

KEYNOTES

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THE 2020 ALOA PRICING SURVEY

An analytical look at our
industry's pricing practices

PLUS

**Cylinder
Replacement on the
Adams Rite 8600**

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Mission Statement: The mission of the ALOA Security Professionals Association, Inc., as dedicated members of the security industry, is to ensure professional excellence and ethics; create a public demand for professional locksmith services; represent and speak for the locksmith industry; and expand the exchange of trade information and knowledge with other security-related organizations to preserve and enhance the security industry.

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Plan for SAFETECH and ALOA 2020

WE'RE ONLY ABOUT a month away from SAFETECH now, so hopefully you've made your plans to attend. Have you looked at the class lineup? There are many new courses this year that can help you, whatever your goals are. There are topics for experienced safe techs, those new to the trade and for those who are just thinking about entering this segment of the industry.

We'll be at the Hyatt Regency Tulsa Downtown April 27 to May 2. March 27 is the preregistration deadline, so you still have a few more weeks to get the best pricing. Some of the classes this year that could be good for those entering this line of work would be Preparing for Manipulation, Introduction to Safe Operated Key Locks and Basic Picking Techniques and Basic Safe Drilling and Defeat. Or come and take one of the many business classes that apply to all of us! If you haven't seen the results of our pricing survey, safe and vault work can be a really lucrative service area to add to your business. Go to SAFETECH and get your feet wet. You won't regret it!

Pricing Survey Results

Speaking of the pricing survey, thank you to all who participated. It's helpful when we have a good number of respondents,

and you came through for us. Take a look at the results in this issue, starting on page 32. While these results are interesting, I want to remind you that this article is for informational purposes only; please do not use them to set your future pricing. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

ALOA Convention & Security Expo

Next up for big events is the ALOA Convention & Security Expo in Kansas City, MO, July 19-25. This is by far the best event in the industry, and we have such experienced and knowledgeable instructors. We've received requests over the years to change up and add new classes, and the board and staff have listened. In this year's lineup, you'll see new and updated classes such as Hostile Event Preparation, E-Plex Wireless, SWIT Tech Electronic SFIC and Master Keying Concepts. If you haven't already, take a look at the brochure included in the February issue of *Keynotes*. We'll have the full registration brochure ready for you in the April issue.

I don't know about you, but I'm excited to be headed to Kansas City, the land of barbecue! There are a lot of fun things to do there for the whole family, from their world-class zoo to taking in some jazz music or visiting the World War I museum. I know many of you like



to drive to conventions, and Kansas City is so centrally located for that. It makes for an easy drive.

Also remember that there's still time to apply for ALOA Scholarship Foundation (ASF) scholarships for the ALOA Convention! ASF just awarded scholarships to two deserving students for SAFETECH, and they are taking applications for ALOA 2020. For more information, visit www.aloa-asf.org.

I hope everyone has had a good start to their year, and I hope to see you all at the conventions soon!

Respectfully,

Jim Wiedman, CML
President
ALOA Security Professionals
Association, Inc.
president@aloa.org

Take Time For Yourself This Year

IF YOU'VE BEEN READING NOEL Flynn's business column series (and you should because he has a wealth of knowledge), you've learned the importance of planning, reassessing and redirecting course as needed. When you see there are parts of your business that need addressing, you take stock of the situation, make a plan and change operations. Are you doing that for yourself as well?

We all tend to overschedule ourselves. When business is good, we ride the wave and take new jobs and clients, even when it takes a toll on us. Add in family commitments, volunteering, church activities and hobbies, and we really get our plates filled to the overflowing point. Take time to think about balance in your life and work.

Prioritize Balance

Many of us are programmed to hustle. Of course you want to grow professionally and take advantage of new opportunities, but keep an eye on your own health. Are you overwhelmed at the moment? Slow down! Hire some help, take a break or postpone those volunteer commitments.

Locksmiths tend to be very passionate about their profession and live and breathe it. I know some of you can't get enough of it! You do your own work, mentor new professionals, answer technical questions for others on all the forums and teach classes. These are all wonderful

things and so appreciated, but only do what you are humanly able to.

Time is precious. We can't always be everything we want to be for everyone, and it's often our own health that suffers. Remember to set boundaries and check in with yourself every once in a while — and maybe check in with your employees, too. Keep company with those who also prioritize balance in life, and it will have a positive effect on you and make it easier to adhere to yourself.

Consider Your Goals

At ALOA, we are always asking members to be more involved, run for the board or volunteer time. We love involved members, but do keep yourself in mind when you take on commitments. If you've been thinking about running for the ALOA Board or your local association board, we certainly want to encourage that. Just be sure you've thought about how it fits into the rest of your life, work and priorities. What do you want to focus your energy on? What are your goals? Make sure that each new piece you take on meshes with those goals. Don't be afraid to say no if it's in your best interest to do so.

When we take care of our own well-being and reset our balance, we often end up performing better because we are sharper, better rested and feel ready to take on the world. So, this month, take a few moments to reset. Clear your



“Are you overwhelmed at the moment? Slow down! Hire some help, take a break or postpone those volunteer commitments.”

schedule a bit and take some time to just be. And when you're refreshed, go after your goals with renewed focus. The world will be ready for you — and you'll be ready for the world.

Mary A. May

Mary A. May
Executive Director
mary@aloa.org



GET ON THE ROUTE TO SUCCESS!

APRIL 27 — MAY 2, 2020

TULSA, OKLAHOMA

CLASSES: APRIL 27 — MAY 1

TRADESHOW: MAY 2

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, EMAIL CONVENTIONS@ALOA.ORG
OR CALL (800) 532-2562.**



Still Time to Register for SAFETECH 2020!

SAFETECH IS FAST APPROACHING AND CLASSES ARE FILLING UP, BUT there is still time to register! Join us in Tulsa, OK, April 27 to May 2 for five days of classes, a tradeshow with the latest products, fun events and a lot of networking opportunities.

For more information or to register, see the full brochure included in last month's issue of *Keynotes*, or go online to SAVTA.org and click on the Convention tab. For questions or assistance, please email conventions@aloea.org. See you there!



Raymond Clark



Bryan Dallas Kruysman



Thomas R. A. Murphy, CRL

Congratulations to SAFETECH Scholarship Winners

CONGRATULATIONS TO RAYMOND Clark, Bryan Dallas Kruysman and Thomas R. A. Murphy, CRL, who have been awarded scholarships by the ALOA Scholarship Foundation to attend SAFETECH 2020 in Tulsa, OK. Each will receive five days of classes plus hotel accommodations.

Clark, owner of C&C Lock and Key in Riverton, WY, joined ALOA last year and has recently started offering basic safe work. He hopes to expand his training and certification qualifications at SAFETECH.

Kruysman works at Suncoast Safe & Lock in North Venice, FL. He hopes to learn more about manipulation, safe deposit lock defeat and spiking electronic locks.

Murphy, of Morgan Locksmiths in Orland Park, IL, took his first ALOA classes at the ALOA 2019 Convention I Las Vegas. He now hopes to broaden his safe skills.

There is still plenty of time to apply for scholarships to the ALOA Convention & Security Expo in Kansas City this July! For more information or an application, please visit www.aloea-asf.org.

ASSOCIATION NEWS



AIL President John Truempy installed GPLA's new officers and directors in January.

GPLA Leaders Installed

GPLA HELD THEIR INSTALLATION Dinner meeting January 20 at the Pennsauken Country Club. The new Row Officers and Board of Directors were installed into office by John Truempy, president of the ALOA Institutional Locksmiths (AIL) and president of the ALOA Scholarship Foundation.

NEWS BRIEFS

» **Schlage**, an Allegion brand, recently celebrated its 100th anniversary at the 2020 International Builders' Show in Las Vegas. "Our passion for door hardware is rooted in security and steeped in innovation, and we are thrilled to celebrate a century of providing consumers with seamless access where they live, work and visit," says David Ilardi, general manager at Allegion Home, makers of Schlage Locks.

» **ABLOY USA** hired Rick Armenta, whose primary responsibility will be sales engineering and design to support the new ABLOY U.S. Competence Center in Irving, TX, which is scheduled to open in March. He has nearly 30 years of experience with various technologies and will report to Michael Woody, ABLOY's customer service and CLIQ Competence Center manager.



» **ABLOY USA** has introduced a new 50-page security products catalog, which contains in-depth security product details for its entire Critical Infrastructure product protection line.

» **PACLOCK** has relaunched its website. Visit www.paclock.com for more information.

» **Advanced Diagnostics** has announced new options for owning a Smart Pro. Customers can now purchase the Smart Pro with one-year UTP without a three-year commitment. After the one-year UTP (included) expires, manage the Smart Pro with a choice of tokens, UTP, or software. For existing Smart Pro Owners with a three-year/36-month UTP commitment, you can void years two and three with the commitment buyout option. Other options are available. Contact (800) 334-1381 for more information.

PRODUCT BRIEFS

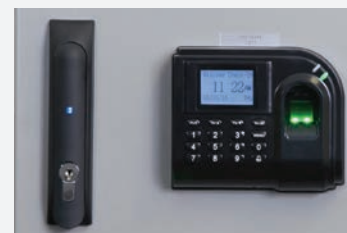
» **Lockmasters's** update for its Little Black Box (LBB) Safe Lock Opening Tool resets and gives a working master and reset code for AMSEC - ESL10 & ESL20 and AMSEC - ESL5 & ESL15 series locks. It works on all locks listed from the year 2000 until current manufacture as of February 1, 2020. The update is supplied with an AMSEC module and instructions. A Little Black Box (LKM522) is required to use the AMSEC module (LKM522UP4), and the LKM522 has to be sent to Lockmasters for software updating before the module will work.



» **Taplock**, creator of the world's first smart fingerprint padlock, has introduced new accessories for its enterprise platform. The Taplock box 2.0 connects through Bluetooth and is used for fingerprint enrollment for its Taplock enterprise software. The company will also be debuting a charging dock as well as the option to customize the shackle length of the locks. For enterprise pricing, contact business@taplock.com.

» The **MedixSafe** Key Care Cabinet allows users to organize keys, limit and control access, remotely unlock and have a history log of who was granted access. The

cabinet can connect to any network allowing remote control to add and delete users, check history and remotely unlock the cabinet. For security, dual, triple or biometric authentication credentials are required before access to the cabinet is granted. It can accommodate more than 1,000 individual users, and all event transactions, cardholder data and system control parameters are stored in the panel onboard memory. For more information, visit <http://medixsafe.com>.



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- ▶ **Michael Shawn Gavin**
Aaron's Lock Service
- ▶ **Nicholas R. Loverde**
Aaron's Lock Service

FLORIDA

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- ▶ **Maykel Amador**
Miami Dade County Aviation Department
- ▶ **Earl Davis**
Miami Dade County Aviation Department

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Aurora

- ▶ **Rodney Steele**
Galesburg
- ▶ **Terris Lee Martin**

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- ▶ **Cameron Jones**
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 - ▶ **Ryan Schwarz**
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Lynchburg Locksmith LLC
- Portsmouth
- ▶ **Christian Balaguer**

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- ▶ **Chris L. Huffstetler**
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ALOA CERTIFICATIONS

CAL

- ▶ **Emily A. Cooper, CAL**
Stillwater, OK

CALENDAR

For a complete calendar of events, visit www.aloa.org.

MARCH

March 4-6

IML Security Expo
Universal City Hilton
Universal City, CA
www.imlss.com

March 5

Detex Training at Hans Johnsen Exit Devices and Exit Alarms (8 a.m. to 12 p.m.) and Automatic Operators (1 p.m. to 5 p.m.)
Hilton Anatole Western Tower
2201 Stemmons Freeway
Dallas, TX
www.detex.com

March 7

IDN Hardware Sales Security Convention
Sheraton Hartford South Hotel
100 Capital Blvd. Rocky Hill, CT
<http://hardware.idn-inc.com/>

March 26-28

H.L. Flake 2020 Trade Show and Education
Several ALOA-led Classes
Houston, TX
www.hlflake.com

APRIL

April 24-25

Just Cars
Caribe Royale Orlando
Orlando, FL
justcars.us

April 27-May 2

SAFETECH 2020
Hyatt Regency Tulsa
Tulsa, OK
education@aloe.org or
(800) 532-2562, ext. 101

MAY

May 18-23

Six-Day Locksmithing Fundamentals
ALOA Training Center, Dallas, TX
education@aloe.org or
(800) 532-2562, ext. 101

JUNE

June 10-12

IML Security Expo
Talking Stick Resort and Casino
Scottsdale, AZ
www.imlss.com

June 18-20

Southern Lock 2020 Trade Show & Learning Expo
Hilton St. Petersburg Carillon Park
St. Petersburg, FL
www.southernlock.com

JULY

July 19-25

ALOA Convention & Security Expo
Kansas City Convention Center
Kansas City, MO
conventions@aloe.org or
(800) 532-2562, ext. 101

We Need Your Help

Attention, ALOA Members:

Help us eliminate the industry scammer problem by screening these applicants, who are scheduled for clearance as ALOA members, to ensure they meet the standards of ALOA's Code of Ethics. Protests, if any, must be made within 30 days of this *Keynotes* issue date, addressed to the ALOA membership department, signed and submitted via e-mail to membership@aloe.org or via fax to 214-819-9736. For questions, contact Kevin Wesley, membership manager, at Kevin@aloe.org or (214) 819-9733, ext. 219.

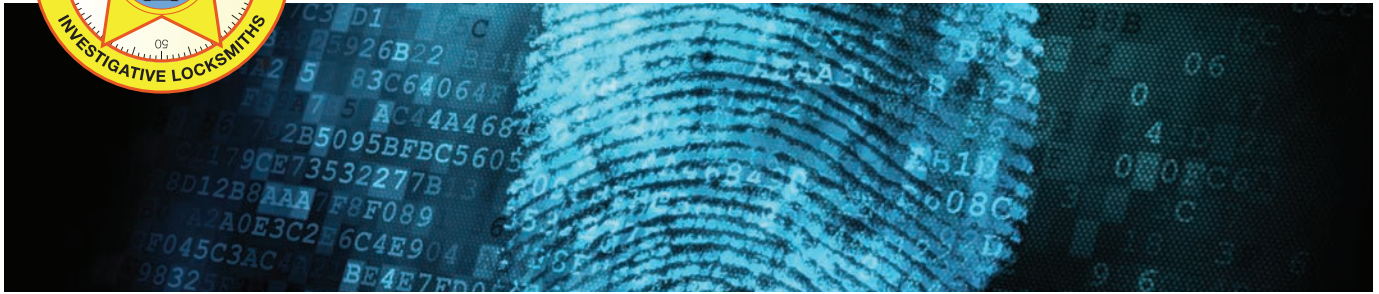
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Get Your CFL at SAFETECH

I HOPE EVERYONE IS LOOKING FORWARD TO SAFETECH IN TULSA, OK. I arrive on Wednesday, April 29, and my forensic class is scheduled for Thursday and Friday. SAFETECH is always so much fun for me because of the great attendees who come to learn and turn that new education into making additional income. Maybe it's because it is a condensed group and everyone knows each other, or safe techs are just warm and outwardly friendly people. No matter the reason, it's a nice place to be. If you've never been to SAFETECH, sign up and come for some quality education and great events like the auction or the kick-off party — not to mention all the great evening adventures in the Tulsa area. If you want to know anything about Tulsa, ask Dave LaBarge!

