I decided to build my own (more research) and so Huntington Outdoor was born.



### **Matthew DiRoberto, IMM Media**

I've been in the advertising/marketing business for the last 20 years. I had a lot of relationships from working in radio so I was looking to leverage that, and I thought outdoor advertising could be a great conduit to that.

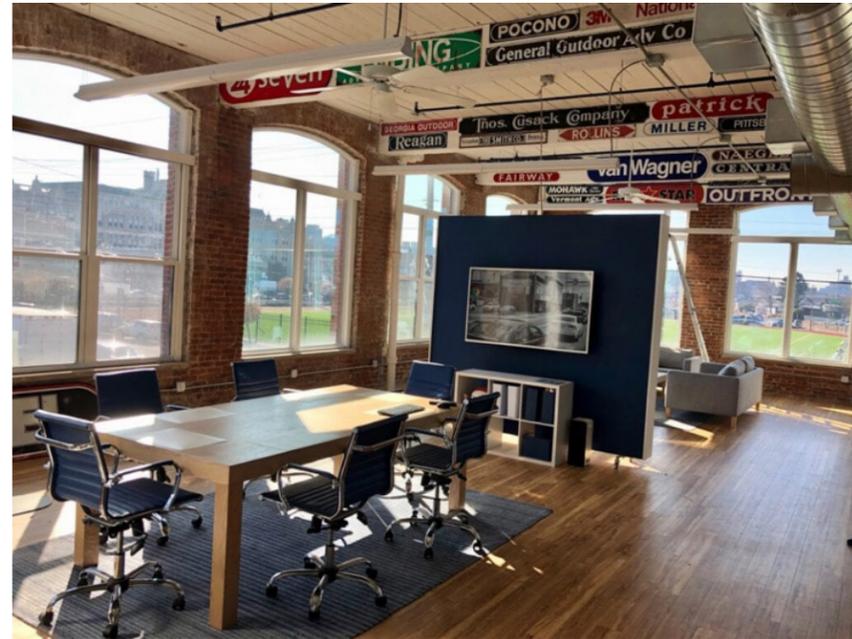
### **Randy Smith, Insite Mediacom**

Glenn (Flutie) is a 3rd generation outdoor advertising company veteran with 35 years in the business himself. Randy and his group were investment bankers in media telecom starting in the 80's and were pioneers in the telecom tower business converting to a concentration in OOH assets in 2000 when InSite got started. We think that a convergence of the communication business and outdoor advertising assets is inevitable.

### **Chris Jarman, Jarman Outdoor**

A major fast-food chain was coming to my hometown the same year I was starting to build a house. I had an idea of building a billboard on family land to help make my new house payment. I met with the managers of the chain to show them my location and proposal. Not only did they accept my proposal on the spot, they asked if I wanted to do advertising for them on all roads coming into town. So, I went from building one face to 5 structures in one short meeting! Jarman Outdoor Advertising was born on that day.

### Kevin Joyce, Joyce Outdoor



*Kevin Joyce's conference room is full of old Out of Home imprints*

There's a long answer to your short question. I grew up in the billboard business. My father started a billboard plant when he was a teenager, and it eventually became a large company. The industry was the backdrop of our childhood. My father would frequently come home with raw wood "Patrick" imprints for us to paint. The basketball hoop in our yard was built with scrap pipe from bulletin columns, as well as uprights and wood panels from the faces. We spent countless hours in the shop, where I especially drove the artists (Jack Davitt / Joe Trudnak) and painters crazy. Fortunately, they tolerated me until I was around 9 or 10 years old. I officially entered into the business in 2009 or 2010. Being one of the casualties of The Great Recession from my previous job, forced me to explore something different.

### Jean-Paul Gedeon, JPG Media

I've always been fascinated by huge Billboards and larger than life prints that make you wonder "How did they do that?" We started as large format printer in 2000, doing signs and banners, senior year in high school. There were only 2 OOH companies in Hawaii at the time and they were only in Malls. We ended up getting some print and install jobs from them and eventually learned the business. Hawaii is a tight knit community and the opportunity presented itself to partner first with a Trucking Fleet, then a couple Malls, then a chain of Supermarkets. As our reputation and track record for success grew, so did our network of media properties. We are continuing to grow and now represent the largest OOH network in Hawaii, which consists of our exclusive media properties and strategic partnerships.

### Rick Rendon Juggernaut Outdoor

I was hired in 1983 by Wally Kelly of, at the time, Whiteco Metrocom, in Tucson AZ. A year later I was promoted to General Sales Manager and 2 years later replaced Manny Molina as General Manger when Manny left OHH to join Karl Eller at Circle K. Arte and Wally brought Rick into the Outdoor Systems group in 1996.

### Brent and Lane Keenan, Keenan Media

Coming from a background in sales we felt that we could be successful in helping others promote their businesses or causes to their target audience. We wanted to start a company of our own to assist business owners in gaining exposure for their companies and also build mutually beneficial relationships with the local community. After noticing the increase in digital Out of Home advertising along Georgia roadways we decided to look into the industry as a profession and after doing market research we decided it would be a great fit for us.

### Natalie Kessler, Kessler Outdoor

We started the billboard side of the business in the 70's when we had the idea to install billboards on our building of our on-premise sign company. The billboards were a hit, so we started investing in the off-premise side of the business by adding new locations and purchasing existing structures. We now have over 300 faces throughout Ohio.

### Kevin Bartanian, Kevani

I got my start in non-traditional/experiential formats back in 2005.

### Kathy Oertel, Lakeland Outdoor

I developed an interest in the Out of Home industry during a time that I was a media planner/buyer. I was very intrigued with the recurring charge business and the excitement of outdoor and its ability to be a mainstay while traditional media was losing market share.

### Chad Harris, Las Vegas Billboards

Las Vegas Billboards has been family owned and operated since 1987. LVB was founded by my father, David Harris. Being a second-generation billboard operator, I take pride in continuing his legacy by providing high quality customer service with superior locations.

### **Steve Snyder, Legends Outdoor**

We started Legends Outdoor in 2005. Previously I had worked at Clear Channel as VP of Sales for the DC-Baltimore market and Steve Sarkady was new to the industry after a successful career in computer sales. Both of us were looking for a change and to work for ourselves after years in the corporate world. We began leasing and secured 10 permits in the Martinsburg, WV market. We constructed our locations using our HELOC's and family investment money.

### **John Siegenthaler, Lind Media**

Lind Media was organized as Lind Outdoor Advertising in 1991 approximately 25 years ago.

### **Jim McLaughlin, Former President, Link Media**

Actually, found my first outdoor job in Wheeling, WV, with Creative Displays through an employment agency. It sounded challenging, fun, and they gave me a car allowance and gas, so I was in. Ha! The rest is history. I fell in love with the business and have been passionate about it ever since, like a lot of your readers out there.



### **Scott Lafoy, CEO, Link Media**

I started with Peterson Outdoor in Orlando (which is now Clear Channel) almost 35 years ago. That was my first job out of college. I started off in real estate and quickly moved into sales and after a few years I became manager of one of Peterson's plants... A couple years later Peterson was sold to a group headed by Jim McLaughlin and renamed POA. Jim was my direct supervisor and was also... my mentor... POA was sold to Universal Outdoor... Universal ended up being bought by Clear Channel... and my final supervisor there was Karl Eller. So, in 1999 I started Lafoy Outdoor Advertising with John Peterson... the company grew to include inventory in five states... After 16 years I sold my company to Fairway... and I stayed on as the GM... my initial supervisor there was Kevin Gleason. How many of us by been direct reports to Jim, Karl, and Kevin? In 2018 I joined Link to head up the M&A effort. Jim McLaughlin was the CEO. And he'd told me about Link and Boston Omaha's owners and the long term view they had on the business... In December of 2019 Jim retired at which time I became the interim CEO, then the CEO...

### **Rodney Lockwood, Lockwood Outdoor**

I got started in the Out of Home business 20 plus years ago. At that time, I had just built a quadplex for office rental. I realized the importance of advertising and I purchased 2 double stack billboards for my complex adjacent to the highway.

### **Alyson Goldberg, Logan Outdoor**

The inevitable pull of the family business! Working with my father who built Logan.

### **Chris Cowlbeck, Look Billboards**

Our main family business started 45 years ago now with my mother founding our real estate company in Ardmore. We had terrific response to our yard signs and had one hand painted 12 x 24 bulletin beside our office (now a location of one of our digitals), which we knew worked well. A grade school friend of mine and now business partner, Charlie Clowe, attempted to get the local tourism effort to build some billboards to generate revenue to promote the city, and when we couldn't build enough interest, we said heck, let's do it ourselves.



### **Cliff Miller and Don Seymour, M&S Signs**

We each owned a shoe store and furniture store. Needed to advertise on a billboard and decided to purchase property and build our own. My business went up 18 percent the first year. We sold shoes from 5 to 15, AAAA to EEEEE, and it got their attention. It was so much fun to see something work so well.

### **Sandy Jones, Mahalo Marketing**

I began my career in OOH sales in 1983 here in Atlanta with Corey Outdoor Advertising, Inc. As a new player in Atlanta, we distinguished ourselves from other outdoor companies in the areas of service, quality, honesty and fun. Those characteristics coupled with the effectiveness of OOH, the lower cost of OOH compared to other media, the creative avenues available with OOH, and the increased interest in this media form by our clients ignited my fascination with the industry. Having been a part of developing and selling billboard assets, I chose to pursue the entrepreneurial path on my own in 1994

### **Peter Maloney, Maloney Outdoor**

In the early 80s when interest rates hit 18-20% I was in industrial sales. My sister told me about a job opening at Naegele Outdoor Advertising. I worked there in sales for about five years. Then, I started out on my own and created Maloney Outdoor Advertising.

### **Jeff Joaquin, Marquee Media**

I started in the Real Estate department at Foster & Kleiser in 1984 out of college, and thought I'd only stay to build a resume. Thirty-two years later I'm still in the Out of Home business and have fulfilled a dream I've had since Karl Eller bought the company I was working for (Patrick Media Group) in 1995 and that was to eventually own my own billboard company. Little did I know then, that it would take me back to where it all started for me, in Sacramento and partnering with the Sacramento Kings.



### **Jim McIntyre, McIntyre Outdoor**

My career began as a UT Knoxville graduate with a degree in Marketing and Transportation. I had hoped to go to work with Delta Airlines or perhaps one of the big railroad or trucking companies, but the economy was in recession. Unable to find work, I answered a help wanted ad in the local newspaper. Suddenly I was in the billboard business with Creative Displays and my education really began. I learned sales, then sales management and became a sales trainer teaching in many Creative Displays markets. We were purchased by Lamar in 1987, and I eventually became a GM in San Antonio with Rollins Outdoor and later with Reagan Outdoor.

### **Chris Zukin, Meadow Outdoor**

We got into the business in 1968 when Joe Zukin bought Cleveland Outdoor in Merced California. In 1981 we bought Honald, Inc in The Dalles, Oregon which was the beginning of our current plant.

