



## August 2011 - Vol. IV, Issue 3



### Greetings!

This month we are covering a topic no one likes, other than perhaps lawyers. Lawsuits are an unwelcome intruder in any business; no one wants to be sued! Unfortunately, lawsuits surrounding the workplace are on the rise. Manufacturers, distributors, control systems integrators, any business, none of us are immune.

### Quick Links

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[Patti Engineering's Blog](#)



[President, Sam Hoff's Blog](#)



[V.P. of Engineering, Dave Foster's Blog](#)



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Did you know that Patti Engineering has been called on to serve as an expert witness in cases involving industrial automation? Like any professional service, engineering and control systems integration carries some risk. A minor miscalculation in a line of code can bring down an entire system, causing your client to lose time and money - or worse, cause damages to other system components and/or cause injury.

Patti Engineering Vice President of Operations, Ken Kutchek, will explain the importance of utilizing the services of a Professional Engineer (PE) when dealing with a lawsuit related to industrial automation. A PE is required to do forensic engineering to serve as an engineering expert witness. Our PE Engineers have the experience and capability to sort through the evidence to find out what happened when something went wrong, and why it happened.

On a lighter note, check out our employee highlight section where you will learn more about Patti Engineering Accountant, Lynn Minard. Lynn's dedication and professionalism has helped Patti Engineering successfully embrace our growth spurts as well as navigate through downturns in the economy. Lynn manages to do all this while raising a young family!

We always love your feedback. Let us know if there is a specific automation topic you are interested in or if you have comments on what we have covered here.

Thank you for your interest in Patti Engineering!

Best regards,

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### Forensic Engineering and Serving as an Expert Witness



As an expert witness, Patti Engineering uses our extensive experience and expertise to uncover the primary cause of why a system and/or project has failed in terms of quality, cost, schedule, functionality and performance. Although multiple parties tend to contribute to a failure, courts typically hold one party more responsible than the others, and often the determination of liability can be an obscure task. To help the court correctly attribute the primary blame for the project failure, it is important to carefully isolate and identify the root cause of failure. A Professional Engineer (PE) experienced in Forensic Engineering and experienced with testifying as an expert witness, can be critical to the outcome of a lawsuit.

### **Patti Engineering VP of Operations, Ken Kutchek, gives us an overview of the Professional Engineering (PE) designation and Forensic Engineering:**

A Professional Engineer (PE) is an engineer certified by a state board of registration to practice engineering. A PE must be licensed in each state in which he or she wishes to practice engineering. The PE license is the engineering profession's highest standard of competence, a symbol of achievement and assurance of quality.

A century ago, anyone could work as an engineer without proof of competency. In order to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, the first engineering licensure law was enacted in 1907 in Wyoming. Now every state regulates the practice of engineering to ensure public safety by granting only Professional Engineers (PE's) the authority to sign and seal engineering plans and offer their services to the public.

What is a PE ?

- To a client, it means you have the credentials to earn their trust.
- To an employer, it signals your ability to take on a higher level of responsibility.
- To colleagues, it demands respect.
- To yourself, it's a symbol pride and measure of your own hard-won achievement.

What are the requirements to become a licensed PE?

- Earn a four-year degree in engineering from an ABET accredited university
- Pass the Fundamentals of Engineering (FE) exam
- Complete four years of progressive engineering experience under a PE
- Pass the Principles and Practice of Engineering (PE) exam
- Get 5 references from other professional engineers
- PE's must improve their skills by fulfilling continuing education requirement

What makes a PE different?

Licensure is the mark of a professional. Ethical standards, continuing education, and professional competency are expected. PE after your name indicates you have met the standards and can be respected as a professional. Regulation of the engineering profession was established to protect the safety, well-being and other interests of the general public. A licensed professional engineer has the authority to take legal responsibility for engineering work. Only a PE can sign and seal engineering documents (reports, drawings, and calculations for a study, design or analysis) that are submitted to a public authority or for public and private clients.

A PE is required to do forensic engineering and to be an engineering expert witness. Forensic engineering is the study of failures, accidents, and other incidents involving engineered products which caused personal injury or damage to property. The goal of forensic engineering is to find out

what happened when something went wrong, and why it happened.

Engineering expert witnesses are highly credentialed professional engineers that provide litigation support through review, evaluation, inspection, laboratory testing, report writing, depositions and court testimony.



In some states only licensed engineers are permitted to use the title of engineer or to practice engineering professionally.

#### Professional Engineers Code of Ethics

- Hold paramount the safety, health, and welfare of the public.
- Perform services only in areas of their competence.
- Issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.
- Act for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees. Avoid deceptive acts.
- Conduct themselves honorably, responsibly, ethically, and lawfully

*You can email Ken with questions at [kkutchek@PattiEng.com](mailto:kkutchek@PattiEng.com)*

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(248) 364-3200*



#### Patti Personnel - Lynn Minard



For any business to operate successfully through good times and bad, you need a solid support system. Lynn Minard has been a solid pillar of strength in Patti Engineering's support system for the past four years. President of Patti Engineering, Sam Hoff, commented on Lynn's contribution, "Lynn has been a terrific employee for Patti Engineering. Her attention to detail and forecasting abilities are invaluable to our operation."

Lynn has kept Patti Engineering financially organized and efficient with her dedication, professionalism and constant attention to the important details that keep our business flowing at peak efficiency. In addition to her responsibilities including all aspects of accounting, Lynn also handles all of our purchasing.

#### Lynn Minard

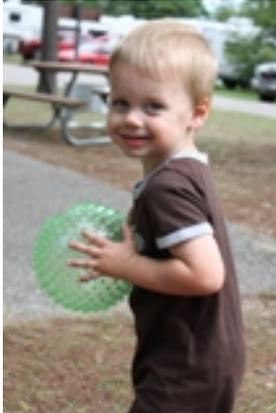
Lynn graduated from Oakland University in 2001 with a Bachelor of Science Degree majoring in Accounting. Prior to joining Patti Engineering in 2007, Lynn worked for a land development/property management company that managed golf courses for just over 6 years where she began as an accounts payable/accounts receivable clerk. Lynn's position there grew to where she handled all aspects of accounting for four companies associated with the golf course management. Prior to leaving she was given the role of office manager, and began doing work for the land development companies, in addition to her accounting responsibilities for the golf courses.

Lynn and her husband Denny (Dennis) have a son, Devin and are expecting a baby girl in December. Lynn enjoys golfing, walking, gardening, camping, reading, and spending time with family and friends.

Lynn has said that she "loves working for Patti Engineering and the talented team of Engineers/Management." The Engineers/Management of Patti Engineering are quite aware of how lucky they are to have Lynn on our team!



Denny and Devin  
Minard



Devin



Lynn and Denny

