



B&L NEWS

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ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING FOR METALCASTERS

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FROM THE DESK OF



Kristine Craft, VP – Professional Services

Start the Year Off Standard using SOP

We often recommend that B&L customers going through an implementation create process documents (or Standard Operating Procedures) for each employee to follow the instructions on how to do their jobs within the Odyssey software. Why?

1) When existing employees are out of the office, someone could pick up the SOP binder to cover for the absent employee with the tasks they do in Odyssey and other tasks specifically related to their jobs.

2) SOP's can also be used internally help to recruit and/or train new people since some, if not all, of the job's functions and expectations are clearly defined within the SOP document.

By having good process documents, new employees (or existing employees who take over the work) can have documents they can reference to perform the required work. This cuts down on training time and helps immediately support the new employee while making sure system efficiencies are still in place.

Employee turnover can have an adverse effect on day-to-day operations. That is a known fact to both HR professionals and management staff. Another known fact is that employees who keep job process information exclusively in their heads hurt the company's ability to function effectively and add to the already steep costs of on-boarding new employees by extending the learning curve.

Recently, I spoke with a person where the company she worked for required every single staff member to have a "desk SOP" specifically to prevent employees from keeping "silos of knowledge" to themselves. They have found it especially useful when experienced people leave the organization or move positions.

A new year is a good time to start out fresh with processes! If you would like to see examples of Odyssey process documents and discuss how they may help your company, please reach out to me. I'll be delighted to help you get started.

Familiar Face in Professional Services

In October, the Professional Services Department welcomed Mike Turner to the staff as a Project Consultant. A graduate of Western Michigan University, Mike has held accounting management and cost analyst positions at Michiana area manufacturers for over 20 years, including: NIBCO, Carrier Corporation, ArcelorMittal Burns Harbor, and Whirlpool. As part of his Whirlpool responsibilities, Mike often met with metalcasting manufacturers supplying Whirlpool and will be a familiar face to some B&L customers. His responsibilities at B&L will include helping customers implement the financial aspects of Odyssey.



Mike Turner
Project Consultant

JANUARY

Bremer Manufacturing Co. Inc.
Magnesium Alloy Products Company Inc.
Weatherly Casting & Machine Co.

- B&L Staff writes article for Foundry Management & Technology "Tech Trends have Real-World Effects for Metalcasters"
- Carol Gorbitz Celebrates 35 Years with B&L



FEBRUARY

Pace – Saltillo Division

- Odyssey Boot Camp Class
- Crystal Reports Class

MARCH

Spuncast, Inc.
Great Lakes Die Casting

- Doug Hinman retires
- Brad Clark takes over Research & Development Department
- Bryan Hoffmaster joins Customer Service Desk



APRIL

Faircast, Inc.

- Web UI Transition Class
- Joe Harmon writes article for Michigan Manufacturing Association on "After a Cyber Attack"



MAY

Pacific Alloy Castings Inc.

- Odyssey Boot Camp Class
- Crystal Reports Class
- B&L Executive Conference

Aarrowcast, Inc.



- Matt Gacek writes article for Foundry Management & Technology on "The ERP Learning Curve"



JUNE

Pace – Cambridge Division
Horizon Metals Inc
Wear-Tek

- Go-Lives
- Odyssey Signings

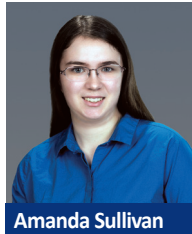
New Voices on the Phone

The Technology & Support Department’s Customer Service Desk welcomed two new faces in the fourth quarter of 2018.



Chris Ticen

Chris Ticen is a 2018 graduate of Purdue University Northwest with a Computer Graphics and Technology Degree. He has previous customer service experience in retail and food services throughout his college career. Chris enjoyed his first visit to a foundry last month (thanks to Plymouth Foundry and Rochester Metal Products for hosting our team) and will be attending the AFS’s Introduction to Metalcasting this January.



Amanda Sullivan

Amanda Sullivan is a 2018 graduate of Indiana University with a degree in Mathematics. She has previous customer service experience in retail and event services during her collegiate career. Amanda has a family connection and long-time familiarity to metalcasting as her father has been in the industry for 20+ years and with FederalMogul for 10 years.

As Software Support Representatives at B&L, both Chris and Amanda will be focused on providing support to customers for technical problem resolution on the Odyssey ERP System. Our support team can be reached at Support@BLInfo.com.

Education and Learning Opportunities

For 2019, we’ve added workshops and customers webinars to the mix of educational opportunities. Below is an outline of options for the first 6 months of 2019. Be sure to check out complete details on our website: BLInfo.com/BLClasses

Virtual	In Person
February 6th – Maintenance Management Webinar	January 15th – Inventory Control Workshop
March 6th – Tool Management Webinar	February 19th/20th – Boot Camp Class
April 17th - General Ledger Allocations Webinar	February 21st/22nd – Crystal Reports Class
May 8th – Margin Analysis Webinar	March 12th/13th – Costing Workshop
June 5th – Stop Codes Webinar	April 9th/10th – Dataviews & Dashboards Class
<i>(Please note, customers will have to log-into the site to access the webinar registrations)</i>	May 13th/14th – Crystal Reports Class
	May 15th/16th – Boot Camp Class
	June 11th/12th – One-on-One with B&L Consultants*

*Schedule a day of training one-on-one in our office with consultants from our Professional Services team

Q4 Signings - Die Casters Prefer Odyssey

During the October – December 2018 timeframe, three North American die casters signed to the Cloud-based Odyssey ERP software system included:

- Langley, British Columbia-based and family-owned **Simalex Manufacturing** - experts in aluminum, zinc and magnesium die casting since 1964;
- Eau Claire, Michigan-based **Shawnee Specialties** - an ISO-certified, award-winning, sole-source supplier for zinc die cast, aluminum die cast, and die cast related needs with 45 years in business; and,
- Fort Recovery, Ohio-based **Fort Recovery Industries** - a leading global manufacturer of structural, functional, and decorative aluminum and zinc die castings for more than 70 years with three U.S facilities.

