

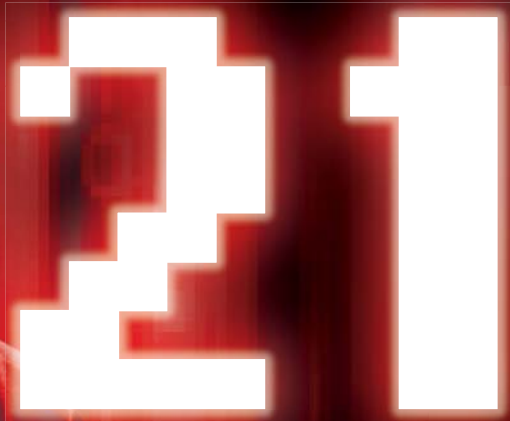
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Tips for Stopping
Cyber Attacks

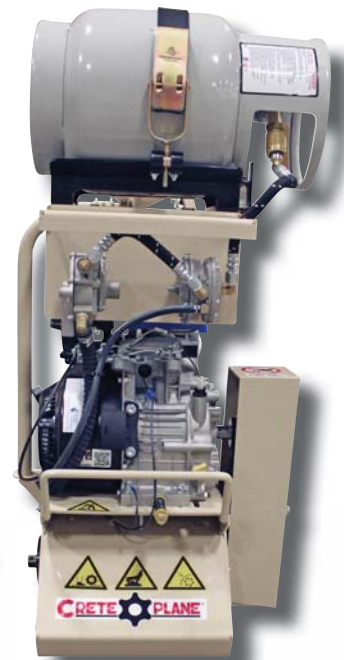


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21 Tips on Stopping Cyber Attacks

Every business in the rental industry or any kind of business, large or small, faces a common enemy – cyber attackers. They come in many formats, often with seemingly friendly faces. But the consequences can be serious and extremely costly. By Michael Roth, *RER*



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By Michael Roth, *RER*

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Restoring power in a crisis is far easier when preparations are made in advance. Mike Madej, rental manager of Altorfer Power Systems, has shown hundreds of rental customers how to be prepared for potential power outages. In this interview with *RER*, he explains the basics.

By Michael Roth, *RER*



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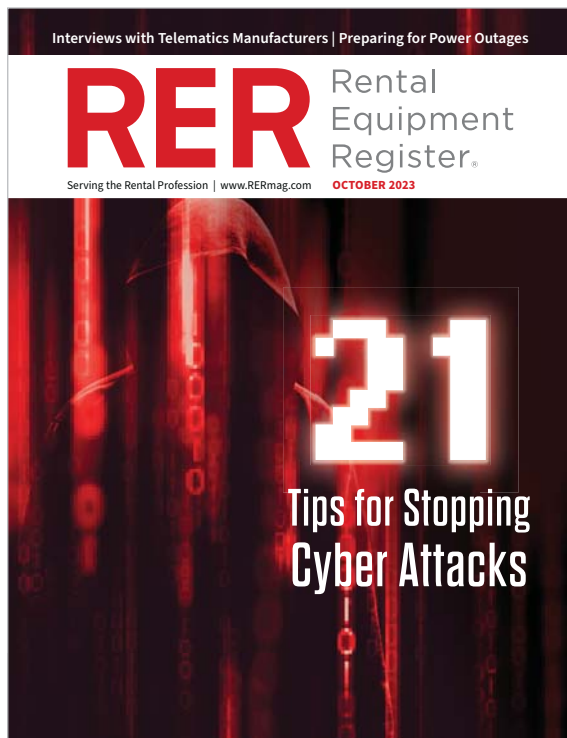
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Tips to Defend Against Cyber Criminals and Plans to Keep the Lights On

Although we haven't seen a hurricane as dramatic as Hurricane Katrina in 2005, nonetheless the first two months of the hurricane season have been above average. According to a report released by the National Hurricane Center, as of October 1, activity so far in 2023 has been about 33 percent above average compared to the long-term mean from 1990 to 2021. As is typical, there was an uptick in August and September. The 13 named storms that formed were the most ever recorded between August 20 and September 28, according to Dr. Philip Klotzbach, a meteorologist and hurricane specialist from Colorado St. University. Six of the 13 tropical storms became hurricanes and three of those reached Category 3 status.

If a business owner doesn't have a plan, he is hiding his head in the sand.

As of the beginning of October, there were still two months to go in what typically would be called "hurricane season." Meteorologists caution there may be some major storms ahead. But whether or not more major hurricanes happen this year, there are clearly more extreme weather events happening in the world in general, and therefore, of more immediate interest to rental companies no matter where they may be located, the generator business is likely to be on the upswing because of the danger of power outages.

I recommend reading our interview with Altorfer Power Systems' rental specialist Mike Madej. Madej points out that the best way rental companies can

help their customers is to help them be prepared in advance for power outages. I would ask any business anywhere: what is your plan in case of a power outage? If a business owner doesn't have a plan, he is hiding his head in the sand. Some business owners have never thought about this issue. They would just call a rental company in the middle of the night while the storm is raging and scream, "Help me, I need a generator!!!"

Oh? What size? And what is your voltage? What is your amp draw? How many feet of cable would we need to hook it up?

Here is one area where social media has done some good. So many stories have been told on social media about disasters that happened after floods or fires or windstorms or ice storms or hurricanes, and what it cost companies that lost

power. Madej points out that, whereas a few years ago, his salespeople were calling everybody trying to convince people they needed a plan in case of a power outage, now a lot of those companies and municipalities are calling him, saying they need to know what to do.

The people they are likely to call, if they are smart, are the local rental companies. The rental companies have the equipment, and they have the knowledge and the expertise. Of course, not all of you are specialists in the power rental business. But customers might call you next time there's a disaster and ask for your help. That's the nature of the rental business.

There is another type of emergency situation rental companies could conceivably find themselves facing, that could affect you very directly and that is a cyberattack. I expect you have some knowledge about this. I also expect, unfortunately, that some of you don't.

In 2021, cyberattacks increased 125 percent compared to 2020, when they increased 358 percent from 2019. In 2022, they increased by 50 percent again.

The main target was small businesses, which account for 43 percent of ransomware attacks. Globally, 46 percent of the targeted companies had fewer than 1,000 employees. And how many of those companies were prepared to defend themselves? A whopping 14 percent.

I know people in the rental business are smart about this issue, because you have in your computer systems the credit card numbers and all kinds of information about your customers. And most of the suppliers that provide you with rental software systems can give you a lot of information about what to do and offer tools to help.

But just in case you aren't fully prepared, or you've thought about it and put it off because of the crush of daily business, I hope you read our article offering 21 tips to help defend your business from cyberattack. Hopefully, there are some ideas that might help.

So, while you help your customers plan to keep their power running in case of emergency, I hope you also take care of your own very important needs to protect your business and that of your customers. **RER**

Michael Roth, mroth@rermag.com



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Sunbelt Rentals Makes Nine Acquisitions in Fiscal Q1 and Four More in August

FORT MILL, S.C. – During Sunbelt Rentals' fiscal first quarter ended July 31, 2023, the company made nine acquisitions for \$315 million in cash. The acquisitions began on May 17 with Sunbelt U.S. acquiring the business and assets of Beattie Construction Services LLC, a specialty business operating in Michigan. On May 24, Sunbelt U.S. acquired the business and assets of Jones & Hollands Inc., a general tool and construction business also operating in Michigan, known as Jones Equipment Rental.

Also on May 24, Sunbelt U.S. acquired the business and assets of West Coast Equipment LLC, a general tool and construction business operating in California, based in Corona, Calif. Craft Partners LLC served as financial advisor to West Coast Equipment.

Sunbelt Rentals continues to grow both organically and through acquisitions.
Photo by Sunbelt Rentals



On June 1, Sunbelt Canada acquired the entire share capital of Loue Froid Inc., a specialty business operating in Quebec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia. The company specializes in power generation and air conditioning rental.

On June 14, Sunbelt U.S. acquired the business and assets of American Covers Inc., a specialty business operating in Louisiana. American Covers specializes in designing, manufacturing, and installing high-quality fabric shelters to suit various applications, including temporary warehouses, high-capacity lunch tents, shipping container covers, boat maintenance and storage, and more. Two days later Sunbelt U.S. acquired the business and assets of AGF Machinery, a general tool and construction rental business operating in Alabama.

On June 23, Sunbelt U.S. acquired the business and assets of Miele Central Equipment, a general tool business operating in Pennsylvania.

On June 28, Sunbelt U.S. acquired the business and assets of J&J Equipment Rentals, a general tool and equipment business operating in Virginia. Craft Partners LLC served as financial advisor to J&J.

