

BUSINESS connections



Relax and Put the Security of Your Business in Good Hands

The SkyBest Security Team of Bob Taylor, Zach Davis, Travus Lovell and Danessa Church



Consumers Have a Growing Interest in Pinterest **3**

The SkyBest Security Team has Much to Offer **4** // Why SkyBest? **5**

Downtown Businesses Speed Up with Fiber **6** // Fiber is the Next Utility **7**



Management
Jimmy C. Blevins
Chief Executive Officer

Business Sales Department Contact Information
1-844-SKYBEST
businessolutions@skyline.org

Robin Miller
Inside Sales Coordinator
(Alleghany/Ashe/Johnson)
robin.miller@skyline.org

Michelle Scott
Inside Sales Coordinator
(Avery/Watauga)
michelle.scott@skyline.org

Corporate Offices
1200 NC Hwy 194 N, West Jefferson,
NC 28694. No part of this publication
may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval
system or transmitted in any form,
electronic, photocopying, recording,
mechanical or otherwise without
the prior written permission of
SkyLine/SkyBest. All rights are
reserved.

Trademarks
All brand names and product names
used in this publication are trade
names, service marks, trademarks
or registered trademarks of their
respective owners.

Additional Issues
Extra issues are available to business
customers on a limited basis while
supplies last. Contact Robin Miller
at 1-844-SKYBEST. Copyright ©2015
by SkyLine Membership Corp. and
SkyBest Communications, Inc. and
Cornerstone Publishing Group, Inc.

Postmaster Send Changes To
Myla Farmer
Marketing & Promotions Coordinator
SkyLine/SkyBest
PO Box 759
West Jefferson, NC 28694

BUSINESS connections

Fiber-optic Internet can change the way you do business.

Internet service has seen many transitions over the years: from dial-up to cable; from Web 1.0 to 2.0; from desktops to the cloud. And SkyLine/SkyBest is leading this region in the important shift from copper to fiber-optic infrastructure. In this issue of *Business Connections*, you'll find out how fiber is changing the workplace.

Fiber-optic service enables faster upload speeds, meaning you can better take advantage of social media platforms that primarily feature images and video. On page 3, learn how **Consumers Have a Growing Interest in Pinterest**, and how you can make the most of this highly successful, image-oriented site.

The SkyBest Security Team Has Much to Offer and on pages 4 and 5, you can read about the leading-edge security, automation and surveillance services it provides. SkyBest Security can protect and automate your business over copper or fiber, but you'll discover how fiber's additional bandwidth capacity is bringing new features and benefits to the SkyBest Security customer.

On page 6, see how **Downtown Businesses Speed Up with Fiber**, and how they're using it to access important databases, improve security services and benefit from crystal-clear SkyBest TV.

Finally, on page 7, we consider that **Fiber is the Next Utility**. Similar to trains and roads in previous centuries, fiber is the newest thoroughfare to business growth and development.

Don't hesitate to let us know how we can help you with your technology needs, including phone, TV, Internet, security and —of course— fiber.

Sincerely,

Jimmy C. Blevins
Chief Executive Officer



Consumers Have a GROWING INTEREST in *Pinterest*

*It seems that a picture really may
be worth a thousand words*

According to the Pew Research Center, Pinterest is now tied with LinkedIn as the second-most popular social networking site, surpassed only by Facebook. Focused on visual content, Pinterest allows users to create “boards” where they “pin” images about selected topics. For example, the Food Network’s Pinterest account features boards on healthy recipes and entertaining. Your business could similarly create boards related to the lifestyle behind your brand.

It’s a marketing strategy worth considering. According to a recent *Business News Daily* article, Pinterest now has around 70 million users, and refers them to more websites than Twitter, Reddit and StumbleUpon, putting it second in referrals only to Facebook. And, according to the Global Web Index, Pinterest is growing by a whopping 57 percent. Compare that to Facebook’s



recent six percent growth rate. Pinterest now allows businesses to pay to promote their pins, and is working on a “buy” button that would allow users to make purchases easily right from the site. Pinterest is well positioned to take advantage of this function, as many users visit specifically to make buying decisions.

