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DELIVERY TRUCKS ARE DRIVING INTO THE FUTURE

Spending Millions to Build Autonomous Vehicles

The trailblazer of futuristic American TV shows, "The Jetsons" first aired in September 1962. Set a whole century in the future in 2062, this show offered viewers a compelling and desirable image of everyday life in the 21st century. The characters interacted with robots that cleaned their house, selected their clothes, and even styled their hair, but the automation that viewers tend to remember most is George Jetson's flying car. While we may still be another century away from flying to work, companies are making a lot of headway when it comes to automotive automation.

In 2016, Uber partnered with Otto to build the first autonomous delivery truck. The truck, outfitted with \$30,000 of additional hardware and software, transported 50,000 cans of Budweiser beer for 120 miles from Fort Collins to Colorado Springs, Colorado. The trip's success sparked an innovation wildfire, inspiring companies like Starship Technology, Nuro, Robomart, Alibaba, and Boxbot to spend

millions and even billions of dollars to build their own autonomous delivery trucks. The Otto technology used within these trucks is unique in that it offers true Level 4 autonomy, meaning that as long as the vehicle stays on well-marked highways with no variables — jaywalking pedestrians, four-way stops, or kids on bikes, for example — it has no trouble navigating. The driver just engages the software and lets the computer do the rest.

While these delivery trucks have a lot of benefits, many people are worried that this invention could put a lot of drivers out of work. Fortunately, this isn't the case. According to the American Trucking Association, the U.S. has a staggering shortage of drivers. In 2015, the deficit reached 48,000 drivers and may grow to 175,000 in the next six years. Should autonomous technology continue to advance, that deficit may exponentially decrease. And as with other AI inventions — such as Pizza Hut's and Walmart's replacement of human



employees with robots — the utilization of autonomous delivery trucks will not only increase the efficiency of getting customers their products, but it will also cut down businesses' spending costs, which in turn lowers prices for customers. So while we may not be able to ride as stylishly as George Jetson for a few more decades, when it comes to building a flying car, these new trucks are definitely a driving force.

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

When Contractors Create a Liability

Indoor air quality is everyone's responsibility. I say this all the time, and I probably sound like a broken record, but I'm constantly stunned at how often people fail to understand that what they do inside a building can impact everyone else sharing that space. From "noxious" fumes emanating from a woman's daily breakfast of maple-flavored oatmeal to bacteria residing inside a taxidermy trophy, sometimes the indoor air quality culprit is totally unexpected and caused by someone who should really know better.

Not long ago, we were called out to a medical building where tenants had been complaining about the indoor air quality. Fortunately, no one had gotten sick from it yet, but the building manager, being very wise, wanted to act fast. I knew there was definitely something up when I met a woman with irritated skin around her nose and eyes, and her elbows and wrists were rubbed raw from scratching. At the time, a quarter of the building was under construction, and the tenants who were complaining just happened to be located in offices closest to the construction. You can see where this is going.

I set up some equipment to test for airborne particles and found that the count was 40 times higher than it should have been. I certainly had my suspicions about the cause when I looked down the hallway and saw some of the construction crew dragging a piece of fiberglass insulation over the carpet. Plus, the construction area was not closed off, and the crew was unknowingly carrying fibers and contaminants to other parts of the building on their clothes and in their hair. After testing some suites that were farther from the construction zones, it was confirmed these spaces weren't

experiencing a problem, so I went to the client with my findings.

The long and short of it is that the construction lead wasn't managing the site well enough. They needed to contain the area, put it under negative pressure, set up some air scrubbers with a HEPA filter to clean the air coming out of the area, clean the hallway carpets, and instruct the construction crew to stop dragging equipment across the carpet. My client forwarded the report to the contractor and told him, in no uncertain terms, that he was creating a huge liability and was going to cause a lawsuit!

"Problems happen a lot around construction areas when the contractor doesn't know how they impact IAQ."

Problems happen around construction areas a lot, especially when the contractor doesn't know how they are impacting the IAQ. Ideally, after hearing about the risks, a contractor will do everything in his power to remedy the situation. Considering we had to go back to that medical building four times for follow-up inspections, where we found the filters not running and more particles in the carpet each time, it's safe to say that the contractor did not take my advice seriously.

