

# Commercial INTEGRATOR

THE BUSINESS BOOK FOR TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS

## Now **THIS** Is a Succession Plan

Ingolf de Jong and presumed successor  
Brandon Gramse are a case study in how  
to pass the torch – working side-by-side  
to evolve GenComm. PAGE 24

Ingolf de Jong,  
owner/CEO/president;  
Brandon Gramse,  
VP of engineering  
and operations

## #MOUNTING

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### The Importance of Keeping Access Clear and Safe

A FEW YEARS AGO, I stayed at an AirBNB in Boston's north end. It was a furnished basement with ceilings that barely cleared my 6-foot, 2-inch height. The problem was there were doorframes and portions of the ceiling that dipped down another 6 inches. When I was wearing a baseball hat that restricted my vision of object slightly above my head, it was inevitable that I would bonk my head hard enough to see stars. Old spaces like that would not meet today's building codes by a long shot.

When adding AV equipment to spaces, integrators must consider the potential dangers presented by protruding objects.

How many times have you accidentally struck or been struck by an object protruding from a wall? Maybe it was when you were texting while walking? Protruding objects that interfere with people moving freely around classrooms, halls, and any usable space are a big focus for the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Such objects can be mounted on floors, walls, or ceilings.

A protruding object can restrict the passage of people in wheelchairs and seriously injure a sight-impaired person passing by. These are risks that need to be mitigated before anyone enters a space.

#### Wall-Mounted Monitors

"Under the ADA, wall-mounted displays can't protrude more than 4 inches from the wall, including their mounting hardware," said Kathryn Gaskell, who manages Chief's product management team for Legrand AV. "We believe that the sweet spot for such protruding mounts is 2 inches depth or less — a goal that can be achieved using thin displays, and when needed, some form of in-wall box to store equipment."

#### Other Mounting Limits

This isn't all you need to know to comply with ADA Sections 204 and 307: Anything you mount on the wall or a post should be no lower than 27 inches off the floor, and no higher



*ADA Guidelines should be heeded when installing technology.*

than 80 inches tall. The 27-inch lower limit is particularly important, because it reduces the chances of tripping by protruding obstacles.

Other limits are as follows:

- Free-standing objects mounted on posts or pylons should be no wider than 12 inches, no lower than 27 inches, and no taller than 80 inches.
- Any objects suspended between posts/pylons that are more than 12 inches apart must also be no lower than 27 inches and no more than 80 inches in height.
- If you are mounting something over the users' heads, it must be at least 80 inches high to provide adequate vertical clearance for people moving underneath.

#### Fixing Protrusion Problems

What is an installer to do if the space has protrusions that violate the ADA standards? "In many cases, you can mitigate the situation by adding storage or millwork under the protruding object to bring the surrounding wall surfaces outward," said Gaskell. "The depth of the protrusion can be reduced to 4 inches or less." If the protruding object sticks out 6 inches, pushing out the wall 2 inches or more brings the net protrusion into ADA compliance.

Alternatively, placing a credenza with equipment mounting capabilities beneath the protruding object can be a practical way of fulfilling this requirement. "This approach can be simpler but still highly accessible, allowing people to interact with the flat panel," said Megan Knedler, director, marketing, Chief.

There are plenty of ways to meet ADA guidelines to make spaces better and safer for everyone. Be sure to always consider protrusion problems while designing.

➤➤ @chiefmfg, #ADA

**Author JOEL HAGEN is the social engagement and content manager for Chief, a brand of Legrand | AV.**

## #EDUCATION TECH

### HoverCam Teaching Stations Central to Tech-Enhanced Classrooms

AS SOCIETY BECOMES more data driven, students need to access, evaluate, and use information to be successful in college, in the work force, and in daily life. With that in mind, Monroe County Public Schools in Alabama is taking its goal of ensuring that students become effective users of ideas and information seriously by taking a thoughtful approach to incorporating technology into its classrooms.

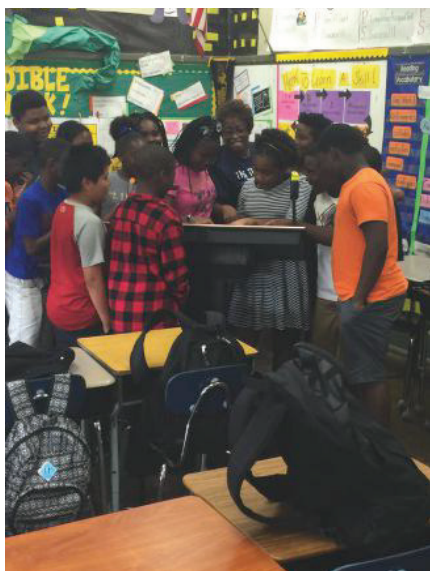
Because much of the technology in many of the rural school district's classrooms was reaching end of life, it meant a strategic overhaul across the board. However, limited funds for the new equipment was at odds with the district's goal.