Is Your Business a Good Fit?

Some businesses are more obviously suited to using Pinterest than others, specifically those whose offerings are highly visual in nature. Since the majority of Pinterest members are women, the site is particularly a good fit for businesses related to weddings, fashion, art, crafts, cooking, architecture and graphic design. However, that doesn’t mean you should automatically discount Pinterest if you sell other categories of products or services. You may just need to think outside the box.

Ideas for Using Pinterest

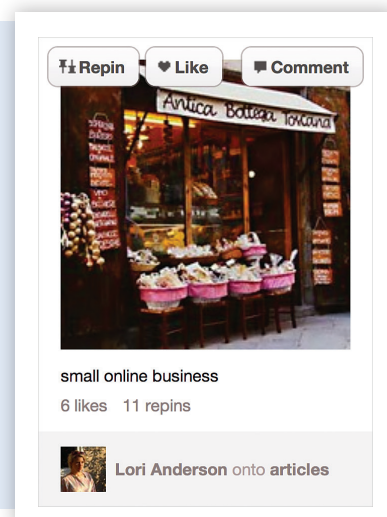
As with other social media sites, the purpose of Pinterest is not to talk solely about what you sell, but to engage with followers and provide value to them. Some ideas for doing so include:

- Inspire users. For example, a home improvement store can show photos of newly remodeled kitchens or bathrooms.
- Pin new product ideas and ask followers to evaluate them.
- Showcase your company’s personality with photos of employees.
- Re-pin content pinned by followers.
- Hold competitions and reward winners with discounts.
- Create infographics to explain data or current issues related to your business.

Remember, you can add a brief description and URL to each pin.

Getting Started

All you need to do to start using Pinterest is visit www.pinterest.com and follow the prompts to sign up. Instead of entering your name and age, use the “Continue as a business” link. You will be asked for some additional information about your business, and then you can start pinning!



The SkyBest Security Team has Much to Offer

Our security, automation and surveillance services are second to none



Photo by Toda Bush, www.bushphoto.com

Pictured above: Bob Taylor, Zach Davis and Travus Lovell work closely together to make sure we provide the best security products to our customers.

Page 5, upper photo: Bob Taylor responds to a SkyBest Security customer in downtown Sparta.

Page 5, bottom photo: Zach Davis shows a customer our Total Connect options.

All business owners and managers worry about certain aspects of their business, whether it's theft, reducing electricity use, maintaining optimal temperatures or knowing what employees are doing. No one can be at the business at all times, but keeping an eye on a business has never been easier.

An Extra Set of Eyes

Current technologies from SkyBest can enable you to monitor what goes on at your business 24/7/365 with online dashboards, alerts and other automated solutions. For example, you can be notified by text or email when doors are left open or when anyone enters a particular area. Senior Security Technician Travus Lovell says, "It's like having an extra set of eyes."

Security, automation and surveillance services from SkyBest are great for all types of businesses, particularly those that want to be proactive about preventing break-ins, have a secure area that needs to be monitored, have sensitive items that need to be stored at a certain temperature or have multiple employees with access to the premises.

SkyBest Leads the Way

SkyBest is leading the way for these services. Security Technician Zach Davis says, "We stay on top of the latest and greatest. When our manufacturer, Honeywell, comes out with a new product, we immediately get it tested and ready to be available along with the other products we offer." Security Technician Bob Taylor adds, "It's likely that we can provide the same

products that our customers see on TV being offered by our larger competitors."

It's a major benefit to customers that SkyBest also provides the backbone of these services: our robust fiber-optic network. Lovell says, "We can typically provide bandwidth speeds that other companies can't; for example, we can adjust upload speeds specifically for surveillance cameras. We can also make sure all the technology is working well together."

