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Alabama Technology Network has the most extensive training and service offerings for business and industry, to ensure the best possible source for your business needs. These include continuous improvement, industrial maintenance & technology, environmental health & safety, and leadership & management development.

Our Mission is to provide industry and business the tools, training and resources to excel.

Socialize with us



ATN to Open the Door to a Food Safety Program

Over the last few years the food industry and its supply chain has become increasingly more complex in regards to food safety and compliance with the advent of the Food Safety Modernization Act.

A wider reaching global supply chain exposes our food—and those companies within the food supply chain to increased risk. Alabama Technology Network (ATN) will start supporting Alabama food manufacturers and those within the supply chain managing operational risks, achieve food safety regulatory and certification standard requirements, and realize sustained business value.

Every company has an obligation to its customers to provide safe and quality food. In addition, a growing number of companies require their producers and suppliers to implement a certification program.

No matter how large or small the organization, a food processing facility should regard food safety and concern for public health as its number one priority.

"The move to begin a food safety program, really came down to need and opportunity. Alabama Technology Network saw a great opportunity to help industry in the state," said Keith Phillips, ATN Executive Director. "This is something that we've been considering for a while, so I'm excited to start implementing the program, so we can assist food manufacturers in Alabama."

The Food Safety program will include:

- An in-depth understanding of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) and third party certifications such as SQF, BRC and FSSC 22000.
- Guidance in evaluating which food safety certification would best accommodate your business and markets you choose to participate in.
- Pre-audit guidance and Gap analysis to better prepare your business for a FDA audit.



**Preparing for a New Decade of
U.S. Manufacturing**

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ATN is in the final stages of hiring an extremely experienced project engineer to lead the new Food Safety program.

EH ENVIRONMENTAL, &S HEALTH, & SAFETY UPDATE

According to the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) there are an estimated 1.5 million workers in the United States who operate powered industrial trucks. Powered industrial trucks are a significant source of serious and fatal injuries to workers, with an average of 100 powered industrial truck fatalities and 20,000 workers seriously injured annually, as a result of forklift related incidents (U.S. Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics). Forklifts, or powered industrial trucks, encompass a large variety of trucks used to move materials within business and industry. For these reasons, and others, OSHA has a Regional Emphasis Program (REP) for powered industrial trucks in Region IV, which includes Alabama and other southeastern states.

ATN has solutions to help you remain in compliance and manage the hazards and risks associated with powered industrial truck operations., including some of the following training programs: Powered Industrial Truck (Forklift) Train the Trainer, Heavy Equipment and Front End Loader Training, Yard Truck Training, Tractor and Backhoe Safety Training, and other related mobile equipment training.

Our mission is to help companies remain in compliance and establish safety cultures that will avoid the unnecessary risks that are often taken by mobile equipment operators. Therefore, ATN provides technical assistance as well, to help companies develop, update, and audit their mobile equipment safety policies and procedures.

Contact: Tim Croley (334) 689-9180

CI CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

New offerings and training in the coming year will be "Transitioning to the AIAG-VDA FMEA" and "Kata", as ATN continues to look forward to meeting the needs of Alabama companies. The last update introduced FMEA, so let's talk about Kata. Kata is based on a popular book by the Lean/Continuous Improvement guru Mike Rother, called "Toyota Kata". If you are seeking a better way to lead, manage and develop people to produce continuous improvements with superior results, Toyota Kata is for you. It is broken down into two forms. First, the Improvement Kata is a repeating routine of establishing challenging target conditions, working step-by-step through obstacles and learning from problems. Second, the Coaching Kata is a pattern of teaching the improvement kata to employees at every level, ensuring that it permeates their thinking and actions.

Changing gears, the most popular class within the CI group continues to be the Root Cause and Problem Solving class. This is an excellent one-day class for operators/associates, technicians, and frontline supervision, as it provides the main points of getting to the root cause with hands-on, interactive exercises throughout the day to reinforce the topics. In addition, the Problem Solving tools of mistake-proofing, effective training, and standardization are included to ensure problems do not re-appear.

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L&M LEADERSHIP & MD MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

The **DiSC assessment**, is a non-judgmental tool used for discussion of people's behavioral differences. If you participate in a DiSC program, you'll be asked to complete a series of questions that produce a detailed report about your personality and behavior. You'll also receive tips related to working with people of other styles.

The DiSC® model provides a common language that people can use to better understand themselves and to adapt their behaviors with others — within a work team, a sales relationship, a leadership position, or other relationships.