Getting Your CFL

If you are thinking of taking your CFL examination at SAFETECH, you can take it right after class so everything is fresh on your mind. IAIL offers four different categories in forensics investigation to choose from: General Forensics; Automotive; Architectural Hardware; Doors, Frames and Codes; and Safes and Vaults. You can hold more than one CFL certificate. When attorneys are looking for an expert witness, they want to see on your curriculum vita (CV) that you have the qualifications to help them build or settle a case.

IAIL allows you to take the examination for your CFL while you are working on the requirements to qualify for your certification. If you pass the exam and have not met your requirements, you have one year to do so to be awarded your CFL certificate. With that said, you have many chances to complete the required classes at the ALOA Convention in Kansas City in July.

We are considering moving our IAIL Forensic Conference to the annual SAFETECH conference starting in 2021. Here is our thinking on why this would be a good idea: First, SAFETECH moves around the country, and that would give our members a chance to travel to different areas. Second, aside from IAIL classes, our members could take SAVTA classes to add that knowledge to their CV. And, lastly,

we would be part of our sister association's conference and enjoy the benefits of this great show. We will be discussing this at our annual meeting at the ALOA Convention in Kansas City, and I would like to hear from our members on how they feel about this proposed venue for future forensic conferences.

If you would like more information on becoming a Certified Forensic Locksmith or attending our conference, e-mail me at ialpresident@aloa.org. I will send you the requirements to test for your new career and a sign-up sheet for the conference. ☺



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Get Published!

IAIL members: Submit your articles for the Investigative Spotlight department. Send your information to Ross Squire at ross@abcforensic.com.



Don't Miss Out on SAFETECH!

There's still time to register, so hurry to get signed up.

IF YOU HAVEN'T YET LOCKED IN YOUR PLANS FOR SAFETECH, hurry! The early registration deadline is March 27, so take advantage of the lower prices and get a better chance at securing your preferred class choices.

Get your career on the route to success by enhancing your safe and vault skills or jumping into this exciting area for the first time. Have you seen the pricing survey in this issue? Safe and vault work can be quite lucrative! Get the knowledge you need to succeed in this segment of the industry by taking classes with the field's leading experts. Learn about manipulation, drilling, repairs, locks and more. For current or aspiring business owners, there are classes for you too, covering QuickBooks, marketing and more.

Five full days of classes and a tradeshow await you in Tulsa, OK, April 27 to May 2, and you'll be able to network and attend events with your peers. Make new connections, buy some new

tools and learn! Registration is open, so take a look at the full brochure included with the February issue of *Keynotes*, or go online to SAVTA.org.

Travel

Be sure to book your hotel room at the Hyatt Regency Tulsa before they sell out! Rooms, which are only \$129 per night, can be secured by calling the hotel toll-free at (888) 591-1234 or the hotel directly at (918) 582-9000 and using the group name "SAVTA" or "SAFETECH." Reservations can also be made online using the hotel link under the Convention tab on SAVTA.org.

Complimentary 24-hour shuttle service to and from the airport is offered by the Hyatt Regency Tulsa. The hotel also offers complimentary round-trip shuttle transportation from the hotel to downtown neighborhoods for dining, shopping and entertainment.



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2020 ALOA Convention & Security Expo

Keep ALOA 2020 in Kansas City, MO, on your calendar! We'll be there July 19-25, and registration information will be available in the April issue of *Keynotes*.

Heat up your career by taking some of the many new classes available this year and earn needed CEUs for licensing. New investigative courses are being offered to help you earn your CFL credential, including basic and advanced tool mark classes. Learn more about the electrified world with practical computer networking, increase your master keying knowledge, or take Hostile Event Preparation to help keep your clients' buildings secure.

Location and Things to Do

There is a block of rooms at the new Loews Kansas City hotel, which connects directly to the Kansas City Convention Center. Reservations can be made by calling the hotel directly at (888) 576-6807 and by using the group name "ALOA Annual Conference." The cutoff date for hotel reservations is June 29, but they could always sell out sooner. Call now to secure your room.

This centrally located venue and the connected Loews Kansas City Hotel give you easy access to activities in downtown Kansas City — and the location is so easy to drive to from many states.

Take a barbecue tour, visit the National WWI Museum and Memorial or take in some famous Kansas City jazz music. Also, there are so many family-friendly things to do, from the Worlds of Fun amusement park to the Kansas City Zoo.

For more information, visit ALOA.org and click on the ALOA Convention tab. ☺



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Replacing the Ignition Actuator Pin on a 2006 Dodge Magnum

Andrew Taylor takes you through the process step-by-step.

AS AUTOMOTIVE LOCKSMITHS, WE OFTEN GET CALLS ASKING US TO replace cylinders or keys or simply “reprogram” them because the customer’s car won’t start. Quite often, they’re looking for that \$50 solution to a serious problem, but sometimes it’s just a minor step away from what we’re used to doing.

This particular car was such a case: The repair shop called, saying the key turns and the lights come on, but the car won’t start! Must be a bad key, they assumed. On checking, I could feel a certain “mushiness” in the way the switch reacted to me turning the key. It didn’t click into each position the way it should. If you’re experienced, you already know that the switch is in charge of the clicks, not the cylinder, so your first thought might be that the switch is bad.

In many versions of Chrysler products, there is another culprit to consider: the actuator pin, which is the middleman between the cylinder and the switch.

Because the key buzzer was incorporated in the switch and a thin pushpin had to ride in the center, the actuator pin had to be made hollow so any extra pressure can break the brittle metal it’s made of. This design was used from the earliest Neons through the Magnums and Chargers.

The following pictures will show the details of a 2006 Magnum with fairly easy-to-find screws. However, the column versions that the Neon, Liberty, Caravan and others use are even more accessible,



Figure 1. Shown is a broken actuator pin with its pieces retrieved.



Figure 2. Dorman 924-739 is available at most auto parts stores, as is the 924-704 for the column versions.



Figure 3. A trim piece in the doorjamb hides a screw for the lower dash cover and snaps in place.



Figure 4. Here is that hidden screw for the lower dash cover.



Figure 5. This sheet metal safety plate is held in place by four 10 mm screws and blocks most of your access under the dash.

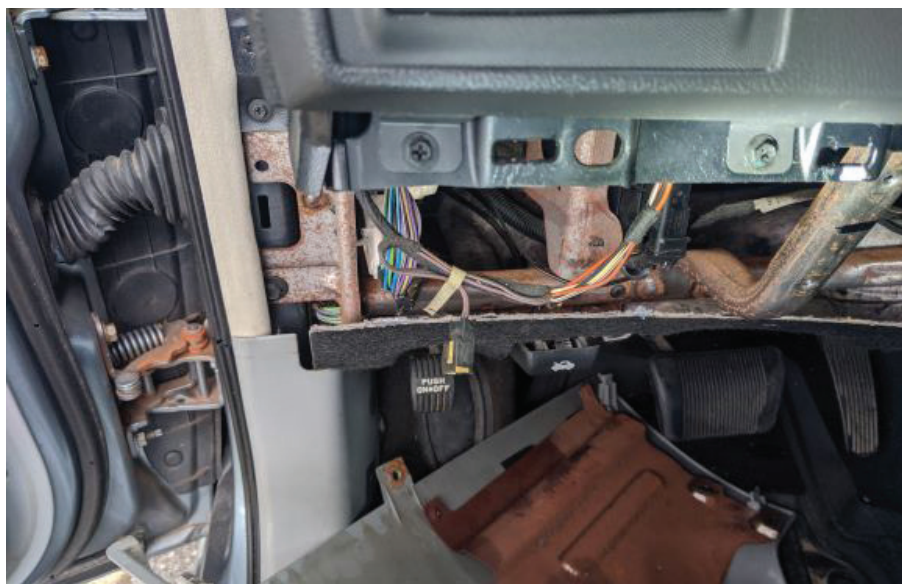


Figure 6. Two of the three screws that hold the upper dash cover are shown, along with some clips.



Figure 7. The third screw is shown, as is the beauty ring around the cylinder, which snaps in place. The top of the dash is held by clips as well.

so they shouldn't be arbitrarily dismissed as the venue of the car mechanic.

The Steps

First, we want to see how thin the hollow section is that drives the switch when you turn the key. Dorman makes these parts available through any parts stores, with 924-739 as the part number for the in-dash

version (see *Figure 2*), and 924-704 for the column-mounted version.

Start by removing the lower dash panel, which is held mostly by clips near the top and a couple of screws at the bottom (*Figure 3*) and one silly screw hiding behind a trim plate at the door's edge, which just snaps in place (*Figure 4*).

Then there is a protector plate of sheet

metal that blocks your access to behind the dash. Four 10 mm screws hold that (*Figure 5*). Three screws hold the bottom of the dash face while clips hold the top (*Figures 6 and 7*), so after popping off the beauty ring from around the cylinder, this is out of your way. There is one little plug for the dimmer switch to unplug to get it totally out of your way.



Figure 8. Three 8 mm screws hold the ignition assembly to the dash supports. The two facing you need to be removed, but the lower one you see the socket on only needs to be loosened to allow the assembly to slide out the back.



Figure 9. The actuator pin seats into the switch before mounting it back into the assembly. Remember not to seat it in 180 degrees out of sync.

There are three 8 mm screws mounting the assembly to the dash (*Figure 8*): two facing you and one tucked underneath with an easy-access hole. At this point, slide the assembly back and swing it down into the hole you created by removing the lower parts, so you can disconnect the switch plug and transmission safety interlock cable. At this point, I must apologize for forgetting to take a picture of them dangling by their cords. You want to remove the cylinder at this time by turning it to “on” and pressing the retainer so the transmission cable can slide out.

The switch is mounted to the housing by three Torx T10 screws, and the actuator pin settles nicely inside (*Figure 9*). Remove the broken pin, shake out the broken pieces and install the new pin.

“Remember that it’s possible to install the new pin backwards, so pay attention to which way is facing correctly!”

Remember that it’s possible to install the new pin backwards, so pay attention to which way is facing correctly! It would be wise to test by installing the cylinder back into the housing before you reinstall it in the dash... ask me how I know.

At this point, it’s just a matter of reassembly by reversing the steps. The total time involved can be as low as half an hour, but on your first attempt, you should plan and price for an hour. The total tools involved are a #2 Phillips, 10 mm socket, 8 mm socket, pocket screwdriver, Torx T10 (screwdriver or socket) and a ¼” ratchet or driver handle. ☺



Andrew Taylor, 57, has been locksmithing since 1983 and self employed since 1989. He originally apprenticed under Tom Sprouse in New Jersey and is owner of Taylor Locksmith in Virginia Beach. He does commercial, residential and automotive work but prefers automotive for the variety.

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A Business Blueprint: Connecting the Dots

Take a pulse check on how you've integrated the management tools discussed to date. **By Noel Flynn**

THIS IS THE NINTH ARTICLE IN THE “TOOLS for Managing Your Business” series. We've covered a lot of ground in the first eight articles, and now we'll bring it all together to help create a blueprint for your business success. Whether your business is in the embryonic stages, beginning to get traction or well established, there should be something of interest and a few takeaways for you in this article.

Reading about management tools and techniques is a great first step. But unless we practice these and they become part of our daily behavior and mindset, we haven't really accomplished much! So let's revisit highlights from this article series — and apply them.

Ignore the Real Threat Aat Your Peril

Before we get too far down memory lane, let's remind ourselves why all of this business management stuff matters. Don't take my word for it; visit the Small Business Administration's website and absorb the statistics regarding business failure rates. This is not fake news!

The most important takeaways here are:

1. Statistically speaking, the odds are heavy that your business will ultimately fail, even after years of success.
2. The overwhelming majority of failures are attributable to a lack of business management, not a lack of product or service expertise. Death certificates usually list cause of death as “cash starvation!”

3. There is plenty of room left for new headstones in the graveyard of failed businesses.
4. You can dramatically enhance your chances of success if you choose to avail of the numerous business management tools that are readily available.

Now that the Grim Reaper has spoken, go ahead and take one of your antidepressant meds, continue your procrastination and ignoring this “management crap.” I completely understand your position, and perhaps you'll feel better knowing that you're certainly not alone. Of course, you are too busy and have more important things to do. Interestingly, that's exactly what many occupants in the business failure graveyard said! Is there a message or wake-up call here?

Now that I hopefully have your attention (hurry up and get your affairs in order now... just kidding), take a deep breath, stop wallowing in self pity (OK, then, just a little bit) and let's focus on behavior that will improve your odds. You know you were looking for a different New Year's resolution anyway. Let's face it; your strategy of hoping to solve that weight problem by getting taller isn't really working so well! Join the club. But maybe we are just looking at this the wrong way. Perhaps all those X's on your T-shirt label are actually a coveted symbol of respect and greatness in some third-world countries? Just saying: Maybe it's a matter of perspective!

Articles in This Series

Following is a list of articles in the “Tools for Managing Your Business” series. We'll take a closer look at important

considerations, key points and how these various topics are related. Readers are encouraged to return to those articles for a review and for more details.

- Planning - June 2019
- Tracking and Measuring - July/August 2019
- Removing the Voodoo From Accounting and Finance - September 2019
- Purchasing and Inventory Management - October 2019
- Pricing for Profitability - November 2019
- Employee Acquisition, Motivation and Retention - December 2019
- Performance Incentive Programs - January 2020
- How to Develop and Use a Budget - February 2020

Houston, We Have Liftoff

So your business has been successfully launched (bet it seems like only yesterday when you took the plunge), you have survived the early stages and are in an acceptable orbit, for now. It's a good time to step back, pause and reflect on where you've been, where you are now and where you are going. It might be helpful to think of your situation in generic terms of past, present and future. Don't worry — you won't be visited by three ghosts on Christmas Eve.

