



The 2019 **PROS TO KNOW** **AWARDS**

By Mary Stroka, Associate Editor

For the sixth year, *Automatic Merchandiser* asked readers to nominate industry peers who deserve recognition for their exemplary work in vending, micro markets and office coffee service. Our 2019 Pros To Know Awards features individuals and teams who go the extra mile for coworkers and customers within their own businesses, raising the bar for the entire convenience services industry.

INDIVIDUAL PROS TO KNOW



Beverly Bowers

Owner, Blue Moose Vending Management

Bowers has worked in the vending industry for 37 years. One of her first projects at Blue Moose was capitalizing on her knowledge of vending operators who are interested in growth by signing on 14 of California's premier vending companies. By working with those 14 companies, Blue Moose Vending Management has been able to close on 1,146 accounts. At Blue Moose, Bowers has ensured new vendors know their rights by providing them with free training and consultation, and by directing them to legitimate companies. She also assists operators with finding and training sales representatives and strives to help family-owned vending companies compete in today's market.



**Beverly
Bowers**

distributors, manufacturers, national operators and independent operators to develop programs that ensure multi-channel success. Casanova has a keen understanding of what it takes to successfully launch products in our industry and is eager to build lasting relationships between customers and distributors. She is a wealth of knowledge for brands looking to grow in OCS, vending and hospitality.

Erin Calkins

**Business Systems Manager,
365 Retail Markets**

Calkins started at 365 Retail Markets in 2013, when the company was focused on learning to sell MicroMarkets to locations. The number of installed MicroMarket locations has increased exponentially since then, and in 2017 the company made the decision to configure a new business system. Calkins was at the helm of this effort to house 365's manufacturing, inventory management, purchasing, sales management and account receivable functions. She led the selection, implementation and go-live of the company's new ERP system. As a business systems manager at 365, Calkins oversees business process improvements, business reporting and day-to-day operational needs within the system. Her natural ability to problem-solve has helped lead 365 to many opportunities and enhance its capability to handle increased order volume, bulk orders and international orders. Calkins constantly puts 365 and its customers first by developing processes that help support 365 teams to provide the best and most efficient experiences for customers.



**Erin
Calkins**

Tony Danna

**Director of International Sales,
Three Square Market**

Danna, 30, launched Three Square Market's international outreach in 2017 and has extended the company's reach to seven European countries with more than 150 micro markets across the continent. Each country has presented different challenges, and growing micro markets in each country will require detail, discipline and personal sacrifice. He continues to learn and educate many people and companies in the world on micro markets. Danna is an advocate for adapting to change and all the technology that is new to the industry. Danna started at Three Square Market in July 2016 as vice president of operations.



**Tony
Danna**

Bob Hurley

Senior Sales Director, USA Technologies, Inc.

After nearly 40 years in the industry, Hurley brings a wealth of experience in managing operations, coordinating and directing acquisitions, and leading business development. Hurley's career in vending began in 1980, when he took a job as a route driver with Canteen in an era highlighted by manual route cards and "the four C's": candy, cup soda, coffee and cigarettes. He subsequently held numerous management positions with Canteen, Servomation/Macke and Sodexo, in addition to regional and independent operations. With his operator background, Hurley can easily relate to operators and help them overcome challenges they face in their businesses. He believes that the industry will continue to be challenged by the integration of systems, especially with the pace at which operators must move in order to elevate their customer experience. By working hand-in-hand with operators, Hurley can help them determine if USAT's technology is the right solution for their business to simplify processes and systems. Hurley has contributed in state associations, participated at advocacy summits and continues to bring his knowledge and insight to help operators.



Bob Hurley

Leah Casanova

Director of Operations, National Coffee

Casanova has more than 15 years of experience in corporate marketing and sales team management. Since joining National Coffee, Casanova has tackled the challenges of distribution and ensuring operators have profitable product margins. She takes pride in working closely with



**Leah
Casanova**

INDIVIDUAL PROS TO KNOW



Evan Jarecki

Co-founder & CCO, Gimme

Jarecki is a tech entrepreneur with a focus on helping the industry and all the operators in it. As co-founder of Gimme, he disrupts areas completely underserved by current technology and leads customer success and marketing as a product expert. Jarecki's efforts are evangelizing new technologies and tools that will increase the convenience service industry's relevancy to new generations, making the industry more competitive against would-be challengers. His ability to put others' needs above his own comes naturally and authentically. In 2019, Gimme launched its VMS, powered by AI and machine learning tools, and entered partnerships with key industry players including HighJump, a global provider of supply chain solutions, and Five Star Food Service on the Georgia Tech campus. Jarecki believes the main challenge the industry will face in 2020 involves maintaining a variety of product mix in markets and machines.