### **Maggie Welch, Media Choice**

We started in the Out of Home advertising business when we started placing signage in shopping malls! We grew from there.

### **Steve Richards, Mile Hi Outdoor**

I started in sales with Outdoor Systems – Phoenix in 1992

### **Denny Orsinger, Mixed Media**

Employed in 1974 by 3M National Advertising. Since 1980 built three plants in several states. Sold two. Have developed locations for Clear Channel and consult to a research company for the outdoor industry.

### **Mike Mortenson, Mortenson Outdoor**

I have a background in metal fabrication and welding. I thought I would challenge myself by building a billboard. I sold my boat for the startup costs and bought 6 large pipes instead. Now I produce and manufacture 12 x 24 and 14 x 48 billboards. I haven't fished since, not enough time.

### **Dwight and Justin Church, Mountain Outdoor**

Mountain Outdoor started in 1993. We have been in the convenience store and restaurant business and started putting structures on our properties. We steadily grew our business over the years by building on our own properties and adding boards and by acquiring existing boards. We currently own and operate 83 faces in Knox County and Sevier County in East Tennessee.

### **Grant Leschin, MV Outdoor**

We developed a large shopping center years ago. It opened to moderate success. There was an available billboard located on the freeway at the exit to the shopping center. We decided to take a flyer and take the board for a year to advertise the shopping center. Three months later, the traffic and sales at the shopping center had dramatically improved! We ended up purchasing that display, along with several others and never looked back. Today our main focus is the outdoor advertising business.

### **Anne Jernigan, Myrtle Beach Outdoor**

I taught High School and loved it but left to get into sales so I could control my salary. I was hired as a sales rep for Coastal Outdoor Advertising in Myrtle Beach. I was then moved to the sales manager position. I left Coastal Outdoor in 2008 to buy in to and manage Myrtle Beach Outdoor.

### **Neil Bell, New South Outdoor**

I started right out of college with Lamar in Tallahassee as a salesperson and then sales manager. I was immediately in love with the industry. After only two years of working there, I realized it would be many years before they let me run a plant on my own – so a friend and I left to start our own plant. Now, after 18 years and four plants later, I still love the business. I can't imagine doing anything else.



### **Jerod Norris, Norris Outdoor**

Started in 2013. Long story short, being in print advertising I had always wanted to get into the billboard business. I had just started Hometown Girard Newspaper after leaving a previous position as publisher of another publication. I had to find a way to replace that income and I thought, “well, if you’re ever going to do it – now’s the time.”...We started with one display in Girard, Kansas and began deriving more from there. That was 4 years ago, and we’ve continued to expand our Out of Home presence each year.

### **Ben Harbaugh, Ohio Outdoor**

We purchased a piece of property about 5 years ago (where our home now sits) that borders a state route. We were looking for ways to generate residual income from the property and the billboard concept was born. Through some challenges, we found a way to secure the permits and built our first billboard. After that first experience, the wheels began turning.

### **Angel Saemai, Overall Murals**

On one of my first visits to New York in 2006, on a break from grad school, I saw a large hand painted H&M advertisement in SoHo and was struck by its size and method of creation. The next year, I had moved to NYC, and when I was a digital media planner at Universal McCann, I serendipitously met my future husband and business partner, Dmitry Pankov. He had been a graffiti and street artist and after his studies at the University of Art and Culture in Russia, found himself in Brooklyn to pursue art. One of his first jobs was designing and installing signage for a local sign shop. Later, he told me that one of the first things in the city that made an impact on him was seeing the large wall outside of Penn Station being painted for Delta Airlines. As he watched the painters work on it, he thought, “That’s what I want to do with my life.” After we married and opened a small successful design, sign and mural painting shop, the deep-down desire to do something bigger in the public realm grew stronger. With little out-of-home industry connections or experience, but a whole lot of passion, we opened Overall Murals in 2010. Today, with growing national inventory, a team of talented painters and a savvy business team, through many ups and downs - including the pandemic, we are intent to continue the adventure we embarked on ten years ago.

### **Brad Sourbeer, Parker Outdoor**



*Brad Sourbeer and crew building a billboard in Arizona*

I started the business in November 1987 building our first sign in Parker Arizona. We originally called the company Sign Broker USA, but after a couple of years decided to change the name to Parker Outdoor as the original name was confusing to the marketplace. We moved back to my original home state of Washington and started building signs there. In the late 90’s an opportunity arose in Snohomish County in Western Washington as the state decided to expand Highway 522 to meet population growth needs. In 2008, we moved our office to Central Washington and started building signs in Brewster, Omak and Yakima. 2013 was the year we put in our first digital in Woodinville and added a second digital in Everett. In 2014 we started building again in Arizona.

### **Larry Lipscomb, Pioneer Outdoor**

My grandfather was a Ford tractor distributor who entered the outdoor business in 1952 along with radio and eventually television stations to promote sales. In 1958 Larry Lipscomb’s dad Jack took over running the business. Jack Lipscomb served as chairman on the OAAA legislative committee in the early 70’s. I started in sales at Pioneer in 1974. We sold the three companies, Pioneer, Superior, and Overland Outdoor to Lamar in 1997. After a hiatus I returned to the business in 2010 when my son Stuart said he would like to get back in the outdoor business.

### **Dom Vastino, Premier Outdoor Media**

In my time at Fuel Outdoor I was directly engaged with the real estate department charged with the task of developing locations and restructuring the signage ordinance in major markets; Miami, Chicago, Dallas and LA. Once I left Fuel, I co-founded the New Jersey based company Alliance Outdoor and when our assets were purchased in late 2015, I moved over to Landmark Dividend to help structure easement partnerships with billboard operators across the county. I was introduced to Sean Corbett, President, Sales and Marketing and we saw that our skill sets complemented each other and with the investment backing of Caruth Capital Partners we founded Premier Outdoor Media.



### **Lisa Shaw Atkinson, Premium Outdoor**

For several years, I had leased sites to other billboard companies. When my daughter, Anna-Lee, showed me a new property she thought would make a great site, I said “yes” to the purchase and “this time let’s do it ourselves.” We have now been in business five years; building, acquiring, and developing the Premium Outdoor plant.

### **Bob Klausmeier, Prime-Site Media**

I had worked for quite a few years as a vendor of technology to the outdoor advertising industry, retiring in 2012. In 2013 I founded *Out of Home Magazine* which allowed me a different perspective on the industry. As I interviewed industry professionals I not only learned more, I developed a passion for the industry that would only be satisfied by operating my own plant. But I did not fully understand the land-lease component, so I contacted an old friend from Michigan who I had always admired for his site development skills. Ultimately, we decided that our own respective talents complimented one another, so we launched Prime-Site Media as a new venture.

### **Mike Fitzgerald, Railroad Outdoor**

We met when Kelly was trying to lease land for a new billboard on land that Mike had listed for sale. That deal didn’t work out, but we stayed in touch and several years later decided to form a partnership to build new billboards in Metro Atlanta and north Georgia. We formed the company during the Great Recession and money was very tight. We worked side by side building our first billboards by hand, but these days the signs are built out of steel with cranes and heavy equipment.

### **Ben Ralston, Ralston Outdoor**

My dad, Doug Ralston started in the business after law school in 1974; first working for Perry Outdoor (my grandfather’s company) and then starting Ralston Outdoor in 1976.

### **Bill Reagan, Reagan Outdoor**

I started in the Out of Home in 1963. I got a job working for someone in the sign business. He had me doing lots of things, maintenance, then leasing and then selling. I earned enough money in my first three months out of high school to pay cash for a new Cadillac, but I didn’t. In the Fall of 1963, I went to Case Western Reserve as a Pre-Med Student on a Football Scholarship.



After my first year I dropped out and went to work for the Harry H Packer outdoor advertising company selling and leasing. They had plants in Cleveland, Toledo, Cincinnati and Utah. On January 1, 1965 Foster and Kleiser bought Packer and after two month I was laid off because they thought I was too young. I went to Utah to join my family as my father had been transferred there from Ohio. In 1965 I started my own sign company out of the basement of the house. 4’ by 12’ signs to start. I was also working at Galaxy Outdoor Advertising, but they fired me when they learned I had my own sign business. I built and operated a bulletin, an 8-sheet plant and a 30-sheet plant while I finished undergraduate and Law School and practiced law for 7 years. I bought Galaxy for \$7 million in 1981 borrowing all the money at 21% and subsequently raised in 1987 a \$100 million to purchase the Rollins company which had plants in Philadelphia, Delaware, DC and Texas. I spun off the other assets in 1991 and kept the Austin plant free and clear of debt.

### **TG Shaw, Reeves Shaw Media**

I grew up in the northern suburbs of Atlanta and when I graduated high school, I went to Valdosta State University in South Georgia. And down at Valdosta I majored in marketing and during my senior year we were tasked with putting together a marketing plan for a local company... I was in charge of gathering advertising costs and that’s when I reached out to Lamar which started my interest in Out of Home... After graduation I moved back to Atlanta and stayed in touch with the Lamar Atlanta office until they were ready to hire me... in this case persistence paid off.

### **Robert Moore, Riley Outdoor**

I grew up in Kinston, NC, and graduated from East Carolina University in 1997. I now live in Greenville, NC, with my wife Laura. I have a 13-year-old daughter named Riley. I actually started with Eastern Outdoor during my senior year at ECU. We developed that company into a medium-sized outdoor company before divesting to Next Media Group

in 2005. Riley Outdoor was started almost immediately after we sold to Next Media Group in August 2005.

### **Matt Rogers, Rogers Media**

I got into the business answering an ad in the newspaper for a lease man in my early 20's. I was lucky that Dan Schnitzer, who was starting Sun Outdoor in Tacoma, Washington, was willing to take a chance on a high school teacher with no real estate or sales experience. I think you are especially lucky in life when you meet your mentor early and they are willing to put time and effort into belong you learn your craft. I was very lucky, I made lots of mistakes, learned, and got hooked for life on a business I absolutely love.

### **Dave Roland, Roland Digital Media**

After failing in my first job out of college as an engineer, I asked God for something creative and that I could make a living at. Not long after that, a lady asked me to make a sign for her. We installed our first sandblasted wood sign on January 1, 1984. I did not even know what sign paint was. In October of that year, we went full time in the commercial and electric sign business. At that time, I had never even been in a sign shop, but desire, enthusiasm and long hours will make up for a lot of mistakes. We saved our money, lived on a shoestring, and put \$80,000 in the bank. In April 1987, we constructed 3 double-faced, monopole boards. In October of that same year, we borrowed our first \$100,000 the day after the stock market fell 500 points. We, like others thought the world was ending, however 30 months later, we paid it off.

### **Matthew Sapp, General Manager, Sapp Outdoor**

Sapp Outdoor was founded in 1949 by my grandfather, Harold Sapp, in Statesboro, GA. He passed away in 2006, and the reins of Sapp Outdoor were passed on to my father, Neal Sapp. Neal was very well prepared for the transition as he has worked at Sapp Outdoor his entire life.