You had been focusing on finding new customers, getting more work from existing accounts and trying to get paid. More recently, you have begun paying more attention to your operating efficiency and profitability while looking for sources of incremental volume... and still chasing customers to get paid. Oh, and yes, you are also trying to figure out what your venture (sometimes seems more like an adventure) wants to be when it grows up and how to one day sell this puppy to fund your retirement.

Assessment

This is a good time to take a hard look at your commercial position, reflect on your shorter and longer-term personal goals and, most importantly, *to take control of your destiny*. Time to act like a pilot rather than crew or passenger. Although it's technically a bit late, as the New Year begins to unfold, it might help to think of now as a good time for an annual "physical exam" for your business. See the planning calendar section.

In our June 2019 article, we discussed the importance of planning and how we can use the SWOT analysis tool to identify our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Yes, although you may have done this before, with each new year comes the need to engage in planning again. So you should

definitely consider updating your SWOT or, if applicable, engaging in your inaugural SWOT process. Remember, SWAT is the one where they kick in our door.

Planning Calendar

As time marches on, develop more discipline and gradually shift this SWOT exercise to around late September or early October, if your business's fiscal year is a calendar year. Otherwise, commence early in the last two months of your fiscal year. Better late than never!

Begin with your SWOT analysis and then move further into a full-blown structured planning session. You can follow the steps outlined and explained in our June planning article. But, this time around, you are now more familiar with some relevant terms, including goals, objectives, strategies and action plans. Each of these represents a piece of the planning puzzle. It's all there for you to avail of, and the more you do it, the easier it becomes. Your plan is your map, and the budget numbers are your compasses. As your business grows, you can also engage in more "tax avoidance" planning.

Let the Numbers Guide You

Although your plan should be a strategic-level document, your numbers should support it. This takes us back to the importance of generating and using timely performance data. In our July/August article, "Tracking and Measuring Performance," we covered the need for monthly, weekly and even daily tracking of key performance indicators, or KPIs. We also discussed that although financial statements are very important, they are not necessarily available early enough for you to react to changes or obstacles in your business.

We likened this tracking and measuring to activities that take place when you visit your medical provider. Key performance indicators (KPIs) can be thought of as your vital signs: In other words, the equivalent of taking your temperature, checking your blood pressure and possibly drawing blood for labs. All of this is aimed at determining how your body functions are behaving compared to established medical industry benchmarks and your own historical norms and trends.

In the "Tracking and Measuring Performance" article, we provided a daily template to help you record the vital signs of your business using specific indicators or business barometers. If you employed some customized version of those templates (one for sales dollars generated and the companion template for sales units generated), you should have monthly summaries and averages. If you have been tracking these business barometers, you now have a solid foundation

(possibly years of data) for your KPI performance, trends and budget development.

Removing the Voodoo From Accounting and Finance

Although it's important, the aforementioned tracking and measuring of our sales/income performance is only part of the equation. In the September article, we discussed understanding and using financial statements, including the income statement and balance sheet. You may recall that our income statement (snapshot of the business for a period) provides monthly and year-to-date summaries of income, expenses and profit or loss. Thus, the income statement is also known as a P&L, as in

statement of profit and loss. Clearly, the addition of expenses provides a more complete picture, when added to our income side and enables us to calculate our profit or loss.

The balance sheet — unlike the income statement — is more of a snapshot of the business at a moment in time. The balance sheet is where we report such categories as assets, liabilities and equity. The B.S. (No, not the B.S. that you are sooooo good at) can be used to calculate important ratios that indicate the financial condition of the business.

Knowing Where to Look

So let's take a quick look at where we can find answers, or at least various pieces of information.

WHAT	WHERE	REMARKS
Accounts receivable balance	Balance sheet	As of that report date
Accounts payable balance	Balance sheet	As of that report date
Inventory - book value	Balance sheet	As of that report date
Cash	Balance sheet	As of that report date
Utilities expense	Income statement	As of that report date
Gross margin	Income statement	As of that report date
Total sales for the month	Income statement	If updated to include day
Daily sales for a particular day	Tracking template	Or accounting software **
Number of jobs	Tracking template	Or accounting software **
Average dollars per sale/job	Tracking template	Or accounting software **
Accounts receivable - aging	A/R report ***	From accounting software

** May be available from your accounting software, if current and set up accordingly.

*** This one is to see if you are paying attention.

Use the Powerful Reports Features of Your Accounting Software

You may be able to use a standard report directly from your accounting software to provide certain recurring data very efficiently on a monthly or even on-demand basis. You are also likely to be able to create custom reports within your accounting software. However, in some instances, you may only

be able to extract raw data (electronically via exporting) from your accounting software and will need to perform some analytical processes via a self-developed spreadsheet model. The more recurring your necessity, the more you need to find ways to generate the data efficiently. If you have the choice, it's usually far better to retrieve data directly from your accounting software than to invest in building and updating spreadsheet

models. Determine whether your software features some kind of dashboard report.

Today's accounting software applications can generate impressive reports, graphs, charts and data in friendly formats and also offer an array of analytical tools, almost at the touch of a button. You have already paid for the software, so learn how to use it to stay informed and save time. If your software is incapable of delivering what you need (make sure that you or your lack of knowledge are not what's holding up the parade), look for add-on applications or applets. There are lots of these affordable separate programs developed to integrate with your basic accounting software. Availability of such add-on programs should be a consideration when you're choosing your accounting software. There is a lot of free and affordable help available.

Purchasing and Inventory Management

In the October 2019 article, we discussed your sourcing choices, the value of supplier relationships, some important factors beyond just price and some common mistakes to avoid. We also discussed the role of credit availability and how to evaluate

and review suppliers' performance. In *Figure 1* in that article, there is a list of questions you should ask as part of the procurement process.

Perhaps one of the most important features of that article was the caution regarding the common trap of over-ordering to get a better price and then becoming stuck with too much inventory. Inventory can be one of your greatest investments and also a cash sponge. Be sure to establish reasonable systems to accurately know what you have and where to find it. Determine what you really need and where to get it. Then, learn how to control your purchasing and inventory management. Oh, and make a habit of reciting this mantra: "Don't repair when I should replace!"

Pricing for Profitability

So what's the point in doing good work if you don't make a profit, get paid late or don't get paid at all? In the November 2019 article, we discussed the importance of establishing compensatory pricing, having the appropriate pricing attitude and common mistakes to avoid. We also discussed various pricing strategies, how to differentiate and why we should engage in



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and leverage needs assessments by conducting site surveys.

Be sure to consider the strong recommendation to select the proper dispatcher or person who has initial contact with the customer or prospect. Ensure that the all-important first impression is the best possible for the caller, even if you don’t land the sale... this time.

Establishing the Right Pricing

Perhaps one of the more important concepts covered is the relationship between price and value. We need to remind ourselves and teach our staff (including technicians and non-salespeople), that everyone’s job is to use their knowledge and experience to educate the customer/consumer so that he or she can make an informed decision. We are not engaged in “selling” the customer per se, but rather helping them to buy wisely. Take the time to understand what problems we are being asked to solve because, at the end of the day, what we are really selling are *solutions*!

I suggested that there isn’t any magical formula to determine the “right” pricing or pricing elements. But there is research indicating that if you achieve and maintain a 40% gross margin (or better), statistically speaking, you are far more likely to be successful. So this provides a target we can use indirectly to gauge the effectiveness of overall pricing. It further strongly suggests that the battle will be won or lost at the gross margin level. Of course, properly managing expenses is also of utmost importance, but the point is that if you don’t generate sufficient

gross margin, you will be placing even more pressure on managing your expenses. Thus, you will be less likely to make up this shortfall even if you effectively control expenses.

Handling Price Increases and Offering Discounts

In the September 2019 pricing article, we reviewed the philosophical and practical aspects of handling price increases. It’s important to pass on price/cost increases downstream, but the preferred approach is to mask your price increases to frustrate decoding efforts by your customers. Smaller price increases on a regular basis are preferable compared to a larger increase after a prolonged period of static prices. *Don’t train your customers to engage in bad behavior!*

If you don’t establish standard (default) pricing at a level that is sufficiently high, you won’t be able to offer discounts while preserving reasonable margins. Moreover, customers love to believe that they are receiving a discounted price and, frankly, there are times when this practice makes good business sense. So create a standard pricing system, and be sure to recognize the *full* cost of providing the service *and* covering your overhead and profit. Build in some flexibility for deserving or earned discounts, but make sure that your discounted price levels do not become your default. Do not, under any circumstances, surrender control of your pricing to your sales force! We love our sales force, but don’t forget: These are the same folks who told us they could sell lots more widgets if only our widgets were blue instead of red. The blues didn’t sell, and now they say they need green widgets... and our price is *always* too high! Best place to buy widgets is Amazon!

Employee Acquisition, Motivation and Retention

In the December 2019 article, we covered various aspects of employee-related topics. Pause now and consider that, for most service businesses, employee-related costs can be the largest single category of expense, or at least in the top tier. And don’t forget the implicit cost of employee turnover and having problematic or underperforming employees on your payroll.

Obviously, you need to do your utmost to recruit and train a strong team, but if you make a mistake (it happens), jettison the bad news and pull the plug sooner rather than later. Again, if within 60 to 90 days you have not seen a compelling case for prolonging the agony, pull the trigger and move on. Next, let’s revisit how we can improve our chances of success in building a winning team.

Before beginning a recruitment effort, be sure to take all

sensible measures to become more efficient at what you do and how you do it. Take maximum advantage of your software, review all of your processes and eliminate or at least reduce the bottlenecks. Delegate whenever there is a sensible opportunity to free up some of your precious time. Don't be afraid to let go, but make sure you have trained whomever you are delegating to and make sure you have also empowered them with the authority to perform the task. Show them "your way," but don't stifle motivation for them to possibly develop a better way.

When you are ready and, ideally, before your capacity is already maxed out (aka capacity constrained), identify what resources you *really* need. Carefully survey the landscape of your business. Objectively compare the fit between your capacity and your demand and the trajectory of your sales volume. What trends have you confirmed? Where are you going for the next chapter?

Understand how much incremental business will be required to offset this new employee cost burden and how you are going to capture that. Be sure to develop a clear job description, including "must have" and "nice-to-have" qualifications. Do your homework and be prepared to offer a combination of

reasonable compensation and benefits. What is appealing to the candidate? A younger person is typically more interested in wage levels, but availability of health insurance may be of paramount importance to some, especially if they have to deal with chronic health issues for themselves or their family. Don't select from a basket of one, and don't grasp at straws by hiring the first one with a pulse. It's probably best to avoid applicants who brag about their experience being a career crash test dummy, unless perhaps you are looking for real upper managerial potential... or maybe your heir apparent!

Employ Proven Tools and Techniques to Minimize Risk

Use available screening tools and best practices, and polish your interviewing skills. Remember to ask open-ended questions and, where appropriate, drill down for more details or to clarify inconsistencies. Invite someone to help ask the questions while you observe the candidate. Avoid talking too much when you should be asking questions and listening. Go back and review some of the discussion and recommendations covered in the December 2019 article.

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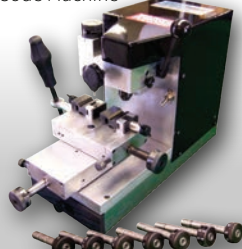
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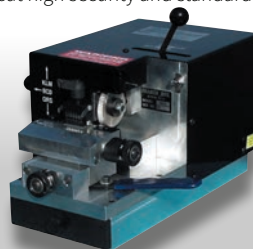
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“Although your plan should be a strategic-level document, your numbers should support it.”

Once you successfully recruit a new team member, your job has just begun. It's imperative to provide a track that will take your new asset to the right destination. Have a clearly defined pathway with milestones and rewards for achievement. Be certain to build a connection between performance/contribution on one hand and compensation/reward on the other. Make sure you communicate (no, your legendary hissy fits are not what's needed here) frequently and coach as much as possible. Don't forget to make your expectations clear and establish relevant metrics shared by all. Lead by example.

Performance Incentive Programs (PIPs)

So, after recruiting and training employees, how do I keep them from leaving? The January 2020 article discussed the creation and application of structured incentive programs intended to encourage and reward optimum performance, consistent with the company's goals and objectives. Such programs become more important as the number of employees increases, and they also serve as an employee retention mechanism.

Ensure that all hands are on deck and rowing in the same direction. But, as the leader, you must chart the course, use the compass to navigate and issue corrections throughout the voyage. The entire crew must clearly understand where we are going and how to get there and, ideally, they should care about our speedy and safe arrival. In the old pirate days, each member of the crew received a portion of the booty. No, this has nothing to do with the Kardashian-type rear ends. OK, my fault. I'll just call it loot instead of booty. The old phrase “idle minds are the Devil's workshop” comes to mind. Can we get back on track now?

So, where were we? Oh yes, we were discussing how essential it is to have everyone performing at or near their personal peak level of performance and working toward making the company successful. Also, constructive internal competition can be healthy, but it is imperative to discourage and avoid renegade or destructive competitive behavior.

One prescription for this potentially infectious disease is to design and enact well-thought-out structured incentive programs that recognize departmental and/or individual performance while ensuring that everyone is invested in the company's overall success, above all else. What good is it if a department succeeds but the company does not? Make sure all team members have skin in the game! As leader, you create and live the culture!

But even the most well-intentioned PIP must be easy to understand and apply, very well explained, communicated and simulated prior to introduction so there are no surprises. Expect and be prepared for at least some employees to be somewhat suspicious and lacking trust. Establish clear metrics and measures, and share progress reports frequently. Oh, and be prepared to conserve cash for when PIP earned distributions have to be paid, and remember that bonuses are subject to withholding and other income-related taxes. Be sure to review any PIP with your tax adviser before release. Review the recommendations listed in the January 2019 article.

How to Develop and Use a Budget

In our February 2020 article (I'm finally starting to write 2020, instead of 2019), we moved on from looking at budgets at higher altitude to actually constructing a budget and illustrating the step-by-step development process. Here, we included a truncated version of some budget templates and even provided readers direct access to the full spreadsheet template models. Use these and modify as needed to save you time.