**Evan
Jarecki**

Michael Johnson

Co-founder & CEO, Yoke Payments

A strong leader and motivator, Johnson is often referred to internally as Yoke's VP of Happiness because he takes a genuine interest in those around him and understands how to keep teams excited while driving both business and personal growth. As co-founder and CEO, Johnson has built an organization that has already made an enormous impact on the vending and micro market industry. He is committed to leading by example, promoting this industry as a place that incubates innovation and growth for all. This year, he got Yoke Payments a seat on the NAMA VDI Task Force to drive innovation with best practices. He has actively integrated Yoke's platform with other industry technologies including Heartland, Stripe and USAT for payment processing, and VendSys, Cantaloupe, VendHQ, and Market Connect for inventory management. He believes that consolidation continues to challenge the convenience services industry, and that operators must properly identify and integrate new technologies that make a difference and keep those technology platforms communicating with one another. Johnson is part of NAMA's Emerging Leaders Network (ELN).



**Michael
Johnson**

Juan Jorquera

Co-founder & CMO, Vagabond

Jorquera manages Vagabond's commercial team and is an active participant in many industry efforts. He serves on NAMA's Education and Government Affairs Committees and has been a part of the NAMA ELN steering committee from its inception. Jorquera has attended every NAMA Fly-In and participates in lobbying efforts to ensure the industry is protected against detrimental legislation. He carries out Vagabond's mission to enable convenience services operators to reduce the amount of time and effort it takes to increase revenue, resulting in better service and satisfaction to consumers. He is bullish on Vagabond's viv commerce platform, which drives growth for convenience services operators by adding new revenue streams to their existing account relationships while requiring minimal capital investment. Jorquera expects the industry to face a number of challenges threatening market share, such as order ahead services, delivery services, meal prep programs and office supply companies. He also views these challenges as opportunities for operators to provide what consumers are asking for and to foster trusting and loyal relationships.



**Juan
Jorquera**

William Kolpasky

Product Manager, 365 Retail Markets

Kolpasky oversees micro market and VMS functionality for 365 Retail Markets and has led many successful technological innovations for the company. An adaptable 365 team member, Kolpasky started as an intern and has become a very knowledgeable source for industry leaders around the world. He cares about operators' success and is willing to go the extra mile to ensure 365's technology takes operators to the next level. Kolpasky has worked closely with top legal experts to fully comply with the changing landscape of consumer privacy laws to implement the necessary measures to protect consumers' personal data. He has expanded the scope of 365's Data Warehouse — an Excel connector that allows operators to build their own reports and dashboards — to incorporate product and sales data into a single consolidated tool that can be used to create responsive reports to gain insight into market trends and opportunities. He is excited about the continued growth of the industry and helping operators meet their goals through the use of technology.



**William
Kolpasky**

INDIVIDUAL PROS TO KNOW



Michael Lovett

Founder & CEO, Vagabond

Lovett is the founding CEO of Vagabond, a technology solutions provider to the food, beverage and facilities service industry that has helped hundreds of middle-market route operators achieve higher margins by using technology to establish core business principles. Furthering his commitment to the food services industry, Michael co-founded Legend Capital, which operates \$30M worth of food services companies across the country and has made over \$2M in investments into small vending operators. Lovett believes that technology is only as good as the amount that it's used to drive operational excellence. He advises that operators commit to certain steps — connecting machines, respecting planograms, merchandising menus, prekitting, dynamic scheduling, consolidating routes, converting to break room markets and engaging directly with consumers — in order to be in a good place to lead the industry's charge against outside threats. He views traditional convenience stores, e-commerce and delivery services among the biggest threats to the industry but believes operators are uniquely qualified to address these threats by embracing break room markets and upgrading business processes in line with the rest of the retail world.