### **Matt Schulze, Selective Structures**

It is kind of a little crazy. I got in the business in 1991. I was working for a radio station, selling airtime... We were selling live remotes. I sold a live remote to a mobile home dealership... and nobody was coming to this live remote. I was starting to get a little worried... So I went and got a bear suit. I got on top of the billboard on the property and started waving people in. They sold 8 mobile homes in one day during the live remote... I went back the next Monday and collected the \$500 for the live remote and said hey, let's do this next weekend. And he said Matt,



I'm not going to do it...Nobody came in from the live remote. They came in because you were up on the billboard. It was a lightbulb moment. So, I left there and went straight to the billboard company and he hired me...after 7 years I was running it...

### **Mitch Fowkes, Steel City Billboards**

That's a funny thing. My Dad and brother have a successful online business and when I graduated from college in 2010, I wanted to help market the business. I looked into generating leads a little differently than they did, and I had the idea of using billboards. I called a local company and asked them what their rates were. When they told me, I asked if that was for the year and they said "nope, just a month." I got off the phone and went looking for my Dad. I said DAD, "We need to start our own billboard business!" He thought I was crazy. In May of 2011, we started Steel City Billboards. Our focus was to advertise our own products and services while helping small businesses advertise along the way. Things started snowballing from there.

### **Stu Stein, Stein Sign Display**

Stein Sign Display was originally named "Hi-Way" Sign Company because of the location of the actual building—located on Highway 212. However, at the time, the company also had several hundred billboard locations across the state of South Dakota. Due to the Highway Beautification Act, many of the billboard locations had to be removed. As it stands today, Stein Sign Display is one of the largest privately owned billboard companies in South Dakota with approximately 175 billboards, including 1 digital billboard in Watertown, SD. In addition, Stein Sign Display is a full-service sign company that provides signage for all of NE South Dakota, including into North Dakota and Minnesota.

### **Katherine Vanderbush, Sway Outdoor**

Back in 2005, I answered a job posting on Craigslist for a marketing position at Adspace Mall Network (now Lightbox). In the five years I worked there I had the opportunity to attend several tradeshow, conferences and industry events and met so many of the wonderful people that make up the OOH industry and family. I knew then it was an industry I had a passion for and enjoyed working with all the people involved in it. One of those people was Dave Pidgeon and we had remained friends and colleagues through the years. After Adspace, I moved on to Starlite Media where I finally tried my hand at sales and realized it was where I was meant to be! I became the Executive Director of National Sales and loved the



experience; however, I did want to branch off on my own, so I decided after several years to become an independent sales rep.

#### **Bart Thomas, Thomas Outdoor Advertising**

My dad when he was a kid was fascinated by billboards. An older gentleman helped him get started. My dad had a great letter hand and was a great calligrapher. I grew up working in the business.

#### **Jim Troy, Toby Outdoor**

My dad managed several billboard operations. I worked for Vern Clark when I was a young guy. That company was sold to Lamar. I went on my own, built 300 faces and sold to Lamar in 2000. I watched ESPN Sportscenter for two and a half years and did Habitat for Humanity stuff and tutored and then started back in the business because I wanted something to do.

#### **Mark Gamble, Transformation Media**

At twenty, I went to work with Peterson Outdoor (POA Acquisitions) in Orlando climbing signs in operations and eventually transferring into real estate. Thirty years later, I have had the good fortune of working with a number of talented people in a variety of settings from publicly traded, Clear Channel Outdoor to private equity groups including Advantage Outdoor, Bressler Outdoor and NextMedia Group. Last September, I joined Transformation Media (formerly 84 Outdoor) as Vice President of operations.

#### **Matthew Trotter, Trotter Outdoor**

My dad started the business nearly 20 years ago. He placed a call into one of the larger companies about a board available on I-26 and after receiving the quote he was shocked and started the research. Being a General Contractor, he was familiar with the steel erection business and he saw an opportunity. Thankfully it worked out.

#### **Tony Tyler, Tyler Outdoor**

Ralph, our dad, owned a radio station in the 1970's and began putting out "Courtesy Benches" at bus stops and installing 8-Sheets around town to promote the station. Other businesses began asking if they could buy advertising and an outdoor advertising company was born.

#### **Russ Hilliard, USA Outdoor**

I purchased a significant number of panels when the Highway Beautiful Law went into effect in 1965. I bought Panels at 50 cents apiece. I was selling in conjunction with a radio station my family owned, called KOLT. I managed the station for seventeen years and then became active in the cable television industry in 1971. We sold advertising as a part of the advertising insertion, but primarily in Nebraska. We sold to Charter in 2001 and at that time we had over 40,000 subscribers and Charter did not want the billboards we owned, so I decided to expand our billboard holdings.

#### **Randy Jackson, Venture Outdoor**

It started with a summer job at the age of 14 on the landscaping crew for Gannett Outdoor, Kansas City just after they acquired Combined Communications. Many of the trucks still had Eller Outdoor on the side. The new GM at the time was Arte Moreno. In college I was able to do an internship with Outdoor Systems in Denver. Upon graduation, and electing not to do law school, I landed an entry level position in the Denver office. In time I was sucked into the industry vortex that most who have at least two years' experience find hard to leave. In the process I was fortunate to have worked with and learned from some of the best operators in the business.

#### **Bob Townsend, Viscom Outdoor**

We started using billboards to publicize out Dingus McGee's restaurant located in a small town on the I-80 corridor between Sacramento and Lake Tahoe/Reno. Our landlord, Stewart Wells, encouraged us to obtain a billboard to assist us in getting our name out. Well, inside of one year our business had doubled. We went from one billboard to 7 and utilized them for approximately 22 years of good success. We then sold the restaurant and began the billboard business.

#### **Bonnie Weissinger, Wagner Outdoor**

John (Laura's brother) was developing a hotel in Greensburg and wanted to advertise on billboards, so he started the business to advertise his other ventures.

#### **Stephen Johnsen, Waller Outdoor**

My parents started to work in the newspaper business when I was a little kid. I had exposure to that for many, many years...Years later I got married and my wife worked for them for 10-12 years. One day I was going to the airport and I ran across my first...digital billboard. I literally exited the freeway and went back around and sat under it for about 5 minutes. I was so taken with it...A couple days later I told my wife I needed

to show her something...We got in the car...and I showed it to her. The newspaper business was good. We had bought that from my parents when they retired so she had been running that paper...We just thought this would be a good way to supplement our income if the newspaper didn't continue to be a success...I don't think anyone cannot see one of those digital billboards and not be mesmerized...That was the beginning of 7 years of us researching and trying to figure out how we could become an owner/operator ourselves.

#### **Nick Giacomini, WC Media**

Around 1996, shortly after college, my business partner/girlfriend and now wife, Danielle Fulgenzi Giacomini, and I came up with a business idea of indoor ads. After a year selling indoor ad space, an advertiser asked if we had any billboards. From then on, we were in search of properties to lease. A few months later, we installed our first 14x48 bulletin in Springfield IL. After adding additional bulletins in our home market, we expanded to Interstate locations throughout Northern IL and Eastern Iowa.

#### **Pat O'Donnell, YESCO**

My father and my uncle had a sign business in the 50's and the 60's. They did primarily on-premise signs but also owned a few billboards between Lake Tahoe and Sacramento that advertised for the casinos. About 40 some years ago I got out of the Marine Corp...I actually found a job selling outdoor for Donrey Outdoor in Reno, Nevada.

#### **Shannon Hollenkamp, Zalla Outdoor**

The owner's family previously advertised on the sign and made a deal after acquiring the land to also acquire the sign in the early 1980s. They inherited the billboard permit dated in 1960 through the deal.

## **HIGH EFFICIENCY LED'S**

#### **Grant Leschin, MV Outdoor**

We are completing the retrofit of our legacy displays with new high efficiency LED light fixtures. All of our new construction uses LED fixtures exclusively and our goal is to have LED light fixtures throughout the entire plant. There's more to high efficiency LED light fixtures than just cost savings due to reduced electrical usage. We've benefited in a number of other ways including better light quality (light type and distribution), and significantly increased life span of the light fixture. The new fixtures have made a noticeable improvement in the visibility and quality of our displays. The increased durability is particularly important as well, with less down time for our clients due to fixture outages and a reduction in maintenance and repair trips and associated expenses across the entire plant.

## **HOT WEATHER**

#### **Robert Kennerson, Arena Outdoor**

Our typical soil type here is ice cream, which tends to melt in the summer heat, causing pole foundations to shift and resulting in leaning structures which must then be propped up with giant churros. In addition, it's a constant drag on our resources having to squeegee off the incessant raining down of toppings onto the display faces, particularly when the skies open up with caramel as it really sticks to the vinyls. Oh wait, you meant what are the challenges in the desert. Ah yes. We operate in a very low population, economically-challenged market, where the biggest challenge is getting business owners to try outdoor advertising for the first time. Once they do, they learn that investing in an outdoor campaign results in more customers, revenues, and profits. Advertising on billboards has contributed significantly to the success of our clients, which is proving beneficial not only to them but to renewed optimism in the community as a whole.

#### **Mark Becker, Becker Boards**

The sunny weather is great and we haven't had any issues with our digital displays due to the heat.

## ■ HURRICANES

Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor



*Tiffen Metal Hurricane Frame*

The hurricane frames have done really well. We do have some issues with the V-type structures with a hurricane frame. The wind can kind of get behind them...And you do have some kind of maintenance that goes along with that. Keeping the vinyls tight on hurricane frames. But we feel that with as many storms as we've had and we'll continue to have over the foreseeable future. The hurricane frames, the wind frames, are the way to go.

We really only had Florence in 2018 that was really bad...We didn't do very much this year...with Florence we took down a lot of vinyls. It comes down to looking at how much it costs to do all that work. Now if you have staff that you're paying salary to do this it's one thing, but if you're paying per vinyl to get them taken down and put back up...it's almost a catch-22...The way these hurricanes work is they're covering a big area, but the severity of them is in a small area...other surrounding areas aren't so bad. The way we're spread out I don't know that I'd do as much as I did on Florence again... Taking down vinyls on a structure that has an at-risk structure that has a wind frame is smart or maybe a non-conforming one...doing that is probably a good idea...

## ■ LESSONS FROM AN OUT OF HOME CAREER

### **John Arnold, Arnold Outdoor:**

1. Never build a double stack with a face taller than 8 feet. It means you only need 1 light fixture.
2. Never build a board more than 100 miles from your house because it will always be the farthest board away which needs the most maintenance.
3. Always build the best board for the money. You owe it to your employees to keep them safe.
4. Buy your employees safety harnesses with straps which allow them to let themselves down after a fall.

### **Larry Roberts, Boardworks:**

1. Location (as the saying goes) and viewability are probably the most important metrics in determining the value of a sign.
2. Some signs sell themselves, but most do not. Some are almost impossible to rent which creates a resource drain.
3. Work with and not against the folks who issue permits if at all possible.
4. Placement on property matters. Good real estate paper makes life easier.
5. Wide V structures and bright lights are good.
6. Relationships are long term and important.
7. If at all possible, own the dirt under the sign.