In the article, we referred to the various sources of data available to help build a budget. It should be self-evident by now that whether it's financial statements or tracking forms and templates, the systems used to measure performance can be invaluable in constructing budget(s). As you will come to believe, all this relevant data that you have been gathering — although time consuming — can be the gift that keeps on giving if used properly. *That's a key element in how we connect the dots.*

Think of the budget as the words of a song and your plan as the music, or vice versa. When they come together effectively, we have a hit. But there isn't or shouldn't be any chicken or egg confusion here; the plan should come first. Indeed, in the real world, there is often some overlap in the process of compiling the numbers and assembling the plan for the coming year. Follow the process steps suggested in the February 2020 article and modify as needed to fit your situation.

Using the Budget as a Management Tool

Once your new budget is completed, be sure to upload/import it into your accounting software. As the new year unfolds,

you will then be able to generate budget variance reports that will indicate where and to what extent you may have strayed off course. Monitoring these variances facilitates “managing by exception,” which is an effective and very efficient technique. Pay particular attention to quarterly results, as the monthly peaks and valleys tend to smooth out by the end of each quarter.

Be sure to pay more attention to your larger income and expense categories that represent the greatest impact on your business, since these tend to make or break your success. Remember that even a smaller-percentage unfavorable budget variance of a larger number or category can be far more important than a larger-percentage deviation of a smaller number category. Take the traditional 80/20 view of this stuff, but don’t totally ignore the smaller items.

Conclusion

Hopefully this recap of key elements from earlier articles will help refresh your memory and serve as a cheat sheet. But as you confront each topic and are ready to drill down into more detail, revisit that entire article for a complete review.

Most important, remember that all of these topics are connected — some more than others. That’s why this article is titled “A Business Blueprint: Connecting the Dots.” As they used to say on one of the police TV shows, “It’s dangerous out there. So stay alert.”

Oh, and speaking of danger, be sure not to drive or operate machinery until at least two hours after reading this article (or any of my other ones). Let’s hope that 2020 will be a good year.

The next article will be “Developing Your Marketing Plan,” which will cover the fundamental components of and how to develop a marketing plan. 📧



Noel Flynn is a degreed business management consultant with global senior leadership experience, including more than 20 years in manufacturing, wholesale distribution and consulting sectors of the security industry. Noel has been a senior executive, officer, board director and adviser to not-for-profit and for-profit companies in numerous industries worldwide. This includes being an ALOA board member since 2011, and he is also an ACE instructor, developing and teaching business management.

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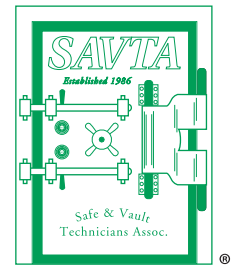


Figure 1. The technical mystery about this opening is why Saw Man felt it necessary to knock off the dial *after* making this hole.

While My Bosch 1198 VSR Gently Weeps

“Saw Man” opens a shopkeeper’s safe — but leaves an 8-inch hole in the process. **By Ken Dunkel**

THIS JOB BEGAN AS A Saturday referral: Call a jewelry store in Carmel, CA, and talk to the lady. Carmel is about 100 miles down the coast from San Francisco, a couple of clicks south of Monterey Bay. The once-famous art colony has gone totally cute. Downtown Carmel is home to a cluster of “shoppes,” each more darling and unique than the previous one. The side streets are a turista gulag of bed and breakfasts. Husbands on family vacations easily earn big points by holding still for one saccharin Carmel night.

Unintentional Convention

The lady who answered my call told a tale of misery and woe. She’d been unable to open her safe since Friday morning, and needed access. Crowds of increasingly restless tourists were in dire need of bangles and bracelets. It sounded very serious.

Knowing that California has a thriving population of safecrackers, I asked why no local safe and lock company was in attendance. She’d tried locals on Friday. According to her, on Friday, her little shop looked like a locksmiths’ convention. Seemingly every rep in a 30-mile radius had stopped by to turn her dial and hobnob with each other. Then she asked if it was common for safes to break so often — less than a year ago she’d spent \$800 for repairs on this one.

When asked what kind of a safe, she answered “Maximum,” adding that the used safe dealer who sold it to her told her it was a foreign-made high-security safe. I offered that maybe Friday’s experts were unfamiliar with it and unsure what to do. “Right,” she said; she’d had that

distinct impression from their collective thumbs-buried-where-sun-never-shines demeanor. One local said it looked more like a fire safe to him. However, he didn't open safes. Apparently none of them did.

The next question begged asking, so I asked: "Why did all these guys who don't open safes show up at a safe that needs to be opened?" She had no idea, she said, but they'd wasted a lot of her time.

A Notorious 'Jerk'

"Why not call whoever you bought it from?" was my next question. She sputtered something about a jerk from San Francisco who didn't return calls. She didn't care if she ever heard from him. The more she talked, the clearer the picture became.

Some background fits here. There aren't many safe dealers in San Francisco who would represent a fire safe as a high-security unit. Nor are there many San Francisco safe dealers whose former customers usually use the word "jerk" or worse to describe them.

One name comes to mind whenever I hear comments like hers. He's a fast-talking hustler who leaves a trail of jury-rigged safes and pissed-off, one-time-only clients. In one respect, he's wonderful, because his mode of operation makes it easy to look awesome by comparison. However, whenever I learn that he's had anything to do with a safe I'm about to touch, I proceed with extreme caution.

I simply said his first name in a querying tone, and she exclaimed "That's him!" I had to interrupt a fresh rant to ask what repairs had been done for \$800 several months earlier. She was vague. "I don't know. They said they rebuilt it." Nobody ever seems to read any part of an invoice except the part marked "Total."

Who was "they?" Not the dealer, she said; it was a local safe and lock company from about 20 miles away. The \$800 "re-

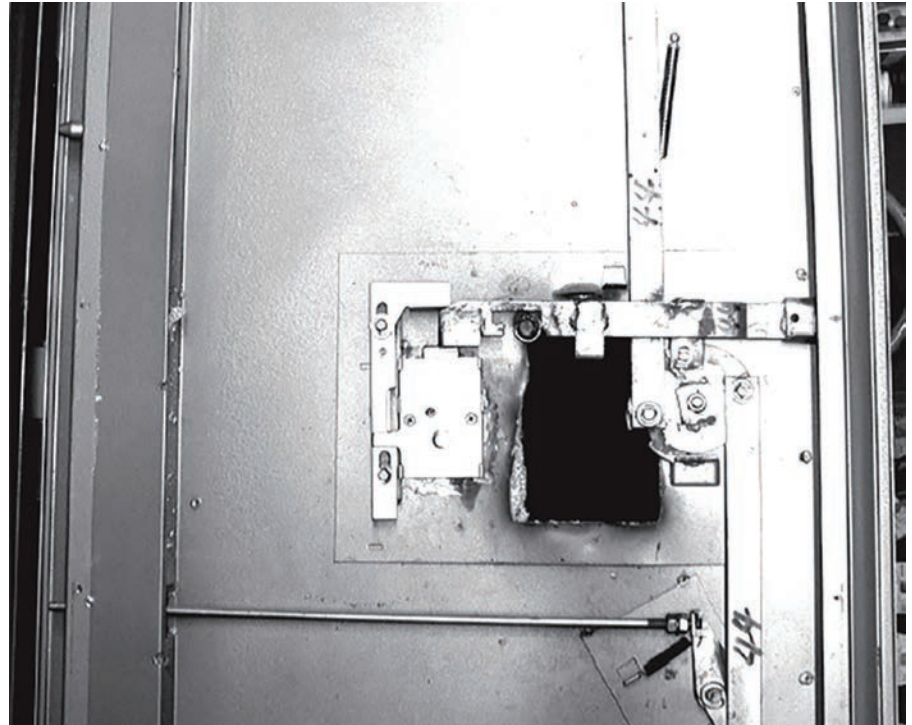


Figure 2. He came, he sawed, he conquered... sort of.

build" had left her safe lockable by combination only, with the key lock disabled. Now the combination lock wasn't working, nobody knew nuthin', and she was fed up.

Questions and More Questions

Besides the safe's label name and her ex-dealer's name, I knew a couple of other things. Maximum Security (not who she bought it from) sold all classes of safes, so Maximum's label can adorn anything from a fire safe to a UL-rated burglary chest. Thus, I also knew that the local man could have been wrong about her Maximum-labeled safe being a fire box, especially in light of a past \$800 rebuild.

Why wasn't the outfit that had done the \$800 "rebuild" on the job? She'd called, she said, but she wasn't sure if they were coming. The man on the phone said he might visit, but that he wasn't anxious to mess with a safe on a Saturday when he could make lots more money on automotive jobs.

More questions and a few more details,

and I was half-convinced it was a fire box. I told her that if she wanted, I'd open it that day. Given the four-hour-plus round trip I faced, she'd be paying a premium, fire box or not. Even after hearing my rates, she said it sounded better than what she was hearing locally. I was at least giving her hope. I finished with, "If you want me there today, I need to hear back by two." That would give me time to lure Ken Doyle out of town for a ride, some safe opening laughs and a seafood dinner in Monterey.

'He's Drilling Now'

Two o'clock and no word, so I called for status. The local safe and lock man had just arrived, she said. "He's drilling it now. Can you hear it?"

I did hear it in the background. "He's drilling already?"

"Yes," she said, "He's drilling out the key lock." Earlier, she'd said the key lock had been broken and unused since the "rebuild."

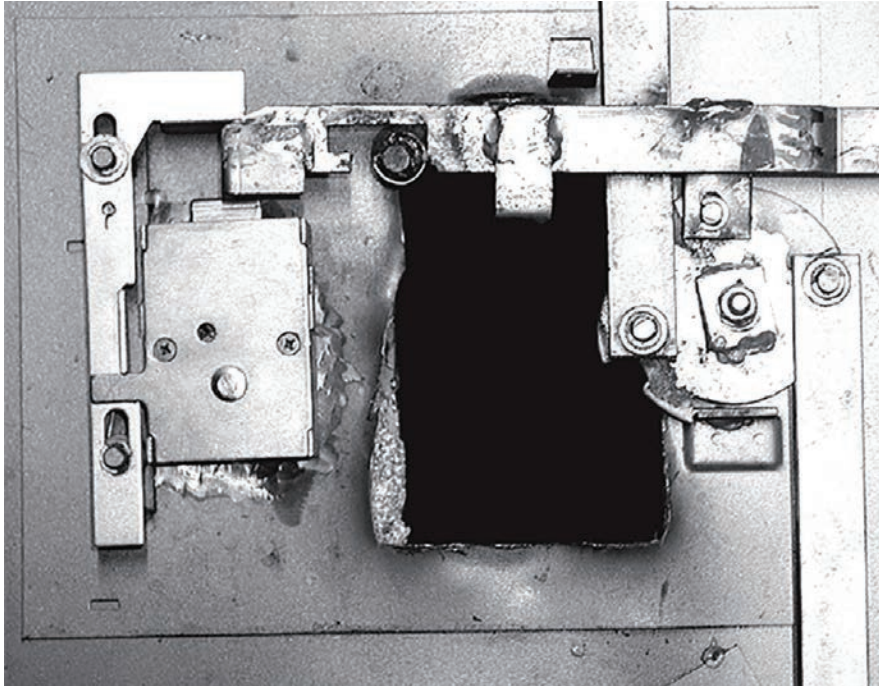


Figure 3. Up close: I guess I'm glad he's one of us. He could have gone into surgery.

"You said the combination lock isn't working. Why is he drilling a lock that's not a problem?" I asked.

"I don't know," she said, "Do you want to talk to him?"

"No, he must have a plan. So you're cancelling, right?"

"Well, I might call you back, depending on what happens with him."

I told her if it came to that, the job would have to be requoted. She understood. Around five o'clock, she called again. "This has been the worst two days of my life," she began.

"Your safe didn't get opened?"

"Yes, but I need to ask you about repairs — can these be fixed?"

"I have no idea. Why didn't the other company repair it?"

"He said they don't repair safes."

"How many holes did he make?"

"Just one."

"Why can't he repair one little hole?"

"It looks pretty big to me."

"How big?"

"Let me look again..." (pause) "... my

guess is about four by eight inches."

"Hunh? I thought you said he drilled...?"

"Right after he drilled out the key lock, he brought in a big, round power saw. You never heard so much noise. Everything in my place is covered with dust. It's awful. It'll take another day to clean up."

Just to satisfy my own curiosity, I asked her to swing the door and look for labels or anything else that might give a clue to what kind of safe it was. She did find a label, and it read "JIS 2 Hour."

Cheaper Isn't Always Cheaper

I gave her the bad news: Although Saw Man had indeed charged less than I would have, the difference was that my fee would have opened and repaired the safe, and she would have been done. Saw Man left her needing a new safe, a haul-out and a dump run for the useless hulk he'd left her with.

On my recommendation, someone from her company visited Hermann As-

sociates in San Francisco on Monday. Hermann sold him a more appropriate safe, and on Tuesday, they delivered the new one, hauled out the old and brought it back to San Francisco for disposal. Upon learning that the remains of the safe I didn't get to open were lying in state in the Hermann warehouse, I scurried over for a look. I had to see for myself.

As you can see from the photos, she wasn't lying about the hole size. This piece of work was done by an employee of the only lock and safe company within 100 miles to have seen this safe's interior layout. If anyone should have been able to open this inconsequential box with one small hole, it should have been him. As ferociously effective as the big saw approach was on this, Saw Man's hole still created a lot more work than was necessary. Worse, it was still in the wrong place (if there could be said to be a right place at all), because it was obvious he had to do more grunt work through the hole to complete the lock bypass. It takes all kinds.

Life is good — I'm sending a barrage of mail solicitations to all the jewelers in that neighborhood. ☺



Ken Dunkel has worked in the security industry in New York, Connecticut, Hawaii and California. After several years as senior bank locksmith for a large

California bank, he started Safecracker, a Northern California-based business specializing in safe and vault work, distributing safe locks and hardware, consulting, and related expert testimony. He also produced and published Boxman, a digital newsletter for the safe and vault industry, from 2001 to 2016. An avid and proficient manipulator, Ken has conducted more than a dozen advanced manipulation classes at SAVTA's annual SAFETECH gatherings.

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THE 2020 ALOA LOCKSMITH PRICING SURVEY

Our members help provide an analytical
look at our industry's pricing practices.

