Q&A with BSCAI Vice President Kevin Rohan, CBSE

Kevin Rohan, CBSE CEO of Cavalleri Services, Inc. and vice president of BSCAI, has been in the building service contracting industry since 1974. Continue reading to see what he has to say about building service contractors utilizing social media and CRM software, how the industry has changed and his advice on advancing in BSCAI.

How has the industry changed since you first started?

Successful contractors have embraced technology, use state-of-the-art equipment and communicate with clients and prospects in a variety of electronic formats. None of these were available when I started. I earned a roll of quarters for the pay phones.

What advice do you give BSCs in acclimating to a changing economy and new trends?

Be open-minded. Pay attention to what federal and state legislators are doing and talk to your peers about what they are doing.

Is there anything in particular that BSCs should pay attention to with federal and state legislators?

Without question the pending health care legislation could have a dramatic negative impact on BSCs. Other legislations to watch for include immigration reform, corporate taxes and regulatory reform.

What are some of the trends that you are noticing in the industry?

Very competitive pricing, green accreditation and social media and CRM software utilization are a few of the trends that I have seen.

Do you think it is important for BSCs to embrace social media?

That is a great question. Many contractors have used or are using Facebook and Twitter to create additional platforms for information about their organizations. I believe that they must proceed with caution and be sure that two things are done; 1) monitor content and comments very closely, and 2) develop a strong engagement strategy for those who connect through the various media with them.

How do you see BSCs using CRM software?

We have used CRM for a number of years and have found it to be very successful. We are communicating our performance on a regular basis relaying much of the client contact's responsibility, keeping them informed on periodicals and complaint/interest follow-up as we enhance the client's experience with us. I have found CRM to be a tremendous asset and recommend it regularly to others.

What would you say is the most important lesson you've learned in the business?

Be honest with your clients, vendors and employees, even if it is uncomfortable. We all face tough decisions along the way and it's important to maintain your integrity.

What do you think is one of the most important attributes of a good business leader?

[One of the most important attributes is having] appreciation for those around you. It goes a long way.

Describe your management style.

I watch the numbers very closely, give people the tools to be successful and then I get out of their way. I believe that small emerging company owners must relinquish some controls, or they will not grow. An owner cannot do it all; they have to hire well and trust that they have trained and mentored their people properly.

What are some tips you have for managing staff?

Be a cheerleader. Appreciate the work they do and tell them. Above all, have some fun.

How would you advise someone who was interested in moving up in BSCAI?

I would suggest that they get involved in the industry. Join BSCAI and take advantage of the education it offers. I can honestly say that the association has shown me how to grow my company. Don't only attend functions – participate in them.

What has been the greatest takeaway from your membership in BSCAI?

The many friends I have met over the years and how much I have learned to appreciate them. They have shared their great ideas with me, and I have been able to learn from all of them.