And finishing up the quarter's acquisitions, on July 31 Sunbelt U.S. acquired Runyon Equipment Rental Co., a general tool business operating in Indiana. Runyon, founded in 1961, was one of the leading players in the Indianapolis marketplace. Catalyst Strategic Advisors served as the exclusive transaction advisor to Runyon Equipment Rental.

August acquisitions

Since the balance sheet date, in the month of August, Sunbelt made four more acquisitions for an additional \$41 million. On Aug. 9, Sunbelt U.S. acquired the business and assets of A-One Rental and Homes A-One Inc., a general tool business operating in Wyoming.

On Aug. 25, Sunbelt U.S. acquired the business and assets of Caribbean Rentals & Sales Ltd and International Rental Services. CRS is a general tool business operating in the Bahamas.

On Aug. 30, Sunbelt U.S. acquired the business and assets of Timp Rental Center, a general tool business operating in Utah. Also on Aug. 30, Sunbelt Canada acquired the business and assets of Modu-Loc Maritimes Fence Rentals, a specialty business operating in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

Based in Fort Mill, S.C., Sunbelt Rentals is No. 2 on the RER 100.

H&E Equipment Services Opens in North Carolina, Missouri, and Kansas

BATON ROUGE, La. – H&E Equipment Services in the last month opened new branches in Wilmington, N.C., Columbia, Mo., and Wichita, Kan., continuing an ongoing expansion this year. H&E has opened 11 branches since the beginning of the second quarter.

Effective August 30, H&E opened its Wilmington branch, its 10th rental location in North Carolina. The facility is located across from the Port of Wilmington.

“The location of our newest North Carolina branch gives us greater reach along the Atlantic coastline, both north and into South Carolina, and covers the southeastern portion of the state below our existing Raleigh facility,” said district manager Justin Gnagy. Adding more fleet in this area allows us to supply customers in Wilmington and up to Elizabethtown, Lumberton, and New Bern, to name just a few cities well within our service area. Our proximity to I-40 and highways 17, 74, and 421 is ideal and allows us to deliver equipment to job sites across the area quickly and efficiently.”

H&E opened its Columbia branch, its third rental location covering the state of Missouri. “We expanded into the Midwest just two years ago, and our acquisition of One Source Equipment Rentals last October instantly increased our footprint in the region,” said branch manager Robert Kerbo. “We’re maintaining the traction with this new branch in Missouri, which is situated centrally to serve Columbia and the entire state – north to Iowa, south to Arkansas, and areas between our existing locations in the Kansas City and St. Louis markets. We’re continuing to add fleet and efficiencies in the region and being located close to I-70 and Highway 63 means we can source equipment for our customers from nearby branches if needed and move it to their job site quickly and efficiently.”

Also in September, opened a new branch in Wichita, Kan., its first rental location in the state of Kansas. H&E now serves 30 states, the company said.

“Our new Wichita branch is centrally located to reach both the large metropolitan market and also surrounding areas beyond,” said branch manager Cody Richardson. “We already have established branches



in Kansas City, Oklahoma City, and Tulsa, so this new location bridges the geographic gap between them and brings additional fleet and resources to customers in the region. Our proximity to I-35 and many feeder highways allows us quick delivery times and responsiveness. I’m a Wichita native and started in the equipment business here 20 years ago. I know the area and am excited to introduce H&E to my state.”

All of the branches include a fully fenced yard area, offices, and a repair shop and carries a variety of construction and general industrial equipment. The facilities rent aerial lifts, earthmoving equipment, telescopic forklifts, compaction equipment, generators, light towers, compressors, and more and represents the following manufacturers: Allmand, Atlas Copco, Bomag, Case, Club Car, Cushman, Doosan, Gehl, Generac Mobile, Genie, Hamm, Hilti, Husqvarna, JCB, JLG, John Deere, Kobelco, Kubota, LayMor, Ledwell, Lincoln Electric, Link-Belt Excavators, MEC, Miller, Multiquip, Polaris, Sany, Skyjack, SkyTrak, Sullair, Sullivan-Palatek, Tag, Towmaster, Unicarriers, Wacker Neuson, Yanmar, and others.

H&E Equipment Services, based in Baton Rouge, La., is No. 5 on the RER 100.

An H&E unit from the company’s new Columbia, Mo., branch on a jobsite. The company has already opened nearly a dozen greenfield starts in 2023.

Photo by H&E Equipment Services

Turkey’s ASKO Acquires Majority Stake in Hy-Brid Lifts

WEST BEND, Wis. – Hy-Brid Lifts, an industry leader in high-quality, low-level access equipment, announces it has entered into a strategic partnership with ASKO, which is acquiring a majority stake in the company.

“The next chapter for Hy-Brid Lifts has started with this partnership with ASKO,” said Jay Sugar, CEO and

president of Hy-Brid Lifts. “We see this as a great opportunity for our customers as we will be bringing new products to the market, accelerating R&D and increasing our sales and service support.”

ASKO is headquartered in Turkey and operates in the construction machinery, agricultural machinery,

energy and technology sectors through its eight companies and subsidiaries. ASKO currently owns ELS Lift, who produces a range of scissor lifts, vertical mast lifts and boom lifts; and MST Construction Machinery, who produces telehandlers and dirt equipment. This partnership will increase the Hy-Brid Lifts product offering and provide working capital for accelerated growth in all areas.

“We are very excited to welcome Hy-Brid Lifts and its skilled employees into the ASKO family,” said Sami Konukoğlu, founder and chairman of the board of ASKO. “With Hy-Brid Lifts’ track record of producing innovative high-quality products and having an established dealer network, this investment fits into ASKO’s strategy to become a global player and expand in North America,”

Hy-Brid Lifts is a brand of Custom Equipment LLC. Hy-Brid Lifts engineers and manufactures all-purpose lifts



Managers and staff of Hy-Brid Lifts meet with ASKO leaders at Hy-Brid’s Wisconsin warehouse.

Photo by Hy-Brid Lifts

in electric, self-propelled and push-around models. For more information visit www.hybridlifts.com.

ASKO operates with eight companies

active in the fields of construction machinery, agricultural machinery, energy and technology. For more information, visit www.asko.com.tr.

Aggreko Makes Multi-Million Dollar Purchase of Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) Systems

HOUSTON – Aggreko, the world’s leading provider of mobile modular power, temperature control and energy solutions, announced the purchase of a fleet of Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) systems to pair with its robust temporary power generators

during events. With the multi-million dollar investment, Aggreko continues investing in the latest technology to enable the broadcasting of events for the country’s largest television networks. The acquisition of the technology came shortly before Aggreko is set to provide

broadcasting power solutions for more than 100 games in one of North America’s major professional sports leagues.

“In providing television networks with the UPS and generators together, Aggreko continues to position itself as a one-stop shop for event power,” said Don Gray, events sector manager at Aggreko. “UPS systems are a critical part of our solutions for major events as they make it possible to instantly supply power in the event of grid failure. While we currently provide this solution, Aggreko’s large investment in dedicated UPS systems demonstrates our commitment to the events sector. Our customers can engage with one company for a comprehensively engineered solution to deploy everything they need for temporary event power.”

UPS systems such as those Aggreko acquired contain batteries to briefly replace grid power in the event of an outage while an automatic transfer switch switches power delivery from the grid to the generator. The change to generator power is



UPS systems save an enormous amount of fuel costs and carbon emissions for the generator operator.

Photo by Aggreko

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Two Days of Equipment/ Party/Services Exhibits

**Exhibits on Tuesday, January 16, 10-4 pm
and Wednesday, January 17, 9 am – 1 pm**

See www.RentalRally.com for a list of exhibitors.

Exciting Optional Events! Seminar Packages*

Monday January 15 • 9:00 am to 3:30 pm

A full day of seminars includes a General Session followed by two breakout sessions in the morning. Then, Party/Event Rental and Equipment Rental go off-site to DigThisVegas with Lunch, Seminars, Equipment Demos and friendly competition. Transportation will be provided.

Seminar Packages: \$75/person if purchased by December 22, 2023; on-site cost is \$85/person.

Opening Cocktail Party*

Monday, January 15 • 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm

The opening cocktail party will be held on the show floor, allowing plenty of time for previewing exhibitor booths and networking with others in the industry. *If purchased by December 22, 2023, tickets are \$40/person; on-site cost is \$50/person.*

Evening Event/Awards Ceremony "Rockin' Rental Palooza"*

Tuesday, January 16 • 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm

The CRA presents "Rockin' Rental Palooza"! Featuring Cocktails, Food Stations, Roaming Magician, Stilt Walker, Axe Tossing, Cars & Cigars and Live Entertainment by The Killer Dueling Pianos. *If purchased by December 22, 2023, tickets are \$80/person; on-site cost is \$90/person.*

Special Room Rates at the South Point Hotel and Casino!