By Wendy Angel

IF YOU'VE EVER WONDERED HOW YOUR COMPANY'S PRICING and demographics compare to those of others in the industry, we have answers for you. The fifth ALOA Pricing Survey polled ALOA SPAI members for pricing and hours information — as well as other details — including average pricing for a wide variety of services ranging from copying keys to moving heavy safes, and from installing locks to rekeying cars.

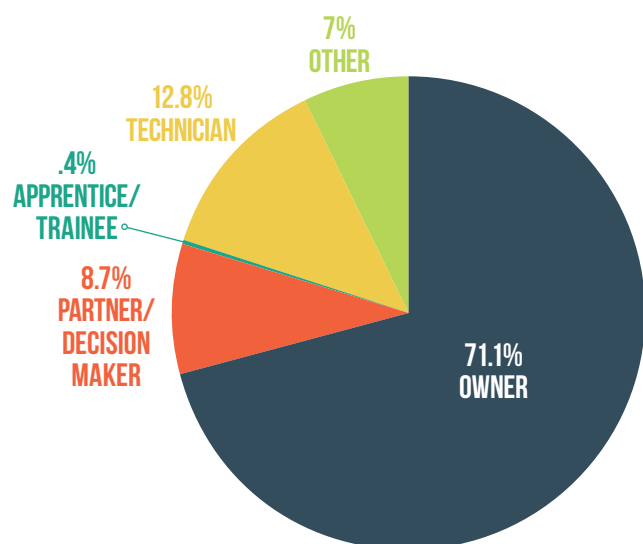
Note that every respondent's individual answers have been and will be kept strictly confidential. In other words, no ALOA SPAI member has access to the information submitted by another member. Also, do not use these results in setting present or future prices. The data presented on the following pages is for informational purposes only.

METHODOLOGY

- An email with an embedded link to an online survey was delivered to ALOA SPAI members. A survey response form was printed in the January 2020 issue of *Keynotes*.
- The survey had a response rate of 5.2%.
- The results of the survey are accurate at a 95% confidence level with a +/- 6.1% error tolerance.
- The results of this survey were confidentially compiled by *Keynotes* publisher madison/miles media, not by a locksmith or security professional.
- All survey questions refer to what ALOA members have charged in the past.

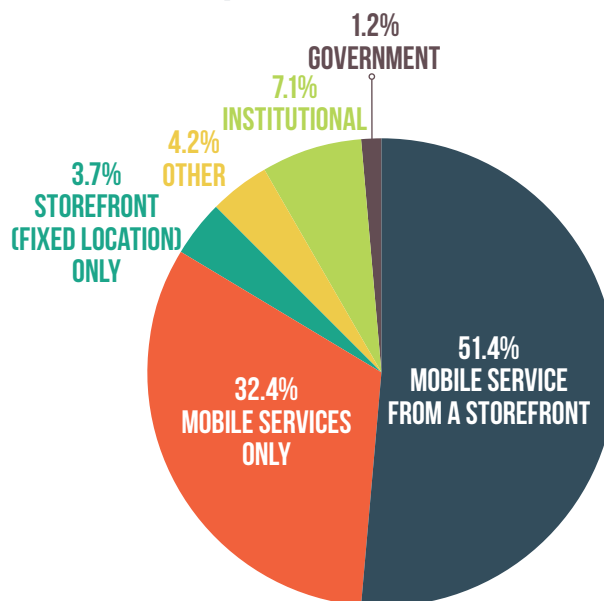
DEMOGRAPHICS

Which of the following best describes your job function?



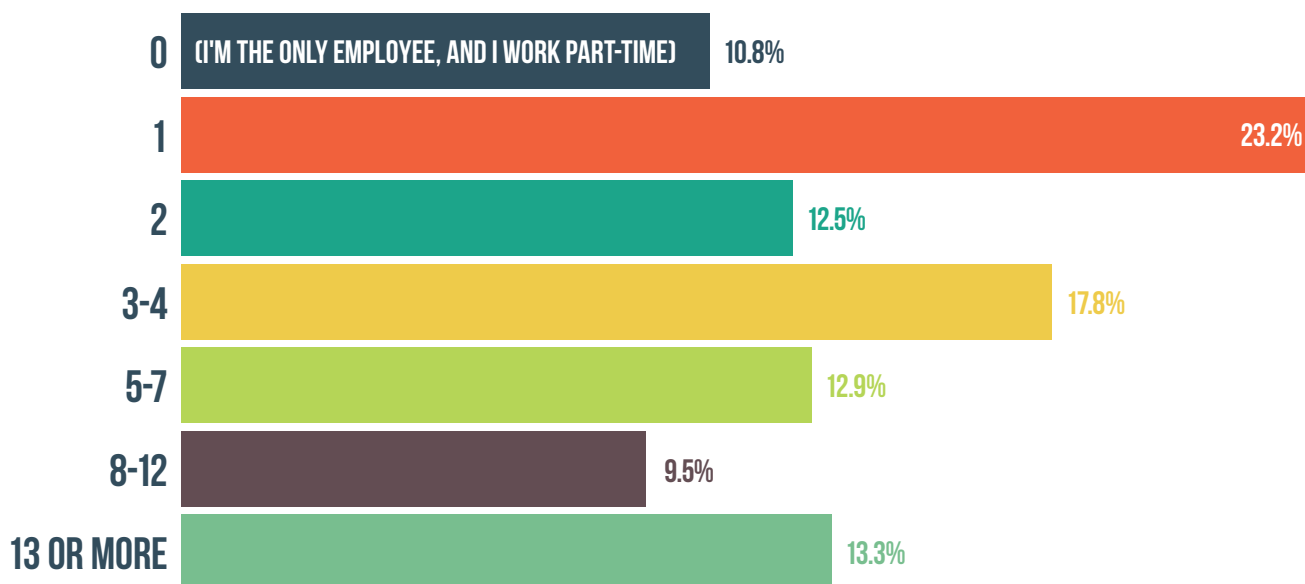
Nearly 80% of survey respondents were either a business owner or partner/decision maker, giving an indication that the survey results are coming from those most knowledgeable about pricing.

Which of the following best describes your work environment?



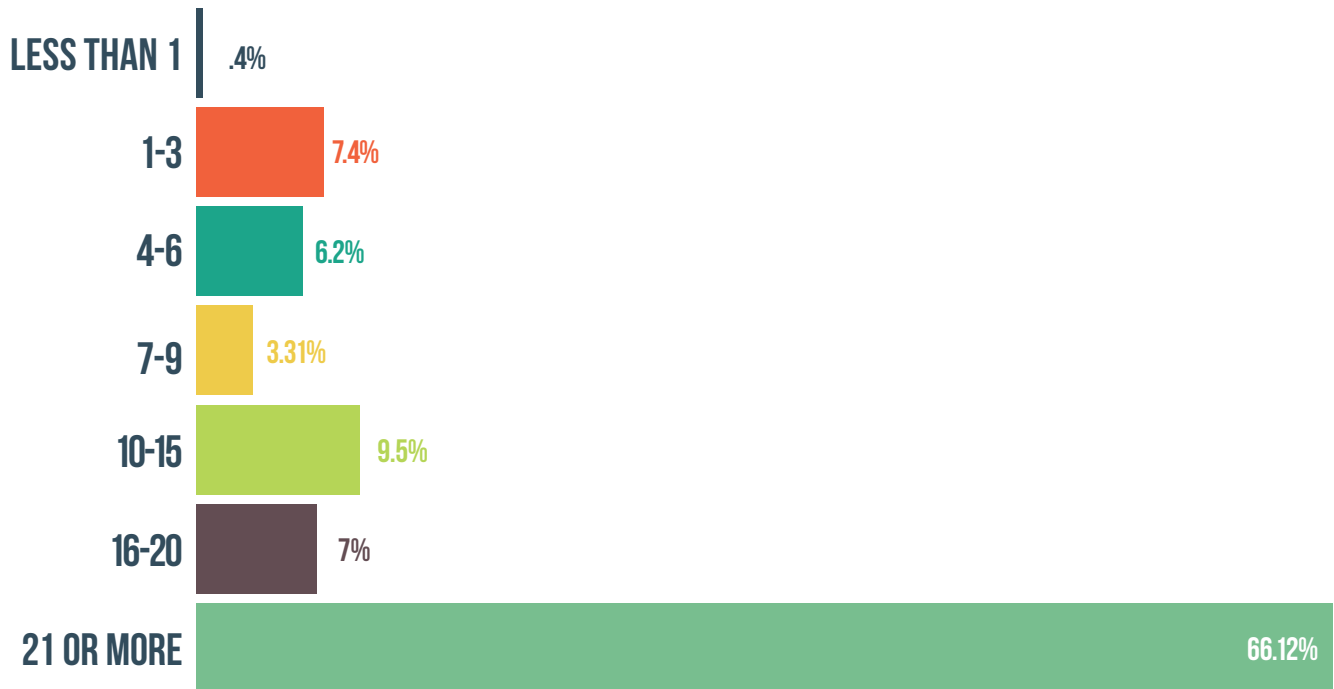
Since the last time this survey was conducted in 2018, the percentage of professionals offering only mobile service increased by more than 4 percentage points, from 28.57% to 32.4%. Conversely, those offering mobile services from a storefront went down from 63.35% to 51.4%.

How many full-time employees (including you) does your organization have?



Similar to the 2018 survey, the largest portion of professionals (34%) work as the only employee in either a part- or full-time capacity.

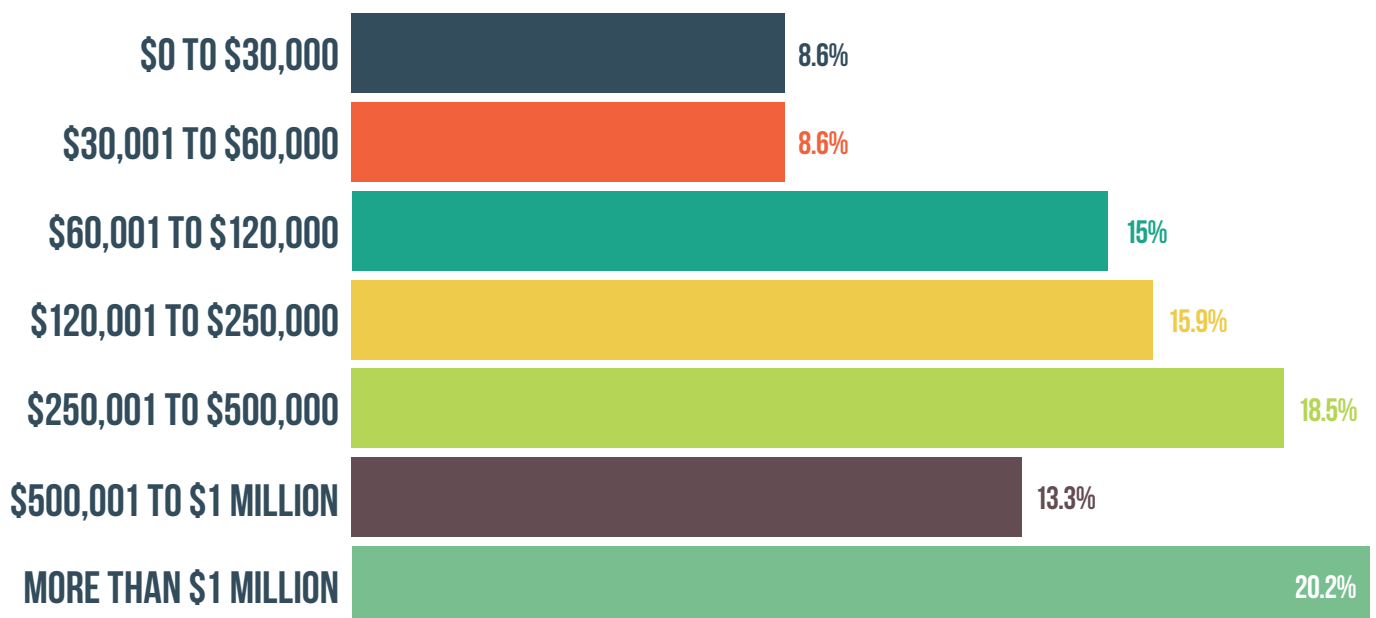
How many years have you been in business?



The majority of locksmiths (73.1%) have been in business for more than 15 years.

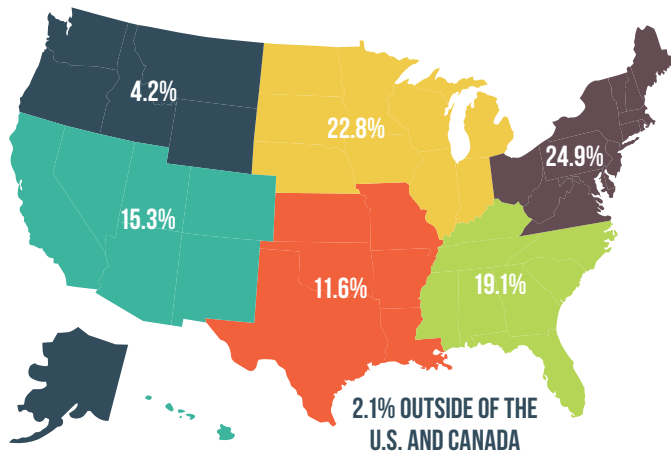
Please indicate the annual gross revenue of your organization.

(If you are primarily an institutional locksmith, select your department's annual operating budget.)



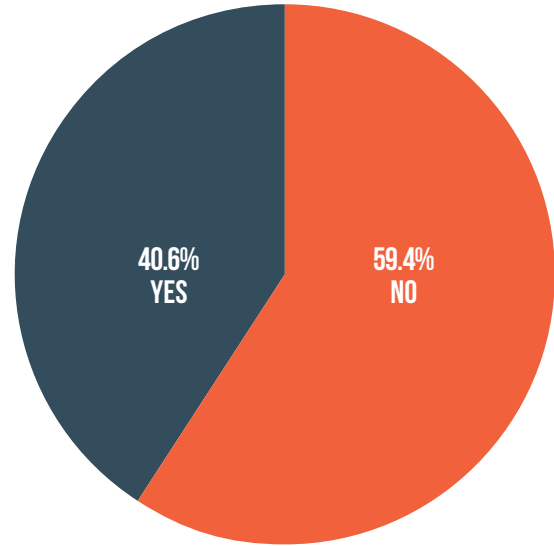
The \$60,001 to \$120,000 category of earnings is up nearly 5 percentage points since the 2018 survey.

