



First Thing

A Monthly Update from The American Society of Home Inspectors

ASHI First Thing

November 2017

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In This Issue:

The 3-Legged Stool
Risk Management
Webinar
Reflections of LTC
Sprint's Exclusive
Offer
Chapter Challenge
Standing Out
6 Common
Misconceptions
Social Media
Etiquette

Quick links:

ASHI.org

[The ASHI School](#)

[Online Education](#)

[InspectionWorld 2018](#)

[InspectPAC](#)

[Inspective: ASHI Blog](#)



The Three-Legged Stool Marketing Philosophy

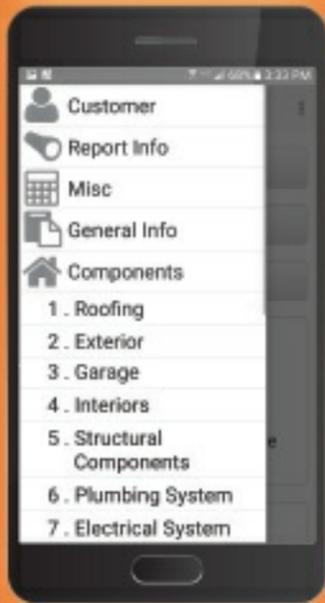
As a business development professional, I make it a practice to listen to

podcasts frequently. I loved this marketing philosophy shared by a collision repair company and I think it can be applied to the home inspection industry. It's the three legged stool philosophy – all legs are equally important. One without the other makes it wobbly and unlikely to withstand the test of time. The more sturdy the legs – the more successful – and dependable – it becomes.

1. GREAT SERVICE – You have to deliver impeccable service – not mediocre service – not just good enough service. But, great, impeccable service. You can be the one who stands out in the crowd by simply improving the service, going the extra mile for clients.

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The ASHI School's Upcoming Classes

[60-Hour Online Class](#)

120-Hour Class

[Cumming, GA 11/27-12/8](#)

[Lakewood, CO 11/27-12/8](#)

[Leesburg, VA 11/27-12/8](#)

[Tampa, FL 11/27-12/8](#)

Mold Class

[Des Plaines, IL 11/18-11/20](#)

**4-Point Inspection
& Wind Mitigation**

[Tampa, FL 12/2](#)

Who doesn't like to receive great service? When you do, do you talk about it? Refer to others? Of course. It's memorable and in today's world, unfortunately, it's unexpected.

2. COMMUNICATION – You need to communicate – with your clients, your agents, your co-workers. We have to spend the time and take the time to communicate – in your business, it's vital that your findings are communicated effectively. Anyone can improve their communications skills and style. Be who you are – then be teachable, tweak and improve along the way. (Listening to podcasts to and from inspections can sharpen your communication skills.)

3. APPRECIATION – you can't thank people enough for spending their hard earned money for your great service and for referring you to their clients, friends and family. Thank them – verbally and in writing.

Obviously, there's more that goes into building a home inspection business; however, having these three sturdy legs in position and mastered is a key to success.

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Buyer's Protection Group

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InspectPAC raises
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hosted by BNK Insurance
Tuesday, November
7 at 8 PM - 11 PM EST

The Hartford and BNK Insurance Services are pleased to offer "Risk Reduction & Report Writing," a webinar for home inspectors featuring Michael Casey, Principal of Michael Casey & Associates and Director of Education for Home Inspection University.

Michael Casey & Associations is a national A.M. Best recommended consulting firm based in San Diego, CA.

This webinar will:

- debunk myths about preventing claims and avoiding liability,
- touch on what other inspectors are doing to limit professional liability exposures, and
- cover risk reduction issues for home inspectors, including tips on best practice inspection procedures and report writing.

REGISTER NOW



*by Joel Singer, CEO,
Applica / Home Wizard*
When Dave Kogan and
I were discussing

Applica / Home Wizard attending the ASHI Leadership Training Conference that was held a few weeks ago, he mentioned that this would be a great opportunity to talk with ASHI's chapter leaders and future leaders. He said these were the leaders of ASHI who were focused on growing their chapters, and helping their members to grow their businesses, and as such, the LTC would be a fantastic opportunity to explore new ideas.

