

BUSINESS connections



Watauga County Health Department

Building Healthy Connections Through Technology



Pictured L to R: SkyLine Inside Sales Coordinator Hollie Brown, Appalachian District Health Department Health Director Beth Lovette, SkyLine Strategic Sales Supervisor Brent Keith, Appalachian District Health Department IT Coordinator Tommy Havelos, SkyLine Field Services Technician Adam Johnson, SkyLine Inside Sales Coordinator Robin Miller and SkyLine Field Services Technician Craig Poe.



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Additional Issues
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BUSINESS connections

The new year is a good time to renew relationships. In your business planning for 2016, think in terms of what you have to offer your customers, employees and community. It may take just a little effort to strengthen these important bonds which support your company.

Email Marketing Hasn't Gone Away, and it's a great method to stay in touch with customers. On page 3, you'll learn that while social media has grown in popularity, email is much more likely to get read by customers than Facebook posts. If you haven't initiated an email marketing campaign for awhile, now might be the time to consider doing it again.

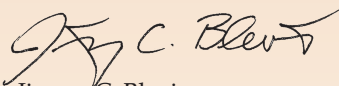
On pages 4 and 5, you'll read about our Business Spotlight customer, **Appalachian District Health Department**, which has used technology to ensure employees maintain a secure and efficient connection with each other. Offices that once seemed distant are now as accessible as if they were right next door.

Next, on page 6, we'll tell you how **Corporate Volunteerism Pays Off**. When you support your community, you get personal and business rewards you might not have considered. There are many resources to help you get started, and we'll point you in the right direction to find them.

This season, SkyLine **Employees Sponsor Christmas Charities**, and we're excited to share the details on page 7 about what we're doing for the Ashe County Interagency Children's Christmas Program, Project Star and Toys for Tots. In addition, we share the results of our **Second Annual Rise & Shine** program to help stock food pantries with much-needed breakfast items.

The new year is also a great time to reassess your technology needs, and SkyLine/SkyBest is more than happy to help. Contact us any time and let us know what we can do for you.

Sincerely,

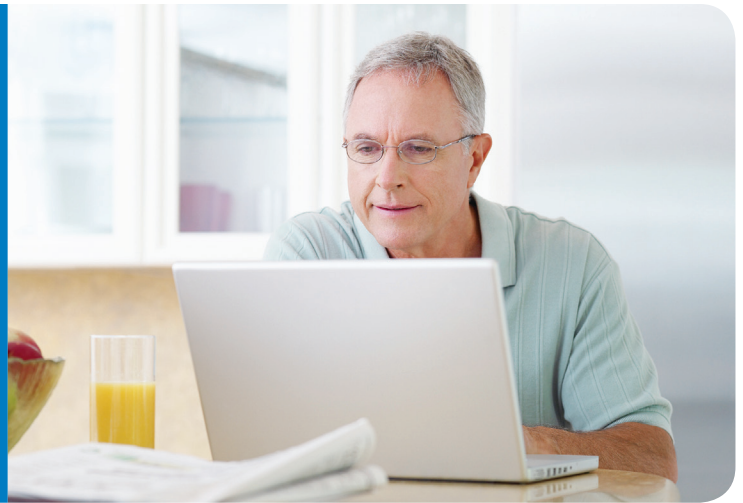

Jimmy C. Blevins
Chief Executive Officer

Cover photo by Todd Bush, www.bushphoto.com



Email Marketing Hasn't Gone Away

Four tips to make the most of your next campaign



In recent years, social media has gained popularity as a marketing tool, but it's not necessarily the most effective method you can use. Forrester Research found that email recipients are much more likely to see your message because 90 percent of email gets delivered to the intended recipient, while only two percent of Facebook fans are likely to see your posts¹. In addition, email readers are more likely to take action; the click-through rate (CTR) for an email campaign is between four and 13 percent, depending on the industry², while the average Twitter CTR is just 1.64 percent³. To take advantage of the power of email marketing, optimize your messages using the following tips:

1. Keep It Relevant

With today's business analytics and other tools you're probably already using, you can easily gather enough information about your customers to divide them into groups based on demographics, buying patterns and other meaningful distinctions. Once you have these groups established, create tailored content for each one.

