

HIGH PERFORMANCE HVAC TODAY™

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HARDI

A Legacy of HVAC
Distribution Excellence

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

**Why System Performance
Measurement Works**

**ABCs of High-Performance
Contracting: Part 5**

**What Makes a Great
High-Performance HVAC
Technician?**

**Celebrating Our
One-Year Anniversary!**



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HIGH PERFORMANCE HVAC TODAY™



MANAGEMENT:

ABCs of High-Performance Contracting – Part 5

Dominick Guarino discusses Return on Investment benefits of moving toward High-Performance Contracting.

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TECHNICAL:

Why System Performance Measurement Works

Rob Falke explains using measurements to solve customer comfort and efficiency issues can also help increase sales.



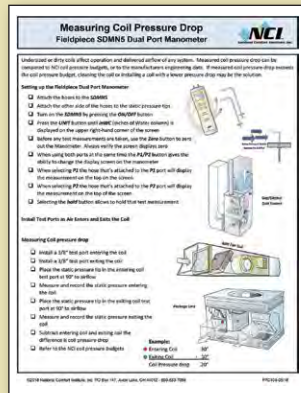
SERVICE:

What Makes A Great High-Performance HVAC Technician?

Here are five key attributes that separate good technicians from GREAT ones. David Holt shares his thoughts on this.

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FREE Monthly Download



This month's download is a procedure for Measuring Coil Pressure Drop using a Fieldpiece SDMN5 Dual Port Manometer. The procedure includes a checklist for setting up this instrument and an eight-step checklist for how to measure coil pressure drop.

Using this procedure helps technicians to determine if coils are undersized or dirty so they can then take the next steps to assure proper system operation.

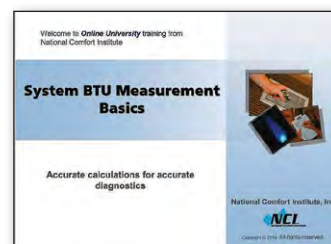
Go to ncilink.com/md1118, or use your phone with the QR Code below.

By registering for free on NCI's website, access this download and many more.



Online University

Featured this month is the **System BTU Measurement Basics** module of our System Performance Testing Series. This class explains why accurate



temperature measurement is one of the essential skills you'll need to effectively test HVAC systems using NCI's HeatMaxx™ and CoolMaxx™.

By adding system temperature measurements to your service routine, you can discover things like duct leakage, poor insulation, and other problems that cause HVAC systems to operate at an average of less than 60% of their capability.

Discover more at ncilink.com/ou1118.



BLOG POSTS



WHY SYSTEM PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT WORKS

Rob Falke explains how high-performance HVAC can work for you and your customers. He says, "All the government and utility programs want is for HVAC contractors to capitalize on what they've tried to offer the public for decades. They've created the demand, that's their job. Yours is to deliver to your customers what they have wanted and are willing to pay for all along."

Read his blog post at ncilink.com/WhyPMW



MANAGING YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET

Time is so valuable because it's perishable – it has an expiration date. What you don't invest, you spend, you burn up, or you waste. David Holt shares six tips on how to best manage time and benefit your business and your life.

Read his blog here: ncilink.com/Time

There's An App for That ... PRESSURE/TEMPERATURE CALCULATOR



This month our featured app is from National Refrigerants. It is a comprehensive Pressure/Temperature calculation tool with several features designed to make the HVACR technician's job easier.

It calculates a simple pressure/temperature relationship or superheat/subcool temperatures. Techs input pressure or temperature(s) on any screen and the other values are automatically calculated and displayed.

For refrigerant blends, both saturated vapor and saturated liquid values are displayed. Within the superheat/subcool screen, a graphic display for blends shows entering, mid-point, and outlet temperature.

This **FREE** app is available for download in both the **Apple** (ncilink.com/1118App) and **Google** (ncilink.com/1118App2) stores.



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Airflow Testing Accuracy in the Field

Advances in airflow instruments and technician certification have increased the accuracy of field airflow measurement in recent years. Test methods are now simplified through advancing instrument technology, and skills are improving because of a steady rise in field airflow testing throughout the HVAC industry.

Speakers: Rob Falke, President, National Comfort Institute; Ben Lipscomb, PE, Engineering Manager, NCI

Monday, Jan. 14, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM
Location: B315

Quick Guide to Applying Fan and Pump Laws

Learn about this quick guide to remember and apply pump and fan (affinity) laws in your daily work. This seminar will provide more than a dozen examples of applications using fan & pump laws. Understanding these laws enables test & balance, commissioning, and facilities maintenance professionals to apply and solve problems on a daily basis.

Speaker: Scott Fielder, Director, National Balancing Council

Monday, Jan. 14, 2:30 PM - 3:30 PM
Location: B315

What it Takes to Get an Installed HVAC System to Operate at Equipment Rated Capacity

Most believe it's extremely difficult to optimize the performance of an installed HVAC system. Fortunately, developing your skill and ability to discover system defects may be easier than you think. Once the defects are identified, improving system efficiency may be more straightforward than you ever imagined.

Speakers: Rob Falke, President, National Comfort Institute; Ben Lipscomb, PE, Engineering Manager, NCI

Tuesday, Jan. 15, 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM
Location: B312

How Much Energy Can HVAC System Balancing Save?

Testing alone doesn't save any energy. However, when an HVAC system is balanced, some energy is saved by bringing the system closer to designer and equipment manufacturer specifications. When additional balancing testing is used to diagnose the system, hidden system shortcomings are exposed and custom repairs can be made. Custom repairs are where the greatest HVAC savings can be found.

Speakers: Ben Lipscomb, PE, Engineering Manager, NCI; Peter Jacobs, President, Building Metrics

Monday, Jan. 14, 4:00 PM - 5:30 PM
Location: B315

Register for FREE today at: AHRExpo.com

Come Visit NCI/NBC at Booth #BC4929

TODAY'S WORD

By Mike Weil

Distribution's Key Role in Contractor Training



Mike Weil is editor-in-chief and director of communications and publications at National Comfort Institute, Inc. He can be reached at MikeW@ncihvac.com

With the writing of this column, HARDI's 2018 annual meeting is just a month away. This distributor event's theme focuses on the legacy that distribution has within the HVAC Industry. It reminds me, once again, of the vital role that distributors play, especially when it comes to training their customer base -- you, the HVAC contractors.

Let's face it, training programs for HVAC dealers are available from many sources around the country. Training providers include HVAC manufacturers, distributors, trade associations, as well as consultants.

But distributors hold a special place in the training channel.

They are the front-line link between manufacturers and the contractors. Good distributors know that to stand out and have the greatest success, they have to find ways to help contractors be more successful. This often means helping contractors become better business people. Many distributors also offer technical training -- usually from the equipment manufacturers whose product lines they carry.

That works well when the idea is to better understand how to install and service equipment. Doesn't it make total sense for distributors to partner with other organizations that offer training that goes beyond the "box," by teaching contractors to test, diagnose, and resolve system-wide issues?

It seems to me that contractors who are well trained and certified, tend to be better at running their businesses and solving customer problems. That means their businesses grow, which leads to them buying more products and services.

Offering training to contractor customers is an essential investment.

From a contractor viewpoint, having a strong distributor relationship not only gives them access to the products and equipment they need to take care of their consumer customers, it also provides them back-up and a training partner.

There is another way to look at this as well. By offering training to contractor customers, distributors are actually rewarding them for purchasing products and materials.

This is key.

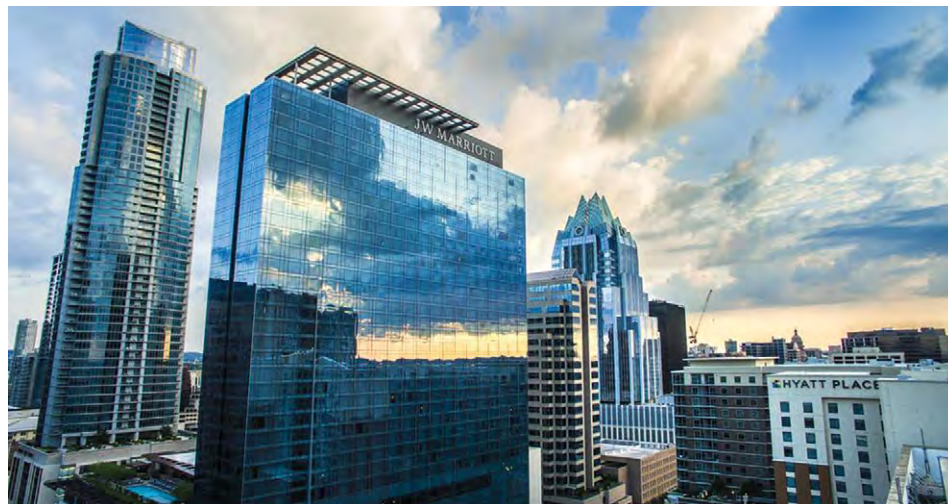
By rewarding contractors in this way, it makes it easier for them to justify time away from the business to learn more about the technology and products they work with every day, making them better at what they do.