Exhibitor and attendees can stay on-site at the South Point Casino Hotel. Special Room rates (Jan. 11-20, 2024) are available from \$85 + tax with a \$17/room/night resort fee; these rates are available until Dec. 22, 2023, subject to availability. Reservations must be made on CRA's show website at www.RentalRally.com.

Register by December 22, 2023, for Special Rates:

\$60/person or \$195/company—All qualified rental centers that register by December 22 will get the special Pre-registration rates of \$60/person or \$195/company. After December 22, registration and optional event tickets must be ordered on-site. *On-site registration is \$85/person or \$295/company.*

**Optional events such as the seminars and demos, Cocktail Party, and the Evening Event/Awards Ceremony/Rental Palooza are not included in exhibitor or attendee registration fees.*

Visit www.RentalRally.com for complete Tradeshow Event and Exhibitor Information.

seamless; there is, for example, no interruption to an event's broadcast if power is switched to the generators. Thanks to their batteries and switches, pairing UPS systems with generators makes it possible for the generators to remain off if grid power is stable. This in turn means that UPS systems save an enormous amount of fuel costs and carbon emissions for the generator operator.

In the absence of a UPS, generators must remain running through the entire event, meaning that a generator could be on for hours despite not being used. This

could lead to the burning of thousands of gallons of diesel fuel, generating up to 20,000 pounds of carbon emissions throughout an event. As events customers such as broadcasters increasingly adopt net zero goals, the carbon emissions reduced because of a UPS makes the device a critical part of a temporary power solution.

The addition of the UPS system to Aggreko's events sector comes as the company prepares to continue a long-standing contract with one of America's four major professional sports leagues. While the company has provided

generators for games of one of the most popular sports in the country for several years, this season's contract includes supplying generators for the most games ever at more than 100. The newly acquired UPS systems will save the customer fuel costs and cut down on emissions, all while ensuring a steady supply of power.

The UPS purchase also comes on the heels of Aggreko making several key hires on the events team. The positions filled include several program managers, account managers, and sales specialists. For more on Aggreko, visit: www.aggreko.com.

Dale Asplund Steps Down as United Rentals COO; Michael Durand to Replace Him

STAMFORD, Conn. – United Rentals announced that Dale Asplund, executive vice president and chief operating officer, will be leaving the company on September 29 to take the role of president and CEO at another public company outside of the equipment rental industry. Asplund joined United Rentals in 1998 and was named chief operating officer in 2019.

Durand joined United Rentals in 2002 as a branch manager and has held roles of increasing scope through the present, including district manager, region vice president, and his most recent role of senior vice president of sales and operations. Durand has been an integral leader across all aspects of sales and operations at United Rentals, including the company's go-to-market strategy, large acquisition integrations, operations strategy, and operational excellence. He has built strong



Asplund moves on after a 25-year career at United Rentals. Photo by United Rentals

and enduring relationships within United Rentals and its customer base over his more than two-decade career.

"We expect this to be a seamless transition between two seasoned leaders who have worked closely together for many years," said United Rentals CEO Matthew Flannery. "Mike is a proven leader whose numerous contributions have delivered strong results across the company. I'm confident that his operational expertise and demonstrated ability to lead our business will play a key role in our continued focus to drive profitable growth and generate shareholder value."

"We deeply appreciate Dale's truly extraordinary contributions to making United Rentals the company it is today. On a personal note, I want to thank Dale for his incredible partnership, leadership, and commitment to our employees and shareholders."

United Rentals, Stamford, Conn., is No. 1 on the RER 100.

Local Businessman Acquires Hays Rental; Rebrands the Company as Flying B Rental


EL DORADO, Ark. – Clark Burton has acquired Hays Rental, a cornerstone rental business in El Dorado, Ark., for nearly 50 years. The transition of ownership took place on September 1st, marked by a rebranding of the business as Flying B Rental. Burton is also the owner of Henley's Feed & Farm Supply in El Dorado.

Hays Rental, established in 1974, has been an integral part of the equipment rental sector, providing a wide range of offerings catering to residential, industrial, and special event needs. Known for its comprehensive range of products, including medical equipment, lifts, power tools, lighting, tents, inflatables, and portable

toilets service, Hays Rental has been a stalwart of the local economy.

John Hays, the founder, instilled a legacy of customer-centric service that continues to be the foundation of Flying B Rental under Burton's leadership, Burton said. While the name may change, the commitment to upholding this



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“We’re stepping into the future while honoring the past,” said Burton. “John Hays built a business rooted in exceptional customer service, and we’re thrilled to carry that legacy forward. We might have a new name, but our dedication to history, service, and the provision of essential

products to businesses and industries will remain unchanged.”

Flying B Rental will offer industrial equipment such as lifts, power tools, lighting, pressure washing, painting equipment, concrete tools, air compressors, and digging machinery, home and lawn tools, and a party and events department.

“We have an accomplished team of professionals dedicated to ensuring the utmost customer satisfaction,” said Burton. “With the imminent expansion of the thoroughfare and our prominent location on West Hillsboro, we are excited to fortify our presence in the community and contribute to its growth for the next 50 years.”

CES Power Expands to Europe, Acquires Euro Touring Power

MEMPHIS, Tenn., and Dublin – CES Power LLC, a global provider of sustainable mobile power generation, distribution, and temperature control solutions for large events, has acquired Euro Touring Power, a premier provider of electrical equipment and air conditioning rental for touring productions throughout Europe. This acquisition expands CES Power’s reach overseas, giving the company a new hub in Ireland with access to all of Europe. CES Power is backed by industrial-focused private equity firm Allied Industrial Partners. Terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Based in Dublin, ETP supplies transformers, cables, distribution boxes, and stage air conditioning to large shows and events. The company provides equipment that powers major entertainment, sports, and corporate productions throughout Europe. Managing director Vincent Campion and the ETP management team will remain with the company.

“Expanding overseas has always been part of our business plan, and we are excited to gain a strong foothold in Europe with the addition of ETP, an experienced partner with a reputation for quality equipment and superior service,” said Greg Landa, CEO of CES Power. “We expect to work closely with Vincent and his team to build our customer base and add exciting new products as we grow the CES brand in Europe.”


Campion added, “We are delighted to join CES Power and its affiliate CES Technologies, as they share our commitment to providing our customers with exceptional, world-class experiences. We look

forward to leveraging CES Power’s deep resources and expertise in the U.S. to support our continued growth.”

In conjunction with CES Power’s expansion and acquisition of ETP, the company announced the launch of CES Global. This new division serves as an extension of CES Power, designed to focus on delivering the company’s signature mobile power generation, distribution, and temperature control solutions globally, starting initially with Europe. CES Global aims to integrate with the existing services of CES Power and the newly acquired capabilities of ETP, offering comprehensive, turnkey solutions for events worldwide. This strategic move enables the company to better cater to its clients operating across various international markets, ensuring a consistent level of quality and service, regardless of location.

Landa added, “The launch of CES Global is a natural evolution of our commitment to excellence and expansion. By integrating our expertise with the capabilities of our new European hub, we’re poised to deliver unparalleled service to our customers wherever they are in the world. This is an exciting new chapter for CES Power, and it underlines our dedication to being a global leader in mobile power solutions.”

Euro Touring Power is CES Power’s eighth acquisition since being acquired by Allied Industrial Partners in June 2021, and the company will continue to seek further add-on acquisitions in areas of strategic interest.

For more information on Euro Touring Power, visit www.eurotouringpower.com. For more on CES Power, visit cespower.com and cestechologies.com. Information on Allied can be found at alliedindustrialpartners.com. 



CES is launching its big event power business on an international level. Photo by CES Power

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21 TIPS FOR STOPPING CYBER ATTACKS

Every business in the rental industry or any kind of business, large or small, faces a common enemy – cyber attackers. They come in many formats, often with seemingly friendly faces. But the consequences can be serious and extremely costly.

BY MICHAEL ROTH

There are a lot of estimates about the costs of ransomware attacks and the costs of cybercrime. A technical writer with Astra estimates that the cost of the average cyber attack has grown from \$10,000 to \$18,000 from 2021 to 2022. By 2025 the average cost will increase tenfold. In the U.S., 40 percent of cyber attacks netted the attacker more than \$25,000.

According to the FBI's Internet Crime Report for 2021, cybercrimes cost \$6.9 billion or more. According to Cybersecurity Ventures, the cost of cybercrime will hit \$10.5 trillion annually by 2025. It seems almost ironic to use the term "annually" because the annual increases tend to be double, triple or even quadruple digits. The Gartner corporation predicts that during the next two years, 45 percent of global organizations will be impacted in some way by a cyber attack.

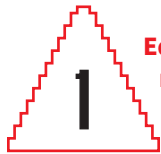
Email is a constant vehicle for cyber attacks and now more than 4.2 billion people use email, a number that is likely to grow to 4.7 billion by 2026.