Michael Lovett

David Marler

VP, Sales & Marketing,
LightSpeed Automation

Marler has managed the grassroots development of a sales strategy including lead generation, pipeline management and sales forecasting to drive sales for LightSpeed Automation. In response to the challenge of meeting operators' increased needs for technology in the warehouse for prekitting, his company created a subscription model to help operators afford the upfront cost of the picking system they need. His marketing approach positions LightSpeed Automation as a trusted partner and solutions-based provider for operators' inventory management needs. He has developed a wealth of experience in a relationship-based marketing program that engages both customers and prospects with educational benefits of technology and provides a venue for the exchanging of information within the industry.



David Marler

Sharon A. Peyer

VP, Business Development & Media, Crane Connectivity Solutions

In leading business development and media, Peyer focuses on growing Crane's electronic payment, enterprise resource management and consumer engagement offerings. Since joining the company in 2016, she has played a key role in developing and commercializing Crane's latest connectivity offerings, including Crane's Media Network, "MediaNet." This massive network has grown to over 40,000 vending screens nationwide and now engages over 20 million monthly consumers, while delivering compelling sales and consumer behavior insights to self-service retailers and third-party brands. In the year to come, it will continue to bring advertisers and operators incremental profits, while ensuring the industry breaks new ground with consumers, whose demands for personalized service, broad payment acceptance and immediate gratification are constantly evolving. Crane's suite of connectivity solutions will continue to address the remote management, transaction fulfillment and security challenges required to succeed in unattended retail, particularly in light of encroaching competition from omnichannel retail giants.



Sharon A. Peyer

Brian Pollock

Area Sales Manager for Phoenix, Rocky Mountain, & Northwest, Vistar

Pollock has been a part of the Vistar team since 2008. As a measure of his success, he has received multiple sales awards within the company. He has seen and adapted to the different segments and channels of business, taken on substantial projects and developed serious sales savvy, especially in the college retail sector. The team has expanded products to diversify its offerings as a distribution company and has adapted to the challenges it faces to remain a strong contender in the c-store segment. He believes embracing consumer trends and products that are thriving in different channels is key for the automatic retail industry. Pollock recently became area sales manager for the company and now oversees sales for the Phoenix, Northwest and Rocky Mountain regions. He is eager to make accomplishments for the company in this new role while embracing the exciting changes in the industry.



Brian Pollock

INDIVIDUAL PROS TO KNOW



Chuck Reed

VP & GM for Vending,

Crane Payment Innovations

Reed has worked in the vending industry for two decades and has developed expert understanding of how full-line operators leverage payment technology and telemetry to drive business growth. At CPI, Reed has driven the development and launch of multiple new vending payment products into global markets, including the company's comprehensive range of cash validation and e-cash products and vending management software. As a member of several boards and organizations, he remains educated on operators' concerns and needs, technology roadmaps and industry challenges. Since workers of different generations have different expectations of convenience services and preferences for payment, Reed believes that growing machine connectivity and flexibility of payment and food delivery options are key for success. Reed serves on the NAMA Board of Directors and is actively involved in its standing Government Affairs Committee, where he ensures vending interests are communicated in Washington, D.C. Reed is a consistent contributor to thought leadership and stands as a well-known, constant voice in the industry.



**Chuck
Reed**

Laurence Saul

CEO & President, MYX Drinks

Under Saul's leadership, the beverage technology start-up MYX, in Exton, Pa., has become one of the fastest-growing beverage systems. He has brought the company from development to commercialization in 18 months. Previously, Saul assumed worldwide responsibility for Aramark's continued growth and success as its senior vice president for global operational excellence. He oversaw quality, efficiency and performance effectiveness for Aramark's \$10B in addressable costs, guiding the deployment and establishment of success measures that yielded \$80M in savings annually. Saul believes investment is required to drive new technology and that personalized offerings and better-for-you all are core to successful products for the industry and specifically for clients and their team members, the consumers. MYX created personalized products for the consumer and offered supplements of hydration, energy and immunity. It has invested in the planet's future by running its MYX kiosk on a platform that uses a patented thermoelectric chiller as opposed to a compressor coming off and on many times a day.