This is especially important in the realm of Performance-Based Contracting™ where technical expertise goes well beyond just replacing equipment and upselling accessories. Right now, this High-Performance approach to HVAC is just a small segment of the overall industry, but it is only a matter of time before it sets a new, higher bar. It is also only a matter of time before residential and commercial consumers begin to demand it.

Last month in his *One More Thing* editorial (<http://ncilink.com/1018OMT>), *An Open Invitation to Manufacturers: The Future is Here and Now*, Publisher Dominick Guarino wrote the following: "The best choice is to BE PROACTIVE and develop a network of indoor comfort professionals with the training and the tools they need to make the entire system work correctly."

By supporting your contractor customers in this way, not only do distributors create a mutually beneficial relationship, the HVAC distribution chain can change the entire industry. And that benefits everyone.

HARDI Annual Conference Set for December in Austin



Every December, the Heating, Airconditioning, and Refrigeration Distributors International (HARDI) hosts its Annual Conference for its HVAC distributor members. The four-day event is set for December 1-4 at the JW Marriott, Austin, TX.

The meeting brings together distributors, manufacturers, and other vendors from across the HVAC Industry to work on driving their businesses forward, growing their professional networks, and expanding their industry knowledge.

This year HARDI's theme is Legacy, which focuses on the rich 100-plus-year history of the HVACR distribution industry and its impact on modern society today and on into the future.

"I have been very fortunate to be Chairman of HARDI for such a groundbreaking year," says Troy Meachum, HARDI's 2018 chairman. Meachum is president of ACR Supply Co. in North Carolina. He adds, "With this year's theme of Legacy, we took a meaningful approach to analyzing and discussing how HVACR industry professionals

do business, and I could not be more excited to bring it all together down in Austin."

HARDI has put together a very full agenda divided into three tracks:

- **Explore:** Analytics, Trends, Data
- **Execute:** Culture, Brand Development,

HARDI

Recruitment

- **Expand:** Strategy, Innovation, and Technology.

Kicking the program off will be keynote speaker Matthew Griffin, co-founder and CEO of a company called Combat Flip Flops, a footwear and apparel company that sells goods manufactured in conflict and post-conflict zones.

Other speakers include:

- **Dr. Alan Beaulieu** – Principal at ITR Economics and senior economic advisor to several trade associations
- **Frances Stroh** – Award-winning au-

thor of BEER MONEY: A Memoir of Privilege and Loss

- **Gerry O'Brien** – Professional speaker and strategy consultant

- **Barry Brandman** – Widely recognized security expert and CEO of Danbee Investigations

- **Susan Frew** – Co-owner and president of Sunshine Plumbing, Heating and Air in Denver, Colorado.

- **Ian Heller** – President/COO of Modern Distribution Management, a resource for market intelligence and industry insight.

- **Mohammad Ali** – Expert in Virtual Reality production, distribution, and education.

- **Luke Hall-Jordan** – Chief of the EPA's Stratospheric Program Implementation Branch.

- **Danielle Wright** – Executive Director for the North American Sustainable Refrigeration Council (NASRC)

- **Richard Hadden** – Author and workplace expert with a focus on Leadership and Employee Engagement.

- **Mark Chaffee** – Vice President of Governmental Affairs & Sustainability for Taco, Inc.

- **Susan Rider** – Consultant in Employee Benefit and Human Capital Management.

- **Chad Morris** – Designs industry-leading cost containment strategies to improve organizations' employee benefits programs.

- **Charlie Warren** – CEO of Convex, a leading data analytics business for the HVAC sales and service market.

The meeting will also feature two distributor panel discussions. The first is the **Young Talent Panel** moderated by Stefan Busch of the Nexstar network.

The second is the **Legacy Panel** led by Tom Gale of Modern Distribution Management. Learn more about all the

High-Performance HVAC Today Magazine Celebrates First Anniversary

November is the one-year anniversary of *High-Performance HVAC Today* magazine – the new voice for the Performance-Based Contracting™ Industry. As publisher Dominick Guarino wrote in the inaugural issue, "Performance-Based Contracting™ (PBC) is more than just a technical discipline. It's a culture within organizations that aren't satisfied with just installing, replacing, or servicing equipment.

"These contractors understand they can provide customers with the highest level of quality and performance when they test every HVAC system they come in contact with. Performance testing allows them to verify each system is operating at optimum performance

"And then they can provide documented proof."

Twelve issues later, Editor-in-Chief Mike Weil says, "Our editorial is written by high performance contractors for contractors who are also performance-based or are considering taking that path.

"We write about the news and technologies that impact performance-based HVAC contractors and their customers, as well as the changes in the business necessary to successfully implement processes and procedures for operating as a high-performance company."

During the last year, 30+ industry experts – National Comfort Institute trainers and Performance-Based Contractors from across the country – shared their knowledge here. In fact, *High-Performance HVAC Today* published more than 380 pages of content geared toward implementing and enhancing PBC into an HVAC contracting business.

After one year, we'd like to thank all of the advertisers and partners who have supported the magazine and recognize the nearly 15,000 subscribers.

To advertise in the magazine and reach this unique audience of HVAC contractors, contact Dave Kenney at DaveK@ncihvac.com or call him at 440-670-5370 with questions.

If you'd like to receive our digital or print version of the magazine, just go to ncilink.com/subscribe and sign up. Or if you'd like to write for the magazine, submit your ideas at hvactoday.com/contribute/. We look forward to continuing our service to the High-Performance HVAC contracting industry for years to come.



speakers and panelists here: hardiconference.com/speakers/.

To register, follow this link: hardiconference.com/register/

For more information, go to the hardiconference.com/ website.

SEPTEMBER'S PHOTO OF THE MONTH WINNER

The winner of the \$50 gift card in the *High-Performance HVAC Today* magazine photo contest was Dawn Mroczek of GV's Heating and Cooling, Glenview, IL.

The contest is for readers to share some of the amazing or crazy installations they find while on service or new



Dawn Mroczek

install calls. Photos are posted on the *High-Performance HVAC Today* website and visitors vote on the one they think should win the gift card, courtesy of National Comfort Institute.

Dawn writes, "Thank you so much!

This was a great surprise to win!"

If you'd like to submit a photo for consideration in an upcoming contest, it's simple: just go to ncilink.com/PhotoOfMonth and upload the photo and a brief description.

AHR INNOVATION AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

AHR Show Management recently announced the winners of the [2019 AHR Expo Innovation Awards competition](http://2019AHRExpo.com). Each year, products in 10 different categories are recognized for being some of the HVACR industry's most innovative

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products, systems, and technologies.

Winners were selected by a panel of third-party ASHRAE member judges who evaluated each award entry based

on its innovative design, creativity, application, value, and market impact.

All winners will be formally recognized during the 2019 AHR Expo, Jan. 14-16 at the Georgia World Congress in Atlanta. The ceremony is open to all Show attendees and is slated for January 15 at 1:00 PM EST.

The AHR Expo will also announce this year's winner of their **Product of the Year Award** at the ceremony. To see a complete list of winners, go to ncilink.com/19AHRWin.

Meanwhile, if you plan on attending the expo, be sure to stop by booth BC4929 and say hello to the National Comfort Institute team.

SOCAL EDISON PRESENTS \$1.8 MILLION REBATE TO CALIFORNIA MANUFACTURER

The Southern California Edison utility recently presented a \$1.85 million check – one of its largest incentive rebates to date – to leaders at circuit manufacturer TowerJazz for upgrades to their plant in Newport Beach, CA. TowerJazz manufactures next-generation integrated circuits (ICs) in growing markets such as consumer, industrial, automotive, medical, and aerospace.



