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Industry Interview – People’s Corner with Michael Sparks

Introduction

From machinery protection and condition monitoring to specialized sensor applications, we provide our Oil & Gas customers with innovative technologies. Our upstream, midstream, and downstream solutions are developed to constantly improve productivity and efficiency while meeting the most comprehensive industry specifications. The industry-leading condition monitoring and diagnostics software, System 1, brings all assets and data types across a facility together in a single user interface. Today, I want to introduce you to one of our Industry leaders and his perspective on our outlook as we kick off 2022.

1. Michael, please tell me about yourself.

I grew up in Arkansas and participated in athletics and all forms of outdoor activity which I still love today. University led me to the foothills of the Ozarks where I received a Bachelor of Science in Chemical Engineering from the University of Arkansas (Go Hogs, Woo Pig Soobie). My first career stop was with an Engineered Products Representative firm selling products and services to a variety of industrial concerns. One of those products was condition monitoring systems.

The transition to a leadership role with that firm brought my family of my wife and daughter to Middle Tennessee (just South of Nashville) where we have been since the move from Arkansas. Home and family are the two things that keep me grounded. I was able to share my love of sports and the outdoors with my daughter as I managed her travel soccer team as we traveled throughout the Southeast for tournaments. It was quite the learning experience with never having played soccer, but an opportunity to fall in love with the sport. The leadership lessons of managing an under 16 travel soccer team that includes friends and family are stories better left for another day.

From my home, I have served the Condition Monitoring and Asset Management needs of Industrial Customers with a variety of companies in a variety of leadership roles throughout the North American and Global Industrial marketplace.

2. Please tell me about your career history with Bentley Nevada so far and how it compares to your previous roles?

I have only been with Bentley Nevada for just over a year now. While I have had several sales leadership roles in my career, Bentley Nevada is by far the most transparent from top to bottom organization of which I have been a part. Compared to my previous roles in business development and market strategy, the openness to new ideas and willingness to try new things by upper management is unsurpassed. The support, receptiveness, and freedom to explore “what should be” is phenomenal. I have been a competitor to Bentley Nevada for my entire career other than a short stint in Industrial Automation. What I see as one of the major game-changers is the degree and dedication to employee training through opportunities like FeLP, Bentley Nevada Knowledge Bank, and Ready in X for new sales personnel set the organization apart from my previous organizations. This coupled with the investment in extraordinary communication platforms like Teams, Deal Machine, Yammer, and the constant updates via corporate communications provide a unique and competitive advantage to better serve our Industrial customers.

3. Please share with us your evolving role with BN Industry and how it differs from your previous role(s)?

In many respects, my role with Bently Nevada Industrial is similar to my previous roles in that the focus is on expanding the company's presence and customer base in the industrial market. Previous roles were across all industrial vertical markets. My current role is focused on the Pulp and Paper, Metal and Steel, and Mining industrial vertical markets. It is evolving to provide mentoring on the processes, opportunities, and strategies for success across all North America, and coordinating the same for customers that have footprints in other regions. A primary difference from my previous roles is that Bently Nevada has the products and services to fully add value, and the management support and vision of Baker Hughes to make a significant difference in the customer's world across sites and industries.

4. What are the take-aways from your previous role(s) that you have brought into this role?

It may sound trite, but really the basics of providing value to customers. Listening to their concerns, advocating on their behalf, and helping them document their successes. In my current role, that is a little different in that it is for a particular industrial vertical and not necessarily a current customer. It provides an opportunity to be the voice of the customer within our own organization.

5. Who does your team comprise of?

My team is primarily comprised of the Foundation and Industrial (F & I team) sales managers, but also any of our sales managers that may need assistance in pursuing Industrial accounts or core accounts that also are involved in Mining or have processes similar to industrial accounts. Speaking of team, I have been so impressed by how the "all-for-one one-for-all" attitude has been instilled by leadership. It allows the team to be much more effective.

6. What is unique about Bently Nevada Industry?

The Bently Nevada Industrial team is unique in that as an organization, is that many of our customers know and trust us from the part of their organization that generates power for their industrial processes (power islands). It allows us to expand relationships as a trusted partner while fine-tuning their ability to more efficiently produce their products. More on that later. The level of knowledge within Bently Nevada about applying condition monitoring systems is unequalled in the industry. The management of Baker Hughes has positioned Bently Nevada to be best in class in the different products and services that make up Integrated Asset Performance Management. We are seen by those serving on the power islands as a trusted advisor. That provides us references with those organizations that can speak to our reliability, commitment to excellence, and great customer service.

7. Please share with us the direction and future of the BN Industry organization through the lens of a Industry leader?

We are on the cusp of being able to deliver to Industrial Plant Managers the vision of what has been promised as long as I have been in the field of supplying condition monitoring and asset performance management to industrial entities. A Plant Manger or VP of Operatons has long had the ability to look at a dashboard to evaluate their profitability with regard to labor, raw materials, production rate etc. With the organizations investment in ARMS Reliability and other partner organizations, that same plant manager or VP of Operations now can economically construct a dashboard to assess the risk posed to continued production and profitability, and ways to improve that profitability. This is the scope and goal of our Integrated Asset Performance Management offering to the industrial market. We are in a unique position to bring our proven ability and knowledge to impact carbon emissions with our core customers to the Industrial sectors which now are having to address those same issues that our core customers have navigated. The extraordinary ability of our sales managers to deliver this vision and message with the assistance of the assembled Application Solution Architect team promises success. Also the ability to have a lot of fun doing it.

8. During Covid 2020/21, how has the Industry team pivoted to support our employees and customers? How will they continue to support through the pandemic into 2022?

As with most of our organization we have learned a new way of working remotely and taking advantage of technology to communicate. I also believe that the entirety of the organization has made it a practice of checking up on each other and our customers in these challenging times. For those instances where presence is required, following the guidelines set forth by our HSE teams and adhering to the requirement has, by and large, kept us and our customers safe. I see this continuing as we grow more accustomed to this new way of working.

9. What type of feedback is the Industry team receiving from the BN employees and the customers during the past two years that we can grow from and continue to support them with, with the lack of interaction while previously being face to face?

I think the feedback from both have been appreciative of the efforts of Bently Nevada to keep everyone safe. Some have commented that remotely, the meetings are more productive and efficient. There will always be the feedback, that the close interaction is missed. We as people like that close contact of companionship.

10. What does Industry mean to you? To our employees? To our customers? Why is it so important?

The industrial sector of customers is important to our global economic health. It provides the economic means for people all over the world to live healthier, happier, and more productive lives. It is important for Bently Nevada and our employees because it is a key pillar for Baker Hughes to Invest in Growth. That is where the Industrial expansion fits. It's important for our customers from a global impact of a healthy world economy, and also from a personal perspective. By being able to assist them in integrating asset performance management, they will be able to plan to keep their facility producing their product, keeping their communities gainfully employed, and living better. With the ability to know what is going on at a facility, across a fleet of facilities, or a group of companies, the stakeholders will be able to make better and more informed decisions about continued existence while taking better care of the world in which we live.

11. Is there anything else you'd like to highlight that we haven't discussed?

As in all my endeavors so far, I am standing on the shoulders of the giants that came before me. I become more excited each day as I see the steps the organization is taking to better serve the Industrial sector and the success that this can bring to Bently Nevada. Thank you for the discussion.

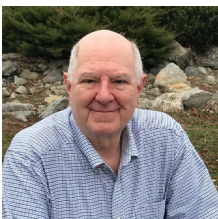
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