**Laurence
Saul**

Patrick Richards

Product Manager - Electronic Payments,
Crane Connectivity Solutions

Richards has led the development and launch of multiple cashless card readers, telemeters and touch screen products into the North American, European and Australian markets for Crane Connectivity Solutions. With over 15 years of experience in the payment industry, Richards has expertise in terminal development, contactless technologies, gateway services and developing value-added services for customers. He drives innovation into the development of new products and solutions, such as Crane's CORA platform, while ensuring that customers have a voice in the process. He ensures that Crane's products are designed to help customers eliminate complexity in the deployment and management of technology while maintaining upgradeability to protect that hardware investment. Richards believes that the industry will be challenged by maintaining compliance with mandatory technology changes and ensuring a positive consumer experience at the point of interaction. He is committed to ensuring next-generation Crane connectivity hardware includes best-in-class security features to protect its customers' business and consumer data.



**Patrick
Richards**

Steven Vosika

Corporate Recruiter,
Five Star Food Service

As a member of the Five Star Food Service corporate team, Vosika manages and directs company-wide hiring programs across three company regions, the Five Star culinary center and its corporate office. Since joining Five Star a little over a year ago, he has been a key asset to Five Star's successful growth, and his efforts have improved customer satisfaction and employee retention rates. Vosika has assisted in reducing employee turnover at each of the company's branch locations, attracted world-class talent from across the Southeast and increased company morale across Five Star. He has also worked to improve Five Star's community relations, building hiring initiatives with special interest groups, including veterans and minorities. He believes the biggest challenge the industry faces is attracting and retaining top-tier talent, especially during a time of record low unemployment.



**Steven
Vosika**

INDIVIDUAL PROS TO KNOW



BBI

Team Leader: Paul Van Vleck, VP & GM, Convenience Services **Team Members:** John Seeberger, VP, Distribution; Eric King, National Sales Manager; Dave Jorgensen, National Account Manager

Burdette Beckmann Inc. (BBI) provides brand information for category-expanding items in order to provide solutions and bring more consumers to its convenience service clients. The company is dedicated to identifying trends across all retail sales channels to maximize its understanding of consumer trends. The BBI team is intentional with new categories that bring more consumers to markets, pantries, machines and coffee counters as they know it's not enough for operators to swap items. Instead, they bring operators items that will increase sales. BBI has invested in incremental coverage options by opening a dedicated Tele-sales office in Appleton, Wisc. Inside sales associates can team sell with field sales associates, provide dedicated or blended coverage, engage in special packs management and cover widely dispersed locations such as hotels and concession directors. Finally, the internal systems on site include Salesforce and a full team of over 15 customer service and administrative support personnel dedicated to the channel.

Canteen

Team Leader: Marc Boman, Division President **Team Members:** Greg Snodgrass, Division Controller; Jerrell Blackmon, VP, Sales, Central US; Matt Hoffman, RVP Illinois, Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska; Byron Hurst, Regional Director, Arkansas; Wes Hiatt, RVP Texas; Chad Kennedy, Director of OCS; Cindy Sielck, Director of Vending; Michael Stoudt, Director of Micro Markets

The Central Division team of Canteen has seen tremendous growth over the last decade, more than doubling their business in recent years. The growth they've experienced is thanks to organic new business and via strategic acquisitions. In the midst of onboarding new business and integrating acquisitions, Canteen continues to keep their focus on providing excellent customer service, which is made easier by the efficient and sophisticated telematics in place in their warehouse. To keep pace with the incredible growth of the business and maintain their premium level of customer service, the Central Division Canteen team makes attracting and retaining the best people in the industry a top priority. Employee feedback surveys, local focus groups, a business growth incentive and employee recognition events are just a few of the examples of this team's commitment to retaining great people and enhancing company culture.