TowerJazz collaborated with Trane® (ncilink.com/TraneComm) to complete energy-saving upgrades which reduced peak energy demand by more than 1.3 megawatts, saving about 12.5 million



kilowatt hours annually. This is equivalent to eliminating greenhouse gas emissions from 2,000 cars.

The project focused on modernizing TowerJazz's chiller plant and replacing aging and outdated equipment. The plant has more than 800 employees and fabricates 200-millimeter wafers (silicon material used in electronics for the manufacture of integrated circuits).

Completed in November 2017, the upgrades reduced HVAC energy use by nearly 50% while improving the manufacturing and working environment. The plant, previously the organization's second-to-worst energy user, is now the second most efficient energy user.

For more information, please click on this link: ncilink.com/SoCalRebate.

ASHRAE REALIGNS RELATIONSHIP WITH IAQA

ASHRAE recently announced they reached an agreement with the Indoor



Air Quality Association (IAQA) for IAQA to transition them to an association management firm.

IAQA became an affiliate of ASHRAE in 2015. In that relationship, IAQA's operational base became integrated within ASHRAE's operations in Atlanta, GA. With this new change, IAQA will take on a more independent management position. Both organizations are committed to continue collaborative programming that benefits all members involved.

During its affiliation, IAQA operated independently within ASHRAE's organizational structure, maintaining its own brand and Board of Directors.

IAQA will now be managed by AH, an association management company

with offices in Mount Laurel, NJ and suburban Washington, DC.

BUILDING A HIGHER STANDARD DEALER/DISTRIBUTOR AWARDS

American Standard announced the winners of its 2018 "**Building a Higher Standard**" awards, for dealer commit-



ment to customers, employees, and their communities.

The manufacturer launched this awards program in 2018 to recognize independent HVAC dealers across the country for exemplifying American Standard's core values, including integrity, community involvement, teamwork, and a focus on continuous improvement in the pursuit of excellence.

Winners include:

- Florida Keys Air Conditioning and Gemaire Distributors, Marathon, FL
- Andrews Heating & Air Conditioning, Clinton, IN
- Shafer Services Plus, San Antonio, TX
- Cary Heating & Air Conditioning, La Crosse, WI.

"This award is our new, highest honor for the highly skilled contractors who represent our brand," said John Hofmann, Vice President for American Standard. "We are proud to recognize these inaugural winners."

Winners were selected from a competitive pool of nominations and are featured in a video series playing across national and regional media through January 2019.

TACO WATER HEATER SHUT-OFF WITH ELINK™

The LeakBreaker, which guards against flood damage from a leaking water heater, is now available with Taco Comfort Solutions' **eLink wireless** technology.

It consists of a control unit, a valve



with an actuator, a sensor, and WiFi capability. This allows status alerts to be sent directly to a user's mobile device whenever a change occurs.

This resettable, testable, protection

device can be installed on any style water heater to shut off incoming water supply and prevent more water flow to a damaged water heater. Alerts are now also sent via text or email.

The unit's plumb-and-plug design – with full-port valve and easily-removed actuator – is perfect for new or retrofit installation.

For more information, please visit TacoComfort.com.

HAIER DUCTLESS WIFI ADAPTER

Haier ductless mini-splits now can be controlled via your mobile device. It's simple to install – just plug the USB WiFi module into the indoor unit, download the app to your mobile device, and sync up the equipment to your smart device.

This allows consumers to control their



comfort systems from wherever they are whenever they want.

The adapter's dimensions are 3.15-in. wide X 2.36-in. deep and is compatible with the following Haier ductless series:

- Arctic
- Advanced
- Tempo
- FlexFit.

For more information, please visit ncilink.com/haier.

MyHomeComfort.org

The source for home owners to find the right contractor (you!)

As an NCI-certified professional, you are uniquely trained to solve comfort, energy, safety, and health issues for home owners. **They are looking for you, so don't miss out!**

MyHomeComfort.org is the place where home owners can get their questions answered and to find you, the professional they need.

You can only be listed if you or your company are currently NCI-certified, so be sure that all your certifications are up-to-date. NCI members get a premiere listing with additional information about your company. **Be sure to take advantage of this lead-generating tool today!**

Call NCI Customer Care at 800.633.7058 to confirm your listing is correct and up-to-date.

Four Seasons Air Conditioning: Taking Their Market by Storm

Ask anyone if they know where Kingsville, Texas is located, and I'll guarantee you'll get a different answer from all of them. Unless you ask a Texan, of course. They know the city of Kingsville is along the Gulf Coast not far from Corpus Christi – a city built in the early 20th Century to help bring the railroad close to the King Ranch (which remains the largest ranch in Texas with more than 825,000 acres).

Of course, people in the know will tell you the late, great Jim Morrison, lead balladeer for the incredible rock band, The Doors, hails from Kingsville. As does actress Eva Longoria.

It is also the city where, in 1966, Four Seasons Air Conditioning and Heating Co. (FSAC) was founded by husband and wife team John and Johanna Smith. The fledgling residential and light commercial air conditioning firm focused on the fast-paced and growing

new construction market. As that market grew, so did Smiths' company.

One day, three years after starting the company, John Smith stopped into a local gas station and met a young service attendant named Jim Altman. Altman was looking to improve his work conditions and Smith needed a helper for the air conditioning business. The rest, as they say, is history.

LEARNING THE TRADE

Says Altman, "In 1969, John put me to work sweeping floors. I knew nothing about air conditioning and wondered what was going on. Within a few months I was doing rough-ins on new construction jobs. For whatever reason the work came easily to me and John Smith was happy with my performance. In fact he soon entrusted me to run the rough-in jobs. I was making \$1.80 an hour and

thought I was doing really great.

"I enjoyed the work very much. My promotions progressed from Installer, to Install Lead Man, to Install Manager, to Service Technician to Service Manager," he says.

A CHANGING MARKETPLACE

During those early days in Altman's career, the marketplace began changing mightily as new construction began to wane and service and replacement became king. The Smiths recognized the change and slowly began increasing the amount of service and replacement work they did. During this phase, Jim Altman moved more to the service side of the business.

"I had to learn many new and different things to be successful on the service/replacement side," he explains.

For 10 years his job was to go into older homes and



Jim Altman



Four Seasons Air Conditioning is the home of Performance-Based Contracting in Kingsville, TX.



Four Season's Field Service and Installation team has the mindset that there isn't a home out there that they cannot fix.

convert them to central air and heat.

He says, "I spent 10 years of my life in attics in South Texas. It was hot. There were days when I questioned my intelligence as I crawled around in attics that were 140 degrees. I was sweat soaked every day. But as it turns out, I liked the work. I liked taking a building or house that had no air conditioning in it and totally converting it to central air and heat. I thought that was pretty cool."

BECOMING AN OWNER

Fast forward to 1988, Altman is working as a lead technician. The Smiths are looking to retire and sell him the company.

When he first bought the company, the staff consisted of Altman, a bookkeeper and several employees. The business was grossing around \$300,000 annually.

"I thought about changing the company name because we *really only have two seasons down here – hot and hotter*," Altman says. "Then I thought better of it because the company was already well established and growing."

Today, FSAC grosses around \$2.2 million with 24 employees. They field six service and three installation trucks out of a 10,000 sq. ft. facility. And Altman says they have thousands of loyal customers stretching over four counties in South Texas.

FSAC is a Lennox dealer and has been since its beginning. In fact, 2018

is FSAC's 50th anniversary being a Lennox contracting firm.

Over his 30 years of ownership, the company has begun adapting the high-performance HVAC approach to doing business. The company motto, "**Measure Everything, Assume Nothing**," tells that story. Through training and continuing education, Altman's team learns to interpret those measurements and diagnose problems in ways that leave their competitors scratching their heads.

TRAINING IS THE KEY TO SUCCESS

"Our mission statement is, '**The Endless Pursuit of Excellence**,'" Altman explains. Training is the operative word here. It is through on-going training that we stand out and fulfill our customers' expectations."

He points out that when manufacturers and suppliers offer classroom training sessions, FSAC technicians attend. This costs the company valuable resources, but Altman explains that "staying up-to-date with fast-paced industry advances allows us to sleep at night."

Altman adds, "Our secret is knowing we do all we can to help our customers with new innovations as well as staying abreast of the latest tools and testing strategies to keep them comfortable, safe, and energy efficient."