This contractor's carelessness could potentially pose a big problem to this building in the future. The area with the



construction has two A/C units mounted to the roof, and you won't be surprised to hear that the contractor didn't cover the supply vents and was letting them run the whole time. Considering how he treated the construction process, I can't imagine he'll think to clear out the A/C before the building moves tenants into those spaces.

Consider this a cautionary tale. Before you let people do any work in your building, you need to make sure the contractors you hire are experienced enough to follow proper protocol in order to maintain good indoor air quality.

Train West

WHEN YOU CAN'T SAY YES

3 Ways to Say No Without Losing a Customer

Has a client ever asked you for something you didn't have the resources to provide? Have you ever had a request to do something that's against company protocol? Do clients want you to bend over backward on a task that isn't worth the ROI? On these occasions, you are perfectly justified in saying no. But clients rarely like being turned down, so it's important to learn to say no without losing a paying customer.

Offer Alternatives

Maybe a client has asked for something you don't traditionally offer. Unless this is a rare opportunity to branch out and begin offering a new service to all clients, it doesn't make sense to run yourself ragged fulfilling a niche request. Avoid the fear of letting your client down by referring them to another place where they can get what they need. This way, you get to say no while still being the person who helps the client get what they want.

Ask for Clarification

If you have changed anything in your company, be it the software interface on your website or your pricing structure, you may have frustrated clients who demand things go back to the way they were before. Since that's not an option, try to determine exactly what they are upset about. By asking a client why they prefer the old way, you might learn that they are having trouble accessing important information in your new software or that the new price increase is beyond their budget. Armed with this information, you can hopefully find a solution for what's really troubling them. This is also a good time to explain the reason behind the change, if possible. Clients can be more accepting when they understand something better.

Make Clients Feel Heard

In every interaction, people want to feel listened to. Even when you have to say no to a client, making sure they feel heard and respected can go a long way toward maintaining that goodwill. Acknowledge the issue they are having, empathize with their frustration, and make sure your client knows you are listening by using their name and saying, "I understand." You can't say yes to every request, but you can remind clients that you value their support and appreciate the effort it took for them to contact you.

Saying no is not bad customer service. When you take the time to say it the right way, you're actually doing the client a favor because it means you aren't wasting their time.



Article Title

Sub-Header



Text

Storm's a-Brewin'

Prepare Your Building in Hurricane Season

Last fall marked one of the worst hurricane seasons to date. Several hurricanes devastated the United States and many island territories, and FEMA reported that Hurricane Harvey was "probably the worst disaster in Texas history." Experts warn this year could be just as bad, if not worse. Here's what building owners and property managers need to do before the next big storm roars through.



damage during a bad storm.

Once you have the playbook, schedule a meeting to review the contents and get everyone on the same page. Remember, the power can be out for days following a disaster. Keep hard copies of this playbook accessible to all managers in case an emergency occurs.

Test the Generators

Just having a generator isn't enough to guarantee you're covered during a disaster. Test your building's generators to make sure they're

ready to run if and when you need them. Additionally, you should call in a professional to conduct regular maintenance long *before* you need the generator to run the building.

Remove Hazards Around the Building

Instruct landscapers to consistently trim branches and remove damaged trees from around the building to reduce the chances of damage caused by wind. Consider having the roof, doors, and windows retrofitted to keep them secure during a hurricane, and prevent water damage by having the rain gutters and downspouts secured and cleared of any debris.

Hurricanes are a terrifying reminder that, no matter how prepared you are, there's not much you can do when the rain starts and the wind picks up. But that doesn't mean you should do nothing except hope for the best. Do what you can to make your building as safe as possible before it's too late.

Create a Playbook

The first step to handling a disaster is to plan and plan *well*. Creating a playbook helps you get a big picture of what needs to be done in the event of a hurricane. Some of the things you should have in this playbook include:

- Contact information for staff members, including phone numbers, addresses, and emergency contacts.
- Outline of pre-storm procedures, including a team of emergency personnel with clearly defined duties for responding to a hurricane and dealing with the aftermath.
- A communication plan. Determine how you will relay important information, be it through phone calls, text messages, email, or social media. While some delay will be expected after a bad storm, keeping staff and occupants informed about what's going on will help alleviate fear and confusion.
- An updated list of third-party companies who can help with disaster recovery. This includes flood water remediation, electrical contractors, indoor air quality inspectors, and other persons who can ensure your building is safe for occupants should it suffer

Have a Laugh With Travis

What did the girl mushroom say to the boy mushroom?



You sure are a fungi!

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