"Almost 10 years ago, we were able to buy a laptop cart, an LCD projector, document camera, and a handheld interactive whiteboard for every single classroom in our district using a larger national grant," said Devlynne Barnes, Monroe County Public Schools' technology coordinator. "Since then, only some of our elementary schools have been able to make small upgrades with some Title 1 funding. But that funding doesn't go very far. In a year's time, we could equip maybe three or four classrooms. At that rate, it would take several years to equip an entire building, and by then the equipment would be end of life. And that's just one school."

With seven schools, nine campuses, and 3,450 students, district stakeholders sought a partner that could help identify how to make the best use of limited funds. In addition, since their high schools receive very little Title 1 funding, they needed a viable way to fund technology access for the rest of its schools. Finally, they needed purpose-built education solution that would replicate the technology experiences students would encounter in the working and higher education world.

Monroe County partnered with Huntsville/Birmingham, Ala.-based dealer Teachers 'N Tools (TNT) to find a solution to meet all its requirements. TNT brought them a





*Monroe County Public Schools in Alabama enjoy the benefits of Pilot 3 podiums that provide an all-in-one technology teaching station solution.*

new, compelling option that would enable the district to expand its technology outreach: classroom technology management service contract. TNT is the first company to offer a service contract opportunity to schools that allows them to purchase new technology from their limited budget and spread the costs out over several years. The contract provides additional software, continuous training as well as maintenance of the equipment and software for its term.

What's more, TNT partners with innovative brands it trusts for enabling 21st century learning. To that end, the company recommended HoverCam's education solutions. TNT originally chose HoverCam in early 2000 as part of its exclusive distribution portfolio, making it the first dealer in the Alabama area to distribute the company's family of document cameras.

"Their Hovercam is very innovative in their

energies and research for preparing classrooms for the 21st century," said Cynthia Lowery, Education Consultant president & COO at TNT. "Their document cameras are the best in the market, and over the years, we've seen them continue their commitment to enabling new levels of interaction and learning in the classroom with new solutions."

For Monroe County, TNT recommended HoverCam's new Pilot 3 teaching station. It's a digital podium purpose-built for teachers to bring new dimension and interactivity to the classroom by eliminating the complexity of disparate laptops, document cameras, microphones, video switching, and sharing systems that can be difficult to operate and waste valuable classroom time and student focus.

Pilot 3 solves these operational and management hurdles by combining the audio, video, and digital content elements of these devices in an all-in-one wireless mobile podium. It gives educators a leg up on using advanced technology that requires minimal training and is intuitive and easy to use. The Pilot allows them to seamlessly instruct the class from anywhere, not just from their desk or from the front of the classroom.

The technology integrates a Windows PC, 13MP document camera, and 21-inch touchscreen with wireless HD mirroring functionality, so any device's content and touch annotations can be beamed to any interactive flat panel, projector, or TV in the room. The document camera's built-in microphone enables educators to capture high-quality audio. And with HoverCam's ClassFusion classroom management software, every lesson, interactive whiteboarding, annotation, and desktop marking can be recorded and saved to the cloud for students to access anywhere, anytime, and from any device or browser — making it well suited for flipped and active classrooms that encourage creative thinking. The integrated classroom solution was exactly what Monroe County had in mind.

"The Pilot really is in a class by itself. It has the tools that teachers use the most, wrapped together in the most convenient, neat, and just efficient bundle," says Barnes. "Right now, our focus is trying to get students more engaged and participate in new ways, especially in our middle school and high schools where teachers are often just standing at the front of the room and presenting. With these tools, the students can

get up, touch the screen, interact, and be involved during lessons."

At the end of 2018, the district rolled out installation of Pilot 3 starting with all the classrooms at Monroeville Middle School and few classrooms at Excel Public School. The Pilot has been met with enthusiasm, even from teachers who weren't keen on solutions put in place in the past.

"This podium does it all. It does everything the teachers were already using, but it's in such a compact, efficient, and innovative way without the cable clutter that caused safety concerns," said Barnes. "These are tools that I believe every single classroom needs to have."

With TNT support, the district now has access to HoverCam and professional development and the technical support. And because the district is so small and with only three people serving their technological staff, it was important to find an education solution that would be seamless to install, wouldn't require hours of training, and wouldn't require costs maintenance.

"The Pilot paired with interactive flat screens was a no brainer when we factored in the costs of the bulb replacements for the aging projectors in many of our classrooms and involvement of other solutions," says Greg Shehan, superintendent. "With this package, we can quickly meet our goal of preparing our kids when they leave our classrooms and go on to technical schools or four-year colleges where they have this type of technology. We're preparing our kids to step right in and succeed."

Lowery adds: "the innovative thinking and planning of the superintendents, Dr. Zickeyous Byrd, and Greg Shehan, along with County Boards of Education has given the faculty, and most importantly, the students of Conecuh and Monroe County a major advantage. Regardless of the path these students may take in the future, having the advantage of such cutting-edge technology in the classroom will serve them well for many years to come. We are delighted to be a partner in these endeavors."

>> **#HoverCam, @teachersntools, #smartpodium**



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