Where is your business located?



The Northeast has more locksmiths and security professionals than any other area of the country, but they are closely followed by the North Central region, which has seen growth.

Do you offer true 24-hour service?



In surveys prior to 2018, locksmiths were evenly divided on whether to offer 24-hour service, but locksmiths are continuing to trend toward not offering it.

What are your business hours?

Monday Through Friday Opening Time	
6:00-6:30 a.m.	5.5%
7:00-7:30 a.m.	11%
8:00 a.m.	39.9%
8:30 a.m.	13.8%
9:00-9:59 a.m.	22.9%
10:00 a.m.	1.8%
24 Hours	4.6%

Monday Through Friday Closing Time	
2:30-3:30 p.m.	2.8%
4:00-4:45 p.m.	10.1%
5:00 p.m.	55%
5:15-5:30 p.m.	8.7%
6:00 p.m.	8.3%
7:00-8:00 p.m.	2.3%
9:00-9:30 p.m.	2.3%
10:00 p.m. or Later	5.9%
24 Hours	4.6%

Saturday Opening Time	
24 Hours	5%
6:00-6:30 a.m.	1.4%
7:00-7:30 a.m.	4.1%
8:00-8:30 a.m.	9.6%
9:00-9:30 a.m.	15.1%
10:00-10:59 a.m.	4.6%
11:00 a.m. or later	1.8%
No Answer/Closed	58.4

Saturday Closing Time	
24 Hours	5%
12:00-12:30 p.m.	3.7%
1:00-1:30 p.m.	6%
2:00 p.m.	6.4%
3:00 p.m.	3.2%
4:00-4:30 p.m.	3.7%
5:00-5:30 p.m.	8%
6:00 p.m.	2.9%
7:00 p.m. or Later	6.4%
No Answer/Closed	54.7%

Sunday Opening Time	
24 Hours	6.9%
6:00-7:00 a.m.	3.2%
8:00-9:00 a.m.	2.3%
10:00 a.m. or Later	1.4%
No Answer/Closed	86.2%

Sunday Closing Time	
24 Hours	6.9%
2:00 p.m. and Earlier	0.9%
5:00-5:30 p.m.	0.9%
8:00 p.m.	2.3%
9:00 p.m. or Later	3.2%
No Answer/Closed	85.8%

Holiday Opening Time	
24 Hours	6.9%
6:00-6:30 a.m.	0.9%
7:00-7:30 a.m.	2.3%
8:00 a.m.	2.3%
9:00 a.m.	2.3%
No Answer/Closed	85.3%

Holiday Closing Time	
24 Hours	6.9%
12:00-2:00 p.m.	1.8%
4:00-5:00 p.m.	2.3%
8:00 p.m. or Later	3.7%
No Answer/Closed	85.3%

The majority of locksmiths work Monday through Friday, with the most common opening time being 8 a.m. and the most common closing time being 5 p.m. For businesses that are open on Saturdays, the most common opening time is 9 a.m. Only about 13% of locksmiths have regular Sunday hours.

PRICING

In 2019, what was your charge for a residential service call at the following times?

During normal business hours (M-F)	\$69.67
Weekend day (before 5 p.m.)	\$96.36
Weekend night (5 to 10 p.m.)	\$102.66
Weekend late night (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.)	\$124.42
Holidays	\$123.81

Since the last survey, pricing for residential service calls on weekdays went up about \$18. Holiday service calls went up by about \$22.

In 2019, what was your service charge for a commercial service call at the following times?

During normal business hours (M-F)	\$75.52
Weekend day (before 5 p.m.)	\$104.81
Weekend night (5 to 10 p.m.)	\$110.73
Weekend late night (10 p.m. to 7 a.m.)	\$133.04
Holidays	\$134.45

Commercial service calls ranged from \$75.52 on the low end for calls made during normal business hours — up from \$71 in 2018 — to \$134.45 on the high end for calls made on holidays.

In 2019, what was your hourly rate for the following types of work?

Flat-rate, commercial	\$84.83
Flat-rate, automotive	\$83.65
Flat-rate, residential	\$77.95
Waiting	\$82.49
Travel	\$79.09

As in previous years, commercial service had the highest rate, which went up over \$4. Waiting charges went up about \$14.

In 2019, what was your rate for the following types of key duplicating?

Key Stamping Per Stamp	\$0.80
Standard American	\$3.11
Foreign Single	\$4.55
Double American	\$4.79
Foreign Double	\$5.76
Everest/Non-Restricted	\$7.60
Interchangeable Core, BEST Type	\$8.47
Tubular Key, Standard	\$9.19
Interchangeable Core, Everest Non-Restricted	\$10.27
Tubular Key, Large	\$10.97
Tubular Key, Small	\$11.02
Duplicating Broken Key Charge	\$11.24
Everest/Restricted	\$12.88
Safe Deposit	\$13.08
Bit Key, Single	\$15.28
Interchangeable Core, Keymark/ Other Restricted	\$16.13
High Security (ASSA, Medeco, Primus, Multilock)	\$16.27
Bit Key, Double	\$19.99
Side Cut Auto	\$35.85
Transponder Key	\$55.80
Tibbe Stile 6 or 8 Track	\$61.25
Transponder Key/Fixed Program	\$71.44
Transponder Key/Clone	\$73.40
Transponder Key/Clone Encrypted	\$79.71

As has been the case in previous years, work involving transponder keys generated the highest rates, although they all decreased in price — anywhere from \$3 to \$11.

In 2019, what was your rate for the following types of automotive work?

Code Cut Key	\$35.73
Open Auto/Passenger Compartment (Less Service Call)	\$46.10
Impression First Key	\$59.38
Rekey Door American	\$60.41
Program Transponder Key American	\$61.67
Open Car American	\$61.86
Rekey Trunk American	\$62.94
Open Auto/Trunk (Less Service Call)	\$63
Open Car Foreign	\$63.77
Rekey Ignition American	\$65.75
Rekey Door Foreign	\$65.82
Program Transponder Key Foreign	\$67.23
Rekey Trunk Foreign	\$72.37
Fit Key to American Door and Trunk	\$72.42
Fit Key to Foreign Door and Trunk	\$77.11
Rekey Ignition Foreign	\$77.60
Develop Motorcycle Key	\$78.32
Fit Key to American Ignition	\$93.11
Fit Key to Foreign Ignition	\$100.46
Develop Transponder Key American	\$122.70
Develop Transponder Key Foreign	\$125.36
Develop Vats Key	\$127.02

Developing vats and transponder keys was by far the most lucrative of the automobile work reported.

In 2019, what was your rate for the following types of rekeying services?

Shim Cylinder	\$12.39
Residential Knob Lever	\$17.98
Bump Open Cylinder	\$18.14
Rap Open Cylinder	\$18.52
Commercial Key in Knob/Lever	\$19.44
Mortise Cylinder	\$19.93
Rim Cylinder	\$20.43
Pick Cylinder	\$20.50
Residential Knob Lever/No Key	\$24.31
Mortise Cylinder/No Key	\$25.88
Rim Cylinder/No Key	\$26.49
Commercial Key in Knob/Lever/No Key	\$27.14
Locker Lock	\$29.06
SFIC-LFIC	\$29.33
High Security Mortise	\$33.38
High Security KIK/L	\$33.87
High Security Rim	\$34.07
Bit Locks	\$34.61
Tubular Lock	\$36.47
Safe Deposit Lock Each Nose	\$43.71

For rekeying services, shim cylinders were the lowest earners (\$12.39, on average). Safe deposit locks (each nose) came in the highest at \$43.71.

In 2019, what was your rate for the following types of lock installation work?

Deadbolt Replace	\$33.94
Key in Knob/Lever Replace	\$36.04
Door Guard New	\$47.15
Key in Knob/Lever New	\$56.07
Deadbolt New	\$61.35
Narrow Stile Deadbolt Replace	\$65.71
Mortise Lock Replace	\$66.30
Adams Rite Replace	\$69.20
Narrow Stile Deadlatch Replace	\$69.24
High Security Strike New	\$72.98
Exit Device Rim Replace	\$85.38
Exit Alarm Lock Replace	\$85.71
Exit Alarm Lock New	\$117.20
Exit Device Mortise Replace	\$117.61
Exit Device Rim New	\$129.56
Mortise Lock New	\$148.34
Narrow Stile Deadbolt New	\$154.98
Exit Alarm Lock VR Replace	\$160.44
Narrow Stile Deadlatch New	\$165.96
Adams Rite New	\$170.13
Exit Device VR Replace	\$177.22
Exit Device Mortise New	\$185.82
Exit Alarm Lock VR New	\$220.76
Exit Device VR New	\$240.83

New exit device mortise, new exit Alarm Lock VR and new exit device VR — all of which were priced above the \$185 mark — had the highest rates in this year's survey, and all increased by \$11 or more from 2018's survey.

In 2019, what was your rate for the following types of door installation work?

Door Viewer Replace	\$41.53
Pest Strip	\$45.23
Door Viewer New	\$50.66
Sealant Installation	\$64.83
Hinge Replace	\$77.18
Door Guard Top	\$87.65
Coordinator Replace	\$98.83
Coordinator New	\$121.20
Threshold Replace	\$128.60
Threshold New	\$142.53
Wood Door Replace	\$264.95
Remove and Reinstall Tempered Glass Door	\$309.90
Wood Door New	\$336.60
Hollow Metal Door Replace	\$363
Refinish or Paint Door	\$417.50
Hollow Metal Door New	\$522.44

For door installation work, new and replacement hollow metal doors are the money makers, with the price increasing about \$250 from the last survey.

In 2019, what was your rate for the following types of door closer work?

Spring Hinge Replace	\$51
Spring Hinge New	\$57.43
Adjust Door Closer	\$37.59
Rim Door Closer Replace	\$119.12
Rim Door Closer New	\$134.95
Floor Closer Replace	\$266.94
Floor Closer New	\$332.92
Concealed Closer Replace	\$179.34
Concealed Closer New	\$189.54
Overhead Closer Replace	\$97.40
Overhead Closer New	\$119.68

Floor closers provided the highest revenue for respondents performing door closer work, with new and replacements increasing by about \$46 and \$79, respectively.

In 2019, what was your rate for the following types of padlock work?

Code Cut Key	\$17.85
SFIC By Code	\$20.05
Find Combination By Code	\$22.33
Impression Key Wafer	\$27.19
Impression Key Pin	\$30.21
High Security By Code	\$31.56

Padlock work ranged from \$17.85 to \$31.65, running about even with 2018's survey results.

In 2019, what was your rate for the following types of safe and vault work?

Change Combo Hand (Mesh, Pin, Screw, etc.)	\$83.38
Change Combo Key	\$74.06
Service Lock (Electronic/ Electro-Mechanical)	\$93.16
Service Lock (Mechanical)	\$97.04
Service Dial and Ring	\$88.84
Install Lock New	\$126.74
Install Lock Replace	\$118.96
Manipulate Lock 1st Hour	\$166.83
Manipulate Lock Each Additional Hour	\$109.39
Drill Lock to Open Record	\$247.53
Drill Lock to Open Money Old	\$310.33
Drill Lock to Open TL15	\$452.86
Drill Lock to Open TL30	\$628.57
Drill Lock to Open TL60	\$735.53
Drill Lock to Open TL30 x 6	\$1,356.25
Drill Lock to Open TL60 x 6	\$1,125
Drill Floor Safe	\$311.86
Repair Door Fire Safe	\$145
Repair Door Money Safe	\$148.38
Repair Vault Door	\$252.38
Repair in the Floor Safe	\$159.09
Install Vault Door (Under 2000 pounds - Fire Door, Ft. Knox, etc.)	\$487.50
Move Vault Door (Under 2000 pounds - Fire Door, Ft. Knox, etc.)	\$580
Move Safe up to 300 Pounds	\$242.38
Move Safe 300 to 900 Pounds	\$342.38
Move Safe 901 to 1800 Pounds	\$595.59
Move Safe 1801 to 3000 Pounds	\$672.92
Move Safe over 3000 Pounds	\$1,000
Move Safe Up or Down Per Step	\$90.90
Cribbing Per Foot	\$90.90

Vault door work is again the most lucrative. Most areas of safe and vault work saw increases in pricing since 2018.

In 2019, what was your rate for the following types of work regarding installation of electric locks, strikes and maglocks?

Electric Strike Replace	\$82.92
Electronic Cylinder Replace	\$84.35
Electronic Cylinder New	\$90.56
Exit Button Replace	\$92.26
Power Bolt Replace	\$100.00
Magstrip Swipe Reader Replace	\$111.43
Exit Button New	\$114.43
PIR to System Replace	\$118.79
Electrified Hinge/Pivot Replace	\$122.02
Maglock Replace	\$122.84
Prox Pad Replace	\$127.33
Electrified Lock Replace	\$127.59
Power Bolt New	\$129.38
Reader/Keypad Replace	\$132.17
Digital Keypad Replace	\$137.52
Magstrip Swipe Reader New	\$139.50
Electric Strike New	\$153.13
PIR to System New	\$153.65
Electrified Hinge/Pivot New	\$158.12
Reader/Keypad New	\$162.64
Prox Pad New	\$164.24
Digital Keypad New	\$168.85
Electrified Lock New	\$186.40
Maglock New	\$191.16
Control Box Replace	\$201
Video Entrance System Replace	\$231.70
Core Door for EL Lock and Install Lock/Hinge	\$250.55
Control Box New	\$281.42
Video Entrance System New	\$283.80

Since the 2018 survey, several types of electronic work have seen significant price increases. The pricing for a new control box increased by \$130, and replacing a power bolt went up by about \$34. 📈

Cylinder Replacement on the ADAMS RITE 8600 EXIT DEVICE



The lock cylinder can easily be mistaken for a rim cylinder, so learn from the author's mistakes. **By Richard Karas, RL**

I REMEMBER A WHILE BACK, I CAME ACROSS THE ADAMS RITE 8600 EXIT device for the first time. I took a quick look at it and incorrectly presumed that it took a rim cylinder. Oops — guess I got that one wrong! That quick look definitely fooled me. It's said that "learning the hard way is the best way." I am not so sure that I always agree with that sentiment. However, in this case, it was true: I never made that mistake again. Since then, I have learned from a few of my fellow locksmiths that they made the same presumptions about this exit device.