### **Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor:**

1. The number one mistake was when we first started in business in building and just over-leveraging the company. We started borrowing and not really knowing what we were going to be able to bring in and not knowing really how much revenue we should be bringing in and how much rent we should be paying and how much we should be spending for the structures... It almost put us out of business... that was 2011-2012 during the recession period... That's the key. To not overleverage.
2. Another lesson is to always get a survey. I've had to move a sign not too long ago – a couple years – but I had to move a sign structure because it was within the setback. It was on the right property, but it was within the setback... so always get a survey... It will save you thousands to spend a few hundred.

**Justin Powell, Huntington Outdoor:**

1. Everything costs twice as much as you think.
2. When you're starting out and young, people are going to kick you. They just will, but things get better. Just stick it out and fight hard.
3. Focus on getting the absolute best locations you can at the beginning. When you have a hundred, you can take a chance and mask a bad one if you have to, but when you start you need to find winners!
4. How do you find winners? I came up with a little system that's easy to remember and might help you. First, unless it's a very special case, don't bother with a location with less than 5,000 a day traffic count. Obviously, more is better. Second, look for what I call "CISD" locations (I always say "KISSED locations"). Here's what that stands for: you want locations that are either at the end of a Curve, at an Intersection, Slow traffic, or you have Demand from advertisers wanting a billboard at a certain location.

**Kevin Joyce, Joyce Outdoor**

When differentiating yourself from competitors, don't go negative. Highlight your great locations and what you do best. Don't even mention the other operators of media platforms. Going negative comes off as petty.



**Robert Moore, Riley Outdoor**

More than 20 years ago, I was told by a very successful businessman to gather an informal Board of Directors... not a formal group that you sit down with, but an informal group that has experience in all facets of business that you can call on from time to time to seek advice on any of a number of topics. As the owner of a small business, this is very important, to have someone that you can call on to ask about a wide range of topics from taxation or financing your next expansion plan. The people that sit on my informal board may not even know who they are, but they have been a key part of my success over the last 20 years.

**Jim Troy, Toby Outdoor**

Don't underestimate how hard it is to access capital. Building one sign at a time is hard.

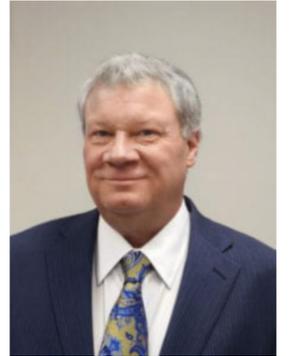
**Matthew Trotter, Trotter Outdoor**

In one word "locations." We can talk hindsight 20/20, but I wish I would have focused on leasing and permitting. Most counties or municipalities have now heavily restricted or erased the off-premises sign from their ordinance in our area.

## MANAGING OUT OF HOME

**Scott Lafoy, CEO, Link Media**

First and foremost, we've been establishing local managers for each of our primary markets where before we had regional management in the past. Not having regional or centralized management helps Link to better understand our markets and customers. We really believe it's important to have local leadership that's part of the fabric of the community, someone who customers and landowners see in the grocery store...We have a corporate office but its functions are a resource for the local markets. We're here to serve them.



**Sean Reilly, Lamar Advertising**

The business school books call it a flat, decentralized organization chart. I like to call it respecting the business judgement that is in the field and creating a corporate infrastructure that services the field...when I walk around our place here in Baton Rouge I constantly remind our corporate folks that at the end of the day if we're not servicing folks in the field – our GM's, our account executives, our production managers, our folks that are hanging vinyl – if we're not helping them get better at their jobs then we don't have a reason to exist...We're not command and control. When we pick up the phone, when we take a call from a sales manager or a general manager, the first words out of our mouth is "how can I help" not "here's how you do it."

## MONUMENT SIGNS

Mike Norton, Norton Outdoor



*Norton Outdoor Monument Sign, Milford, Ohio*

We just added a "Digital Gateway Display" in Milford, OH, which is a beautiful city just outside Cincinnati. It is the prettiest digital billboard, and with a 10mm pixel pitch, it is the highest resolution digital billboard in the market.

Tom Jackson, Veale Outdoor



*Veale Outdoor Monument Sign in Rohnert Park, California*

When we began our investigation into adding digital billboards to our inventory, we drove Northern California to look the digital billboards that had already been developed and decided we'd like to do something that stood out and looked good instead of just being a digital billboard. When we started working on our first digital unit, we took into account the wishes of the local government officials to not build a "TV on a stick", the aesthetics of the local community and worked with the sales staff at YESCO (now Samsung) to design and ultimately build Veale Outdoor Advertising's signature looking monument digital billboards.

There are many more pros than cons. Pros include community members, government officials and advertisers all comment on how great the signs look when compared to some other digital signs. During most initial meetings with prospective advertisers, they say how nice the signs look. The only con that I can think of is the cost to build these monument digital billboards is greater than the average looking digital billboard. However, given the goodwill with advertisers, local communities and government officials we're going to continue to build monument digital billboards as we grow.

## MURALS

Kelly Peppers, Colossal Media



*Colossal Media Painting Mural*

On average a mural takes 5 days to complete, sometimes they go faster and sometimes they take way longer. We recently finished a 50,000 square foot mural that took 3 weeks to paint but that's the beauty in what we do, it's a performance and it's amazing. There's no telling how many stories and experiences will be had once we go to work

### Angel Saemai, Overall Murals

The weather app is one of our most used apps on our phones. The paint team is well versed in reading and predicting the accuracy of the precipitation radar. Compared to a day in December in Los Angeles, frigid Northeastern temperatures make hand warmers, shoe warmers, and ample layering part of the wardrobe, which includes Carhartt overalls, army GORE-TEX coats and thick soled boots. The paint thinner and oil-based paint we rely on rarely freezes but it can. There were a few times where painters showed up in snowboarding gear to get a painting done as the snow pounded down on them. Besides the cold weather, one of the main challenges of the winter season are the shorter days. Daylight plays a huge part in being able to work the long hours necessary to meet tight deadlines. Typically, artists are on their feet between ten to twelve hours a day, so when nights are longer, we plan in advance to accommodate more days on the wall. They also wake up earlier, usually 4 or 5 AM, needing more time to make tea or coffee for their thermoses and pack all the cold weather gear (like lots of Chapstick) and to get started as soon as the sun rises. All that said, one surprising thing overheard from several on the team was that the summer humidity can actually be more miserable than the blistering cold.

## ■ ORGANIZATIONS

### **Steve Weber, Mixed Media**

I've been in this Industry for 19 years now, IBOUSA is a group of people across the country doing the exact same thing I'm doing day in and day out. Even if we're competing for the same ad dollars at times, it's important for all of us to be pulling on the same end of the rope.

### **Mike Norton, Norton Outdoor**

My dad has been heavily involved with the OAAA, serving on many committees over the past 3+ decades, including as Chairman. He encouraged me to do so from the beginning of my career, and I have been happy to follow suit. To have the ability to have a voice, especially as a smaller operator, is very valuable. More importantly, having the opportunity to help shape the industry and guide its path in the future is both humbling and exciting. We love this industry, and the decisions that we make, whether for our business or in our capacity as committee members, all have the industry's well-being at their root. At the end of the day, we are all trying to do what my Grandpa told me was the key to his success, which was "Make people money, and you will make money." We have a great medium to connect brands and consumers, and if we keep striving to leverage our ability to connect and engage, we will succeed.

### **Steve McNeely, Tantara Capital**

I give the Independent Operators Association (IBOUSA) a lot of credit for bringing the independents together so they can take advantage of group buying or group benefits... People say OAAA is just the big guys. Well, it's not. OAAA does a phenomenal job of representing every operator across America. So, it's extremely important that the independent association and the OAAA work close together.

## PERMITTING

### **Beau Burkett, Burkett Media**

We recently were granted approval for the final two sign licenses in a small town inside San Antonio that otherwise didn't allow new billboards. It took over a year to work along with the mayor, attorneys and city council to find common ground for our two new sites – the city will get annual land rent and some free advertising as Burkett receives a 30-year lease for the site. The biggest challenge was the significant opposition from neighborhood groups who were anti-billboard in general. I made myself available and reached out to them to answer questions, hear their concerns and ultimately come up with solutions that made them much more in favor of the new signs. We focused on changing the configuration, placement and location of the signs to minimize visibility and light trespass from the digital units.

### **Leonard Busby, Busby Companies.**

Success is in the eye of the beholder. Permitting new locations and converting static billboards to digital in key locations is near impossible and by all means not an easy accomplishment. Success comes with failures, and that is why some perceive us as successful in this expertise. Each location, new or converted, is of great value, especially in markets that are considered "UNOBTAINABLE." In terms of permitted locations, we have had our share of failures and successes when it comes to permitting. Our success is mostly due to determination and persistence to acquire permits.

### **Vince Miller, DDI Media**

We face the same regulations as our bigger competitors...In St Louis county alone we deal with 92 different sign codes and revenue collection companies...It's a continuous challenging environment. We wanted to rebuild a 30-year-old structure. Our real estate rep worked it for 2.5 years and got six variances. We were at the hearing and a neighboring landowner stood up to object...A landowner objected. The city pointed out the objector lived outside of the city property.

### **Joe Mancino, GreenSigns Chicago**

I'm going to start off with one that seems obvious, but many forget. When you're dealing with city hall and you're dealing with folks at the counter level the first thing you need to remember is be nice. Be nice. There's a lot of entitlement out there in our industry...Just because you have the right to get a permit doesn't mean they're going to make it easy on you. So be nice to these folks. They work very hard....Always

be straight with these folks. It's the staff and the professionals at the counter level that are going to get you through a permitting process. It's not the fact that you know the mayor or that you know the council person...in fact that is the worst thing you can do...you never want to go in for a permit dropping names of the mayor or names of other elected officials. That immediately will get you to the back of the line. There is a definite live between staff professionals and elected and you don't want to mix them.