Welcome to the Odyssey family of customers!

ODYSSEY UPDATE



Brad Clark, Manager
Research & Development

GA of Odyssey 6.1

All Odyssey 6.1 release information is available through Rapid Support within Odyssey Web UI or via the B&L customer portal (Customer Login) for customers on Windows UI. Any assistance needed in the update process is free for any customers on maintenance with B&L. Odyssey customers on the B&L Cloud will be contacted by B&L's Technology Department with the update schedule.

Odyssey 6.1 incorporates dozens of customer-driven enhancements from the Odyssey

Customer Feedback Forum. A few highlights of the enhancements include:

- **Built-in user experience improvements**
 - Colored themes by company for multi-company users
 - Enhanced Data Entry Grid for quicker and more reliable data input
 - Improved Profile Manager with drag-and-drop capabilities
 - Sorting on multiple columns
- **Capital Projects have been made more full-featured**
 - Capital Projects is split from Equipment with new screens
 - Capital Projects can be entered on tool orders
 - REQs, POs, and A/P all have new Capital Project entry fields
- **Production reporting by crews has been made easier with Pre-defined Crews**
- **Usability enhancements on Employee Time Approvals, Purchase Orders, and Purchase Order Receipts**

In addition, Odyssey 6.1 begins a process where we are continually modernizing and improving the user interface and the user experience. When we released the Odyssey Web UI back in 2016, we knew the nature of modern interfaces was not static. Over the next several releases, we will be not only improving the look and feel, but also the underlying Odyssey UI framework to allow B&L to stay on the cutting edge of application development.

New R&D Staff



Vance Curtis

In November, the Research & Development (R&D) Department welcomed new Software Development Engineer Vance Curtis. A recent graduate in Computer and Information Technology from Purdue University Northwest, Vance has done contract work in a variety of programming languages and applications for several industries including a metal stamping company, an entertainment company, and local court system. This January Vance is attending the AFS's Introduction to Metalcasting class. At B&L, Vance's responsibilities will include focusing on business application development for Odyssey ERP software.

JULY

- Inventory Control Class ○
- GLDC
- Michigan Die Casting LLC

AUGUST

- Odyssey Boot Camp Class ○
- Crystal Reports Class ○
- Jamie Kleca-Holse transfers to Professional Services ○
- J&M Precision Die Casting
- WDC Acquisitions LLC
- Ancast Industries LTD
- Madison-Kipp Corporation
- Quality Castings Company
- Pace – JEL Finishing
- Superior Brass & Aluminum Casting Co. ○
- Bryan Hoffmaster transfers to Research & Development Department ○

SEPTEMBER

- Fisher Cast Steel ○
- Spectrum 2018 (Annual Users' Conference) ○
- Patrick McCrevan writes article for Metal Castings Design & Purchasing on "Surcharges and What They Mean for Buyers & Sellers" ○

OCTOBER

- Fort Recovery Industries
- Shawnee Specialties Inc. ○
- Mike Turner joins Professional Services ○

NOVEMBER

- Odyssey Boot Camp Class ○
- Crystal Reports Class ○
- Amanda Sullivan joins Customer Service Desk ○
- Simalex Manufacturing Co. Ltd ○
- Vance Curtis joins Research & Development ○

DECEMBER

- Chris Ticen joins Customer Service Desk ○
- Odyssey 6.1 released ○

- Go-Lives
- Odyssey Signings



01/19

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Phil's Q4 2018 Travels



Manitowoc Grey Iron, Kyle Bonin



Eck Industries - Brian Kulas and Keley Eck-Hayon



Acme Alliance - Mike Anderson and Rachel Sylverne



Manitowoc Grey Iron, Jay Peaslee



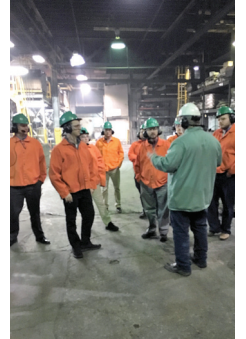
RCM - Alex Bednarke and Jim Mock

Phil Laney, B&L's CEO, and other senior members of staff have been continuing to visit customers. Pictured, left are some of the customers Phil visited in Q4.

While the audacious 2018 goal of visiting **every** B&L customer didn't quite materialize, 83% of customers received a visit from B&L staff in 2018! The executive team will continue the visit momentum and in-person customer outreach.



Plymouth



RMP

(Photography by Phil)

Phil also shepherded a group of newer employees on a business field trip in December. Our thanks to Sam Schlosser and Rebeca Colon, pictured, from Plymouth Foundry and Rick Bean, pictured in green, at Rochester Metal Products for hosting new members of B&L's Customer Service and R&D teams!