Increasingly people need to plug in to the Internet to transact the most basic of activities. One prediction is that there will be 7.5 billion Internet users by 2030.

There are a lot of avenues for phishing and cyber attacks from increasingly insidious viruses.

"Ransomware attacks on businesses both large and small are skyrocketing," says Jeff Knoepke of Alert Rental Software. "As our businesses become more and more dependent on computer technology for daily operations, losing access to your systems can be a devastating blow. You can lose everything from financial records to upcoming orders, making it nearly impossible to operate."

So given the seemingly high odds stacked against owners of businesses that work with hundreds or thousands of customers who must give up sensitive financial data to do business with you, let's take a look at some of what a rental company can do to protect its business against attacks. *RER* spoke with rental companies and many software providers to put together some tips that might help.



Educate and incessantly remind your staff:

Most software providers in the rental industry have effective systems to help rental companies protect their data. We'll get to those. But as Knoepke says, most hackers don't need to use sophisticated tools to get past firewalls and "hack" their way in. Most of them waltz in the front door, invited, through a phishing attack because a rental center employee opens a link in an email or text message that appears to be from either a trusted contact or one that isn't well known but appears harmless. The seemingly innocent link loads the ransomware onto that computer, and it immediately begins to replicate itself across the network.

Bob Kendall, president of Seattle-based Star Rentals, says his company uses "an internal and constant campaign of 'remind, remind, remind!' Flood employees with communications about phishing scams, fraud, etc."

It's important to educate staff to question any email with an attachment that looks odd. Sometimes spelling or grammatical errors is a sign of something off-kilter. Always carefully check the sender's email address. Often official-sounding emails that are supposedly from banks or government offices come from a casual g-mail account that could have been set up by anybody.

Also, staff should be doubly careful about opening attachments that they weren't expecting. If in doubt, contact the sender to see if it really came from that party.

And if a worker makes a mistake and realizes it, make sure they immediately inform IT staff. Don't punish them so that they don't admit the error, since such mistakes can happen to industry veterans as well as newcomers. Alerting appropriate staff immediately can minimize the damage.



More than remind or admonish – Training is required:

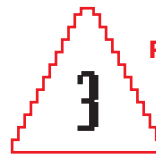
Clare McCormick, general manager of Wynne Systems, recommends concentrated levels of training for employees.

"We can fall prey to attacks like phishing due to the attacker's ability to play on our thoughts and emotions," McCormick says. "It's important to train users on how to spot and react to any signs of an attack on your organization. A proactive plan should be put in place to ensure employees are getting a foundational and continued level of education on the many different methods that attackers utilize to gain access to an

organization's systems. This is increasingly important if your organization has high turnover in an area like the rental desk for example. New employees can be more susceptible to attacks due to their lack of knowledge about your rental organization and their eagerness to make a good first impression at work. They should be trained as quickly as possible to spot attacks such as someone posing as a high-ranking employee requesting money or special access."

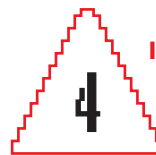
You or your IT staff don't have to do the training yourselves. Consider subscribing to services like KnowBe4.com, which provide monthly phishing simulations and cyber security training to keep your team vigilant.

The key is that training must be continuous and ongoing. "Well-informed employees are your first line of defense against data breaches," says Paul Zdane, chief solutions architect, Texada Software. "Cultivate a security-conscious culture within your organization, where employees actively monitor for and report suspicious activities. Employee vigilance complements your security infrastructure. Provide specific training on data privacy and confidentiality for all employees, emphasizing the importance of safeguarding customer and company information. Well-informed employees are essential for data protection."



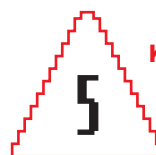
Robust access control:

"Establish stringent access management protocols to limit data access to authorized personnel exclusively," counsels Zdane. "Employ advanced authentication mechanisms like multi-factor authentication to bolster security. Effective access control is the foundational pillar of data protection, ensuring that only those with legitimate reasons can access sensitive information." Accounts should be audited on a regular basis to ensure that no one has been inadvertently granted over-permissive access.



Implement multi-factor authentication (MFA):

MFA adds an extra layer of security by requiring users to provide multiple forms of verification before granting access. Even if a cybercriminal obtains your login credentials they won't be able to access your accounts without the additional authentication step. Always implement MFA for any privileged accounts. If a user requires elevated permissions such as "admin" permissions, a separate "privileged" account should be assigned and granted the "admin".



Keep sensitive data on the cloud:

Rental companies keep track of customers' driver's licenses, e-signatures and banking information. The cloud offers better

protection but requires high security, says Orion software's Patrice Boivin. "Some people believe that because it's in the cloud, it's automatically secured. Rental companies should look for providers that are using the best practices and procedures. They should ask for their security scores and certifications."

6

Sensitive data must be encrypted:

"Implement encryption for data at rest and in transit to safeguard against unauthorized access, even in cases of data compromise,"

says Zdane. "Encryption renders data unreadable to unauthorized individuals, providing a crucial layer of defense."

7

Have cyber insurance and the proper limits:

"The strongest and most comprehensive security software available," is what you need, says Star's Kendall. And don't go for the cheapest deal. This is not the place to scrimp. Says Kendall: "Price should not be an object!"

And this is not a place for DIY. The biggest mistake many companies make is thinking they can manage this issue themselves. You need an expert provider to set up your firewalls, to store data, to train your employees, to make sure the system has a recovery capability, and to manage backups. You may have a brilliant IT staff – but cyber thievery is a full-time job.

8

Back up frequently!

Regular backup will dramatically reduce the impact of an attack, says McCormick. While there will likely be some data loss, different strategies like offsite storage and segmenting your network can make a difference.

"Attacks from malicious actors aren't the only reason for data backups," McCormick adds. "Natural disasters like wildfires or flooding can really set an organization back if there was no planning ahead of time."

9

Store backups in offsite locations:

While it might seem convenient to keep your backups in your office, don't! Typically in the case of a malware attack, the backups would be affected by the same virus, says Alert's Knoepke. "Plus, what good is an on-site backup in the event of a server theft, fire or flood?"

He adds that good backups are run automatically on a daily basis or multiple times per day and pushed offsite to a protected server. Multiple backups should be kept in the event the ransomware isn't discovered until after the backup runs. And backups are only as good as how quickly and reliably they can be recovered in an emergency," he adds.

Tokenization lets you charge returning customers for new or recurring long-term rentals (including cycle bills on any schedule), without actually storing the credit card data on your system.

10

Secure wireless networks:

Wireless networks are vulnerable entry points for cybercriminals, says Daniel Ruiz, security engineer for Point of Rental Software. "Ensure that your wireless networks are encrypted using strong security protocols like WPA3. Hide your network's SSID (Service Set Identifier) to prevent it from being broadcasted to potential hackers scanning for available networks. If your business has a guest wifi network that you've been so kind to offer customers, ensure it is completely separate from your various business networks such as where your Point of Sale operates, and where you may conduct internal business."

11

Practice "spring cleaning" at least once a year:

"As employees change roles or leave your company, it's important to update or revoke their access to sensitive data," notes Matt Hopp of InTempo Software. "It's best practice to make these changes in your rental software as soon as the personnel changes occur, but if you can't make immediate updates, make sure you carve out time to "spring clean" your system at least once per year."

12

Have a recovery plan:

Sometimes mishaps do occur and in case they do, your company must have a detailed recovery plan, says Joe Lewis, CEO of Fame Rental Software. "It must be both defined and practiced," Lewis says. "I've seen situations where a recovery plan was there, but, when it was needed it did not work. Verify it by doing a drill."










Ruiz advises regularly reviewing security measures by conducting security audits and vulnerability assessments. "Identify weaknesses and areas for improvement, then take action to enhance your data protection protocols," Ruiz says.

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"A great place to start is obtaining your PCI DSS certification as the standard has many cybersecurity requirements businesses must comply with. It is geared towards protecting cardholder data but pertains to protecting any critical or sensitive data.

13

Long and complicated passwords:

All passwords should be long and complicated so they are not easily guessed, nor should they be duplicated on other sites or systems. Use at least two-factor authentication whenever possible. If a person wears a different Taylor Swift or Bruce Springsteen shirt every day of the week, he or she should probably not use the artist's first or last name in the password.

14

Strict password management:

Requirements for regular password rotation should be implemented on all accounts, says Ruiz. "Consider using a password manager to securely store and manage your passwords, making it easier to use complex and varied credentials, as well as privileged accounts for elevated access."

Texada's Zdane suggests following the principle of least privilege: "Grant the lowest level of access rights necessary for employees to fulfill their job roles. Limiting access minimizes the potential attack surface. Best in class rental solutions should provide granular access to different menu options, field access, and permissions within the screens as well."