Municipalities look at billboard companies very different than they did 10-15 years ago. We used to not be treated so well. Billboards were considered a form of pollution. Many folks didn't like seeing signage going up. It was reflected in how we were treated...That way of thinking really changed over the years and especially after the 2008-2009 real estate crash which cost municipalities tons of revenue. Now they started to look at billboard companies as potential revenue...and they started talking with billboard companies about signage. And many billboard companies missed that nuance...and didn't have the tools...to work with the municipalities...A Greensigns we've had great success with a few local municipalities in doing billboards there that technically weren't legal...we achieved a special use permit or some kind of amendment to allow the permit...we did it in a very different way than just going in for a billboard permit. We went in thinking like a developer does when they are dealing with municipalities. What can I do to help this municipality...When we approach a municipality we get educated about who they are. What they are. What they do. We read their comprehensive plan...We approach them from a partnership and development perspective. I'll give you an example. We had a location in Rolling Meadows, Illinois where I had a lease for 10 years and we could not get a permit... The municipality had created a sign zone district on the opposite side of the highway that did allow billboards...I kept saying hey, if you just expand that zone over about 300 feet to this side of the highway I can do my sign, isn't that great? And they kept saying no...After some experience as a mayor I went back with a development proposal and I said look Rolling Meadows, this property has massive problems. It is an old-fashioned office complex. Single story. It has an occupancy of only 50%. The parking lot is demolished. It looks horrible. It's gravel. It's not even blacktop. It has 150 dead trees on it that were killed by the Emerald Ash Borer...The roof needs to be done. The AC needs to be modernized. We went in with the property owner to the municipality and said look, if you can help us get a permit for this sign the property owner has committed to take the first three years of revenue and pour them right into his property. He's going to redo his parking lot. He's going to tear out all the dead trees and plant 100 new beautiful trees. He's going to update his roof and AC...We also offered a donation – an impact fee as well...Once we approached it that way it was a completely different story...It was received much, much differently...we were able to build the sign – a double sided 14 by 48 billboards. We made the impact fee to the city. We paid three years up front of rent to the property owner who immediately

took the money and did what he said he was going to do...It was a complete win all the way around, because we didn't go in just saying we want a billboard permit...we've duplicated that across the Chicago region.

### **Steve McNeely, Tantara Capital**

You absolutely must spend a significant amount of time before bringing up the project to the entity lobbying and calming any and all fears about billboards and their use. They are not Las Vegas, they can be dimmed, they are not animated, and they are now able to be used for emergency notifications. Spend a significant amount of time quantifying your base of support, philanthropic work, and the amount of future philanthropic work you are willing to allow your signs to perform for the community. Count your votes, if you do not have the votes, do not even consider bringing it up for a vote. You may just damage your future projects.

### **Bryan Javor, Liberty Media**

There are ways to develop that are tasteful in a supportive complementary way and then there are sticks in the ground. And that's how the industry got itself in trouble back in the 80's. Getting a Marlboro or Camel contract and going to a bank to get a loan and put a stick in the ground.

## **PLACE BASED SIGNS**

### **Jean-Paul Gedeon, JPG Media**

We've found our niche and focus on where we can operate: Malls, Supermarkets, Drugstore / Pharmacy, Truckside, Gas Stations and C-Store. We've been Hyper Local since we began. Hawaii is considered a small market compared to other major DMA's but a big driver of revenue for many national brands. We have the #1 Costco, #1 Safeway, #1 HR Block, #1 Cheesecake Factory, and the list goes on.



## ■ RADIO, TV, NEWSPAPERS AND OOH

### **Claude Dicks, Allison Outdoor**

I can certainly see from a radio and billboard standpoint, because you have the sight on the billboard and the sounds of radio. Trying to sell radio, people would always be asking “I never hear my ad”... because you have to be tuned in at the top of the hour... With billboards you can drive down the street two miles on your left and you’ll see your billboard and you’ll see all the people driving by... I have found that billboards are an easier sale than radio.

### **Matthew Mollman, Mollman Outdoor**

There is more synergy between outdoor and radio than any other forms of media. When you are in the car you are listening to the radio and also seeing billboards. The outdoor and radio messages can reinforce each other... We offer added value in the form of extra radio ads when a client make a combination radio and outdoor buy... We use one sales force to sell both outdoor and radio ads which makes us efficient... Initially, we wanted to keep our billboards inside our radio stations’ coverage area but, soon came to the realization that we could operate both media entities separately or as a single entity depending our clients’ desires.

### **Jerod Norris, Norris Outdoor**

Any way we can help our customers we will make an effort in doing so. If they’re looking for advertising opportunities in our area through the newspaper, we always cross-market and let them know about our Out of Home opportunities if and when applicable. It’s a multi-media approach. Every advertiser in print is a potential customer for billboards.



Generally, if we can’t help them we know of a business that can, which also includes other Out of Home businesses. We’re most interested in helping out our customers and the people that take the time to call us, even if it means referring them to a competitor. We as Out of Home business owners should be able to find referrals within each other. We’re all trying to do the same thing, and that should be to provide the best service to the customer.

**Steve McNeely, Tantara Capital**

I find all three mediums have their roots in the local business community. Approximately 75% of our advertising base in OOH, radio, and TV is local advertisers. All three are strong reach mediums that complement more targeted digital campaigns. Being a part of each local community and supporting it through public service is important as well...The biggest difference between broadcast and OOH is content. In OOH our content is impactful creative that drives purchase decisions. Broadcast media must deal with programming and Nielsen ratings to move the needle. OOH ratings with Geopath have surpassed the broadcast ratings scheme. At Adams + Fairway, we're having significant success selling with Geopath ratings...OOH excels in all things of paramount importance to brands: transparency, brand safety, measurement, and ROI. OOH can't be fast forwarded or blocked, and there are no phantom bot clicks! OOH is well positioned to drive incremental search and tap into mobile campaign budgets.

**Tony Tyler, Tyler Outdoor**

Some, but fewer than one would think. There is some cross-selling of our products and our back-office operations, like accounting and HR, have synergies. The production of each product is different so once the advertising is placed the process goes in different directions.

**Russ Hilliard, USA Outdoor**

Since being in the radio and cable television business these medias have lost ground since I managed them. The FCC has quadrupled the number of stations on air and television has lost ground because of likes to Netflix and Hulu. The one media that has not lost ground is outdoor and we have a monopoly in many of our towns and because of that we can raise prices throughout our system.

**Stephen Johnsen, Waller Outdoor**

My family has been in the printing and newspaper business since I was a small boy. My wife began working at the family newspaper business after we were married in 1991 in both the business office and in advertising. That relationship fostered her creative side and we ultimately bought the newspaper when my parents retired in 2008 giving her the responsibility for all of the advertising for the newspaper – sales and creative. It is a small community newspaper that covers local news not covered anywhere else. Advertising revenues are stable and have been self-supporting for many years now... As technology advances and print publishing remains somewhat the same, we felt a desire to move "towards the light" after seeing a digital billboard in a suburb of Houston, Texas, which does not allow any digital billboards. It seemed like a natural

progression to augment our newspaper advertising revenues with digital billboard advertising revenues. We are in a small community, so technology of this type was non-existent. Our area is the last growth corridor out of the greater Houston area, so we wanted to get in early and get our established customers comfortable with the idea (as well as new customers coming into our area).

## ■ RAISING CAPITAL

### **Jim Matalone, Ashby Street Outdoor**

Before Ashby Street, I had been running Next Media Outdoor which was owned by a radio platform...while we were building an outdoor platform and growing value the radio platform was slowly declining. From that experience I learned that I needed to go out of my own and start an outdoor company where there was nobody but me and the investment money to worry about...I started looking for money...It's easier said than done...PE firms want to see a deal first...the people that are selling want to see that you have money behind you. It's a little bit of the chicken and the egg story...I cold called Ryan Fowler who had a company in Northwest Arkansas called Fowler Media. It's a nice really well-built outdoor plant, very strong real estate portfolio. And what caught my attention was...when I heard the average rates he was getting for static faces it was 20% higher than I was used to...that stuck out...we negotiated a price point pretty much that first day. Getting the money and getting the deal together took another three or four months...I really got lucky there...Getting debt was pretty hard...There was equity money there but everybody was really cautious with it...What made Tinicum the perfect partner was they had been looking at outdoor for about four years...The Tinicum folks are going to be knowledgeable about any investment before they put their money in it...What I really liked about Tinicum was their pockets were deep enough where this acquisition wasn't going to be it. We could go after Fairway or Clear Channel...I felt like I'd been put through the ringer. They called every single reference that I gave them...I did a pretty in depth psych profile. They wanted to know how I was going to run a company...They didn't take what I said at face value. They called former employees, former equity guys, they called everybody. Noone's going to BS their way through that screening process.

## ■ RECORDKEEPING

### **Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor**

You can grow just organically out of your cashflow but at a certain point if you want to grow it you've got to have good financing and the bank loves somebody who has all their accounting organized...it you can produce something immediately...the bank's going to love you...

## SAFETY AND OSHA

### Jim Poage, Formetco

Fall protection and fall restraint is one of the top 2-3 reasons for citations in the outdoor industry... A lot of companies are trying to break the old mentality that people had in the past that as long as I can hold on to the structure really good, I don't need fall protection... One of the companies that was acquired by Clear Channel back when I was working with them was a perfect example of that though process. One day before the acquisition paperwork was signed there was an operation gentleman that was training a new hire on posting ad copy on a Saturday. The new hire gets out his harness and begins to put it on and trainer says what are you doing? You don't need to wear that stuff today, OSHA doesn't work on the weekends... They walked up on this board and as they were getting ready to change the ad copy and the guy who had just made that statement walked off the end of the deck because he wasn't paying attention and fell to the ground, breaking his back...



OSHA fines are absolutely negotiable. And that's a misconception that a lot of people have whenever they get into an inspection/citation situation... At the closing conference the OSHA inspector will say "I've concluded after my OSHA inspection and talking with your employees that these are the things we are going to issue you a citation for," and they'll run down the list and they'll say you're looking at a potential citation amount of \$10,000... When your final paperwork comes in and you've got OSHA citations that are specific to the paragraph of what they say you violated you can determine if you really have a violation or if it is something you'd like to discuss with a high level person at OSHA... You can then request an informal hearing with the area director... and if you have evidence to support you claim, you can say I think these citations may be extreme, or I feel these citations should be dismissed... If the area director agrees, it becomes more of a bargaining issue. I've had people... come to my class as part of an agreement during an OSHA citation where they said how about I spend the money on training rather than write you guys a check... OSHA is always negotiable on both the penalty and the citation.

The principles of safety in the field are pretty simple: (1) Wear the proper safety equipment and use it in the proper manner (2) Always be hooked up to an authorized anchorage point. (3) The main core of fall protection is 100% hook up. 100% of the time. (4) When on a billboard are electrical exposure points, and additional Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements. Exposed electrical areas could cause a shock that could results in a fall or electrocution. PPE is to protect from areas that might be recognized as having and exposure such as hardhats to prevent head injuries and gloves to protect the hands.