Recently, I was hired by a new client: a new restaurant owner. His landlord gave him only one key to the locks at the front door of the restaurant and told him that the previous tenant still had the other keys. He called me to see if I could make him an extra key. I said sure, no problem. When I got to the restaurant — expecting to

just make a few extra keys or rekey the cylinders — I found out that, instead, I would have to replace the cylinders. I was not able to duplicate the keys or rekey his cylinders because they were on a keyway for which I could not obtain the key blanks. My new client needed action immediately, so my only option at that point was to replace the cylinders and provide new keys.

I am hoping this article may help my fellow locksmiths when they encounter their first Adams Rite 8600 exit device. It may seem a little intimidating at first. However, after working on a few of these, it will become old hat, and you'll be able to complete the job quickly and efficiently.

Replacing the Cylinder

The Adams Rite 8600 exit device cylinder removal is a little different because it does not have a set screw that holds the mortise cylinder in from the face of the lock, like most mortise cylinders do (see *Figure 1*). The lock cylinder can easily be mistaken for a rim cylinder (I know firsthand).



Figure 1. There is not a set screw that holds the mortise cylinder in from the face of the lock, unlike most mortise cylinders.



Figure 2



Figure 2a

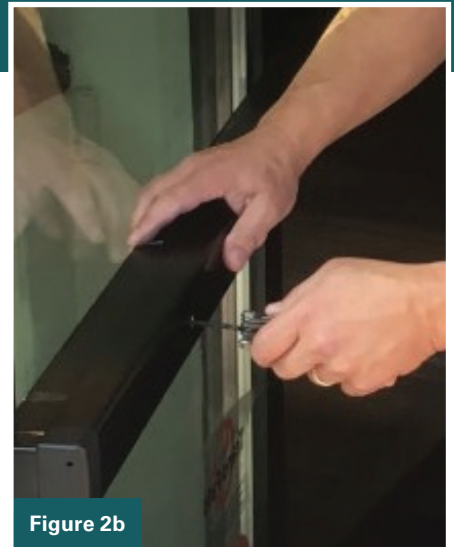


Figure 2b

Figures 2, 2a and 2b. If the door is dogged down, undog it with the hex key and have the bar extended.

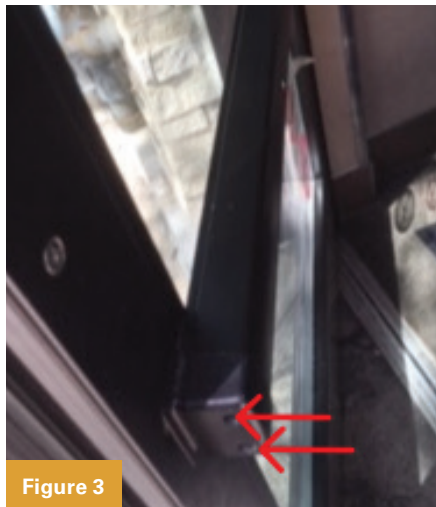


Figure 3



Figure 3a

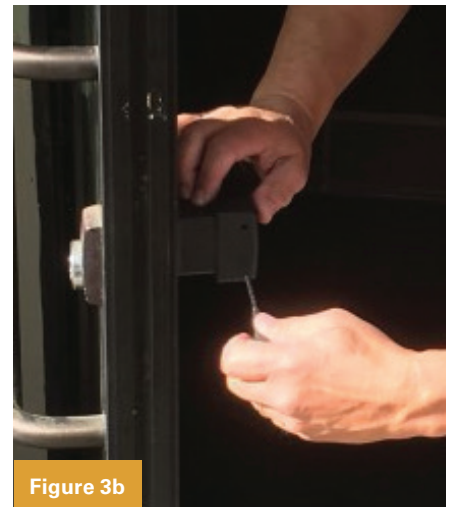


Figure 3b

Figures 3, 3a and 3b. Loosen the two screws that are holding the end cap cover on the lock cylinder side of the bar.

However, it is indeed a mortise cylinder, even though there is no set screw to hold it in place on the door edge. Following are the steps that I used to get the job completed. Hopefully you will find it a simple process to follow.

1. Do your pre-check before you start the actual lock replacement. Check that the door swings freely and that everything is working. Be sure that the door is square in the frame, that the door closer is adjusted properly, that there are no missing components or

screws, etc. If you find any problem, be sure to show the customer — and fix what needs to be fixed — before proceeding. Fortunately, the two doors I worked on were fine, which I took as a good omen.

2. If the door is dogged down, undog it with the hex key and have the bar extended (*Figures 2, 2a, 2b*).
3. Loosen the two screws that are holding the end cap cover on the lock cylinder side of the bar (*Figures 3, 3a and 3b*).
4. Slide the end cap out and remove it (*Figure 4*).



Figure 4. Slide the end cap out and remove it.



Figure 5. Remove the two screws holding the device to the door.



Figure 6. Remove the bar and let it hang gently.



Figure 7



Figure 7a

Figures 7, 7a, 7b and 7c. It's shown before (*Figure 7*), during (*Figures 7a and 7b*) and after (*Figure 7c*) screw removal.



Figure 7b

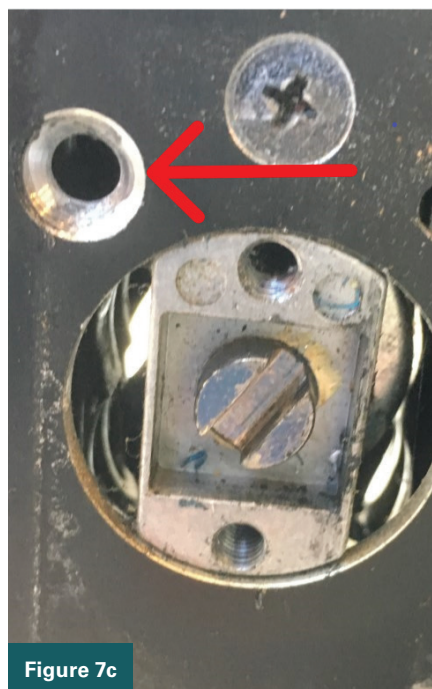


Figure 7c

5. Remove the two screws holding the device to the door (*Figure 5*). Note: The photo shows two different screws. Did somebody before me lose one of the original screws? You never know what you're going to find!
6. Remove the bar and let it hang gently (*Figure 6*).
7. Remove the screw to the left (*Figures 7, 7a, 7b and Figure 7c*).
8. Turn the 8650 escutcheon pad clockwise to about the 2 o'clock position and remove it (*Figures 8, 8a and 8b*).
9. *Figure 9* is what it looks like from the outside once the 8650 escutcheon pad is removed.
10. *Figures 10 and 11* show the new mortise cylinder in the 8650 escutcheon pad.



Figure 8



Figure 8a



Figure 8b

Figures 8, 8a and 8b. Turn the 8650 escutcheon pad clockwise to about the 2 o'clock position and remove it.



Figure 9. This image shows the outside view once the 8650 escutcheon pad is removed.



Figure 10

Figures 10 and 11. The new mortise cylinder is shown in the 8650 escutcheon pad.

9. Remove the mortise cylinder and install your replacement (*Figures 10 and 11*). I would highly recommend using a wavy washer or spring under the face of the mortise cylinder or under the spacer rings, if used. The lock cylinder is held on with a locking nut. Using a wavy washer or spring will provide slight tension between the face of the mortise cylinder and the nut. From my experience, a door that slams or has a slight snap on the latch adjustment may cause the nut to back off if it does not have the tension from the wavy washer or spring.

10. Install the 8650 escutcheon pad starting out at about the 2 o'clock position (look at the tabs if needed) and returning to 12 o'clock position. When installing the 8650 escutcheon pad, you should not have to force it (turn hard) to turn. If you feel that it is hard to turn, then stop. More than likely, the mortise cylinder is too long. Use a spacer ring or a thicker collar to make the proper adjustment. Do not force it!

11. Re-install the screw (left hole) that holds the 8650 escutcheon pad on (*Figure 7*). I like to use Loctite 242 series blue threadlocker and use a



Figure 11



Figure 12



Figure 13

Figures 12 and 13. Re-install the bar and re-align it with the slot shown in *Figure 12*. This can be done by moving the bar slightly, as shown in *Figure 13*.



Figure 14



Figure 14a

Figures 14 and 14a. Re-install the end cap and tighten the two screws that hold it on.



Figure 15. The final installation is shown.

hand screwdriver when installing the screws and fasteners. The last thing I want to do is cross-thread a screw with a power drill or impact driver.

12. Re-install the bar. Important: You will need to re-align with the slot shown in *Figure 12*. This can be done by moving the bar slightly, as shown in *Figure 13*. You will feel and hear it pop into place, and the bar will be flush with the door.
13. Re-install the two screws that hold the device to the door.

14. Re-install the end cap (*Figures 14 and 14a*) and tighten the two screws that hold it on.
15. Test the lock cylinder and the exit device and make sure everything is working. *Figure 15* shows the final installation.

My client was very happy with the end result, and I was too. I hope you find this how-to article helpful in the future should you encounter a similar situation. 🧐



Rick Karas, RL started in the locksmith industry in 1983. A licensed locksmith, he has experience with many physical security disciplines, including access control systems, intrusion detection systems and video monitoring systems. He works in both a commercial and institutional settings. Rick owns Phil-Rich Lock, which serves the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

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Figure 1. A BEST core and mortise cylinder are shown.



Figure 2. The author disassembled this BEST core.

BEST Hacks

In the first part of this two-part series, **Tony Wiersielis, CPL, CFDI**, discusses hints and tips for working with BEST SFICs.

THIS MONTH, I HAVE SOME HINTS/HACKS FOR BEST SMALL FORMAT interchangeable cores and how you might use them to solve problems. Some of this is for beginners; the rest is for everybody else, particularly those who don't deal with these cores daily like I do. For those who are new at this or don't use interchangeable cores, I'll go over a few basics.

Figure 1 shows a BEST core and mortise cylinder. BEST Universal Lock Company introduced the interchangeable core many years ago. Today, many manufacturers have their own style of interchangeable cores that work a little differently than BEST, but the idea is still the same. I'm going to concentrate on BEST IC cores.

An interchangeable core contains the type of plug, pins and springs that you'd find in a standard pin tumbler cylinder, but in a smaller, self contained, removable unit. This "core" is usually part of a master key system, some of which are fairly large. The core fits into whatever type of cylinder is required for the lock being used.

But how does the core get into and out of the cylinder? If you're reading this, I'm pretty sure you know what a shear line is. In a BEST core, there are two shear lines: one that allows the key to turn completely around and then a control shear line. Besides the master keys and change keys, which operate the lock, there is a control key

that allows the core to be inserted in and removed from a cylinder.

Figure 2 shows a BEST core that I disassembled. I did this so you can see what the control sleeve and control lug look like. In the course of pinning and servicing these cores, you don't need to take them apart like this. This is for instructional purposes only.

Figure 3 shows an arrow pointing to the control lug on the control sleeve. Figure 4 shows a core with the control lug as it would be while the core is locked in the cylinder. Figure 5 shows the lug retracted by the control key as it would be if the core needed to be removed. Figure 6 shows the front of the core with the control key turned to retract the lug; note that it doesn't turn very far — maybe five degrees. That's all it takes to get the core out or put it back into the cylinder.

A Side Note

Let's pause for an important point about control keys. These are the second-most dangerous keys that are possible to lose. If someone finds and pockets a control key



Figure 3. The arrow is pointing to the control lug on the control sleeve.



Figure 4. The core is with the control lug as it would be while the core is locked in the cylinder.



Figure 5. The lug is retracted by the control key as it would be if the core needed to be removed.



Figure 6. Note that the control key doesn't turn very far — maybe five degrees.

that you misplaced or left in a lock, you might as well have lost a grand master key.

Anyone with a control key and a little bit of knowledge can open any door that has a core under that control key, and there would be no evidence of tampering. Every single core in the building/complex would need to be rekeyed — probably at your expense. When I do core installations on a large scale, I usually hang an ID badge lanyard around my neck or put a spring-loaded key reel on my belt.

Back to the Story

There is one other important point about installing a core in a cylinder, however: the issue of “timing,” and it’s the problem you will see most often when laymen install cores. Why would they be doing it? Sometimes it’s people who remove the construction cores who think they know what they’re doing. Other times, it could be the security department at a company that’s tasked with doing it.

You’re less likely to have an issue with security because you can teach them how

to check for timing. The carpenters or construction guys? You’ll probably never see them again, if you ever saw them at all, so you’re out of luck. The big benefit of correcting this issue is that it absolutely isn’t a problem with your hardware, as the end user often thinks.

Mistiming is mostly an issue with mortise or rim cylinders, which can be 180 degrees out of phase, or upside down. It can be an issue with cylindrical locks of certain functions such as classroom, which can turn 360 degrees from locked to unlocked.



Figure 7. The two throw pins in an IC mortise cylinder are shown.



Figure 8



Figure 9

Figures 8 and 9. The back of the cylinder is shown with the cam properly timed (*Figure 8*) and improperly timed (*Figure 9*).



Figure 10. A cylinder wrench and the black plastic thumbturn that comes with the lock are shown.



Figure 11. The construction core is painted green to mark it as such.

Figure 7 is a shot of the two throw pins in an IC mortise cylinder. *Figures 8 and 9* show the back of the same cylinder with the cam properly timed for standard use and improperly timed. This is glaringly obvious while the cylinder is in your hand. If this cylinder is installed in a lock, however, how do you know which way the cam is facing?

On a BEST 45H mortise lock, it's pretty easy. You insert your cylinder wrench (*Figure 10*) or the black plastic thumbturn that comes with the lock. Then turn it away

from the lock edge of the door. It should start to retract the latch before you get to 180 degrees. Now turn it back to the upright position, then turn it just a tiny bit to the right and pull out the tool you're using. By turning it slightly to the right, you're compensating for the slight turn of the plug in the core when you turn the control key. The core should be easy to insert.

On rim cylinders and non-BEST locks, you need to use your tool to check the timing of what you're working on; some mortise locks could retract the

latch by turning left instead of right. On a rim cylinder, you could be 90 degrees out of phase. The key is to become familiar with what you're working on. I've done literally thousands of BEST cylinder replacements on other brands of locks over the years. It doesn't take long to figure out who's who and what's what. The most important thing is for you to time each cylinder when you install the core. Don't take anything for granted unless you like to do callbacks for nothing.