This absolutely turned out to be true.

It was a great opportunity to meet existing

and re-elect candidates to Congress who have an understanding of the home inspection profession, and who are supportive of the profession. At InspectionWorld 2018, we're planning something new. After a long day of classes, expo hall and networking, come relax and unwind with us with music, hors d'oeuvres, and signature drinks. It's just \$50 to get in (money to support InspectPAC). While relaxing and enjoying the relaxing vibes, help us raise donations for the Political Action Committee on Monday night, January 22 from 7:00-8:30 PM.

This is a "signature" event you won't want to miss out on. Purchase tickets when you register for InspectionWorld or pay at the door.

If you won't be at InspectionWorld, or want to donate now before IW rolls around. Download

clients in person, like Hank Sander of the Great Lakes Chapter, and Roger Gerhardt of the Ohio chapter. And it was fascinating to hear the innovative ways that they were using Applica / Home Wizard's tools, which were ways that we had never even thought of. Plus there were great discussions with inspectors who talked about their needs, and what they were looking for to help them grow their businesses.

As I mentioned at the luncheon on the second day of the LTC, these discussions included talking with Robert Stockmann of the new Southern Colorado Chapter. As a follow-up to our discussions earlier in the day, he asked "what about doing a two-for-one deal for their chapter . . . two years for the price of one?" At first I thought he was just kidding, but after talking with our team and others at the conference, if we did the orientations as webinars, it actually could be a win-win. So we announced at the LTC that we would be offering this to all of the Chapters.

There were other great discussions, and I'm absolutely glad to have been able to participate. It was great seeing everyone at the LTC, and I'm looking forward to being at InspectionWorld, where we'll be doing a "Grab & Go" session.

Applica / Home Wizard (www.applica-solutions.com/ASHI) is a Gold Affiliate Member of ASHI who helps inspectors to grow your business with marketing tools that keep you top-of-mind with realtors and homeowners: interactive eNewsletter with personalized home care reminders & tips; mobile app; social media post-ables; web SEO enhancers; and more.

[REGISTER FOR INSPECTIONWORLD](#)

What you're probably hearing is the toilet refilling as if it had been flushed. But how is that possible? Water in the tank is slowly leaking past the flush valve and into the bowl. As the bowl fills, the water silently flows down the drain line. When the water in the tank gets low, the automatic fill valve opens and you hear the tank filling – just as if the toilet had been flushed. The fix is simple: clean or repair the flush ball or flap valve. At times, the problem can be fixed just by wiping deposits off the mating surfaces. Other times you'll need to replace the valve because of a crack or surface imperfection. If you want to test for this type of silent leak, place a few drops of food coloring in the tank. Within a short time, you'll notice the color in the bowl – a sure sign of a leaking flush valve.

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ASHI Members and Home Energy Score Candidates and Assessors!

The ASHI and Home Energy Score Chapter Challenge is steaming full ahead! ASHI Chapters are in a heated race. Here are the current standings:

CHAPTER LEVEL

- **MOST ASSESSORS: Ohio Southern**
- **MOST SCORES: Great Lakes**

INDIVIDUAL/BUSINESS

- **MOST SCORES: Gordon Glidden of Inland Lakes Inspection Services LLC**

Here's a quick reminder of just how good the prizes are:

- \$400 worth of tools/hardware for each category winner from ID Energy/Inspection Depot
- Free admission to Inspection World 2017 in Orlando for each category winner from ASHI
- A marketing "overhaul" package from ASHI and the DOE for the Individual Winner

And while our leaders are doing great work, they're not so far ahead that your chapter can't still make a run for the big WIN!

