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Foodservice

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This will allow those of us in the supply chain to spend our capital resources on providing the value-added aspects of customer service rather than tracking shipments.

FE&S: How has this been received by the other parts of the supply chain?

BP: It has been beyond enthusiastic, which continues to blow me away. Manufacturers, reps and everyone across the board has been enthusiastic. If there are any naysayers, they have not made themselves known to me. Our biggest challenge is having too many dealers and manufacturers wanting to be part of the testing process.

FE&S: Where are you with the process?

BP: The backend interface is done and testing began in January. How long the testing lasts will depend on what we run into. We have tried to pick different types of companies to be part of the testing process and to be as inclusive as we can. If it works for one custom manufacturer, then it likely works for others. On the dealer side, we have some of the industry's bigger players involved and when they say the industry needs a more automated supply chain, more people want to participate. But the key to this project is getting it to market quickly,

preferably the first half of this year. But this is a longer-term project that will morph and change over time.

FE&S: Describe the result, meaning what will be the outcome of this project and how will it impact operators and other members of the supply chain?

BP: We are trying to provide instant, actionable information that will allow a purchasing decision or transaction to happen immediately. We will have a dashboard that will show what was shipped when, invoice price, tracking numbers and more. So if I am working on a specific project, I can call it up and look at every order, ship date and more. This will allow me to see what's working and where the problem areas may be. So if the project has 250 items but only 6 will cause me a problem, I now know how to better spend my time to meet my customer's expectations. This should help eliminate some of the surprises or things that slip through the cracks and impact getting the job done on time. This will also help execute other aspects of a job, including working with a service agent to set up an installation or a rep to schedule training.

Everyone in the industry benefits. FE&S may be leading this but it ultimately benefits the greater good of the industry.



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Foodservice Professionals on the Move

The Association for Healthcare Foodservice selected Kelly Armstrong to serve as its new executive director. Prior to being named executive director for AHF, Armstrong served as economic development director for Greater Louisville, Inc. in Louisville, Ky. AHF is managed by FSA Management Group, a Louisville-based association management, marketing and events development company.



NEAL HIX

The Bauer Marketing Group, an Ohio-based independent manufacturers' rep firm, has hired Neal Hix to serve as a territory manager. Hix brings 11 years of foodservice equipment sales to his new role. He will work with dealers, consultants and foodservice operators in both Kentucky and Indiana.

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