In 2008, FSAC upped the ante and brought in National Comfort Institute, Inc. to train the team in Performance-Based Contracting™. He says

this was their first step onto the performance path.

"This revolutionized our modus operandi – that is, we now measure air conditioning performance just like a doctor measures blood pressure. We have actual numbers that prove if a system is performing or not.

"Ten years later we have "Certified Professionals" in the field, which requires ongoing training for bi-annual renewal," he says proudly.

"We call ourselves "air-heads" because we recognize the importance the "air-side" of the system plays in comfort system success. Our training and certification vastly improve our ability to analyze and fine-tune duct systems as well as furnaces and air conditioning units.

"Our motto forces us to also deliver on a new system, not just install and walk away. We must diagnose the *complete system*, not just that broken part. This is key to our success."

SYSTEM RENOVATIONS AND UPGRADES

Altman tells a story about his early days installing air conditioning. He says John Smith used to take him into a newly constructed house and conduct a room-by-room walk through. Smith would say, 'Give me a 10 – 6 grill here, an 8 – 4 there,' and so on. Altman would ask, 'How do you know what to put where?' Smith's answer was, 'I just know from experience.'

"Because of our exposure to the

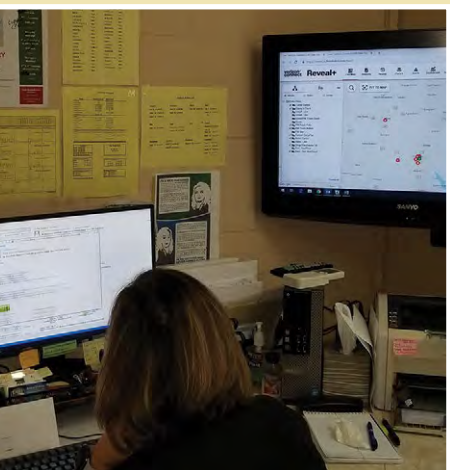
concepts of Performance-Based Contracting,” Altman continues, “I know that experience isn’t enough. It needs to be backed up by some design details including load and duct-size calculations. These practices are



Judy Lutz manages the Four Seasons warehouse and is in charge of parts procurement.



Rose Morrow is the front line for running the maintenance department.



Cindy DeLaPaz is at the dispatch command center. She also serves as assistant service manager.

standards followed by Four Seasons and continue our tradition of being excellent duct system installers/designers who match up mechanical air requirements appropriately.”

But he adds that the technical part is really just the basics. “You need to know how to sell it,” Altman explains.

“You need to know how to talk with customers and ask questions about hot and cold spots in their home, whether anyone suffers from allergies, how many pets do they have, and so on. Just asking these questions has led to profits in excess of \$100,000 for Four Seasons over the years. More importantly, it has led to ecstatic customers.”

By this, he means that customers regularly tell him that other contractors tell them there is nothing to be done about their comfort or energy concerns. Others, he says, tell him that they never thought their indoor air could be the source for many of their health and comfort problems.

MONEY LEFT ON THE TABLE

By addressing customers’ issue, Altman says he usually can offer a menu of four or five options beyond just fixing the mechanical equipment. He says on average he can sell three or more right along with the equipment purchase.

“No one else in our area is taking the time to address these customer concerns,” he says, “because so many are only focused on making quick equipment swap outs. For them, that is just leaving money on the table and potentially a bad taste in the customer’s

mouth. For us, in many cases, this additional work is our most profitable.”

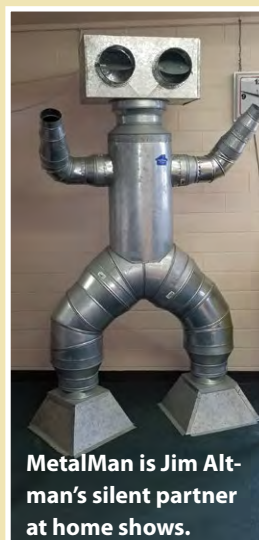
One tool that FSAC comfort consultants use to help sell jobs is the NCI CoolMaxx™ forms. These forms are filled out by service technicians (and sometimes the sales staff) with all the measurements and diagnoses,

which sets the table for explaining to customers what is going on in their home and what options they have for resolving issues.

“We’ve finally got our technicians to where they do a CoolMaxx report on every maintenance call. It took us a while to convince them on how important it was. Then we had to get those reports into the hands of our comfort consultants who use them to convert leads to sales.

“They do this by making comparisons between medical blood pressure and HVAC static pressure, delivered versus rated performance of existing equipment, and so on,” he explains.

“This information is the basis on which our customers make the decisions that transform their homes and even lives, in some cases,” Altman says. “Everything is backed up by load calculations with Manual D and J, as well as additional live measurements made with things like ‘humidity sticks,’ flow hoods, and more. These tools are all our stock and trade. When we bring out the big guns (blower door, duct blaster, CoolMaxx) it just solidifies our position (and sale) with our customers.”



MetalMan is Jim Altman’s silent partner at home shows.

GETTING STAFF BUY-IN

Jim Altman is the first to tell you that Performance-Based Contracting isn’t easy or inexpensive to implement into an HVAC business. It takes time and perseverance. Sometimes it takes bringing in outside experts to help show your team members the light. For FSAC, that outside expert was Paul Wieboldt of NCI. Altman brought Wieboldt to town for several days of sessions on system performance testing. To make it more affordable, Altman says he opened the class and invited contractors from around a 120-mile radius to come to share in the knowledge (and expense) of the class.

He says, “It was great and we haven’t looked back. These NCI procedures are business-getters that we

cannot afford to back-slide on.”

Though it took time and is something they work on every day, Altman says he believes FSAC is firmly established as a Performance-Based HVAC contracting firm now. His company can show the value of properly operating standard, medium, AND high-efficiency equipment. They can assure great airflow and humidity control.

And finally, in Altman’s own words, “We are now in a league of our own. There are a lot of clients out there who recognize the value we bring to the table and will spend the money it takes to keep their family comfortable, safe, healthy, and happy.

“Over these last 10 years, my team and I have developed a mindset that there is not a home that we cannot fix.

The training NCI provides in Residential System Performance, Residential Air Balancing, Commercial Air Balancing, Combustion Analysis, along with our own in-the-field experience, has made us just about bullet-proof.

“The secret now is to keep our eyes on the ball and continue down the Performance Path.”

That sound strangely like the lyrics to Jim Morrison’s song, Roadhouse Blues: “Keep your eyes on the road, your hands upon the wheel.”

We have no doubt that Jim Altman and the entire team at Four Seasons Air Conditioning and Heating will successfully do that, which is why **High-Performance HVAC Today** selected them as the **Contractor Spotlight for November 2018**. NCI





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The ABCs of High-Performance HVAC Contracting: **PART 5**

Your Investment in Performance

Any major change in a company's business model usually requires an associated investment in time, money, and other resources. Transforming your business into a High-Performance HVAC organization requires all three, but done right, your ROI (Return on Investment) will be fast and plentiful.

There are several variables that affect what it takes to build a Performance-Based Contracting™ (PBC) company. These include the size of your organization, your mix of service versus replacement, residential versus commercial, add-on replacement versus new construction, and so forth. The examples in this article are based on the typical investment for a service/replacement company with 10-15 employees. You should be able to adjust the numbers based on your company size and business mix.

The four key factors that impact your investment in time, money, and human resources are:

1. Training
2. Tools and Instruments
3. Marketing

4. Process and Culture Change.

Let's take a look at each factor and examine how it relates to the bigger picture.

YOUR TRAINING INVESTMENT

Your investment in training goes well beyond the cost of sending people to a class or bringing in a trainer for onsite training.

High quality training usually runs between \$300-\$400 per day per person. Believe it or not, this is not your biggest expense. One of the biggest costs is loss of income during the training. I bring this up not to deter you from sending people to training, but to help you get a realistic picture of your training investment.

Why is understanding these real costs important? Because as a good business person, you should always look at your return on any training investment, and how long it will take to pay for itself. Sure, there are many intangible, sometimes tough-to-quantify benefits of training, but when comparing one class to another, you must be able to evaluate the tangible, quantifiable returns for that investment. Everything else is a bonus.

One benefit of Performance-Based training is your ROI can be immediate and tangible. A contractor from Phoenix, Arizona recently emailed me saying he's selling air diagnostics at \$295. He's setting up duct renovation jobs 2-3 months out, filling in his slower times with high margin work.