2. Optimize the Subject Line

The subject line is very important, since it affects whether or not the email will be opened or immediately deleted. It needs to contain a clear and compelling offer or benefit and should make the reader want to know more. As for length, remember that email applications cut off subject lines after around 50 characters for desktop email readers and browsers, and around 30 for mobile devices. However, in a study conducted by Return Path, there was no correlation between subject line length and read rate⁴.

¹Forrester. "Facebook Has Finally Killed Organic Reach. What Should Marketers Do Next?" http://blogs.forrester.com/nate_elliott/14-11-17-facebook_has_finally_killed_organic_reach_what_should_marketers_do_next.

²Constant Contact. "The average open, click-through, and bounce rates of other Constant Contact customers by industry." <http://support2.constantcontact.com/articles/FAQ/2499>.

3. Make It Easy

If you've done your homework (which you should!), you know your customers and prospects pretty well. You may even be able to predict what their next interaction with you might be. Rather than thinking of your email campaigns as a way to "get" clicks or visits or revenue, think of them as a way to give recipients an easy way to do what they already want to do, such as bring their car in for a tune-up, get a great sale price on clothes or check out some new bike accessories.

4. Don't Forget the Call to Action

Rather than wasting space with an elaborate backstory, get right to the point. Include specific calls to action early and often. Don't leave any doubt as to what you want readers to do. Want them to call you? List your phone number prominently. Want them to come into your store? Include a map. Want them to visit a website? Include a big button, and make the text specific; instead of "Click here," use something like, "Reserve yours today!"

³Sign-Up.to. "Twitter marketing: what results should you expect? [Infographic]." <http://www.signupto.com/news/2012/10/24/twitter-marketing-what-results-should-you-expect-infographic/>.

⁴MarketingSherpa. "Email Marketing Chart: How subject line length affects open rates." <http://www.marketingsherpa.com/article/chart/subject-line-length-success>.

APPALACHIAN District Health Department

Protecting and improving health for citizens of three counties



Photo by Todd Bush, www.bushphoto.com

Pictured above: SkyLine's Robin Miller discusses phone options with Appalachian District Health Department's Beth Lovette and Tommy Havelos.

Page 5, upper photo: Chasity Annas, Management Support, works at the Alleghany Health Department greeting visitors.

Page 5, bottom photo: Candy Graham, Ashe County Nursing Supervisor, uses her new Mitel phone from SkyLine.

The Appalachian District Health Department provides essential services and education to ensure safe and healthy living, prevent disease and protect the environment for citizens of northwest North Carolina. Beth Lovette, Appalachian District Health Department Director, says, "We are a community safety net provider since we also offer many services on a sliding fee scale."

A History of Good Health

The department was established in 1933 with the counties of Watauga and Avery comprising the health district. Dr. Robert King, Sr. served as the first Health Director from 1933 to 1944. Dr. King was followed by his son, Dr. Robert King, Jr., who held the Director position until 1949. Various other directors and staff members operated the department over the years, and in 1973, Yancey County joined the district. It expanded again in 1976-77 with the addition of Ashe, Alleghany and Mitchell counties, making the health district the largest in North Carolina. In 1980, the district reverted back to three counties: Alleghany, Ashe and Watauga, which remain the counties that form the district today.

Patients appreciate the confidential, high-quality services provided through the practitioners and staff, and employees enjoy the family atmosphere. In the coming years, the department will adjust its services based on the needs of each community. Lovette explains, "In Alleghany and Ashe counties, we have recently been designated as a Federally

Qualified Health Center, in addition to being a local health department. So, those counties will see a real increase in availability and wrap-around services for our clinic patients. We anticipate adding behavioral health care as well as evaluating dental needs in both counties. In Watauga County, where local health care resources are more readily available, we expect to see our prevention efforts continue to increase."

Community Wellness Support

The list of services the department provides is extensive. Patient care includes specialized services for children, women, communicable diseases, immunizations and primary care. The environmental health program includes septic system permitting and inspection; a private well program that ensures safe drinking water and protects groundwater supplies; a food protection and facilities program that ensures safe food and clean facilities at restaurants and other establishments that serve food; a program to ensure the safety of public swimming pools and spas; a children's environmental health program that ensures child care facilities meet basic sanita-

tion standards; and a program that issues permits to tattoo artists.