15

Secure remote work practices:

In this day and age, a lot of work is done remotely and a lot of employees need to take their laptops home or on the road. It's critical to "extend security measures to remote work environments," says Zdane. "Emphasizing secure VPN access or Zero Trust Networking, endpoint security, and secure data transfer methods. Maintain a clear desk/clear screen policy. Remote work adds new dimensions to data protection."

16

Use tokenization to protect your customers' credit card information:

Storing or transmitting credit card data over unsecured systems leaves it vulnerable to attacks. However, there's an easier and more secure way to keep cards on file without actually storing the credit card numbers and CVV codes. Tokenization lets you charge returning customers for new or recurring long-term rentals (including cycle bills on any schedule), without actually storing the credit card data on your system. The tokens that you *do* store

are randomized and unencryptable, so even in a worst-case scenario of a successful attack on your organization, your customers' credit card data still wouldn't be exposed.

17

Keep software up to date:

Outdated software is a prime target for cyberattacks, says Ruiz. "Hackers exploit known vulnerabilities to gain unauthorized access. Regularly update your operating systems, applications, and plugins to patch security flaws and reduce your vulnerability to attacks. If you have software, especially if installed on business networks, it normally requires patching at least every 30 days. Are you checking? There exist annual cybersecurity conferences where competitors hack systems based on unpatched, or zero-day vulnerabilities. For example, exploit this particular software's vulnerability to gain remote access, then exploit this other's software vulnerability to elevate my permissions."

18

Monitor for unusual activity:

Set up alerts for suspicious login attempts and monitor your accounts for any unusual activity, advises Ruiz. "Rapid detection of unauthorized access can prevent data breaches or minimize their impact. The sooner you know of attack indicators, the sooner you can derail the bad actor's actions and mitigate damage."

19

Employee departure procedures:

Institute a comprehensive offboarding process to revoke access for departing employees and prevent unauthorized data access. Terminated employees should not retain access to sensitive information.

20

Employee confidentiality agreements:

Require employees to sign confidentiality agreements to legally bind them to protect sensitive company information. Legal safeguards reinforce data confidentiality.

21

React fast!

Quick reactions can limit the damage that attacks create for your organization, notes Wynne Systems' McCormick. "Anything out of the ordinary should be flagged and acted upon accordingly. It should be an organization wide effort to spot, flag, and react to any data security issues." **RER**



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* Source: Comparing data in the International Rental News 2023 IRN 100 Survey from companies using RentalMan, versus companies not using RentalMan.

** Source: Comparing data in the Rental Equipment Register 2023 RER 100 list from companies using RentalMan, versus companies not using RentalMan.



Interviews with
Telematics Manufacturers:

RICH VEINS

Telematics providers discuss
their latest offerings, new
efficiencies, trends in
telematics, influences from
other industries, AI and more.

BY MICHAEL ROTH, *RER*

RER: What have been the most important
achievements in your telematics systems in
the past year?

ECKEL: In April, JLG offered a first look at its new ClearSky Smart Fleet, a next-generation Internet of Things platform for true, two-way fleet management and machine interactivity, at the Summit of the International Powered Access Federation in Berlin. This JLG system will launch in late summer/early fall 2023.

JLG ClearSky Smart Fleet is a global IoT solution developed by JLG specifically for JLG's mobile elevating work platforms (MEWPs)

and telehandlers, providing more actionable data about the equipment than any other telematics program. As an OEM-specific platform, it gives customers deep insights and information about what is going on with the equipment — not just where it's at, but also how it's being used. This depth of detail enables equipment owners and operators to make informed decisions about JLG products based on the relevant information available. It is a ground-up redesign, adding innovative elements to transform the way customers work. Key features include:

- Digitized daily processes for operational efficiencies
- Accurate and efficient machine location
- Additional equipment service capabilities
- Streamlined logistics with Automated Site Networks
- Actionable, on-demand machine and fleet insights

ClearSky Smart Fleet will be standard on most new machines produced later this year, and customers with existing JLG products can continue to use the legacy ClearSky program for their connected needs. Both platforms will be integrated into Online Express, JLG's 24/7 e-Commerce site.

EARLY: This year marked the launch of our updated telematics system Elevate 2.0. Originally launched in 2018, the mobile-first solution aimed to provide operators access to critical machine information such as the machine's current state of health, pre-use code. The straightforward access to this information was designed to empower both operators and rental companies. The updated navigation in Elevate 2.0 allows easy access to additional insight and features, including live metrics such as battery details, engine faults, and controller alarms.

These updates provide clear guidance to operators; encouraging safe operation and saving rental houses time spent answering questions. Furthermore, the insight into each machine allows for straightforward, efficient fleet management.

SWAN: We've recently launched a new capability called Sites. This is a feature that allows customers to make a construction site, a rental depot, or a logistics center sit at the core of their connectivity software.

The construction industry and construction rental truly operate around the productivity,



efficiency and profitability of different types of sites. It's an important step to have a connectivity solution that mirrors that thinking.

Practically this means that users in Trackunit's software suite are now able to manage assets by site, report on utilization by site, group units by site. It allows the user to define an important geographic area and then drive insights and actions based on what happens within that area.

A useful way to think about this is: traditionally in telematics we asked the question, what assets are you interested in knowing about (select a group of units, produce insights) whereas Sites lets us start by asking what sites are important to your business, and then automatically see whatever assets are related to that site.

One of most important achievements has been our move towards an extendable platform strategy and solution. This approach helps us to facilitate the creation of a broad array of software solutions for the construction industry. The Trackunit IRIS platform has been positioned to work as the scalable and secure foundation for different parties in industry to build their solutions on top of.

This is an important capability for the industry because of the wide variety of business models, processes and the need to digitize these unique processes to capitalize on the now wide availability of asset connectivity.

You can see this platform strategy and solution in action in our recently launched Marketplace, where Trackunit platform customers are able to access numerous apps - such as ISO feed configuration apps from specific OEMs on demand, and choose and utilize the apps that are most relevant to their business.

OLSON: It's all about getting our machines connected to enable our dealers and customers with the best machine monitoring services and

With Elevate, electronically powered machines can see a live battery percentage, extensive charge information, and suggested actions for next steps.

Graphic by Skyjack

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“For those who love data, we continue to make improvements in the fidelity and frequency of data coming from our machines and now capture and transmit data as often as every five seconds.”

Edward Olson, John Deere

the value of the John Deere Operations Center and Connected Support.

We are adopting JDLink connectivity across all the Wirtgen Group machines and have started with Hamm roller and Vögele pavers this year and in the next couple years, all Wirtgen Group will become native JDLink connected machines.

Our John Deere compact construction machines are also getting JDLink connectivity. Starting May 2023 all compact track loaders and skid steer loaders have JDLink in base. We also expect to provide connectivity options for compact excavators and compact wheel loaders by fall 2023. These machine forms round out telematics capabilities across the entire John Deere earthmoving fleet.

We have also introduced the John Deere Operations Center as a customer focused and jobsite centric digital destination. We're extending the superb tools that our dealers and customers have enjoyed for many years and putting our customers at the forefront of our developers' minds. We're building functionality to enable management of the jobsite and supporting future jobsite and machine automation solutions.

Trackunit will soon release an emissions reporting app which will use models based on millions of machines to ensure that machines with simpler data can accurately deliver emissions figures representing their Co2 impact.

Graphic by Trackunit



Lastly for those who love data, we continue to make improvements in the fidelity and frequency of data coming from our machines and now capture and transmit data as often as every five seconds.

What have been the most important advancements in capabilities, enabling rental companies to improve efficiencies?

ECKEL: ClearSky Smart Fleet reimagines what's possible, paving the way to a new frontier for connectivity solutions in the industry. More than yet another singular piece of software, it's built as a robust, constantly evolving IoT platform capable of delivering new functionality, new insights and new ways to run cost-effective operations.

As an example, the new ClearSky Smart Fleet system is designed to offer two-way communication, allowing for continued collection of data from the machine, while introducing the ability to push data to the machine. This enables the system to offer a wider range of functionality and deliver greater value.

Because IoT enables users to streamline access to important machine information quickly and effectively through digital channels, the most important advancements in telematics capabilities, enable rental companies to improve efficiencies such as increase machine uptime and utilization.

For example, ClearSky Smart Fleet can show fleet managers where and how equipment is operating by providing high-level or finite details on several machine systems, including:

- Location to help with service planning and cuts on downtime for field techs
- Diagnostic trouble codes to address machine issues and get them back on rent quicker
- Machine hours to help with billing and knowing when to service the machine
- Battery status, including State of Charge and actively charging
- Machine utilization
- Automated Site Networks make geofencing a thing of the past

Access to this type of information allows users to manage machine usage more efficiently and effectively.