Selection of Services

SkyBest can customize solutions based on the following services:

- **Total Connect** is an app that customers can use with their smartphone or laptop to operate security system cameras including arming, disarming, setting up notifications, viewing live camera feeds and viewing recorded camera events. Total Connect supports the Honeywell products we offer. Visit SkyBestSecurity.com to see a demo.
- **Sky Detect** is similar to Total Connect, but it supports cameras and automation devices outside of the Honeywell line. All data is

“When our manufacturer, Honeywell, comes out with a new product, we immediately get it tested and ready to be available along with the other products we offer.”

— ZACH DAVIS, SECURITY TECHNICIAN, SKYBEST

stored in the cloud, on a server located in our central office. So you don't have to worry about data being compromised at your location.

- **Security Systems** include wired or wireless systems that can be configured according to customer needs. Sensors are available for doors, windows, breaking glass and motion detection. Our security systems can be used with Total Connect.
- **Automation Solutions** allow customers to choose technologies to eliminate keys, arm or disarm a security system when they lock or unlock doors, set the thermostat to a certain temperature at a certain time of day, turn off lighted areas after a certain time and many more possibilities.
- **Video Surveillance** allows business owners and managers to monitor what goes on when they're not physically on the premises. Indoor and outdoor solutions are available, with infrared lighting for night viewing. IP cameras provide better video quality than an analog camera system.
- **Panic Buttons** can be installed in schools, city and county buildings, convenience stores or anywhere else where workers deal regularly with the public. With a press of the button, emergency personnel can be dispatched to the location. Buttons can be stationary or mobile.
- **Temperature Sensors** allow business owners and managers to monitor the temperature in sensitive areas. For example, a doctor's office can maintain the optimal temperature for stored medication. Sensors can be set to notify you based on parameters you provide.
- **Water Leakage** sensors create an alarm when probes come into contact with water for three minutes. This service is very affordable, and helpful for mitigating flooding damage, which can occur due to many common situations such as an overflowing toilet or a frozen water line.

Lovell says, “All of these technologies have become more affordable in the last couple of years, and we offer financing for customers that qualify. So we encourage anyone interested to explore solutions they may not have considered before.”

To schedule a free consultation, or to learn more about security, automation and surveillance services from SkyBest, call 1-800-759-2226, or visit SkyBestSecurity.com.

Why SkyBest?

Any number of companies offer security, automation and surveillance services similar to those offered by SkyBest. But, not every company has the same reputation for service or is available 24/7 when things go wrong. We're proud that we receive many compliments from customers about our fast, friendly service; many of them came to us after being dissatisfied with the service from other providers.

Our security installations are more than just a transaction; they're part of a relationship that we build over time with every customer. Being a local company means being accountable; we know we may see our customers at the grocery store or a community event and we always want to know we've provided unparalleled customer service.

In addition, SkyBest stands behind its equipment with a lifetime service plan; as long as customers are paying the monthly monitoring fee that includes maintenance, they're automatically enrolled in the plan.



Photos by Todd Bush, www.bushphoto.com

Local Businesses Win \$100 SkyBest Credit

Because we value your feedback, SkyBest recently conducted a business survey to get a better understanding of customers' opinions in three areas:

1. Satisfaction
2. The importance of various services that could be added to bundles
3. Awareness of our business services

Your responses will help us create better bundles and serve customers more effectively. We thank everyone who completed the survey.

Customers were informed of the survey with an insert in their February bill, and we took responses online and over the phone. All responses were placed into a drawing from which we chose two random winners: **Michael Tesh of Master's Touch Stoneworks in Banner Elk**, and **Sherry Goodman of Ashe Rental Agency in West Jefferson**. They both received a \$100 credit on their April bill.