If an OSHA Inspector shows up, make sure they truly are OSHA inspectors. They'll present a badge or will have a business card that will have their office info on it. You call and verify their credentials... You want everyone to remember that they are government agents. You don't want to be rude to them. There was a gentleman I heard about who had an OSHA inspector show up on his site that belly bumped the guy and knocked him off his feet because he wasn't happy that he'd shut down his job site... and that was a \$10,000 penalty. You don't want to be rude or aggressive to them...The best thing to do is to stop working and shut the job site down, then see what they want. If they come into your facility you put them in a conference room...Ask them why they're there. They need to tell you what their purpose is for stopping in... They will also identify what type of inspection they are doing. Is it an imminent danger, is it a scheduled inspection, or is it an employee complaint? From there what you want to do is comply and show them exactly what they want to see... The first thing many people want to do is to prove so bad that they are in compliance that they begin to show the inspector a ton of things they did not even ask for. That's not good. Everything you provide them with they can cite you for if they find something not to their liking. The next thing they'll say is "I want to look at the work site." They'll walk through the area, take pictures, and may ask to perform industrial hygiene sampling. I recommend people taking the same pictures that the OSHA inspector takes and perform duplicate testing of anything they test. After they finish all of this, they may ask to talk to employees... OSHA says they have the right to interview employees and employees have the right to talk to OSHA in private... The employer can tell their employees that the employee in the beginning is not obligated to speak to an OSHA inspector. The employee can say I am not comfortable talking to you about this or I would rather have someone in here with me, but it is their right to speak to an OSHA inspector. I do tell people that in 25 years of doing OSHA work I would never go one on one with an OSHA inspector.

#### **Matt Schulze, Selective Structures**

Here are some commonsense rules for avoiding electrocution while installing a sign or changing a vinyl. (1) Use fiberglass rods. (2) Use a qualified and insured contractor rather than doing the install yourself. Preview the area. (3) Look up. Know where the nearest powerline is. (4) Keep your distance from power lines. Remember that you don't need to touch a power line to get shocked. On existing older structures there are many billboards that do not meet today's minimum setback requirements. If that's the case, just be very careful and take your time. On new construction an onsite inspection should be done to determine the distance from the leading edge of face or outside catwalk to the power line. Not every power line has the same setback. If you are not sure what your setback is contact your local power company. On most power poles there should be some type small placards at the base showing the voltage.

## **SALES TIPS**

#### **Kevin Gleason, Adams Outdoor**

We don't get ad \$\$ because we don't ask for it. We don't hold our salespeople accountable. We accept too many shitty little contracts. This needs to be a campaign, not a sign.

#### **David English, Ad Trend, Inc.**

The most common mistake sales reps make is a lack of ownership over the account. They get the contract and assume the sales job is done. The really successful reps take full responsibility for making sure the campaign is successful. They make sure the artwork is of high quality, the board goes up in the right location, the boards that are contracted reach the audience the client needs them too. They act with urgency but do not skip the fine details. They understand that every decision they make regarding the client is an important one. I feel it is a sales rep's responsibility to own everything about the account. When there is no ownership, that is just a huge mistake. Own the good and the bad. The decision not to educate the client about art and claim that the client wouldn't listen anyways or the decision to not call the client about the renewal because of an assumption the rep is making are horrible decisions. Own your client. If they weren't going to renew the old campaign, they might want to start a different one with different creative. Bring them new creative for a new campaign. To me, personal responsibility is huge and owning your client is a very obviously sign of personal responsibility.



#### **Wendy Hickey, Artpop**

A client that I had in the younger days of my career known as Cramers Hardware. A client of mine in Pennsylvania. They were pretty adamant that they weren't interested in doing Out of Home. And we had many meetings with them. And in one brave moment I brought three signs with me. One was a quote from Mother Theresa. One was from music, "Should I stay or should I go now?" And one was "Show me the money." I got very brave and walked out with a contract and enjoyed doing three-dimensional creative for this client like a saw cutting through the billboard, a three-dimensional tool belt, we built a spec house on one of the billboards. They became a household name. Our whole sales team – they couldn't go anywhere on a cold call without saying "We're the ones that do the Cramer billboard." To this day that client is still a dear friend.

### **Claude Dicks, Allison Outdoor**

There was a small wine store. They made their own wine. I made a cold call. He didn't have a lot of money to spend. He flat out said "I hate billboards. I don't like billboards." He even said he'd torn down a billboard in Florida...But my favorite part about that is we were making some headway...I laid everything out and said "this is what we can do for this price" and I laid the pen down and I didn't say anything and it felt like 60 seconds and it was probably 15 seconds and he just grabbed the pen and he signed and he was a good customer for 2-3 years...There's nothing better than making a sale...especially...if there was no interest and you turned their mind around and then you go from one board to two to three on annual contracts...

### **Don Wright, Billboard Consultants**

Today I deal with a lot of independent vendors who are so much easier to deal with than large corporations' sales staff....biggest thing is the small vendors make you feel like they want and appreciate your business. I have bought space from independents and large firms at the same time – the small guy gets the copy up and the large company rep frequently will tell you they are so big they cannot get the copy up on time – bad answer. While handling Luby's I worked with so many small independent vendors in TX and OK but sadly many have sold off or are deceased – thus their names are no longer remembered. To me the hardest sell is the repeat business, not new business; reason is if you did not treat us properly, why should we pay 5% more the next year to be treated bad again. Sadly, the sales reps from the large companies have no control over rates and service issues.

### **Diana Stevenson, Grace Outdoor**

I view Grace Outdoor as a sales organization. Without the sales there's really nothing else. You can have a great billboard. If you don't sell it, it doesn't matter. I look at sales numbers every day... I look at quarterly goals as well... The whole firm gets a bonus if we reach certain goals. Our AE's are the ones that are out there on the street... but we want everybody in the office to feel like there in sales too... if we get contracts processed and invoices out on time and if we have good collections... all of that helps... out creative helps in our sales effort, so we look at quarterly goals and we give quarterly bonuses for good sales results.



### **Haleigh Bayer, Huntington Outdoor**

The obstacles of all sales are always one of the five-points Zig Ziglar (expert and author on sales and how to sell well) intelligently makes: (1) No Need. As a billboard saleswoman, I do not believe this is true. In my mind, every business needs billboards. Billboards are more than a way to just promote your business, you can offer promotions, create brand awareness, and reach out to your community. Also, billboards are the only form of traditional media with an increasing profit share, while the other traditional media forms are slowly losing viability. (2) No Money. In today's economy, any viable business is doing well and should be spending part of their budget on advertising. (3) No Hurry. This is where sales start to become hard. When people are interested but are not in any hurry to buy, I try several things to close the deal. Offer them a deal to get them on your boards now so they can try out your services, it is much easier to keep a client than to create new clients. Inquire when would be the best time to follow up and chat about advertising. (4) No Desire. When businesses have no desire to advertise with you the task is to show them the value billboards provide to others and how their business could also reap value from advertising on billboards. Testimonials, statistics, and referrals all help when businesses have a little initial interest in using your services. (5) No Trust. Occasionally I run across a business that was burnt by a billboard advertising company in the past. These businesses lost trust in the industry and earning their trust takes time. Showing patience and slowly gaining a good reputation with these businesses is the best way to create a relationship.

### **Neil Bell, New South Outdoor**

In order to be effective on a sales call, we really should not be pitching anything until we understand the prospect's business needs, their motivation, and their goals. Once you have set your meeting, you must show up ready to ask questions. The core of the sales call is not about you or your product. It should be about their business and how you can help them solve a problem. Here is a set of questions I learned to ask throughout the meeting: (1) Prospect, tell me about yourself, how did you get in this business? (2) Tell me about this company. How many people work here? What are your annual sales? What are your primary products? (3) What are your goals for the year? Sales goals? General growth? (4) How are you planning to hit those goals? (5) What could keep you from hitting those goals? What would you do if that happened? (6) Who are your best potential customers? What do you want them to do and why should they do it? (7) Who are your competitors? Why would someone do business with them over you? Why would someone do business with YOU over them? (8) What kind of advertising do you typically do? What do you like about it? What do you not like about it? (9) Prospect, you said your goal was to hit X in sales this year. If we could get Y new people into your store, would that help you hit your goal? (10) You said that

your customers lived in X and worked in Y. We have displays in X and Y which could reach those people. Do you think reaching people in these areas would help drive more sales? (11) You said that you offer X faster than your competitor. If we could design copy that would effectively communicate that advantage, would you be willing to try outdoor? (12) You said you didn't like X about the reach of the current media you are using. If we could show you how outdoor could help amplify that reach, would you give us a try? At this point in this discussion, you should explain all of the features and benefits of outdoor, how it works and why it fills their need. Then you can get on with asking for the sale.

#### **Jeremy Male, OUTFRONT Media**

We used to be sign sellers whereas now we engage with local advertisers in a much broader way. We talk about how Out of Home is going to work with mobile. So, we can sell mobile overlays onto their Out of Home campaign through geofencing. We talk about social. We have a social influencer product and talk about how we can maximize their campaign on social...It's been one of the reason local is growing so well for us.

Five years ago we were sign sellers. We'd sell that sign there to Joe's Mufflers because Joe's Mufflers was right over here. Now we're having conversations where we ask "what's your media strategy. How can Out of Home be part of your media strategy? How can we put a mobile overlay onto your Out of Home strategy? Shall we geofence? How can we merchandise this campaign with social...The Kylie Jenner board she spent \$3,000 on had 50 million hits online...It's a sign that Out of Home has gone from becoming a real estate business to becoming a medium.

#### **Paul Savka, retired, former VP of Sales at Park Outdoor**

Advice to a new Out of Home rep just starting out? Now with text and emails, I've seen many reps become lazy waiting for the phone to ring and become unsuccessful. There is nothing like selling yourself before you sell your product. Be a people person. Every account, especially local accounts, are different. You need to place yourself on the other side of the desk to realize what the customer's needs are. You need to know in advance what the customer is selling and ask many questions. A local owner of a business loves nothing more than to talk about his business that that he heads and how he or she wants it to grow. Persistence plays a large part in selling. The "No Answer" is not an option for a salesperson. Continue to call back until you gain the owner's trust. Become a partner with him or her to make their business grow. Again, show yourself in person, not just be a name on an email or text.

#### **Annette Kenyon, Park Outdoor**



*Haunted House Creative prepared by Park Outdoor*

I am a new account executive here at Park Outdoor in Binghamton, New York. I come to this billboard world from a 12 years of retail sales experience with little knowledge of marketing. I am eager to learn, love to meet and talk with people. After reading all I could on billboards, many of days listening/ watching my co-workers in and out of the office, I embarked on my new adventure. I went to back the stock room to see if there were any old posters that maybe were dead accounts, that I could bring back to life. One was a Halloween Haunted House from years back, I thought this was perfect! I love Halloween and the opportunity was right. I called the business owner, gave him my pitch, went out even to meet but – no sale. I didn't give up, but now I had the idea! I then did my own detective work finding out that there was a new haunted walk that was opening soon. I cold called them, I got great feedback from the co-owner, he takes his Halloween seriously! When I say he lives Halloween 24/7, take my word for it HE DOES! We hit it off and there it was, my first contract! We ended up doing three 30 sheet boards and I have him slotted for next year's campaign doing the same thing but adding the new digital board. It all came together, we collaborated on the artwork, with my graphic designer, we came up with 3 awesome designs that has caught a lot of attention here in Binghamton, NY. I couldn't have asked for a better start to my new career at Park Outdoor, everyone remembers their "first" and mine happened to be a haunted zombie walk!