The department also promotes emergency preparedness and the Women’s, Infants and Children (WIC) supplemental nutrition program. The latter includes breastfeeding instruction, vitamins and minerals, nutritional counseling, farmers’ market coupons and other programs and resources for pregnant women and new mothers.

In addition, the department sponsors health promotion activities, including the following:

- Community Health Reports
- Chronic Disease Maintenance and Prevention
- Communities Putting Prevention to Work
- Community Transformation Grant
- Eat Smart, Move More
- Northwest Tobacco Prevention Coalition
- Seeds of Change Initiative
- Positive Parenting Program
- Worksite Wellness

Behind the Scenes

Services from SkyLine/SkyBest, including a new VoIP phone system, have helped the department become more efficient. SkyLine/SkyBest Strategic Sales Supervisor Brent Keith comments, “Now they have four-digit dialing between all of their offices, district wide, as well as data network redundancy. Employees there say it makes offices that were considered remote as accessible as if they were next door.”

IT Coordinator Tommy Havelos, adds, “Our PBX system was never able to really be programmed the way we needed nor could it be modified easily. With the old system, customers would very often get a busy signal or continuous ringing, but with the new auto attendant, we’re better able to get customers to their destination.” Primary Rate Interface (PRI) and Metro Ethernet services have also increased efficiency. Havelos remarks, “We have a lot more capability for call volume and a dedicated network for voice and data communication traffic.”

With the old system, customers would very often get a busy signal or continuous ringing, but with the new auto attendant, we’re better able to get customers to their destination.”

— TOMMY HAVELOS, IT COORDINATOR, APPALACHIAN DISTRICT HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Commenting on the customer service from SkyLine/SkyBest, Havelos notes, “They’ve worked tirelessly to accommodate our needs and schedule. Having their technicians available at a phone call, email or text message away gives me assurance that we can handle any problems that arise.”

SkyLine/SkyBest is just as enthusiastic about having the department as a customer. Keith says, “Appalachian District Health is a great partner. The counties they serve are at the heart of our service area.”

Multiple Advantages of Metro Ethernet

Today’s businesses require robust connectivity—not only to the Internet, but also to their own resources. Metro Ethernet from SkyLine / SkyBest supports businesses that need to connect to multiple Local Area Networks (LANs) over a wide-area connection, send high volumes of data between several locations or share high bandwidth applications between sites. Our Metro Ethernet is:

- **Private** - The connection created between your business locations is independent of the Internet and only accessible by you.
- **Scalable** - Bandwidth can be increased or decreased without changing equipment or adding circuits.
- **Expandable** - New locations can be added easily without service interruptions.
- **Efficient** - Employees at different locations can collaborate efficiently and effectively.
- **Reliable** - In the event of a fiber cut, our network prevents a disruption of data services and Internet access.

Your business can increase productivity and better manage uncertainties with Metro Ethernet from SkyLine / SkyBest. For additional details, call 1-844-SKYBEST and speak with a member of our Business Sales Team.

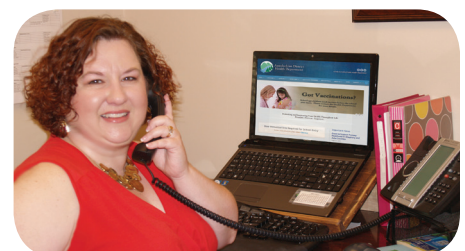


Photo by Todd Bush, www.bushphoto.com

Corporate Volunteerism **PAYS OFF**

*Lend a hand to help your
community and your business*



Remember to Use 10-digit Dialing

To ensure a continuing supply of telephone numbers, the new 743 area code has been added to the area served by 336. This is known as an **area code overlay**, and it comes with a change in the way you dial local calls. To complete local calls, dial **area code + telephone number**. For now, if you forget, your call will still be completed. However, beginning **April 23, 2016**, if you don't use the new dialing procedures, your calls won't be completed. Effective **May 23, 2016**, new numbers may be assigned the new 743 area code. Note that the overlay does not require you to change your existing area code or telephone number.