He wrote, "Since I started using some simple static pressure and airflow tools, things are exploding for me. I have fixed many problems other contractors said couldn't be solved - and I've gained customers for life as a result!" Now there are some tangible, quantifiable returns on his investment! Not only is he getting paid well for his time to do the diagnostic work and solve problems, he's essentially getting paid \$295 to perform a sales call!

When's the last time a customer called you and asked if he or she could pay you for an estimate?



Make no mistake, this contractor is providing real value with documented testing and suggested corrective actions. The difference is **he's getting paid for what he knows.**

A company with 10-15 employees including salespeople, typically invests between \$10,000 and \$15,000 a year in Performance-Based training and education. Remember, training is a never-ending process. In addition to attending formal classes that include certifications, it's important to set up internal reinforcement training on an ongoing basis – preferably weekly. It can be as basic as a half hour Friday morning class reviewing static pressure testing, or as involved as a half day in the field with three to four techs at a time.

Don't forget about online training. High-quality web-based reinforcement training can really pay off. The key is to develop a culture of rewarding ongoing improvement through education.

INVESTING IN TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS

A set of quality diagnostic instruments for your salesperson and/or testing-and-balancing person includes a flow hood, high-quality digital anemometer, static pressure kit,

psychrometer, an infrared thermometer, and a few other tools. Your investment in these tools will run around \$5,000.

At some point there's no way around making this investment. You may be able to borrow or rent some tools to get started, but you'll quickly find it impossible to conduct a performance-based sales call without owning the right tools.



In addition, you'll want to equip your service techs and installers with a few key test instruments, including a static pressure test kit, and a good quality instrument to check temperatures and wet bulb in ductwork. Remember, **"If You Don't Measure, You're Just Guessing!"**

Each of your technicians should also carry a high-quality combustion analyzer and draft gauge. It makes sense for your field people to own these tools, as they will take better care of their instruments when they invest in them personally.

As you begin spreading diagnostics through your company, your investment in new tools and instruments will increase.

But if done right, your payback should also increase tremendously.

YOUR MARKETING INVESTMENT

One of the great things about selling High-Performance HVAC is it requires a much smaller investment in marketing than other products and services. Most of your leads for diagnostics, Air Upgrades, and renovation work will come from existing customers and referrals.

Your existing service customers and your maintenance agreement customers are your best source of leads that should give you the highest closing rates. When properly trained to test and share findings with customers, your service technicians can generate more leads than any other marketing investment.

Once customers experience the benefits of a highly performing system, they will gladly refer you to their family, friends, and neighbors. Be sure to ask for referrals as part of your post-sale follow-up process.

If you decide to invest additional marketing dollars to gain new customers, consider investing in marketing High-Performance tune-ups. Your messaging should explain the benefits your customers will get in terms of safety, health, comfort, and saving money on utility bills. Keep it simple and to the point, with slogans like, *"Experience the High-Performance Service Difference with ABC Heating and Air."*



Catch up on all the installments of this series:

Part 1: What is High-Performance HVAC and Why Do It? ncilink.com/ABCs-1

Part 2: Is It the Right Fit for Your Company? ncilink.com/ABCs-2

Part 3: Five Steps for Becoming A Performance-Based Contractor. ncilink.com/ABCs-3

Part 4: Five More Steps to Becoming a Performance-Based Contractor. ncilink.com/ABCs-4

An additional marketing campaign could market your company as the problem solver for people with Comfort and Indoor Air Quality problems and high utility bills. Here you share how your installations are performance tested for guaranteed results.

Once you've trained your people and have the methods, tools, and instruments to stand behind this guarantee, you can truly rise above your competition.

PROCESS AND CULTURE CHANGE

This is by far the largest investment you'll make in High-Performance Contracting, but it's also the most important and valuable one. Tools can always be purchased, formal training will always be there, but knowledgeable people

are hard to attract and keep. They are by far your most precious asset.

Continuous investment and encouragement to grow their knowledge and skills is vital to your success, not only in selling performance, but in all aspects of your business.

Figure 1 illustrates the typical steps contractors take as they progress up the path of High Performance, along with the investment in training and tools needed along the way.

You can take these steps slightly out of sequence, but try to follow them as closely as possible - they are based on the experience of many people before you.

This example is based on a company currently doing \$1 million in annual Service and Replacement sales. Done

right, a company this size could experience as much as \$600,000/year in very profitable additional Service, Replacement, and System Renovation revenue within the first two years.


Each step shows the approximate investment, and the cumulative Return on Investment (ROI) you should experience as you achieve each goal. Of course, every company will experience different results based on the pace they implement, the length of their technical and sales learning curve, and how well their team embraces the culture change required for implementation.

There's no doubt that creating a High-Performance contracting business requires investment, but what sustainable long-term business

FIGURE 1: Performance-Based Contracting Investment and ROI
Example: Residential Company with \$1 Million in Sales - 2 Service Techs and 2 installers, \$600,000 Additional Annual Revenue with 20-25% Net Profit

Cumulative Annual Net Profit	Training	Approximate Investment		Action/Tools Needed	Approximate Investment		Total Investment
15-20K	Step 1: Air Testing and Diagnostics	\$500/field person x 4	\$2,000.00	Static Pressure Kits	\$200/field person x 4	\$800.00	\$2,800.00
30-40K	Step 2: Duct System Optimization	\$600/field person x 4	\$2,400.00	NCI Membership and ComfortMaxx	\$100/month x 12	\$1,200.00	\$3,600.00
40-60K	Step 3: Air Balancing	1 Lead Balancer	\$800.00	Air Balancing Instruments for Balancer	1 Pro-pack	\$5,000.00	\$5,800.00
70-80K	Step 4: HVAC System Performance	\$600/field person x 4	\$2,400.00	Temperature/Humidity Instruments	\$250/field person x 4	\$1,000.00	\$3,400.00
80-90K	Step 5: Combustion and CO	\$800/field person x 4	\$3,200.00	Combustion Analyzers	\$1,000/field person x 4	\$4,000.00	\$7,200.00
100-120K	Step 6: Performance-Based Selling	1 Salesperson	\$800.00	Set up Pricing	Internal		\$800.00
130-150K	Step 7: Implementation	1 Owner/Manager	\$1,200.00	Update Systems, Processes, etc.	Internal		\$800.00
			\$12,800.00				\$24,800.00



doesn't? Once you've made it through the learning curve, your investment will continue to pay off, month after month, year after year, with your returns increasing exponentially.


Next month we'll dig deeper into the specific training needed to get and keep your company on the profitable and rewarding path to High Performance! 



Dominick Guarino is publisher of HVAC Today magazine and CEO of National Comfort Institute, Inc. He can be reached at domg@ncihvac.com

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WHY System Performance Measurement Works

The quest for greater energy efficiency has been promoted by the government using utility company programs for more than a quarter of a century. This movement has made consumers aware that higher efficiency equipment is the right thing

to use. Manufacturers have responded with higher efficiency equipment and contractors have consistently been able to increase the sale price of their systems because of this.

An increasing number of HVAC contractors are voluntarily measuring the performance of the HVAC systems they install.

They do it because their customers are willing to pay extra for the assurance of increased efficiency and verified comfort.

Let's take a closer look at system performance measurements and how you can use them to solve your customer's comfort and efficiency problems and increase sales.

CONTRACTORS CAPITALIZE ON EFFICIENCY

During this same period of time, leading HVAC contractors took the concepts from utility company programs and began to infuse their sales opportunities with the idea of testing. Since they had a relationship with the customer and were able to work directly with them to make the buying decision, testing evolved into a key component of the sales process.

Testing and diagnostic methods were used and tied to live system-testing that HVAC con-

tractors were already doing. Air balancing and combustion efficiency testing measured the performance characteristics of the HVAC system and compared the collected information to manufacturer's specifications.

When this testing is used today, customers are invited to become involved in the testing and diagnostics of the system, and a contractor/customer bond is created. Using an air-balancing hood enables the customer to "see" and relate to airflow.

By including the customer in the testing process, it will be easier for the contractor to convince the customer that a kitchen that has been uncomfortable for years requires airflow of 100. The contractor should use the balancing hood to show the customer that the measure of airflow is only 35.