Fixturlite

Team Leader: Steve Orlando, Co-founder, **Team Members:** Troy Geis, Co-founder; Denny Richard, Customer Success Enthusiast; Kelly Tolson, Customer Success Enthusiast; Nicole Willinsky, Customer Success Enthusiast



Throughout 2019, Fixturlite has focused its efforts on on-site visits and mentoring operators in the refreshments space to better their micro market, OCS, and pantry designs and customer presentations with the Fixturlite virtual design tool. The impact? More significant account acquisition in new locations, business retention within existing accounts and increased revenue growth (as much as 40 percent in market locations) within the industry. Through the mentorship provided by Fixturlite, food safety practices have increased across the various lines of industry-related businesses. Through the Micro Market Design Newsletter, Fixturlite shares knowledge and customer case studies to show operators how to better their businesses. The Fixturlite booth at the NAMA Show provided a real-life example of the elements found within a customer experience-based design approach. Fixturlite attended the NAMA Executive Forum to learn key techniques to serve the operators with whom they work. Fixturlite teamed up with the Business Enterprise Program program in various locations across the U.S. to help operators build better, more profitable businesses.

INDIVIDUAL PROS TO KNOW



Gimme

Team leader: Cory Hewett, Co-founder & CEO **Team members:** Rickman Ryals, VP, Enterprise Sales; Evan Jarecki, Co-founder & CCO; and Colleen Calahan, Director of Operations

In January 2019, Gimme announced the public availability of Gimme AutoDrive, software designed for micro markets and traditional vending that automates the inventory process from start to finish. Using computer vision that's verified by humans, this software identifies products, their placement and inventory levels, mitigating errors and manual effort from warehouse staff and route drivers. Route drivers can now shift focus from tracking products to delivering amazing customer experiences. With more automation comes an easing of the burden vending operators face as demands on their staff increase. Gimme was also named as one of Atlanta's "Coolest Companies" and a Top 40 Most Innovative Company in Georgia for the third year in a row. It has encouraged the adoption of innovative technology while relentlessly pursuing new advances that will keep our industry relevant and attractive to changing consumer demands and market pressures. The team believes operators have a strategic advantage over the legacy guys in the more integral ways they can connect to their customer, delivering the right product and the right amount of product every time, resulting in a premium user experience.



Healthy Living Vending

Team leader: Kimberly Jenkins, President **Team members:** Ed Boehm, Operations Manager; Tim Awad, Route Driver

Located in Manakin Sabot, Va., Healthy Living Vending is a new

vending and micro market business that Jenkins and her team built from scratch without sacrificing the vertical market strategy of healthy vending. Driven by the goal of "doing a common thing uncommonly well," Healthy Living Vending offers healthy products and service that exceeds the expectations of its customers. By taking on the initiatives of leadership and mentoring, Jenkins and her team have created their own operation manuals and inside training programs for every position within the company. The challenge they face in the company is to continue to grow their customer base while simultaneously building a solid infrastructure of hardware, software and general operation systems. Additional industry challenges that require all operators to improvise, adapt and overcome include incorporating cashless payment options, unattended micro market offerings and the current low unemployment rate.



MarketReach

Team leader: Amanda Puppo, CEO **Team members:** MarketReach Team

For more than a decade, MarketReach has been dedicated to assisting operators and suppliers with the toughest sales challenges they face, including consistently filling sales pipelines and closing deals. Puppo and her team are looking forward to growing the nanomarket niche with clients and technology providers that have figured out how to make smaller markets successful. MarketReach believes there is a large, untapped opportunity for operators to serve smaller markets across the country. The company strives to be forward-thinking in the way it uses technology and digital marketing to help clients increase sales, while also offering appointment-setting to help operators and suppliers get in front of their best prospects. Under the leadership of Puppo, the MarketReach team recently added new marketing services to help increase client brand awareness and create a demand generation formula for inbound leads. By using a multi-channel approach, the team has been able to reach a larger audience with the right message at the right time, delivering more value to clients.

TEAM PROS TO KNOW



Nayax

Team leader:

Dave Berlin,
Customer Support
Manager **Team**

members:

Josh McMillan, Lead Account Manager; Fernando Flores, Technical Account Manager; Matt Huff, Technical Account Manager; Taylor Fletcher, Technical Account Manager; Zach Greenberg, Technical Account Manager; Alex Vaserman, Technical Sales Director; Amerra Walton, Technical Account Manager; Aramis Alexander, Technical Account Manager; Candice Winkler, Technical Account Manager; Duane Davis, Technical Account Manager; Ty Griffin, Technical Account Manager; Hien Pham, Technical Account Manager; Joanne Dalfonzo, Set-up Support; Caitlin Williams, Set-up Support; Anastasia Vaserman, Set-up Support
Nayax's technical support team ensures its payment platform becomes a pivotal piece in its customers' operational success. This team is dedicated to providing best-in-class product, support and customer service to Nayax customers. Bridging