The affected area includes Ashe and Alleghany counties. Generally, it also covers the Piedmont area including High Point, North Wilkesboro, Winston-Salem, Greensboro and Asheboro

If you have questions regarding the area code overlay or dialing procedures, please call 1-800-759-2226.

Volunteermatch.org notes that companies which volunteer may enjoy improved morale and team-building, ongoing learning and a broader customer base. If you've considered giving your employees time to do volunteer work, here are suggestions for getting started:

1. Assess employee interests, business objectives and community needs.

Visit volunteermatch.org or 1800volunteer.org or contact the community service resources below to find local opportunities for volunteers. Look for opportunities that align with your business goals.

- Dayna Price, Ashe County Volunteer Coordinator
daynaprice@ashecountygov.com
336-246-2461
- Amy Lucas, Alleghany County Extension Director
amy_lucas@ncsu.edu
336-372-5597
- Watauga County Project on Aging
828-265-8090
- Volunteer Avery County
828-737-0718

2. Pick a project. Focus on a project that involves the services and products you provide for your customers. For instance, a landscaper could create a garden at a local school.

3. Set a schedule. You may want to offer each employee one or two hours a week to work on the project, or allocate one full week a year on a large group commitment.

4. Track your progress. Your success could be measured by anything from improved employee attitudes to increased publicity for your team and those you're helping.

SkyLine/SkyBest volunteers with the following organizations:

We take an active role in Relay for Life each year to help raise money for the **American Cancer Society (ACS)**. Our internal pledge campaign raised \$8,366 in 2015 to benefit the ACS.

SkyLine has provided the phone bank at the annual Ashe County Heart Auction for many years, and employees usually field a team for the annual American Heart Walk to fund continued research and programs of the **American Heart Association**.

Project Teamwork is our employee-led community outreach program, which provides financial **relief to area families during times of crisis**. This program has contributed more than \$125,000 to help our neighbors since 1997.

Employees Sponsor CHRISTMAS CHARITIES

SkyLine is filled with the holiday spirit



SkyLine Holds Second Annual "Rise & Shine"

Sadly, many local families struggle to keep food on the table, and numerous individuals, churches and local organizations try to help fill the hunger gaps. This fall, SkyLine coordinated our Rise & Shine breakfast food drive to support area food pantries. Thanks to you, our members and customers for the generous response to our food drive.

Participants used SkyLine's "Rise & Shine to Fight Hunger" grocery totes to bring in non-perishable breakfast items, which was then distributed to local food pantries including the Solid Rock Food Closet, Ashe Outreach Ministries, the Hunger and Health Coalition, Reaching Avery Ministry and the Northeast Tennessee Mobile Food Pantry.

As a local cooperative, we are reminded that the seventh cooperative principle is "concern for community." SkyLine takes this responsibility seriously and continues to be active in its community support and outreach efforts.

As a locally based company, SkyLine Membership Corporation is widely known for its community support. From sponsoring college scholarships and youth leadership programs for local youth and funding technology in our public schools to contributing to various community organizations, SkyLine works to improve the quality of life throughout its service area. Employees also give generously to those in need during the holidays by participating in the following local projects:

The **Ashe County Interagency Children's Christmas Program** provides Christmas gifts to needy children throughout the county. Our employees annually sponsor children from birth to age 18 in this outreach program. Through their generosity and participation as sponsors last year, Christmas wishes came true for 11 local children ranging from toddlers to teenag-

ers. In 2014, 800 children were sponsored countywide.

Project Star, coordinated through Appalachian Senior Programs, reaches out to needy elderly citizens of Ashe County during the Christmas season. In 2014, our employees helped bring a smile to 25 senior citizens through their support of this program, which they will again participate in this year.

Our employees based in Alleghany sponsored a local elderly couple in need, and Avery and Watauga counties designated their holiday contributions toward Toys for Tots.

We also thank our employees for their generosity, as well as you, our members, for your support of our efforts for local charities and for all you do for other charitable organizations throughout the year.

Voice Mail as Mobile as You Are



Call in to check your messages from any phone - anywhere. Even better, you can receive your voice mail messages on your PC, laptop or mobile device through email. Just double click the attachment and listen!



SkyLine

SkyBest

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