Customers quickly understand the cause for inefficiency and desire to have the problem

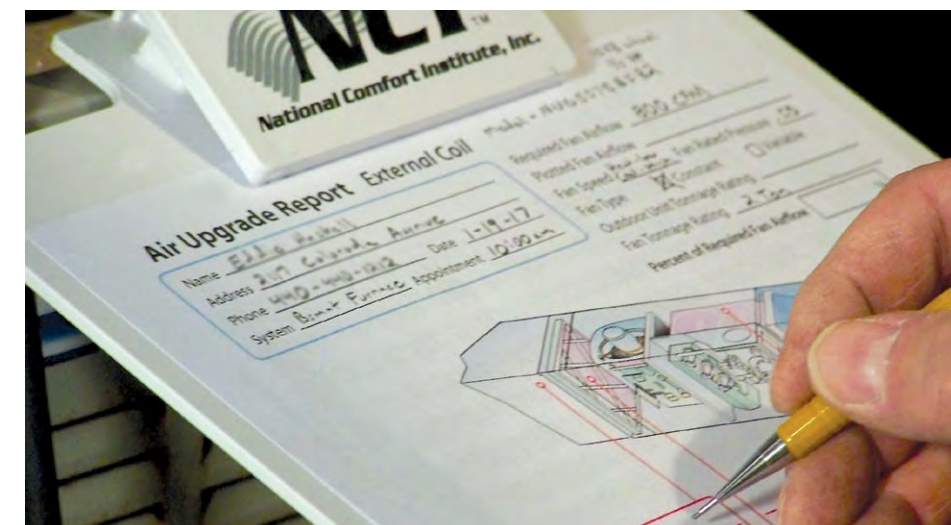
solved. In addition to getting a new box that heats or cools, they will now gain comfort in a room that previously had none.

THE EQUIPMENT AND THE DUCTS MAKE A SYSTEM

New heating and cooling equipment is not an appliance to be swapped out like a refrigerator. System performance measurement helps customers understand that purchasing new equipment alone cannot assure comfort and efficiency.

Efficiency is purchased when duct and equipment defects are discovered using easy to understand live system diagnostics. An air-balancing hood is a good method for basic pressure and temperature testing, and can be very effective at identifying defects that prevent efficiency, comfort, and safety.

Keep pre-sales testing simple and to a minimum. When a customer sees enough to buy, stop testing and make



the sale. Additional testing and diagnostics will be needed to form a detailed scope of work for the installers. The work can be priced and sold to meet your customer's budget and efficiency needs.

A LIVE ONE-HOUR INFOMERCIAL

System performance measurement works because what you've created is a live one-hour infomercial. You've educated and motivated your customer to get more than a new box that did the same thing the old one did. Typically the sale increases by a third, but more importantly, you can now actually deliver the efficiency and comfort that others can't.

Through testing and diagnostics, you also exposed the feeble attempts of your competition to sell a high-efficiency box that cannot deliver what they promised. Your customers win and you win.

CAPITALIZE ON THE VALUE OF VERIFICATION


Your customers trust you. They commit to being your customers and you commit to being their trusted contractor. By adding system performance measurement before and after the sale, you can raise the level of trust and seal that promise by inviting your customers to witness for themselves

the results of your work.

Remember that bedroom with an airflow reading of 35? Let the customer measure it at 105. If the pressure was 85 (.85-in. water column) show them it's now 48. If their system was operating at 57%, show the customer the testing and calculations confirm it's now operating at 93%.

What's most important is you can now deliver to your customers what you've been promising them for years. They're willing to pay you to deliver the quality and efficiencies others talk about, but are unable to deliver.

All the government and utility programs want is for you to capitalize on what they've tried to offer for decades. They've created the demand, that's their job.

Yours is to deliver to your customers what they have wanted and are willing to pay for all along. 



Rob "Doc" Falke serves the industry as president of National Comfort Institute, Inc., an HVAC-based training company and membership organization. If you're an HVAC contractor or technician interested in a free procedure to calculate system airflow at higher elevations,

contact Doc at rob@ncihvac.com or call him at 800-633-7058.

Go to NCI's website at nationalcomfort-institute.com for free information, articles, and downloads.





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Think you know airflow? Think you know carbon monoxide safety? Think you know how to solve your customer's comfort issues? Be sure. Don't guess. Find the training and expertise you need from the National Comfort Institute (NCI). Only at NCI will you find certification courses like Duct System Optimization and Combustion & Carbon Monoxide Safety, taught by leaders and innovators in the HVAC industry. Find out why NCI says "If You Don't Measure, You're Just Guessing!™" Visit the link below or call 800-633-7058 to find classes near you.

Upcoming 2018 NCI Training Schedule

Duct System Optimization & Refrigerant-Side Performance Certification Program

Nov 27-29: Los Alamitos, CA

Duct System Optimization Certification Program

Nov 27-28: Los Alamitos, CA*

Refrigerant-Side Performance Certification Program

Nov 29: Los Alamitos, CA*

Duct System Optimization & Air Balancing Certification Program

Nov 6-8: Charlotte, NC
Nov 27-29: Houston, TX
Nov 27-29: New Hudson, MI
Nov 27-29: South Plainfield, NJ

Residential HVAC System Performance & Air Balancing Certification Program

Nov 6-8: Los Alamitos, CA*
Nov 13-15: Richmond, VA
Nov 13-15: Chicago, IL
Nov 27-29: Atlanta, GA
Dec 4-6: Jacksonville, FL

Combustion Performance & Carbon Monoxide Safety Certification

Nov 6-8: New Hudson, MI
Nov 13-15: Cleveland, OH
Nov 13-15: Dallas, TX
Dec 4-6: Baltimore, MD
Dec 4-6: Denver, CO
Dec 4-6: Tulare, CA*
Dec 11-13: Las Vegas, NV
Dec 11-13: Austin, TX
Dec 18-20: Los Alamitos, CA*

Commercial Air Balancing Certification Program

Nov 6-8: St. Louis, MO
Dec 11-13: Cincinnati, OH

Performance-Based Selling Bootcamp

Dec 11-13: Los Alamitos, CA*

National Balancing Council Commercial Balancing with Certification

Nov 3-7: Los Alamitos, CA

Introduction to Hydronic Testing, Adjusting, & Balancing

Dec 18-19: Cleveland, OH



* Subsidized NCI training offered by Southern California Edison

Visit [NCIlink.com/ClassSchedule](https://www.ncilink.com/ClassSchedule) to view the latest schedule of NCI Training events

What Makes a **GREAT** High-Performance HVAC Tech?

According to most customers, technicians are your most credible team members. As a result, technician recommendations are trusted more often than even those of the company owner. I clearly remember the day that this lesson hit me square in the face while working in my family's HVAC business. Let me explain.

I was contacted on my two-way radio (it was 1992 so no cell phones were in the trucks yet) by one of our best service techs, Herbert. He said, "Mrs. Smith needs a new furnace and she wants you to come out and write it up." I told him to let her know I'd be there at 2:00 pm.

When I arrived at Mrs. Smith's house, she promptly greeted me with "Herbert said I need a new furnace and it would cost around \$1,800." Remember, this was in 1992! I thanked Mrs. Smith for her business and the opportunity to discuss various options with her.

She firmly said, "Herbert said all I need is an \$1,800 furnace and that is all I want." The more I tried to explain that other options might be a bet-

ter solution for her, the more committed she became to Herbert's recommendation. "I just want the \$1,800 furnace - period."

That was the day I realized that technician recommendations were viewed as "the gospel." Even though my last name was the same as the company name, my technician's recommendation had greater weight than mine. What a lesson! That's when I started thinking about how important my technicians were to the company's sales lead generation strategy.

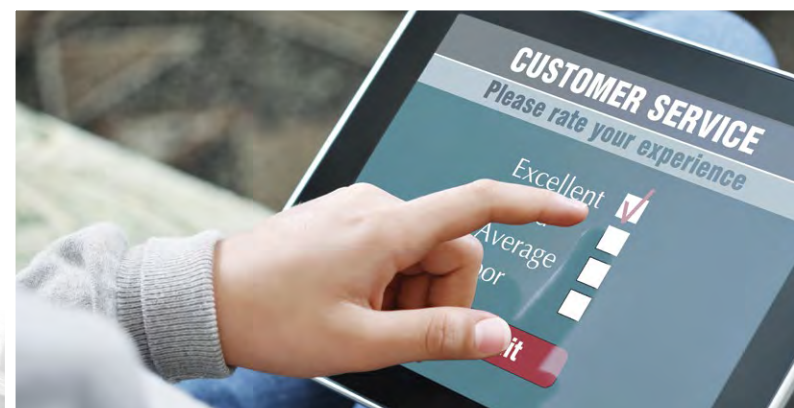
EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE IS KEY

You can learn a lot about excellent customer service by watching your truly great technicians. Herbert's recommendations were taken seriously because he provided great service to our customers. He took time to listen to their concerns, and always went the extra mile to make sure they were more than satisfied. That's how he earned the right to make recommendations that were taken so seriously.