### **Brad Sourbeer, Parker Outdoor**

I think a large part of our success in sales is that every day I take at least two hours to make sales calls. I focus on touching base with existing customers as well as always looking for new prospects. We have found that consistency has made a huge difference for us in our sales.

### **TG Shaw, Reeves Shaw Media**

Knowing how to talk to people across the spectrum of business is key...We see our inventory on a weekly basis and never stop working for our clients...Being available and responsive is half the battle... The biggest mistake you can make when selling Out of Home is not knowing your inventory. I've made the mistake of selling a board that I thought was a good read, but I hadn't seen it with my own eyes in quite some time...trees grow significantly in a year. The board was not worth what I sold it for. I made it right with an alternate but that's not a conversation you want to have with a client, especially with a new one...Just own up to your mistakes... if it's my mistake I'm going to own up to it and I'm going to make it right...own your mistakes and make them right.



### **Robert Wallace, Southeastern Outdoor**

I'm not a natural born salesperson...I didn't understand how to sell a billboard ad...Now I know that it's not just billboard ads. I'm selling myself in all aspects of my life. I'm selling myself to the zoning guy. I'm selling myself to a landowner when I'm trying to lease his property...

### **Andrea Messimer Henley**

I've learned a few things over the years:

- Slowdown and ask detailed questions to fully understand the client objectives for the overall campaign.
- Don't just look at what is on the request. Dive in deeper so that you can make additional recommendations, based on experience and market knowledge. It's simple, agencies can't pitch or buy anything they aren't aware of.
- Work with the mindset that you will have to replace 50%-60% of your entire book of business year over year. That way you always keep your pipeline full and you will continue to grow your business.
- Nothing is guaranteed.



## **SMALL MARKETS**

### **Robert Kennerson, Arena Outdoor**

It's challenging yet rewarding. The towns are very small, there are many miles between towns, and there are a lot of billboards. Developing strong local relationships goes a long way to renting faces. Watching clients develop successful businesses through the use of outdoor advertising is very satisfying, and I've enjoyed getting to know many good people in the communities we serve.

### **Chris Cowlbeck, Look Billboards**

It can be both rewarding and frustrating at the same time. Ardmore is a trade center for about 5 counties on Interstate 35 and was ranked one of the nation's most affordable places to live a few years back. That really sounds great until you figure that it's very difficult to raise rates. Being in the oil patch hasn't helped buffer this, so we developed some unique ways of selling that includes becoming a good marketing consultant for our advertisers who can't afford it.

### **Jerod Norris, Norris Outdoor**

The local market, while rural, has many smaller to mid-sized cities that make up one footprint – and a lot of eyeballs. Billboards tend to stick out very nicely in a rural setting, where less competitors are setting up shop. Rates are certainly a fraction of what they would be in a larger city, so you have to have more displays to make things work.

We've been very fortunate to have great, long-term relationships with our advertisers which keeps our displays full and often not a lot of vacancies available. If you offer good, competitive rates and take care of your customers they will stick with you.

### **Jim Troy, Toby Outdoor**

I operate in smaller markets. Advertisers can't afford a 10 by 40 or 14 by 48. By splitting the sign I'm able to allow more businesses to participate.

## ■ SMALL VS LARGE BILLBOARDS

### **Mike Fitzgerald, Railroad Outdoor**

We have a pretty even split between small and large signs now. Most of our recent development has been in Posters and Bulletins. It's always a challenge to protect the visibility of shorter signs, but we've found the rental rate has more to do with the readability of the face than its size. By placing smaller signs close to driver, the advertiser can showcase their message much better than larger signs that are 100 feet tall and set back 200 feet from the road.

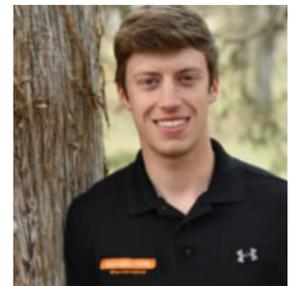
## ■ SOCIAL MEDIA

### **Denny Orsinger, Mixed Media**

We funnel all digital touch points to Facebook (email blasts, blog posts, etc.) so it's kind of a catch all spot for our digital marketing efforts. The only benefit I've seen is when using it to interact with our customers or partners by posting completion shots and things like that. It gives them a warm fuzzy feeling to be interacted with on Facebook. Aside from that, I can't say that it's contributed to the bottom line in any meaningful way.

### **Robert Wallace, Southeastern Outdoor**

I can only talk to so many people per day on a phone. So I use social media to talk to the masses... not only my current clients but my future clients to educate them on the benefits of billboard advertising... with social media I can reach thousands of people with one post in one day... I've trying to make billboards not boring... I'm trying to get people interested... and one way you can do that is really cool videos. If you take drone footage and time lapse footage and you chop it up it grabs their attention... social media, Instagram, Facebook, the website... The website is the first thing people check out, especially for young billboard companies.



### **Sam Stokely, Stokely Outdoor**

Our website has been a good source for lead generation. Especially for out of state buyers. New maps, approach photos and blogs keep our website in front page search for my area

## SOFTWARE

### **Dunkin Allred, Blackbelt Outdoor**

Apparatix has been a real game changer. It has allowed me to manage a workload efficiently that otherwise would have been very difficult to do. The system is still operating very smoothly. The service that they offer is second to none.



### **Diana Stevenson, Grace Outdoor**

We started using Apparatix three years ago. I can't even tell you how much it's helped us. Keeping up with our contracts...It's all integrated as well as production, work orders, all of that is in one system...it saves us a lot of time...We just converted almost all of our digitals to the scheduling program in Apparatix. The girl who does our posting for us she's coming to me telling me she's bored and doesn't have anything to do. It's saving us that much time...We're almost paperless. We used to have file cabinets with contracts and schedules. And now we don't even use those...

### **Chris Cowlbeck, Look Billboards and IBOUSA**

About four and a half years ago a gentleman named Jim Matalone...the President at Ashby Street Outdoor, suggested that I talk to Apparatix Media Solutions...I tested that platform out...we use that now. It incorporates proposals, instantly switches them into offers which when signed have scan codes...that we can scan in to create automated billing records, hosting records for traditional and digital scheduling...I used to spend a day or day and a half doing my billing...now most of the time...my billing takes about 90 seconds...It is an enormous time saver...It's also allowed me to put together a proposal in a minute, two minutes in a very professional way

### **Neil Bell, New South Outdoor**

QuickBooks has been a big one for us. One thing I can say that's been probably more impactful than I expected has been e-sign...Especially with digital boards...as soon as the contract is signed, we're ready to go up...In the past we'd email it to them and they've got to print it out and we've got to go by there and get them signed. So, you lose a day or two. It just seems like it happens that way. And the e-sign, we're able to send it and they approve it and get them up that day...We use google docs a good bit...For content we use the manufacturers software...all my boards right now are , 125. As far as the inventory and contracting software we use there's a little company called Signdash that has just rolled out some great software that we're really happy with. It does a lot of what

these other inventory software managers do. It doesn't necessarily have all the bells and whistles that you find with the other companies that are out there but what I find is that we don't really need all that. I know that my salespeople like it. They can see what's available. They can see what's been proposed. Once they get to yes, they can send out an e-sign for a contract and it comes back pretty quick.

**Mike Fitzgerald, Railroad Outdoor**

We use mailchimp.com to send out emails to prospective advertisers and existing customers about upcoming promotions. Docusign.com is a real time saver for e-signatures on our advertiser agreements. For our general office needs, we rely on google suite and dropbox.com to share worksheets, documents and files.

**Ben Ralston, Ralston Outdoor**

We have really enjoyed using the Apparitix software. It has totally streamlined our business.

**Randy Jackson, Venture Outdoor**

We use Apparitix to help manage our business. Their system touches all aspects of the business, continue to innovate in response to client input, and have great customer service when needed.

**Justin Booher, Vital Outdoor**

We use Apparitix and love it. Some of the features are really great for proposals. We've received many compliments on how well organized and how great our info looks. For a small company there's really too much to learn with it, but APX is working on producing a less intensive version for us smaller companies where you wear multiple hats.

## **SOLAR POWERED BILLBOARDS**

**Travis Rhodes, Dusty's Outdoor**

We look at all investments through an ROI prism. From acquisitions and new builds to solar investments, our capital expenditure has to meet our ROI hurdle. Working with a PhD specialist in this field, we've crafted our own solar power systems to meet that ROI goal. In particular, remote interstate locations offer the smartest application for us. We can install a complete system for less than the electrical connection cost required by the local utility.

**Sean Reilly, Lamar Advertising**

Battery technology needs to evolve for us to deploy solar more effectively and efficiently...And that's going to happen. You've got a lot of really smart people working on that...The electric car industry is going to produce breakthroughs that inure to our benefit...We need three things to happen. We need better battery technology... We need better, more fair and standardized net metering arrangements. And finally, there's a dissipation of power when you send power over power lines and if we could generate and sell to our neighbors that would be nirvana.

**Jim McIntyre, McIntyre Outdoor**

An effective solar power unit for a billboard must be a simple DC battery storage system using DC LED lights. Where one might typically use 100+ watts of LED lamps, you need to think of light fixtures using 76 watt or even 50-watt LED lamps. Our experience tells us that unless the site has an extreme amount of bright ambient lighting in the area, the smaller lamps will do just fine. Additionally, I like a split system with separate battery storage and charging controllers for each face. Downsize your power demands and the solar system quickly becomes manageable with simple cost-effective components. Spend your dollars on the best batteries you can afford.

**Mike Zukin, Meadow Outdoor**



*Meadow Outdoor solar powered billboard near Boardman, Oregon*

Our location near Boardman, Central OR gets more sun than Portland or the coast. It still requires a large solar array and powerful batteries to get through cloudy winters. On our first system we installed a SmartLink so we could monitor it closely. It went through the winter with no issues or problems, so that gave us the confidence to proceed with the second, larger system...It does qualify for the 30 Federal tax Credit, which reduces the upfront cost. With a 30-year design life, even with periodic battery replacements, it will pay for itself several times over.

**Brad Sourbeer, Parker Outdoor**

We originally bought a solar package from one company. They claimed that the lighting would be sufficient to light our boards. On installation we discovered the lights were not strong enough for billboards standards, as well as having problems with the charge controller. We decided that we could come up with a better solution on our own and after some trial and error we settled on a larger 300-watt solar panel, Formetco's solar light and an MPPT charge controller. We now have 6 structures that are solar. Our other structures we have converted to LED lights and have them on photocells, which we have found to be very economical.

## STRUCTURES

**Leonard Busby, Busby Companies**

We have been through numerous experiences where local governments have denied permits due to the billboards not appearing aesthetically pleasing. Through those denied permits we asked ourselves "How can we change this outlook on our signs?" After changing our way of thinking, we decided to put our focus on building showcase signs that could be viewed as works of art. We feel that we are making a statement by customizing the base of the sign with brick and cast stone or theming the design around the local architecture. By creating a work of art, we have found everyone from government bodies to customers are much more receptive and open to advertising on these media platforms.