Gold Affiliates:

[Applica/Home Wizard](#)
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[How To Operate Your Home](#)
[Inspection Certification](#)
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https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.inspection.Home_Energy&hl=en



As an exhibitor at InspectionWorld (or any conference for that matter) your goal is to walk away with as many leads and new business as possible. To do that, you need to stand out from the rest of the crowd, Stand out from your competitors, other exhibitors and even the attendees. It's up to you to make your time worthwhile. Which is why you should seriously consider sponsoring InspectionWorld Orlando. There are numerous opportunities to choose from, including:

- Tote Bag
- Umbrella w/special case
- Conference Pens
- T-Shirt
- Tote Inserts

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Upcoming Chapter Events:

11/11

[East Tennessee Chapter](#)

11/18-11/19

[Ohio Southern Fall Seminar](#)

12/2

[Louisiana Chapter Event](#)

12/9 - 12/10

[FABI Winter Conference](#)



We're starting to hear from exhibitors (and a couple of us were

- Special Events

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The 6 Most Common Misconceptions About HomeBinder

In the last several months we've been fielding a number of recurring questions

about HomeBinder.

Despite efforts otherwise, many inspectors have come to think that our business model is based on soliciting clients. When in fact, our true north is the homeowner and our job is to make sure that they have a great app to manage their largest asset.

These are the most common misconceptions that home inspectors have about HomeBinder:

- 1. HomeBinder business is selling all our homeowner data to third parties.** This is not our business. We don't do this.
- 2. HomeBinder makes outbound calls to solicit my clients and upsell services.** We don't do this either directly OR indirectly (through a partner). This is not the business we are in as we heard from inspectors that they didn't want to work with firms that did this as it leads to too many problems.
- 3. HomeBinder works with OneSource, therefore HB is selling customer data.** We do work with OneSource. That is

called at HQ as well) about how they have received calls from Travel Business Partners and other companies stating that they are working with ASHI to book hotel rooms at the Caribe Royale for InspectionWorld 2018.

ASHI has never, nor ever, worked with independent travels brokers to book hotel rooms. We work directly with the hotel. If you're attending IW, follow this link: [Book a Room Now](#)

absolutely true. But the misconception comes from HOW we work with them. We ONLY work with them if a homeowner asks for help with something that they can help them with. What this means practically is that last month (September 2017) 1.4% of new homeowners asked for help inside the HomeBinder application and ONLY those homeowners were connected with OneSource. No one else. We will help those that ask, not those that don't, as we believe this to be the best approach.

4. To be a customer of HomeBinder you have to be a warranty

customer. Absolutely not true. 92% of our customers don't use Complete Protection.

5. HomeBinder offers warranties so they are selling customer data.

Not true. Earlier this year we began to offer a warranty integration with Complete Protection because a portion of our customer base asked for us to offer a 90 day warranty program that met their needs. We saw that Complete Protection was a leader and didn't fall into issues that typically befall the industry (and we encourage any firms that are interested to take a look at them through our integration or independently). What this means is that about 8% of our inspector customers want to, and choose to, use their warranty. ONLY those clients are setup with a 90 day warranty, no annual warranties are pushed on clients, and the inspector can even pick and choose which of their clients they want to set-up with a warranty. NO OTHER HomeBinder users are shared with Complete Protection.

6. Homeowners don't use the binders setup for them.

This one regularly comes up but is far from the truth. What is true is that there is a wide range of engagement by homeowners depending on the inspection firm they are working with. Some have nearly all (90%) of

their clients accept and use their HomeBinder account. Our top performers with homeowner engagement do several things such as bringing up HomeBinder at the time of the scheduling and at the inspection. If you'd like to learn more we'd encourage you to watch this video. <https://support.homebinder.com/using-your-account/increase-client-login-rates>

As you can see above the majority of questions are around customer data as this is a concern across the entire industry.

We MUST handle your customers, which become our users, with the utmost care.

Why? The reason is two-fold:

Inspectors have told us that they want a reasonably priced service that does not sell client data or do outbound calls to the homeowner to push product or services.

This is a paramount concern we've heard from Day 1 and we've oriented everything we do around this.