the gap between development and the operators, the support team conveys the on-the-ground operational realities to Nayax's extensive R&D teams. By working with Nayax's development team

to resolve issues and implement future requests, the support team makes the customers' voice heard, keeping them at the heart of the company's operations. The team offers proactive training sessions on new features and diligently works to create personal connections with customers to give them the most value of Nayax's platform solution. To make sure that all Nayax users get the personal attention they deserve, the company continues to scale its support team as its customer base expands, providing trained and knowledgeable support members to answer the phone every time it rings, allowing for any issue to be dealt with promptly. The support team members have a knowledge of different machine types, are experts on EMV and communication specifics, and understand new developments in the unattended retail landscape.

Pot O' Gold Coffee Service

Team Leader: Larry Jones,

President Team Members:

Laurie Sergeeff, Owner; Alex Sergeeff, Sales Manager; Blake Jones, Sales/Marketing Specialist

Pot O' Gold Coffee Service, a family-run business in the greater Seattle area, is the largest independent OCS provider in Washington. The company, which still pushes itself to grow and innovate, continuously finds ways to ensure its service is the best in town. The leadership believes in treating every customer, regardless of the size of account, just like he or she is part of the Pot O' Gold family. Pot O' Gold was



selected this year as a winner of Seattle Business Magazine's Family Business Award. To ensure it tackles the challenge of choosing a solid lineup for its equipment, the company keeps up with industry news and consistently checks in with different equipment manufacturers on the new brewers coming to the industry. Technicians at Pot O' Gold work closely with manufacturers' technicians to ensure they master the equipment and are committed to responding

within two hours to service calls so the customer can get coffee as soon as possible. Customer service is what this OCS provider is all about.

INDIVIDUAL PROS TO KNOW



Tahoe Vending/Sonoran Coffee and Food Services

Team Leader: Jarrad Duxbury, CEO **Team Members:** Tahoe Vending: Diana Koether, CFO; George Caruso, CTO; Colin A. Watley, CMO; Annette Sundland, Branch Administrator; Pierre Sundland, Sales Director; Scott SantAmour, Database Administrator. Sonoran Coffee and Food Services: Jose Palafox, Branch Manager; Carlos Garcia Rodriguez, Service Tech, Nathan Middaugh, Lead Driver

Tahoe Vending and Sonoran Coffee and Food Services is a young, aggressive company committed to a superior customer experience. Launched in Northern Nevada in July 2018, the company now has over 600 points of sale with more than \$4M in annual revenue. From the onset, the company

made the decision to purchase its own beverage vending equipment, enabling its leadership to greatly expand the variety of drinks offered to clients. The company became a Canteen franchise in order to receive the best in market pricing for products and equipment, allowing for further growth. They are USConnect affiliates and Randolph Sheppard Act Operators, and they work with all the major vending management companies. The company looks at secondary sources of revenue — advertising, water delivery and distribution — to help the bottom line and expand offerings to customers. They believe in offering diversity in products, including fresh food from a local baker and other small and local suppliers. The leadership says the biggest challenge for the company will be continuing to add accounts and broaden product offerings while maintaining the highest level of customer support.

Translucent LLC

Team leader: Patty Closser, Head Coach; Steve Closser, Head Integrator. **Team members:** Patrick Closser, CFO; Bailey Lang, Marketing Guru; Stephanie Closser, Merchandising/Logistics Specialist; Kathy Baumstark, Construction Expert; Denis Baumstark, Construction Expert; Alec Closser, Assistant Head Coach; Rachel Graef, Graphic Design Specialist, Herb Williams, Construction Coach.

Translucent LLC, in Kansas City, Mo., makes a difference for the better in the industry through the team's actions, influence, education and experience. They collect the data that proves changing the approach to product selection in micro market and pantry services results in increased profits. Translucent leadership believes that a perpetual push for new ideas within the industry will be key in 2020, especially in terms of creativity in the design and use of space in micro markets. Maintaining a quality supply chain system is another challenge as new, interesting products and services will help keep customers engaged. As the outside nominator states, the team is "pure awesomeness." ■