In the heating and air conditioning service business, there are two types of technicians — good ones and great ones. There are also those "not so good" techs, but they don't typically stick around very long. The great technicians are popular, busy, and valued members of the team. They're personally successful and make great contributions to their customers and the company.

I've worked around many great technicians over the past four decades. I've learned many important lessons from each of them. When I consider the characteristics of the great techs I've encountered, they typically:

- Are excellent communicators
- Take time to look at situations through the



customer's eyes

- Maintain a positive attitude
- Make proactive recommendations whenever possible.

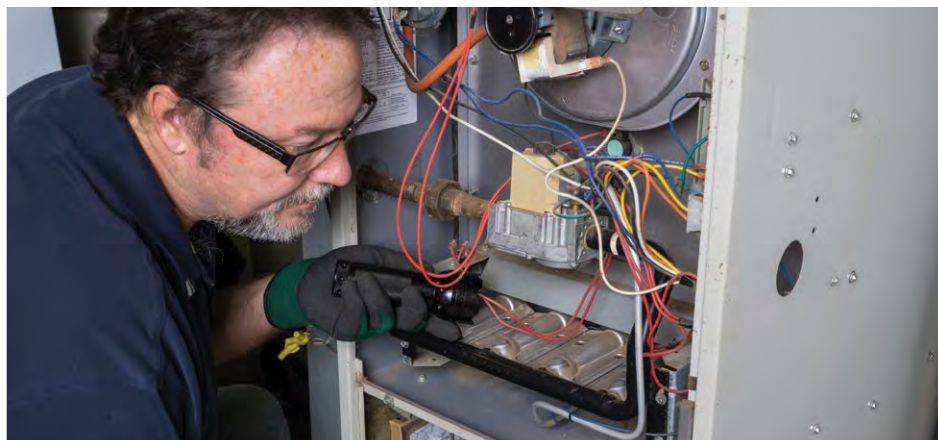
EXCELLENT COMMUNICATORS USE MORE THAN JUST WORDS

Great technicians are great communicators. They speak with customers before they “get to work” to check in and inquire about any issues that affect customer safety, health, comfort, and efficiency. They also check in at the end of the call to explain their work, provide helpful advice, and to see if there is anything else that needs attention.

Great technicians typically go beyond these important niceties. They also communicate through what they do, how they do it and how they present themselves.

They realize that the condition of their van or the organized way in which they go about their work speaks volumes about their attention to detail and thoroughness. Great technicians know customers depend upon their personal presentation to help assess work quality.

These techs understand the work order description is more than just a necessary administrative task at the end of the call. They realize their written words communicate the value delivered to the customer. They see this as an opportunity to reassure the customer of a job well done.



LOOKING THROUGH CUSTOMER'S EYES BECAUSE THEY CARE

Great technicians have taught me the importance of seeing things the way the customer sees things. They know the customer isn't “always right,” but they are always the customer. Great technicians naturally care about customers and about the quality of the work they deliver to them.

Care is what makes these technicians so resourceful and motivates them to be life-long learners. They feel a responsibility to serve customer needs and take the initiative to find a solution when others give up or pass the problem to someone else. Great technicians never give up. They're first in line to attend classes and constantly read trade magazines/websites to keep up with emerging trends.

Care is also what drives great technicians to pick up the phone or send a brief email to follow up on previous work or recommendations. They ask customers if there is anything else they can help with. They do small favors like changing a light bulb, bringing in a trash can, or other simple tasks. Doing the small, seemingly insignificant things spotlights that they really do care.

Great technicians think from the customer's perspective. They are sensitive on how their presence and work might impact the customer and take steps to minimize disruptions. They know that time is important, so they show up when promised and are efficient on the job.

They know that a complaining customer isn't always being unreasonable. They try to understand customers' underlying concerns without judging outward behavior. They treat others the way they would like to be treated.

POSITIVE ATTITUDES CREATE HIGH-PERFORMANCE RESULTS

Great technicians have also proved to me that positive attitudes can really move emotionally-charged situations to a positive resolution. Great technicians recognize that the service business is a high stress business where conflict often arises because of uncomfortable customers, demanding dispatchers, unexpected failures, long working hours, and sheer frustration. Great technicians understand that their approach to highly emotional situations will largely determine its outcome. This is positive attitude.

As a result, great technicians don't

take things personally and avoid becoming defensive. Many seem to instinctually follow the fifth habit from Stephen Covey's “The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People,” (I highly recommend all technicians read this book) -- seek first to understand, then be understood. They remain calm, using their body language to show that they are fully engaged and share the urgency of the moment with the customer.

happen. They recognize this reality and, like a good Boy Scout, know they must “be prepared.” They take steps to reduce the emotional temperature, so they can work together with the customer to address the issue.

MAKE PROACTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS

Finally, great technicians taught me one valuable customer service which



They verbally acknowledge the customer's concern and let them know that they understand. They avoid emotion-laden language that might increase the tension. They need to fully hear the customer out and allow them to express their concerns. Only then can they move to address the problem itself.

Whenever possible, they take a collaborative approach, involve the customer in the solution, and provide multiple options from which to choose.

Great technicians don't look forward to conflict. They know that, despite their best efforts, it's going to

is to make recommendations. They can do this because great technicians always look for ways to do things better. They see this as a critical part of the service. They are true craftsmen (and women) who stay focused on improving their own skills regularly.


This often means they take pride in their knowledge of technology and its application, and constantly add to their expertise. They make it their business to know the complete range of products and services their company offers.

Great technicians are very familiar with their customers' needs and wants because they ask. They also have strong relationships with their customers and

a natural interest in understanding their future goals and objectives.

Their empathetic nature causes them to see their job as not only keeping the existing equipment running well, but also helping the customer recognize opportunities for improvements they would never see on their own. After all, customers don't study heating and air conditioning technology – that's why they need a professional to look after it for them. This is where great technicians' efforts create an ongoing flow of new business opportunities.

Great technicians are a bonus to any service organization and the customers they serve. They do not have to be the best “technically” and they don't have to act much differently from good techs. The small difference in their actions, however, contribute tremendously to their personal success and to the delight of their customers.

There's a lesson in this for all of us. The next time you see a great technician at work, watch him or her very closely. They have a lot to teach us about how communication, empathy, positivity, and proactivity can lead to more delighted customers. With more delighted customers, more high-performance sales leads are the natural result. 



David Holt is the Director of Business Training & Coaching for National Comfort Institute, Inc. (NCI). He joined NCI in 2011 and focuses on training contractors on how to implement the performance-based processes into their business. David also helps develop content for NCI's in-person training events, as well as for a number of classes. He is also one of NCI's trainers. He can be reached at DavidH@ncihvac.com.



“There Are No Words ...”

— Pasquale Giovane, Priority Energy, Lansing, IL

When this crew leader and energy rater came upon this scenario, he was speechless. In his mind, all he thought was, “What the heck?”

Pasquale Giovane from Priority Energy LLC is the November 2018 winner of our Photo-of-the-Month contest, as voted on by the subscribers to the [High Performance HVAC Today magazine](#) and visitors to the website. He will receive a \$50 gift card.

You can too – submissions are always welcome. If you’d like to submit a photo for consideration in our Photo-of-the-Month contest, go to [ncilink.com/POMSubmit](#) and fill out the information as requested.

THE DECEMBER CONTEST OPENS ON NOVEMBER 9, 2018.

That gives you plenty of time to submit something in any of our three categories: **The Good**, **The Bad**, **WTH (What the heck)**.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR HVAC SUMMIT WEEK!

NCI Summit Week 2019 registration will soon be open. The weeklong event will be held in Orlando, FL on April 15-18. It starts with an optional all-day **Goodman/Amana Business Bootcamp**, featuring well-known industry speakers -- available to NCI Members at a deeply discounted rate.