Our vision is to be THE platform that people use to manage and eventually sell their home. We cannot be shortsighted about annoying them by trying to sell them services out of the gate in the relationship. We'd only be hurting our brand and our vision. We need a relationship with that homeowner until they decide to sell (and then again in their next home).

If you are looking for a company with a big vision and that thinks different, you've come to the right place. If you thought different of us we hope that you understand who we are, and the direction we are going. We hope you'll give HomeBinder a try and find out for yourself.

Anyone that has told you different about HomeBinder, we hope you ask yourself why?

No contracts, no hidden fees, no setup, no penalty for leaving. We'll even pro-rate your current month if you want to leave. That's just another example of how we "think

different.”

We hope this helps set the record straight.

Social Media Etiquette: What's Safe to Share on Social Networks

Social networks - self-contained online forums where users can share their lives and careers and engage in ongoing dialogue with others in the form of text, photos, videos, comments and other forms of high-tech communication - have grown by leaps and bounds over the past decade. Billions of people worldwide now regularly turn to social networks to provide friends and strangers alike with snapshots and updates of their daily life and, in turn, see what friends, family, and acquaintances are doing at any given moment. In fact, it's fair to say that today we're juggling two lives: Real and virtual. But what do basic rules of online etiquette look like, and which information and viewpoints are OK to share on these most public of forums? As we note in the new book *Netiquette Essentials: New Rules for Minding Your Manners in a Digital World*, answers are often hard to come by. Below, you'll find essential hints, tips, and guidelines for maintaining a safe and positive presence on popular social media sites from Facebook to Instagram, Snapchat, and beyond. **Maintaining a Positive Online Presence**

- Sharing extremely-opinionated viewpoints (e.g. political leanings or thoughts on controversial topics) can be a lightning rod online. Think twice before liking supporting status updates or posting such opinions, which can incite and aggravate others (and live on in perpetuity). If you feel the need to express these opinions, consider confining such communications to exchanges with individual friends, or specific Facebook or Google+ groups. Ultimately though, it's important to remember: If you don't have anything nice to say, perhaps it's best left

unsaid.

- Posting embarrassing, revealing or negative photos of yourself should be avoided at all costs. Remember: Images you share may be taken at face value, and/or viewed as representative of your character - not to mention live on forever on the Internet. What seems cute in high school or college may not seem quite so endearing to potential employers.
- Never post photos of others without their express permission.
- Relationship or personal drama is best kept private. If you cannot resist the urge to share, do so sparingly - and in the most vague, unspecific terms possible - for the sake of involved parties, or friends uninterested or unwilling to participate in the situation. No communications should be shared about other individuals and those involved in real-life situations without their advance permission.
- Avoid posting on social networks unless you have a tight grasp over your privacy settings, and are completely comfortable with the group of online friends that your updates will be shared with.

Tone of Voice and Attitude

- Professionalism is imperative - if you wouldn't say it in a social or work setting, don't say it online, in the most public of forums.
- Politeness and respect are vital: Always be considerate of others, and treat them the way that you'd wish to be treated.
- Avoid bad-mouthing other users as it will negatively impact your image and casual bystanders may judge you based on these actions.
- Maintain a positive tone and attitude: Negativity, complaints and condescending messages often reflect poorly on the poster.
- Bragging and self-aggrandizing statements should be avoided, and making them may cause you to lose friends and followers.
- Since social networks are shared venues

enjoyed in mixed company, always avoid using vulgar language and making derogatory remarks.

- Demanding that others share your status updates, projects, thoughts or ideas is inappropriate.
- Reserve confidential discussions for private message threads or, better yet, phone calls, emails or other venues where interactions aren't recorded in perpetuity online.
- Be advised that conversational nuances and subtle shifts in tone or personality may be lost in translation, and that individual users may interpret messages differently: Consider how posts will be read and interpreted before sending.
- Poor spelling, punctuation, grammar and choice of words can reflect equally poorly upon the individual - proofread all communications before sending. Shorthand, abbreviations and online slang should be avoided if possible, and used only in the most informal of conversations...[READ MORE](#)

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