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Monitor Controls: Holding to a Higher Standard

Profiles

By emphasizing training in this family business, Monitor Controls has influenced other security integrators to be held to a higher standard. by Lee Distad

Monitor Controls knows a thing or two about training and education.

The Wallingford, CT-based integrator, founded in 1970 by president John Yusza, Jr., has been leading the charge to hold security companies to a higher educational standard, starting at home.

All new hires must pass Certified Alarm/Security Technician - Level 1, regardless of their prior experience. In fact, Deborah Sokol, Yusza's daughter and Monitor's CFO, was the third woman in Connecticut to be Level 1 certified.



John Yusza, Jr., Deborah Sokol, Jason Sokol

A family owned and operated business, Monitor Controls' management team is Yusza, Jr.; his son, John III, Vice President; his daughter, CFO; and his son-in-law, Jason Sokol, Operations Manager.

Training Provides an Advantage Over the Competition

Education is a critical component of Monitor Controls' success.

After new hires finish Level 1, their training remains ongoing and often accelerates in pace with specialist NTS courses and the 10-hour OSHA certification.

Every week, hardware vendors are invited to present vendor-specific training at Monitor Controls' office, usually covering the specifics of a piece of new equipment.

"The level of training our techs have gives us a decided advantage over the competition in our market," says Deborah Sokol.

"It sets up a three-way win for our company, our techs, and most importantly, our customers," says Jason Sokol, who teaches troubleshooting skills and service call training in house.

Spreading Training Throughout the State

Holding their techs to a higher standard has resulted in "bringing the state up to our standard," says Deborah.

"As of January 2010, the state of Connecticut now [recognizes] NTS classes in order to gain licensing. This is due to my dad's [John Jr.'s] involvement in the state alarm and electrical boards.

"As a result, he's been extremely influential in helping to shape state licensing requirements."

Deborah is responsible for creating and developing the 7-hour Continuing Education Unit (CEU) course required to maintain the state's low voltage technician licence, which was a challenge.

"Taking state law and OSHA regulations and trying to keep them interesting wasn't easy," she jokes.

Monitor's involvement in the industry doesn't stop at state licensing. They are strongly committed to giving back through training and education.

Both Jason and John Jr. are certified NTS instructors, as have many employees been over the years. John Jr. was awarded the NBFSA's Instructor of the Year in 1989, and was recognized in 2009 as State Coordinator of the Year.

In addition, Deborah sits on the National Installation Quality (IQ) certification board, and technician Dan DiPaulo was appointed Regional VP of CASIA, the Connecticut Alarm and System Integration Association.

A Family Affair

It's notable that Monitor Controls is the single largest family-owned independent alarm dealer in the state, with many relatives amongst their 40 or so employees.

"It's actually amazing that we work so well together," says Jason.

Beyond that, however, they give much of the credit to their success to their commitment to training and continuing education.

Monitor Controls serves residential, commercial and industrial clients in Connecticut, eastern New York and all of southern New England. They are licensed in CT, NY, MA and RI. <http://www.monitorcontrols.com>