Construction Cores

Figure 11 is an example of a construction core. This one is painted a hideous green to mark it as such. If you're working on a construction site past the stage where the doors and hardware are installed, you'll see these in the locks. Construction companies use many different colors; I've seen them painted black, orange, gray, etc.

What's a construction core? This is one of a batch of cores, usually keyed alike to a single operating key and nothing else but the control key. They are temporary cores installed so the trades still working on the job all have access to the areas they need to work. A lot of times, the foreman of a trade will have a key to get his people in. Other times, I've seen everybody carrying an operating key.

These cores are used so the master key system and cores will not be compromised when the building is completed and turned over to the owner. If the system cores were put in as soon as the hardware was installed, that's a problem. If keys were given out to every Tom, Dick and Harry working on the job, some of those keys would disappear or be duplicated, pocketed or simply forgotten. Using construction cores prevents this. At the end of the job, just before the new cores are installed, the construction cores are removed and collected to be reused on the next job. In my experience, a lot of tradesmen hold on to copies of construction core keys. In fact, some have a collection of them. But at least they're not walking away with keys from somebody's master key system.

There are additional advantages. These cores prevent other trades from using a screwdriver to open locked doors, thereby potentially damaging the throw pins in the cylinder. They also provide some measure of security by locking the doors on rooms that might hold expensive tools, equipment or materials that are left overnight.

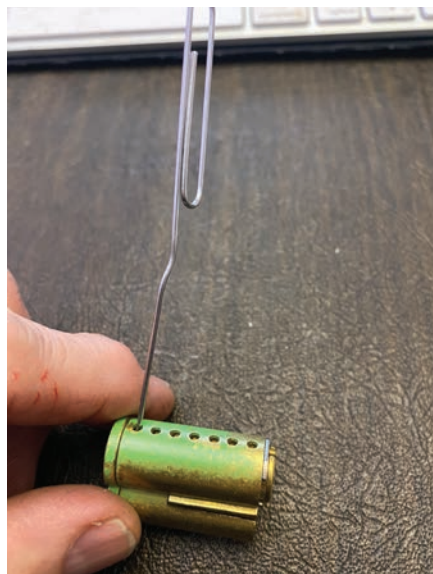


Figure 12. If you don't have a control key, you'll need a large paper clip or a small-diameter punch that will fit up through the bottom of the core.

Hacks: No Control Key?

There are several tricks for missing control keys; some are simple, and others are complex. I can't count the times I've been sent somewhere to install a core and no one there has the slightest idea what a control key is. Usually, a lock and core are delivered to a chain store, but the manager doesn't have a control key to put the core in.

If you're new to the trade, you might wonder why there's no control available at the store. Go back and read what I said above about control keys getting lost or stolen. Another issue is that if there is a control key available, sometimes they get handed out like an extra key. I know this from numerous emergency calls over the years where "a piece fell out of the lock when I pulled the key," and panic ensues. Back to the story.

Here's a way to get around this mess. You need a large paper clip or a small-diameter punch that will fit up through the bottom of the core (Figure 12). You'll also need something to keep pressure on the control lug, such as a pair of pliers or



Figure 13. The author is pushing in the control lug with his finger.



Figure 14. The author is holding the core and pushing a small punch through the bottom into the first chamber.

a hemostat (forceps). It can be done with a finger, but it can be a little uncomfortable.

In Figure 13, I'm pushing in the control lug with my finger. This is the equivalent of using a tension wrench while picking a standard pin tumbler cylinder. As with a tension wrench, you need to find the right amount of tension to pull this off. You'll change the amount a tension you apply each time you attempt to pick the control.

Figure 14 shows me holding the core and pushing a small punch through the bottom into the first chamber. Gently



Figure 15. Once you get all the pins to drop, the control lug will slide in.



Figure 16



Figure 17

Figures 16 and 17. Figure 16 shows the back of a BEST Coremax or MX8 IC core with a key out, and Figure 17 shows a core with the key in.

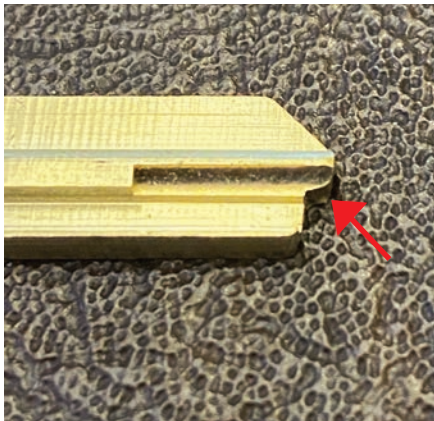


Figure 18. This image shows the special milling at the tip of the key that moves the pin out of the way.

push the pin stack while maintaining pressure on the control lug. What you'll feel first is a little difficulty in pushing the pins toward the springs. What you're feeling for next — as you push in the pin stack — is an abrupt stop in your motion, almost like the pin fell into place.

Stop at this point, maintain pressure on the control lug and do the same thing

in the next chamber. You may or may not feel that “stop.” If you don't, keep moving down the pin chambers; some pins will drop in, and others won't. As the pins drop in, keep going back to the chambers where they didn't. Once you get them all, the control lug will slide in, as in Figure 15.

The key here is to keep trying if you don't get it the first time. Vary the amount of pressure on the control lug and keep going up and down the chambers. You also want to use common sense and not crush the springs by bottoming out against the cap. It should take you very little time to work your way down the pin chambers; maybe a minute or so, so keep trying.

The other key is that you have to practice this to be proficient. Not religiously, like you're learning to play a violin or something, but maybe a few minutes a day. Much like picking, you probably won't get every one you try, but

you'll get none of the ones you don't try.

Figures 16 and 17 show the back of a BEST Coremax or MX8 IC core, the first with a key out and the second with the key in. See that little pin in the circle? The plug won't turn unless the proper blank is inserted in the keyway. Figure 18 shows the special milling at the tip of the key that moves that pin out of the way. I'll try picking the control on this and get back to you.

Next month, I'll go over some other ways to deal cores without a control key, up to and including decoding an existing core to cut a replacement control key — plus the “hacks” I told you about. ☞



Tony Wiersielis, CPL, CFDI, has more than 30 years of experience and has worked in most phases of the trade throughout

the New York metropolitan area. He was named *Keynotes* Author of the Year for 2016.



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Probationary Membership

Persons undergoing training to qualify as an Active member, who have not received one of ALOA's recognized program designations. No person shall be a probationary member for more than three years.

- | | | | |
|--|-------|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> US and US Territories | \$255 | <input type="checkbox"/> I elect to Go Green | \$230 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International | \$270 | <input type="checkbox"/> I elect to Go Green | \$200 |

Probationary Membership – No Sponsorship Required

Persons undergoing training that are new to the industry and do not know any Active member for sponsorship. Probationary period extended from 90 days to one (1) year. Probationary status lifted if sponsor acquired within year. Must obtain license if residing in State requiring licensure. A second background check will be performed by ALOA after 2 years of the 3 year maximum term. Any violation of ALOA Code of Ethics during probationary period will result in immediate termination of membership.

- | | | | |
|--|-------|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> US and US Territories | \$255 | <input type="checkbox"/> I elect to Go Green | \$230 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International | \$270 | <input type="checkbox"/> I elect to Go Green | \$200 |

Allied Membership

Persons whose position in the locksmith/access control industry relates to locksmiths, and cannot qualify for any other class of membership.

- | | | | |
|--|-------|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> US and US Territories | \$255 | <input type="checkbox"/> I elect to Go Green | \$230 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> International | \$270 | <input type="checkbox"/> I elect to Go Green | \$200 |

Note: Your application will be processed with a 90 day waiting period.

Any institutional locksmith not using his/her work address must submit a letter from employer stating that you are an institutional locksmith.

DUES AND FEES

An application fee and the appropriate dues must accompany the application in order for processing to begin.

Application Fees Schedule:

US and US Territories	\$70
Canada, Denmark, Ecuador, New Zealand	\$160
Australia, Bahamas, Barbados, Belgium, Belize, Bermuda, China, France, Haiti, Philippines, UK	\$210
Israel, Korea, Papua New Guinea, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates	\$360
Applicants from countries not listed must submit background check and report from local Law Enforcement with application.	

FINAL CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Required Proof of Employment in Industry | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Annual Dues Amount | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Application Fee | _____ |
| Total Amount Due | _____ |

METHOD OF PAYMENT

- ☐ Check ☐ MasterCard ☐ Visa ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____ SEC _____

Print Name on Card _____

Signature _____ Date _____

I understand and consent that in the course of reviewing this application ALOA may review publicly available information for the purpose of verifying the information submitted and do a background check.

I certify that all statements are true and, if accepted as a member, I agree to abide by the rules, regulations, and Bylaws of ALOA, and further agree to adopt the Code of Ethics of ALOA as my own, and adhere to it to the best of my ability. Should my membership be discontinued, I agree to return my membership card and cease use of all ALOA insignia.

Signature _____ Date Signed _____

Dues, Contributions, Gifts are not deductible as charitable contributions for Federal income tax purposes. Dues payments are deductible as an ordinary and necessary business expense. However, donations made to the Legislative Action Network ARE NOT deductible as a charitable gift or business expense.

Return to:

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SAFETECH 2020 will be held in Tulsa, which has a great deal of historical activities to explore.

Living On Tulsa Time

By Jim Hancock, CML, CMST

AH, SPRING. WHAT COMES TO MIND WHEN YOU HEAR THAT WORD? Crazy weather, gardens growing, flowers blooming, baseball, March Madness. Or maybe it's spring forward, fall back... Hope springs eternal... Comes in like a lion, goes out like a lamb. Spring can bring many thoughts and visions into your mind. Here at ALOA, when we think of spring 2020, our thoughts naturally turn to Tulsa, OK. Wait, what? Yep, you read it right. Tulsa, OK.

Spring 2020 will bring SAFETECH to Tulsa. While geographically located near the center of the continental United States, most folks who do not live in the area (and many who do) have never thought of Tulsa as a place to visit or attend meetings. I mean, let's face it: Most images of that part of the country we have seen in movies depict a desolate, dusty, windy no man's land that offers little in terms of modern amenities and entertainment. I know — I have seen the same movies and old television. Well, kids, I am here this month to dispel those notions and visions of this great little city and a wonderful part of this great nation of ours and, hopefully, make some of you think about attending SAFETECH 2020.

"Why," you might ask, "would I, as an ALOA member, care about SAFETECH

2020 or consider going?" Let me answer it this way. Did you read the price survey included in this edition of the magazine? If you aren't doing at least some safe and vault type of work, you are missing out on a pretty good revenue stream. You are potentially losing customers to someone who has more in-depth training in working on, opening, repairing and servicing both mechanical and electronic safe locks. Maybe it's time to expand your knowledge base.

All About Tulsa

So, having said that: "What about Tulsa? Tell me, Jim, what can you share about the Tulsa, Oklahoma, area that will make



me want to spend my hard-earned money, my precious time and trek to the northeast corner of 46th state in the spring of 2020?" Beyond the SAFETECH classes, of course.

Well, here are some cool facts about Tulsa and the surrounding vicinity, as well as Oklahoma in general:

- It was settled in the 1830s by the Creek Indians. The saying "Good Lord willing and the Creek don't rise" had nothing to do with water and flooding but with the Creek Nation rising up and attacking.
- Tulsa was known as the "Oil Capital of the World," as there were more oil discoveries in the area than anywhere else in the world in 1907. The city held that title for six decades.
- Tulsa has more man-made lakes than any other city in the United States.
- Fred Flintstone may not live in Tulsa, but he'd probably feel right at home inside the famous Cave House on Charles Page Boulevard. Resembling a shack made of cartoonish boulders and built in the 1920s, it functioned as a novelty restaurant by day and a Prohibition-era speakeasy by night.
- Tulsa businessman Cyrus Avery was known as the "Father of Route 66." Frustrated by the region's poor roads, he started pushing for improved transportation and was named Oklahoma's highway commissioner in 1924. When the fed-

"If you aren't doing at least some safe and vault type of work, you are missing out on a pretty good revenue stream."

eral government started planning an interstate highway from Chicago to Los Angeles, Avery lobbied for the route to run southwest rather than west over the Rocky Mountains. The road that would become Route 66 was laid through Arizona, N.M., the Texas panhandle and (conveniently) Tulsa.

- Tulsa's Gilcrease Museum houses the world's largest collection of art and artifacts from the American West. The collection of more than 350,000 objects — including a handwritten copy of the Declaration of Independence — was amassed by oilman and philanthropist Thomas Gilcrease. Allegedly, his ghost haunts the halls of the museum.
- Before they made it to the big leagues, pro baseball players Matt Holliday, Sammy Sosa, R.A. Dickey, Ivan

"Pudge" Rodriguez and Mark Teixeira suited up for the Tulsa Drillers, now a Double-A affiliate of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

- On a railroad overpass in the city's downtown, a mysterious brick circle laid into the ground is dubbed "the center of the universe." When people stand in the center and shout, they hear an extremely loud echo that is barely audible outside the circle. Scientists aren't sure why. Who knew the portal to parallel worlds ran through Tulsa?
- It's the birthplace of Garth Brooks.

And this is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Many movies have been set in or filmed in and around Tulsa: *Rain Man*, *Twister* (go figure), *The Outsiders*, *UHF*, *Where The Red Fern Grows* and more.

Come to Tulsa for the education. Learn a skill you don't currently have and increase your business opportunities. But while in Tulsa, explore the area and the "Buckle of the Bible Belt" and all the unique shopping, restaurants and landmarks it has to offer. ☺



Jim Hancock, CML, CMST, is ALOA's education manager. You can reach him at jim@aloe.org or (214) 819-9733.

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Each ad will run for three consecutive issues. For blind boxes, there is a \$10 charge for members and nonmembers. All ads must be submitted in a word document format and emails to adsales@aloea.org by the 15th of the month two months prior to issue date. ALOA reserves the right to refuse any classified advertisement that it deems inappropriate according to the stated purpose of the classified advertising section.

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- One Hour Fire Label @ 1700°F
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- Single Key Operation
- (1) Stationary Locking Bolt on Hinge Side to Deter Prying
- Heavy Duty Powder Coated Paint (Black)
- Pull Out Plastic Tray for Small Items
- Center Boltdown Hole with Hardware Included
- Great Storage for a Handgun

Model	Outside Dimensions			Inside Dimensions			Approximate Weight (lbs)
	H	W	D	H	W	D	
MS911-B-K	11½"	15¼"	12½"	8½"	12"	8½"	55

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