EARLY: Our goal with Elevate has always been to empower rental companies and our update allows us to do just that. In addition to providing operators with easy-to-access operation materials, Elevate gives rental companies an enhanced look at their machines to make strategic and informed decisions regarding fleet management.

With Elevate, electronically powered machines can see a live battery percentage, extensive charge information, and suggested actions for next steps. Controller alarm data also presents any issues with corresponding codes and timestamps, battery voltage, and total hours of battery usage.

Engine-powered machines can see issues complete with codes and timestamps, fuel amounts and fuel consumption data, total hours and battery voltage. Tracking of overload and tilt alarm triggering can also be tracked on telescopic and articulating booms.

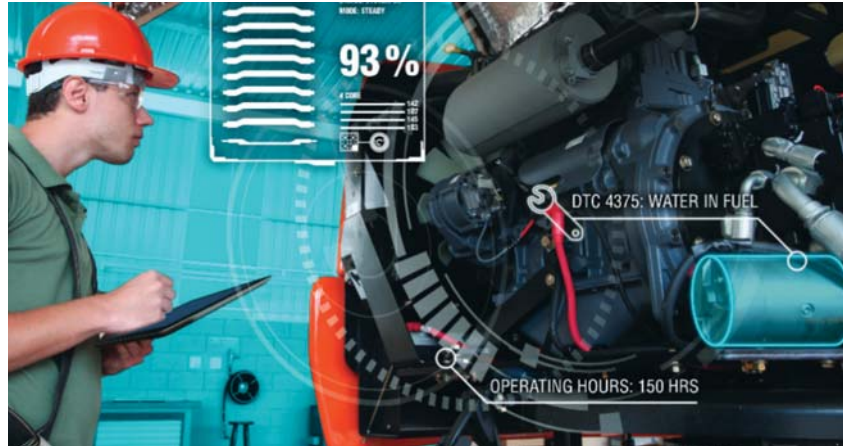
SWAN: One area where we see entire new categories of efficiencies is in hand tool and small attachment connectivity. Over the past two years we've seen many rental companies roll out pilot projects utilizing Trackunit KIN devices, as well as built-in connectivity capabilities from major tool manufacturers that are partnering with Trackunit to make tool data available on the IRIS platform.

These smaller asset categories represent a massive opportunity for efficiencies and greater productivity in construction and construction rental. Although the cost per asset is a fraction of larger powered machinery, time and resources spent managing these smaller high-volume categories is significant. Replacing lost or stolen tools cost the industry one-third of the total annual spend on small tools.

OLSON: The universal availability of JDLink telematics enables a whole new level of capability for our rental company customers. Any machine you get from John Deere will be connected with OEM supported telematics capabilities. There is no need to install third party telematics devices – we've done that for you. JDLink modems are integrated into the machine for maximum protection and provide the best and most robust data you can get from our machines. No subscription management or costs and no costly installation headaches. JDLink connectivity is included, forever, in the price of the machine.

Dealer monitoring (should it be leveraged by the customer) is much more robust whenever you have OEM telematics. John Deere is progressing with Expert Alerts and fleet wide monitoring to spot trends and notify dealers when something may be going amiss.

We have great features and capabilities in Operations Center, but we know that isn't the only option for all customers. So, we've supported ISO 15143-3 (aka AEMP 2.0) for nearly seven years now. That provides utilization and basic machine data into rental business systems.



How will telematics advance in the next few years? What are customers expecting in the next level of telematics?

ECKEL: We're finally at a point in the industry with telematics where digital infrastructure and digital demand are coming together. As connected construction sites continue to evolve, telematics has provided a foundation and infrastructure for other technological advancements in safety and productivity. For example, historically telematics offered more data points from machines with combustion engines, but today, JLG's ClearSky API also offers extensive information on electric equipment. This has opened opportunities for more customers to use our program.

Over the few years, we see telematics continuing to evolve to include even more machine information on electrified products, more finite details from the equipment's integrated sensor suites, live/real-time video feed footage, in-the-moment servicing of machines, additional semi-autonomous functionality and so much more.

As the journey continues, I am looking forward to seeing how advancements in data, data analytics and data science will make telematics more and more valuable every day.

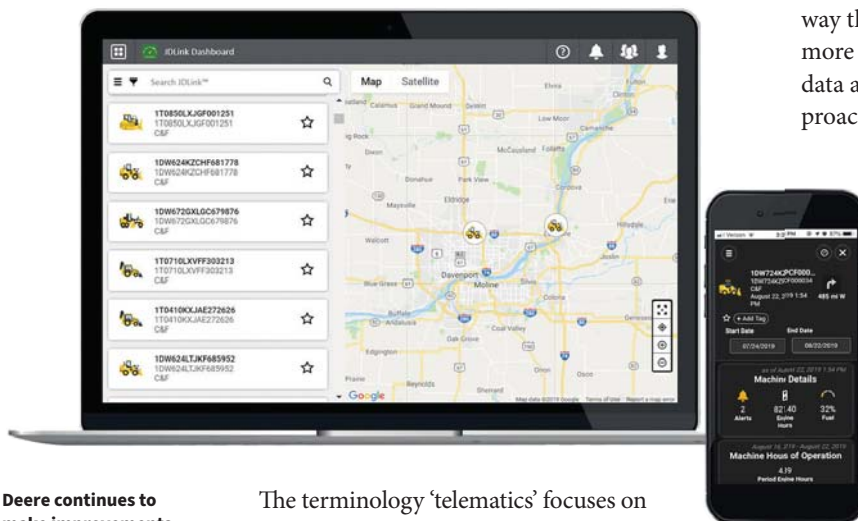
EARLY: The degree and depth that rental companies use all the power of telematics varies. At the base hours and location, but for those that appreciate the power of telematics there is a world of data to explore. The key is to ensure that real operational issues are explored, and, in that way, really measurable benefits are possible. Helping rental companies move along that continuum is key and next stages will see software develop to allow the development of "apps" that address real operational issues.

The new ClearSky Smart Fleet system is designed to offer two-way communication, allowing for continued collection of data from the machine, while introducing the ability to push data to the machine.

Graphic by JLG

We expect that telematics will continue to advance in the coming years. In terms of customer expectations, customers will likely continue to appreciate insights that enhance their ability to make informed, strategic decisions for their equipment. With that in mind, enhanced insight into efficient and environmentally friendly operation, machine health, operation data, and maintenance suggestions will continue to develop through telematics. The way in which that information is presented and used will also continue to be developed and optimized.

OLSON: Customers expect more data, more often, from all machines and from wherever those machines are located. So, we work to enable that. Whether we are lobbying for more ubiquitous cellular coverage in the places our machines operate or looking for new technologies like Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellite capabilities, John Deere is going to advance the connectivity that our customers depend on.



Deere continues to make improvements in the fidelity and frequency of data coming from its machines and now capture and transmit data as often as every five seconds.

Graphic by John Deere

The terminology 'telematics' focuses on the hardware and the data. Telematics should be thought of as an enabler that allows the entire fleet to be analyzed, visualized and presented in ways that we've never been able to do in the past. I mentioned we are building the customer jobsite context into our tools so we can better tailor the data coming from machines, so it matches what the end customer sees out their pickup truck window when they arrive at a jobsite. We expect to provide the solutions based on telematics, that help the customer get more value out of the other tech on our machines. Let's show them how and where they are using SmartGrade and how they can use it better next time. SmartDetect systems (with cameras and the ability to detect a person) bring new capabilities to Site Safety managers. Certainly, fleet management and maintenance remain critical, but connectivity enables so much more beyond that!

I'm sure you keep your eye on telematics development in other industries. What are some of the developments or trends in telematics that you've noticed in other industries that you admire, whether or not they are relevant to the rental industry?

ECKEL: Telematics has become table stakes industrywide — today, everyone expects standard connectivity in their equipment. As a result, one trend that has re-emerged over the years from this is customers asking again for deeper machine insights. In the early days of telematics, customers wanted to access all of the data from the machine. Then, there was a period of time when customers said they were getting too much data and requested less. Today, the pendulum has swung back in the other direction, and users are again wanting more data from the machine, asking for even more than ever before.

To meet this demand, OEMs, including JLG, need to structure their telematics solutions in a way that is more efficient for customers to navigate, more meaningful in the way the system provides the data and more effective for them to use the data to proactively manage and maintain their fleets.

EARLY: Telematics really started outside of rental in the likes of the transportation industry and indeed for telematics to really provide benefits for rental, one needs to focus on relative benefits. For example, speed is important for transportation, but in rental and in off-highway situations it is less critical where machines travel in the 5 to 0 kmph range. This means data acquisition and sampling rates do not need to be as complicated and as costly as other industries.