Downtown Businesses Speed Up with Fiber

Customers benefit from digital TV, security services and faster online access

Businesses in the downtown areas of Boone, Sparta and West Jefferson looking for faster Internet speeds are in luck: SkyBest is now offering fiber Internet in these locations. Inside Sales Coordinator Robin Miller says, "With copper, the speeds were limited to 12 Mbps download, and 1 Mbps upload. Our fiber Internet provides speeds of up to 100 Mbps download and 16 Mbps upload, which is a huge benefit for businesses that need to upload photos or large files, or access databases." Residential customers served by the SkyLine fiber network can access broadband speeds up to 1 Gbps (1,000 Mbps)—that's 100 times faster than the national average!

Inside Sales Coordinator Michelle Scott notes, "Fiber Internet also enables businesses to have SkyBest TV. We offer HD quality and DVR. TV in waiting rooms is a great service to provide to customers." Several TV packages are available:

- **Digital Basic.** Features local channels including SkyZhone HD.
- **Digital Plus.** Includes the same channels as Digital Basic, plus additional channels including the Weather Channel, ESPN and HGTV.
- **Digital Premier.** Includes all the channels of Digital Plus and such premium channels as the SEC Network and Turner Classic Movies (TCM).



Miller notes that fiber is no more expensive than copper and there is no fee to convert: "We've made it affordable because we want customers to be on fiber. We want to offer them the highest Internet speeds and the best technology possible."

Our fiber Internet provides speeds of up to 100 Mbps download and 16 Mbps upload, which is a huge benefit for businesses that need to upload photos or large files, or access databases."

— **ROBIN MILLER**, INSIDE SALES COORDINATOR, SKYBEST

The switchover process is simple and includes installation of an optical network terminal (ONT) to connect your business to fiber and a battery backup, which keeps dial tone and Internet service operational for up to eight hours in the event of an outage.

To learn more about switching to fiber and to find out if your business is eligible, visit <http://skybesttv.com/service-lookup> or call 1-844-SKYBEST to start the process.



FIBER is the Next Utility

*It's also a key to business growth,
especially in rural areas*

To understand the importance of building fiber networks, it's useful to look back at a couple of other life-changing infrastructure projects. By 1900, much of our nation's railroad system was in place; it cleared the way for the settlement of the West, provided new economic opportunities and stimulated community development. In the 1950s and 1960s, the new Interstate Highway System brought business to the towns it went through while towns located farther from the new, faster roads struggled to survive. Today, fiber is becoming as essential to business growth and everyday life, as railroad tracks and highways were in previous centuries.

The huge impact of fiber is even more amazing when you consider just how tiny fiber is-- each strand of glass is only about the size of a human hair. Fiber uses light to transmit data and is unique in its ability to transport virtually unlimited bandwidth over long distances. It's the only technology that delivers enough bandwidth—reliably and at a low enough cost—to meet the ever-increasing demand for more robust Internet, video and voice services as well as other applications.

Thanks to fiber, Internet speeds of 1 Gigabit per second (Gbps) and higher are starting to become available. Why do we need all this bandwidth? Here are a few reasons:

- Businesses are making a massive shift to **cloud services**. For economic efficiency, their critical systems now operate

at remote data centers rather than on-site computers. The speed, reliability and security of fiber connections make cloud services viable.

- The American Telemedicine Association estimates there are now 200 **telemedicine networks** in the U.S., connecting over 3,000 institutions.
- Services such as **distance learning** and **remote energy management** are expected to grow considerably over the next several years.

Bandwidth demand is growing at an enormously high rate, and is projected to continue growing for years to come. According to the Cisco® Visual Networking Index (VNI) Forecast (2011-2016), 3.4 billion people are expected to be using the Internet by 2016—about 45 percent of the world's projected population according to United Nations' estimates. In addition, the average fixed broadband speed is expected to increase nearly fourfold, from 9 Mbps in 2011 to 34 Mbps in 2016.

Fiber networks in smaller cities and rural communities help level the playing field and close the urban-rural technology gap. Existing businesses can access the Internet speeds and reliability needed to expand e-commerce. Economic development organizations have an easier time attracting new businesses. Plus, educational opportunities, once only found in large schools, can now be delivered to rural classrooms via online education.