Then get ready for Summit’s biggest welcome reception ever. We’re expecting well over 300 at this gala event, co-sponsored by **Goodman Manufacturing** and the **High-Performance HVAC Alliance** – a partnership between EGIA and NCI.

Tuesday morning kicks off the two-day core Summit Conference which is jam packed with interactive and fun General Sessions, plus the Idea Meetings -- where you have the opportunity to win cash for your ideas.

This year we’re featuring double-length breakout sessions focused on the High-Performance Sales Cycle, taught by top NCI members and instructors from around the country.

Of course, you’ll have plenty of time to interact and relax with your fellow High-Performance Contractors from across North America during our breaks, social events, and after-hours. Relax in one of the resort’s several lounges, pool, or gardens.

Past attendees have lauded one-on-one time with fellow members as one of

the most valuable parts of Summit.

You’ll also have lots of opportunities to spend time with our industry partners throughout Summit. Furthermore, our partners will once again donate dozens of great items for our prize drawing on Wednesday afternoon.

Summit culminates with one of the most cherished events Wednesday evening, with our Awards Reception, Banquet, and presentation of our 2019 Award Winners.

But Summit Week doesn’t end there. Thanks to our Alliance Partner and Summit sponsor, EGIA, you’ll have the opportunity to spend Thursday, April 18th with renowned Speaker and Author, Gary Elekes, in his unique workshop, “**Breakthrough Business Leadership: Developing a Process Driven Company**,” also at a highly discounted Summit rate.

Stay tuned for more details. Early-bird registration will be open online later this month! Go to [GoToSummit.com](#) to Pre-register and we’ll send you a link as soon as registration is open.

HIGHPERFORMANCETALK.COM

One of the newest upgrades to your membership is the **HighPerformanceTalk.com** website and discussion forum. What is a discussion forum? It is a site where people can hold conversations in the form of posted messages. Those messages are then archived and made available to you

anytime and from anywhere.

Within a forum, a single conversation is called a “thread” or “topic.” It is set up in a hierarchical or tree-like structure and can have several subforums, each of which may have several topics. In High-Performance Talk, each new discussion started is called a thread, and can be replied to by any member.

The operative word here is member.

HighPerformanceTalk.com is only for NCI members and provides an online peer-to-peer networking forum where you can ask questions, seek and offer advice, and converse with other Performance-Based Contractors across the HVAC industry and around the world. Think of it like the proverbial water cooler where everyone gathers to talk about things in an informal setting.



High-Performance Talk is also where you have access to NCI trainers and other staff members.

High-Performance Talk links you to your performance-based contracting peers like no other forum can. From CO to air to business practices, ask your fellow members (and NCI knowledge experts!) for advice.

Were you a fan of the old PerformanceTalk email list? You can participate with HighPerformanceTalk.com via email as well! We’ll help you walk through it if you’d like.

Don’t miss out on this invaluable member resource! If you aren’t already set up with **High-Performance Talk**, please call NCI Customer Care at 800-633-7058 Monday – Friday, 8 AM – 5 PM EST.

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Email us at contactus@hvactoday.com
with your comments and questions.

High-Performance HVAC Today Turns One!



Dominick Guarino is publisher of HVAC Today magazine and CEO of National Comfort Institute, Inc. He can be reached at domg@ncihvac.com

It's hard to believe **High-Performance HVAC Today** is already celebrating its first full year! I can't tell you how proud I am of our amazing team who work so hard to produce this incredible publication every month.

In addition to dozens of pages of editorials, industry news, and new product information, over the past 12 months we've published 12 spotlights on the movers and shakers of High-Performance HVAC. We also featured more than 45 articles by HVAC professionals and NCI staff.

A special thanks goes out to our advertisers. Your backing continues to help us provide the cutting-edge content our readers have come to expect every month. We now reach more than 15,000 subscribers across North America, Europe, and many other countries worldwide. It's exciting to see our circulation grow each month.

If you're a new reader, you might be wondering what makes **High-Performance HVAC Today** different. In short, this publication and the HVACToday.com website were created to

and buildings they touch.

High-Performance professionals embrace NCI's motto, "*If You Don't Measure, You're Just Guessing.*" This approach goes far beyond the technical aspects of testing and improving HVAC systems. For many HVAC contractors, it applies to the performance of their businesses as well.

When you set measurable goals and track how you perform against those goals, you experience meaningful growth in virtually every aspect of your business. Your KPIs (Key Performance Indicators), should track marketing, lead conversions, closing rates, operational performance - virtually every aspect of your business.

Can you imagine watching a baseball game where there's no scoreboard, no umpire to call balls and strikes, and everyone on the field is wearing the same jersey? There would be no way to know what inning they're in, and who is winning. But how many HVAC companies are run today with virtually no scoreboard? Your tax return doesn't count. It's too late by then.

In the archived issues of this magazine, you will find valuable information on building a Performance-Based HVAC organization. We are blessed by many contributors willing to share their knowledge, successes, and yes, failures as they move up the High-Performance path. Be sure to also spend time on the

HVACToday.com website where you have access to additional information, blogs, news, and so much more.

We welcome your feedback as we strive to make this publication better every month. Please let us know how we can make it more valuable. We also welcome aspiring authors willing to share your experiences and knowledge. If you have an article idea that can help your fellow professionals, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Happy First Anniversary High-Performance HVAC Today! 

provide a voice for the growing group of industry professionals who are setting a higher bar.

These individuals are not satisfied with just servicing or installing HVAC equipment. They are the caretakers of the entire HVAC system. They know that to deliver high performance, they must test the systems they maintain and install. They document performance, diagnose problems, and offer verifiable solutions to their customers. They see it as both a responsibility and an opportunity to improve safety, health, comfort, and energy efficiency in the homes

CAN YOU IMAGINE WATCHING A BASEBALL GAME WHERE THERE'S NO SCOREBOARD, NO UMPIRE TO CALL BALLS AND STRIKES, AND EVERYONE ON THE FIELD IS WEARING THE SAME JERSEY?

APRIL 15-18, 2019 • ORLANDO, FL



High-Performance HVAC LIVE

Don't miss our Breakout Sessions and Special Partner Events at HVAC Summit Week 2019!

Generate High Quality Leads With Performance Testing

Speakers: Mike Hartman and David Richardson

Turn High-Performance Leads Into Appointments

Speakers: Nancy McKeraghan and David Holt

Performance-Based Selling in 12 Steps: From Test to Proposal

Speakers: Michael Hyde and Rob Falke

The Handoff Can Make All the Difference

Speakers: Dawn Vickers-Mroczek and John Puryear

Sell High-Performance Maintenance Agreements

Speakers: Jim Ball and Tom Johnson

SPECIAL PARTNER EVENTS:

Goodman Business Planning Bootcamp

Monday, April 15, Sponsored by



Breakthrough Business Leadership: Developing a Process Driven Company

Thursday, April 18, Sponsored by



Pre-Register Now to Get Started!

Pre-register Today at GoToSummit.com or call 800.633.7058





Your Support Team on Your High-Performance Contracting™ Journey

Your key to success in Performance-Based Contracting™ is a strong support network – always there when you need it. NCI helps its members overcome the typical hurdles associated with implementing the measured performance approach.

Membership Options:

Turbocharge your membership with added learning opportunities and financial incentives.

	 High Performance HVAC Alliance	 Learning Excellence Premium Upgrade	 Learning Excellence Live Upgrade	 Learning Excellence Online Upgrade	 Membership
Unlimited Toll-Free Support	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
High Performance Talk Discussion Forum	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Find-A-Certified-Professional Lead Generator	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
i-NCI: Mobile-Friendly Technical & Sales Tools	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Hundreds of Technical & Marketing Downloads	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Members-Only Newsletter	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Article Library Featuring Technical & Business Articles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Live & Online Training and Conference Discounts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Member Rewards NCI Training Bucks on Purchases	15%	15%	15%	15%	5%
Training Incentive Partner Program Dollars	Maximum	Maximum	Maximum	Maximum	✓
NCI Online Store Discounts	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ComfortMaxx Air™ - Airflow Testing Software	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Unlimited Online University Courses	✓	✓		✓	
Unlimited Webinar Access	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Bonus Annual NCI Training Bucks Earned	\$4200	\$4200	\$4200	\$1200	
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