In looking at other industries we have to bear these things in mind. While we are not saying that we would not learn from other industries we probably see more "runway" in rental operations defining their needs more closely. Advances in software are coming that will enable rental operations to customize their data collection based on their needs and that is a rich vein for the industry to tap into.

SWAN: I love to see work being done in precision agriculture through advanced asset connectivity. It shows how powerful and meaningful digitization can be when the job is very well defined and understood.

Thinking about the advancements made in seeding efficiency using super precise RTK GPS solutions (for example) brings me back to the thought that when we provide an extendable platform and then invite the

industry to come in and create, there is this incredible opportunity to really zero in on the thousands of unique processes and challenges in our industry that can be revolutionized through the right deployment of connectivity and digital solutions.

OLSON: Automotive customers have more continuous and fluid relationships with the technology in their cars. It remains more difficult to get information on the technology that is on a construction machine into the hands of rental customers who may only have the machine a few days or weeks. Ways to connect those folks with ways to leverage the totality of the technology on their John Deere machines is a place we need to do better.

I admire the massive displays we find in some cars — touchscreen displays of that size, resolution, and quality will be seen in more and more Deere construction machines moving forward. These displays will be very intuitive, offering a user experience and interface that keeps the operator as productive and comfortable as possible.

It seems there is a lot of discussion about artificial intelligence these days. Is AI relevant to the world of telematics in relation to the rental industry?

ECKEL: Today's technology is making it easier in general for the rental industry to access machine information and improve functionality. As digital connectivity continues to evolve, including discussions about artificial intelligence, we believe it's time for the conversation to change — we should stop talking about telematics and talk about IoT. What's the difference? The scope of telematics is primarily focused on the remote monitoring of an asset, which is actually quite narrow when compared to what IoT can bring to the table. As the internet connects devices and allows them to communicate to each other, the benefits of IoT in rental, including opportunities in the future to evaluate technologies like AI, can help equipment owners and operators be more competitive and solve common problems. It's really changing the whole market.

EARLY: Things like goal optimization, pattern recognition and predictive analytics can very much be applied to telematics data and in that sense telematics role is data gathering, while AI techniques allow us to make sense of that data. In rental the places where these techniques need to reflect key operational problems and the rental industry is the master of its own destiny.

“OEMs need to structure their telematics solutions in a way that is more efficient for customers to navigate, more meaningful in the way the system provides the data and more effective for them to use the data to proactively manage and maintain their fleets.”

Ara Eckel, JLG

SWAN: One thing that has become clear over the past year is that AI will impact almost every sector. One area where we've already started to see the impact of AI is through machine learning applications. It's well known that many of the OEMs that supply construction rental are pursuing and very interested in the idea of true predictive maintenance which relies on advanced machine learning methods, combined with a rich enough data set delivered through telematics to model scenarios and identify them before they impact rental and contractor business.

Another area where machine-learned models have an opportunity to have an impact in the short term is in the world of emissions reporting. At Trackunit we're getting close to the release of our emissions reporting app which will use models based on millions of machines to ensure that machines with simpler data can accurately deliver emissions figures representing their Co2 impact and output in line with those machines that have richer data on fuel burn and efficiency.

OLSON: Yes, for sure AI is relevant to rental. John Deere is investing in AI and machine learning in ways that will impact all machine forms for all customers. AI in the world of warranty analysis, field uptime improvement and predictive maintenance are immediate areas of work. Keeping machines running while in customer hands and enabling planned maintenance remains critical for rental customers and AI will help us improve that across the board.

Past that, we can assume that the future will see more integration of AI into machine features and capabilities, but you have to stay tuned for more news! **RER**

Preparing for a Power Outage

When extreme weather events such as a hurricane, windstorm, ice storm or tornados hit, power outages are the probable result. Suddenly panic-stricken business owners call rental companies begging for help. But restoring power in a crisis is far easier when preparations are made in advance. Mike Madej, rental manager of Altorfer Power Systems, has shown hundreds of rental customers how to be prepared for potential power outages. In this interview with RER, he explains the basics. BY MICHAEL ROTH, RER

RER: Extreme weather events have certainly increased in North America. How has this trend impacted your power generation business?

MADEJ: I'm involved with hurricanes, maybe not significantly. I work with my Cat Rental network partners, the ones in Florida - Ring Power, in Louisiana - ERS, and Carolina Cat in North Carolina, Thompson Machinery in Mississippi/Tennessee, and Yancey Brothers in Georgia. I also work with all my Cat partners on the East Coast when they reach out to me. I would say in the last three years, I probably sent on average 30 to 40 generators per year just for hurricane relief.

Do they come to you for your inventory or your expertise?

Most of the time they reach out to their neighboring Cat dealers and when their neighboring Cat dealers are out, they expand their search for equipment. But sometimes just because I have such a good relationship with the dealers there, they'll contact me direct, "Mike, how many 150 kW's can you send

me, how many 100s?" We'll run a couple of trucks and send them down there.

Your territory with Altorfer Caterpillar is not so much a hurricane region in the upper Midwest, but you must have other power outages, with tornados and storms.

The utility grid, Commonwealth Edison locally, isn't perfect. And yes, we have windstorms, ice storms, tornadoes, derechos. We deal with a lot of power outages locally.

Obviously power rental is much more than renting generators. You do a lot of reaching out to businesses year around asking if they are prepared for power outages. How does that work go?

There are so many businesses in our territory, around northern Illinois, major companies that are headquartered in Illinois, with their corporate offices. We call on them. We call on the maintenance and or facility managers, or the maintenance supervisors in the industrial and commercial sector here.



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“The industry has shifted in the last five or six years. Now they’re reaching out to us to do site visits and make a plan for what to do if they lose power.” Mike Madej

They are the ones we touch base with. It’s a much easier job convincing them nowadays that they need my phone number and that we need to come out to their facility, and we need to do a walk through and figure out what size generator they need, where would we park it in an emergency? We ask “Who is your house electrician onsite? If you don’t have one, I’ll give you the name of three popular ones that we use in that area.”

We’ll have those conversations with them. It’s much easier now. Seven to eight years ago I had to make phone calls to those customers or potential customers and convince them that this is a good idea. Now, especially the last five years, they reach out to us before we can reach out to them. Saying “we need to have an SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) in place in case we lose power.”

So that is where the industry has shifted in the last five or six years. Now they’re reaching out to us to do site visits and make a plan for what to do if they lose power.

The first thing they need to do is call Mike Madej if they lose power! When we receive a call from them it’s usually after hours, 2 a.m., in a driving rainstorm. We have a 1-800 number, it’s on our business card, an emergency after hours number, it’s assigned to one of my reps that we rotate on call. Normally the way that calls goes is “I lost power, I need a generator” and if they don’t have a process or a plan in place it becomes very difficult. We will ask them, “What size do you need?” And many times their answer is “A big one.” And we basically have to tell them, call your house electrician and they will tell us what your amp draw is, what your voltage is and then we can size the unit from there.

It must be much easier if you have that information in advance!

When I go out there before and do a proactive site visit, that’s the first place we’re going to start. A common mistake if they

don’t have an electrician to confirm the size that they need, they’re going to look at the size of their circuit breaker panel. Their panel might be a 3,000-amp panel, at 480 volt, but their load never goes over 1,000 amps. They’re going to ask me to provide a 3,000-amp generator, when they only need a smaller unit to cover their actual load.

There is a significant cost savings if they can tell us what their highest amp load is. If they can give us the amperage range of their high loads and what their voltage is, we can size their generator just from that. The other thing that we’re looking for is what is their footprint, an area where we can park the generator and how far is the generator going to sit from their tie-in spot. Sometimes that’s within 50 feet, sometimes that’s within 600 feet. It does no good to send and park a generator at their facility if we don’t have enough cable to go from the generator to the tie-in spot.

So obviously if your people do a site visit, they check out all of this to do an assessment.

If we’re doing a preliminary proactive site visit, we’re going to walk around the facility. We’re going to check the voltage, we’re going to figure out where is the best place to park the generators. And then normally we’ll bring measuring tools so we can walk off how far it is. We write it up. So if it says “75 feet” our cables usually come in 50-foot increments so we know we’re going to need 100 feet of cable. That’s all pre-planned.

I’ve also done site visits where they have multiple buildings, let’s say there’s five buildings. Well, this building is set up at 208 volts and that building is set up at 480 volts. And another building we only need a 10-foot run and this building we need a 200-foot run. We’ll have all of that information down and we’ll mark it “Building 1” and “Building 2” and “Building 3.” We set up a lot of universities that way. So the rec center is at 480 volts and it generally draws no more than a 1,000-amps. The president’s house at the university just needs 208 volts because there’s an elevator there. We’ll have it all mapped out so all they have to do if they lose power is call me and say, “We need a generator for the rec center and we need a generator for the library” and I already have notes on how much cable I need to send and what size generator for each and I’m already ordering freight to have it delivered. That’s how fast it goes when I have the data.