DiSC profiles help you and your team:

- Increase your self-knowledge: how you respond to conflict, what motivates you, what causes you stress, & how you solve problems
- Improve working relationships by recognizing the communication needs of team members
- Facilitate better teamwork & teach productive conflict
- Develop stronger sales skills by identifying & responding to customer styles
- Manage more effectively by understanding the dispositions & priorities of employees & team members

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IM INDUSTRIAL &T MAINTENANCE & TECHNOLOGY UPDATE

Typically, people logically divide Industrial Maintenance into two distinct pathways, electrical & mechanical. At ATN, we have combined our Industrial Maintenance group with Information Technology, which we call Industrial Maintenance & Technology. With Industry 4.0 & the Internet of Things, today's Industrial Maintenance technicians must be skilled in electrical & mechanical areas, but they must also be competent in networking & data collection. Every industry with machinery, from paper mills to automotive assembly plants, needs Industrial Maintenance technicians. Not only do they troubleshoot & maintain equipment, but they also install & dismantle it. Every time a car rolls off the line or a finished product leaves a factory, a skilled industrial maintenance technician played a role in producing it. To keep up with technology, maintenance workers usually need at least a year of on-the-job training, and OSHA standards require that companies train or re-train employees at least once every 12 months. ATN provides the most extensive workforce training, technical assistance, & engineering services to incumbent workers in AL. ATN will provide your mechanics, electricians, and control system specialists with the training & tools to elevate their skill set, which boosts job performance & improves your skills gap.

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How Coronavirus is Affecting Alabama Business

The spread of the coronavirus is affecting world markets, & its impact is being felt in Alabama. How far that impact goes, though, is still an open question.

Family Medical Supply in Birmingham began seeing the effects last month when demand for N95 respirator masks began spiking. The store, which normally carries 6-12 cases of the masks, is now sold out & has a waiting list.

According to the World Health Org., the total number of cases worldwide has now reached 80,980 & almost 3,000 people have died. But the rapid spread of the virus is a stark reminder of the inter connectivity of global commerce.

The Alabama State Port Authority, acting on federal guidelines, is implementing controls on ships coming into the Port of Mobile.

The epicenter of the outbreak, China, happens to be the main source of goods coming into the Port. Mobile saw \$17.71 billion worth of traffic for all of 2019, with China making up for 18% of that traffic, according to WorldCity.

However, Judith Adams, vice president of marketing for the Alabama State Port Authority, said the port's risk of the virus transmitting is "extremely low." "The virus, according to the CDC, shows no evidence to support transmission of COVID-19 associated with imported goods..." 

Facts from OSHA on COVID-19

20 Cybersecurity Statistics Manufacturers Can't Ignore

Cybersecurity threats are a huge business risk for all companies. Small and medium-sized businesses — including manufacturers — are especially vulnerable to attacks. One of the first steps when prioritizing how to manage your business risk is to gather information about the threat environment. The 20 important cybersecurity statistics listed below focus on what manufacturers need to know about the "what" & "so what" of cybersecurity, so they can start planning their "now what" actions.

1. 10% breached small companies shut down.
2. 77% of industrial companies rank cybersecurity as a major priority.
3. 32% of Managed Service Providers report Construction and Manufacturing most targeted by ransomware.
4. 88% of small business owners felt their business was vulnerable to a cyber attack.
5. Ransomware is the No. 1 threat to SMBs.
6. From Q2 to Q3 of 2019, the average ransomware payment increased 13% to \$41,198.
7. Cybercrime will cost the world \$6 trillion annually by 2021.
8. By 2021 a business will fall victim to a cybersecurity attack every 11 seconds.
9. The average cost of a data breach is \$3.92 million as of 2019.
10. About 20% of malicious domains are very new and used within about one week after they are registered. 

ATN Leads Multiple Projects for Manufacturer in Troy, Alabama

ATN is providing training in multiple Industrial Maintenance subjects for Sander's Lead in Troy Alabama.

The training began near the end of September 2019 and will continue until March of 2020. Subjects include Shop Math, Hand and Power Tools, Fasteners, Bearings, Hydraulics and Pneumatics, Pumps, Blueprint Reading, Precision Measuring and much more. Sander's Lead understands the importance of training and education of their workforce to their long term success — titling the initiative as "Sanders University" with ATN partnering with Enterprise State Community College to provide the training.

Sander's Lead has seen the need for greater Industrial Maintenance skills among their Team Members, which will decrease their downtime due to Mechanical and Electrical failures, while improving equipment utilization. Some of the team members completing the training will move to Industrial Maintenance roles within the company due to the tight labor market of skilled tradespeople.

Sander's Lead also recognizes the need to reduce waste and their associated costs and have partnered with ATN to provide a 6S Train-the-Trainer class. This training will be completed in March and will serve as a starting point for Sander's Lead journey toward Continuous Improvement.

INSIDE THE NETWORK

Click the map to learn more about each ATN location including staff and contact information.

ATN is hiring for the following positions: (Click on each position to learn more)

[Project Engineer - Industrial Maintenance Technology](#)
serving Auburn, Alabama

[Project Engineer - Quality Engineering Systems](#)
serving Alabama

[Project Engineer - Industrial Maintenance Technology](#)
serving Alabama

Congratulations to ATN's Ashley Lackey for winning **Cullman County Ambassador of the Year.** 