**Sharrod Delia, Delia Outdoor**

All our structures are designed with Hurricane Panels so they will blow out before the structure would be affected by Hurricane Force winds. We pour extra big footings around the columns that are rated for 140mph winds.

**Bill Durden, Durden Outdoor**

We have a standard maximum height of 4 feet tall on the top extensions and 3 feet for side extensions. This size just works for our installers. The minimum size we try to do is 12". Anything smaller than that is Usually not worth doing as it's hard to view from the road. Pricing is important too. We think extensions really make our clients ads more effective, so we keep pricing compete even at \$14-\$18 per square foot.



**Grey Vick, Grey Outdoor**

The economics of it is the key...The type of structure you're going to build the amount of money you're going to spend is basically going to be off the economics of the location – how much rent is it going to take in, how much rent are you paying and what's the area like...We've always erred on the side of being very frugal in building and one of the reasons why was when I first started one of the mistakes that we made was we overspent right away. We were talking about building all monopoles in locations where we could only rent them for \$300/face, and you can't overspend or you're going

to be in a bind...You can't cover the note. You can't cover the rent. The only option we had at that moment was to go renegotiate the loans with the finance company and go to interest only...You can look on the Lamar website and see that the state rent is \$900 but is that what they're getting. You don't know...Maybe you have to talk to advertisers and see what they're willing to pay for a location before you commit to building a structure and paying a landowner a good amount of money every year.

#### **Neil Bell, New South Outdoor**



*New South Outdoor tiger tail billboard in Auburn, Alabama.*

There were a bunch of trees. I wanted to build a 14 by 48, but half the sign would have been covered up. And so, the idea was let's build it vertical...It just looked kind of plain. This was on the main stretch going into Auburn University. A college street. I'm an Auburn grad...so we came up with a backlit can of a tiger tail running up the bottom of the LED and coming out of the top. And it lights up at night. And it looked great. I'd like to do more embellishment type things for these landmark displays.

#### **Matt Schulze, Selective Structures**

What are the mistakes Out of Home companies make when they put up a structure? (1) The biggest mistake is they don't get a survey. We have had signs that we've built and they thought it was on the property and it wasn't and we had to move it...and that is not an easy fix...It costs \$500-1,500 to do a survey. It's one of the best things you can do when you're building a sign. (2) Not tall enough or too tall. You can't

determine what's going to happen down the road. We like to have the client pull a local on-premises sign ordinance to see if a business comes next door how big will their sign be...We like to go 5 feet above any on premise sign...(3) Sound walls are a huge problem. It makes no sense where they're building them. The last 3-4 signs that I built in a city I try to get the client to build them for a future 20 or 30-foot raise. So, in case they anticipate a sign wall being built in the next 5 years...all we have to do is put another column in it to raise it up. (4) I've been preaching this for years Dave. I wish everybody built their structure digital ready. Because you never know what's going to change down the road. I see companies spending 5 times as much money to fix it, to do a retrofit, than it was if they would have built it...On a 14 x 48, standard center-mount...to go from a static to a digital might be \$1,500...the little bit of money that it costs now is worth it...

#### **Ken Wingate, Wingate Outdoor Advertising**

We started in 1986 building mostly wood structures. In those days we based our decision on whether to use wood or steel on whether we could dig a hole by hand or if we needed to hire a rock driller. Holes drilled in rock allowed us to use a smaller diameter metal pole. I've since gone exclusively to metal. I've gradually been replacing the wood structures with metal as they deteriorate.

## SUSTAINABILITY

### **Joe Mancino, GreenSigns Chicago**

How we think when we're actually doing business is what makes us green. I'll give you some examples...We've built many new signs in Chicago. We're grown organically... Whenever we spec out a new billboard, we spec it out with sustainability in mind. All of our steel is 100% recycled...sometimes it has taken calisthenics to get it sourced... we also do the same thing for the digital faces...we can spec the actual plastic panels before they get the displays in them to be 100% recycled resin...When we start operating the sign, we take the sustainability factor even further. For instance, all of our signs whether they're static or LED's or digital are operated on wind and solar energy, 100%...metal halide lamps, these are horrible for our environment. They draw so much power...it's a no brainer...disposing an LED lamp is so much easier and friendlier to the earth than disposing of these old metal halide lamps which have mercury in them and chemicals...We always spec eco-flex. It's thinner. There's no PVC in there...It does not last as long. If you have an annual contract eco-flex is not going to be the product for you unless they plan on changing it every 90-120 days. The average contract in Chicago now is under three months which lends itself to using eco-flex.

...On our real estate we can eliminate 80% of the paper that we do but because of statutory requirements it's not feasible to go 100% paperless. On the sales side... we were able to go 100% paperless and now that's become very simple for us. Our salespeople are on the road or their sitting in front of customers...most of them are using their company issued iPads. We have an operating platform from Broadsign... it runs the business from front end to back end. It does everything for us. It even sends out rent checks...Our salespeople are able to use that platform, sit in front of a customer, do their presentation...and if they walk out of there without an order they leave behind a recycled USB drive with everything that they just presented to the client. So, no paper has been exchanged...Should the customer want to go to contract through our Broadsign system we're able to immediately go right to a contract, show it on the iPad and the customer is able to sign it with their finger...Everybody's desk is clean...You're so much more organized...

### **Sean Reilly, Lamar Advertising**

We've invested over \$100 million in lowering our energy bill. We've deployed 78,000 super-efficient LED lights which have lowered our lighting bill on our structures by 73%. We pace the industry in solar deployment...We have a footprint that generates over 1.7 megawatts over 7,000 solar displays. We've invested in smart grid technologies to make sure the lights aren't on when they shouldn't be...Recycling initiatives. We

have one disposable material. That's the material tenants print on when they put it up on the billboard...Several years ago we converted over to polyethylene which is 100% recyclable. To the extent that we're still using PVC we have a relationship with a company called Rareform and 100% of our PVC is repurposed. On the social front we rent advertising space to our tenants. We also give away \$150 million in ad space to thousands of local non-profits every year. A few years ago, Forbes magazine did an analysis of the 100 most trustworthy companies in the world and Lamar made the list because of the transparency and accuracy of our financial disclosures. On the board front we're diverse. One third women. We've been recognized for that.

## TRANSIT

### Jeremy Male, **OUTFRONT**

Having transit gets you into downtown. It gets you into urban audiences that are really hard to get through traditional media... As I look forward, I think that our transit growth may be ahead of our billboard growth over the next 3-4 years as we do this digital buildout.

### Jim Moravec, **Stott Outdoor**

Stott got into the transit business in 2000 initially to add inventory in markets in which our billboards enjoyed high occupancy. We have since expanded beyond that and now have sales offices in a number of transit-only markets. Our transit footprint is from Salem Oregon south to Modesto California. Due to the growth in this segment of our business it now makes sense to have one individual responsible for managing our sales efforts in 11 transit markets and directly manage our 4 transit only sales representatives. We operate both street furniture as well as bus advertising.



## VINYL

### Rod Rackley, **Circle Graphics**

The table stakes these days are quality, speed and low price. You have to have all three. You can't tell a customer to pick two. You have the right to expect some additional things from a printer. You don't want a printer that's going to go to market directly to your customers. That issue came up in a recent article you did. Your printer needs to be responsive. If there's an issue with production your printer needs to fix it. Fix it fast. Not quibble about whose fault it is. Your printer should have some excess capacity so you can get your production out of time when things are busy.



## WEATHER/TRAFFIC CAMS

Bill Durden, Durden Outdoor



*Bill Durden of Durden Outdoor with one of the company's traffic/weather cams.*

I had this idea back in 2013 but had been told by a few old school media pros that the idea wouldn't work. Dothan, AL is a small metro and has a county population of around 110,000. When I would go to larger cities like Orlando or Nashville, I would notice that during their local news they would always cut to a Department of Transportation web camera (which were normally low resolution) or sometimes even cut to a live Helicopter shot. So, it made me think that our company could capitalize on this idea as we have all the right ingredients of hi speed internet connections (at digital billboard sites) in multiple cities and one-of-a-kind high-traffic camera shots.... Our idea with these traffic / weather cameras was multifaceted. One of our company goals was to partner with a local news source to have updated local / national news RSS feeds on our digital boards in the Durden Digital Network....We started out by installing three 360 Axis 720 DPI cameras atop our 3 digital billboards in our highest traffic areas in Dothan, AL and Enterprise, AL. Our team then created a sales package which would give one local news source (i.e.: TV station, Newspaper, Radio Station) the ability to use 3 traffic / weather cameras exclusively plus have access too their own RSS Live Feed on 5 digital billboards. The ABC affiliate in our market loved the idea and signed up for a 12-month contract. TV station generates great content on a daily basis shown for drivers on our digital network of billboard (see one of my favorites below). Occasionally the TV station will want to run ads promoting a new anchor or new fall shows which help them pay for this advertising. The other stipulation was during all 4 of their 30-minute daily news cast they refer to the camera shots as the Durden Digital Traffic Cams. Our company has received a lot of bang for our buck with

this partnership...We have partnered with an ABC affiliate going on our 4th year. The anchors love using these cameras and normally use them twice in a live 30 minute news broadcast. We choose to purchase 360 degree hi resolution cameras for our traffic / weather cams so that you can get multiple shots (5 to 15) from one camera. The anchors will search thru the cameras on a daily basis to find interesting things to talk about ranging from a wreck, a burglary, beautiful sunset, storms, rain, fog, sleet, tornados, etc. This packing helped to sell this idea because the GM of the station could sell corporate on the fact that not only are we getting some great content for our news cast, but also some digital boards. The client just renewed for their 4th year.

## ■ WIRELESS ANTENNAS

### **Scott Wells, Clear Channel Outdoor**

Thus far it has been slower going than we hoped, but we still think it is a long-term trend. You have not mentioned our street furniture business emphasizing bus benches. We now have more than 9,000 units in Los Angeles and in Florida. The reason I bring it up here is that we have an experiment going on in Los Angeles with 300 wireless beacons on bus benches in this market. Our partner in this project is Gimbal Inc., a spin out of Qualcomm. Although the technical details are too numerous to discuss here, this is an example of what may be coming over time.



### **Randall Smith, Insite Street Media**

That is something we're doing...but it's small. A lot of our assets aren't necessarily in the places that 5G rollout is most packed. The issue is you need density in the inner part of a city...There's a little bit of a mismatch between where the assets are and where the gaps in the networks are...It's an opportunity for us still but I think it's something people overhyped a few years back.

## ■ WORK LIFE BALANCE

### **Ike Wingate, Wingate Media**

When my wife and I made our decision to go out on our own and do this full time the one thing I wanted to make sure of is that the business didn't run me. That I ran the business. We've put a lot of processes in place. a lot of automation to be able to step away from the business when we need to. To be able to address the business remotely, through Google Drive, through Apparitix...One of our four values for our company is God, family, work, in that order. So, we try to live it out...Nobody on their deathbed says I wish I would've worked more.

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