There’s no way I can possibly send a generator out to somebody who lost power if they’re not sure what their amp load is or what their voltage is or how far the unit is going to be parked away from the tie-in spot. Without that I can’t send you a unit. If they don’t know, they need to find an electrician to give me those answers before I send it out. Companies are losing millions of dollars in product or labor while they’re sitting in the dark.



A generator from Altorfer Cat waits to be loaded on a plane at O’Hare Airport and shipped to the south for use in hurricane relief. Photo by Mike Madej

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POWER RENTALS

I imagine quite a few businesses have no idea how to answer these questions.

If I were to take a guess, I would say less than 50 percent know their amp draw, their voltage or how far the generator can go from the tie-in spot.

You're looking at powering virtually every type of business – universities, factories, retail, hospitals?

Yes and a lot of municipalities. I have one particular customer from a municipality, a waste-water treatment plant. If they lose power for more than one hour people's basements are flooding and I know what he needs on every single one of their buildings.

It's interesting how the general public is so much more aware of the need to be prepared for power emergencies.

I think you can attribute that to social media and all media in general. Because in the past I'd have to go share stories when I'm on a sales call of what happened to their neighbor when they lost power. Now everything is publicized and people can see the damage that's being caused all across the country due to power outages, and large corporations are making sure they have a plan to save time and money during these circumstances.

Another recent trend in the last few years, is that many companies are contacting us prior to storms arriving in Chicagoland based on weather forecasts. We will periodically receive calls from local customers asking us to put units on rent and keep them in our yard in case they lose power after an approaching storm rolls through. It is very smart for them to be proactive. We have had many storms in the past that caused local widespread power outages. Although we have hundreds of generators readily available, there have been times where more units were needed than what we had ready to deliver.

So I imagine you go with a sort of check list of everything you have to cover.

Yes. And we take a lot of photos. One of the most important parts of the plan is not only the equipment needed, but the priority list on how you contact us. Normally the call comes to my rental rep who covers the territory. If they don't answer, they call our 800 number emergency line. If they don't answer, Mike Madej is everybody's backup and my phone is always on, we're here to help the customer. That's one of the things we're best at in my department.

So sometimes you get the calls yourself.

Yes. Sometimes I get out of bed before I answer so I don't wake my wife.



Altorfer Cat Rental Power, like many Cat dealers, is capable of sending generators of many sizes for use where needed. Photo by Mike Madej

You must keep a steady communication with Caterpillar to order inventory rapidly if you need it.

Yes. And two years ago I joined the Cat Dealer Advisory Team, there are 12 of us on that team. We act as the liaison between all the Cat dealers and Cat Corporate when it comes to power rental. So yes, we have a high level of communication with Caterpillar.

And if necessary you can draw from Caterpillar dealers around the country.

Yes, and that's one of the biggest advantages that we have, our Cat rental network. Anywhere in the United States, I can pick up the phone and call my Cat rental partners and I have access to their entire fleet. So, if I get a call from a local customer that needed a 400kW in Texas tomorrow, I can pick up the phone and call Holt Cat and I just say, "Hey it's Mike Madej and I'm looking for a 400 kW in your area, do you have any available, and it's for this address to be delivered this time." And they'll bill me and I'll pass it to my customer.

It's a very dynamic network.

What is the key to what you do?

The first key is answering our phone when the customer calls us, any time of day – 24/7/365. It is paramount for us to always be available when our customers need us! After that, it's those three important facts about their facility. 1. What is the voltage in their building? 2. What is their amp draw? (their current amp draw, their average amp draw, their maximum amp draw). And 3. Approximately how far can we park the generator from the tie-in spot? If they don't know all of those things, at least have a direct communication with their electrician so they can answer those questions. If they have that, that's the fastest, and best way I can help them. **RER**



Genie's GTH-1256 12,000-Pound Telehandler

Genie's new GTH-1256 12,000-pound capacity telehandlers deliver 6,000 pounds at a max height of 56 feet 3 inches and 3,500 pounds at max outreach of 42 feet. Powered by a side-mounted 120-hp Deutz engine with four-speed powershift transmission, the unit is designed to deliver 15 percent more efficiency in power transfer for picking and placing activities. New limited slip differentials on both axles and full-time 4-wheel drive provide torque and traction. Single-reduction, planetary, specialty and transaxle lines deliver performance for rough terrain. Hybrid, all-terrain tires combine the best characteristics of rock lug tires and conventional rough-terrain tires. A wide center bar delivers better wear on hard surfaces and self-cleaning outer lugs power through soft, muddy ground.

Hy-Brid Lifts ZT-1630 Scissor Lifts

HyBrid Lifts ZT-1630 scissor lift features a 16-foot platform height and a working height of 22 feet. The point-and-go style drive makes movement easier in confined spaces with proportional controls for lift positioning. The unit includes a built-in tool tray. The scissor stack supports the weight of the platform with four points of contact. Low wheel loads allow users to maneuver over delicate floors and get onto green concrete sooner. The units are made with high-grade steel and feature non-marking tires and a low step-in height.



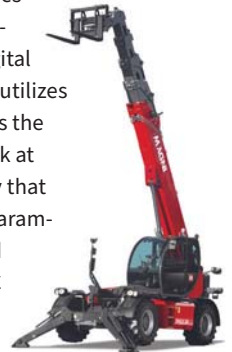
JLG R11100 Rotating Telehandler

JLG's R11100 rotating telehandler features a capacity of 13,000 pounds and maximum reach height of 97 feet, JLG's tallest. It offers 3-in-1 machine capabilities – a traditional telehandler, a MEWP when equipped with a platform attachment or a rough-terrain crane when equipped with a truss boom and winch. Since the unit is often operated in place, it comes with front and rear scissor-style outriggers with automatic leveling jacks, which enable the operator to position the machine and then level the frame up to 6 degrees to compensate for uneven terrain. The R11100 is equipped with 168-hp FPT diesel engine and a 2-speed, stop-to-shift hydrostatic transmission for a smoother ride over uneven terrain.



Magni TH 5,5.24 Fixed Boom Telehandler

The Magni TH 5,5.24 fixed boom telehandler has a maximum lifting height of 78 feet 5 inches and lifting capacity of 12,100 pounds, equipped with standard 4-wheel drive and three types of steering (front, 4-wheel and crab.) Pivoting outriggers in the front add stability and versatility. The digital Load Moment Indicator is an intelligent system that utilizes RFID-tagged attachments and automatically updates the digital display with the precise load chart for the task at hand. Magni incorporated Load-Limiting technology that prevents operators from exceeding safe operating parameters. The new cab design provides an unobstructed 360-degree view. The cab is equipped with full HVAC and filtered air, ensuring a comfortable working environment in any climate.



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MEC NANO10-XD Electric 10-Foot Scissor Lift

MEC Aerial Work Platforms NANO10 electric scissor lift is ultra compact and eliminates the risk of oil leaks because of zero hydraulic oil and an all-electric lift, steer and drive. The NANO10-XD delivers extended battery duty cycle with standard lithium-ion batteries. With a platform height of 10 feet, the unit is designed for data centers, hospitality, food and pharmaceutical applications. Lightweight at 1,235 pounds, with low ground pressure, the machine fits on standard elevators and can work on a wide range of floor types. At 63 inches tall with no folding rails, it can get through standard door frames. It comes with a standard Xtra Deck to get through 2 feet X 2 feet ceiling grids.



Skyjack's DC Electric Scissors

Skyjack's new range of DC electric scissors features AC brushless electric drive motors and other design changes. The range will be launched globally throughout 2024 replacing hydraulic drive models. The drive system provides strong duty cycles and fully proportional controls. With improved efficiency, controllability and torque, runtime improves by 20 percent, the manufacturer says. The sealed drive motor is maintenance free. The drive motors have no oil leakage



potential, and an optimized hydraulic lift and steer manifold reduces hydraulic connections by 70 percent, reducing potential for ground contamination and associated clean-up costs. An optional leak containment system is available. With E-Drive, Skyjack introduces a new CAN bus-based operating system.

Snorkel S3013 Mini Electric Drive Scissor Lift

The Snorkel s3013 mini electric drive scissor lift is suitable for indoor and outdoor use and fits through a standard doorway. A roll-out deck extension and 600-pound maximum platform capacity makes the unit usable for two people or one person plus materials. A deep-cycle 24V DC battery and non-marking solid rubber tires enable clean and quiet indoor use. Maximum working height is 19 feet, maximum platform height is 13 feet, the platform size when extended is 29.5 inches x 76 inches. Overall width is 30 inches and stowed height is 72.75 inches. The unit weighs 2,100 pounds.



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