

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

Your Voice, Your Business Resource, Your Trusted Advisor



powered by



Change Isn't Coming.

IT'S ALREADY HERE page 4

- 6 NSCA Success Story:
The Value of Project Management Training
- 7 Can Cloud Videoconferencing
Improve Your Team's Efficiency?
- 8 Preparing for the Workforce of the Future
- 10 New Financial Analysis of the Industry Available
- 11 New Way to Track Business-Impacting Legislation
in Your Area



FALL 2018



PUBLISHED BY

NSCA
3950 River Ridge Drive NE, Suite
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402
800.446.NSCA • 319.366.6722
Fax: 319.366.4164
www.nsca.org

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President

Josh Shanahan
Sport View Technologies

Vice President

Michael Boettcher
New Era Technology

Secretary

David Ferlino
Whitlock

Treasurer

Anne Sellers
Sensory Technologies

Immediate Past President

Kelly McCarthy
Genesis Integration

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Ray Bailey

Lone Star Communications

Dale Bottcher

AVI-SPL

Brad Caron

SIGNET Electronic Systems

Christina De Bono

ClearTech Media

Tim Hennen

IVCi LLC

Dan Schmidtendorff

Communication Company

© Copyright 2018 by the National Systems Contractors Association (NSCA). All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. Except as permitted under the United States copyright act of 1976, no part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, be manipulated or entered into or stored in a database system without the prior permission of NSCA.

Statements of fact and/or opinion are the sole responsibility of the authors and do not imply an opinion of the officers or board of the association. Send letters regarding materials to: NSCA, c/o Building Connections Editor, 3950 River Ridge Drive NE, Suite B, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402.



A Message from the Executive Director

Channel Friendly and Channel Ready? A Way to Keep Score ...

The integration community is a tightknit group: Everyone knows everyone, including the few bad actors that tend to straddle the fence in their channel strategy.

Being “channel friendly” means they move product through integrators while supporting their sales efforts and using their marketing platforms to create demand and provide lead generation.

NSCA defends the channel, and wants to see manufacturers sell *through it* — not around it. We encourage lead generation, building brand awareness, sales support through regional sales reps, etc. We’ve seen many instances where manufacturers attempt to manage a direct sales team and a VAR/dealer channel for increased revenue opportunity.

The difficult part: We all think we can outsell each other. Manufacturers tell me that they don’t think integrators have sophisticated enough sales teams — only *they* know how to effectively sell products to the enterprise-level client.

On the other hand, integrators tell me that manufacturers are so focused on moving products that they often do more harm than good when they call directly on customers.

We all want to grow and sell more ... so what’s the resolution?

We haven’t seen a successful, multi-tier channel management model that creates a win-win-win. Trying to manage this without conflict is exhausting for the reps, and it never ends well. We’ve seen this run in cycles, and it always comes back to this: The best strategy is finding top-tier integration firms to represent you in local regions. So the top-tier integration firms won’t lead with your product. Now what?

Many of our members use NSCA’s vendor scorecard as a way to evaluate manufacturers and distributors, and develop a preferred vendor program. If you’d like your own copy, just send me a note at cwilson@nsca.org — and we’ll send you one!

Chuck R. Wilson

Chuck Wilson
NSCA Executive Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

Oct. 9-12 **EVENT**

Project Management Training
Boston

Oct. 16 **WEBINAR**

Leading Virtually: Culture and Engagement
Presented by: Insperity

Oct. 22 **EVENT**

IGNITE Golf Outing
Atlanta, GA

Oct. 22 **EVENT**

Build-A-Bike Team-Building Event
Atlanta, GA

Oct. 23-24 **CONFERENCE**

Pivot to Profit
Atlanta, GA

Nov. 6-9 **EVENT**

Project Management Training
Dallas, TX

Nov. 20 **WEBINAR**

Cyber Insurance Policies
Presented by: TrueNorth

Dec. 18 **WEBINAR**

Motivating Your Sales Teams
Presented by: Corporate Sales Coaches

MEMBER ADVERTISEMENT



The NEC C Series

Clear, Captivating Digital Signage

www.necdigital.com

Orchestrating a brighter world **NEC**



powered by

Change Isn't Coming. IT'S ALREADY HERE

A recent NSCA survey revealed that, in the last three years, RMR revenue *hasn't* increased for integrators. To keep up with customer demands, however, we know we need to move in this direction. Pivot to Profit 2018 will help you increase revenue from managed services! This event answers the tough questions you'll have as you re-examine your firm's technology, services, processes, and structure to prepare for recurring revenue (without disrupting existing revenue models).

GET THE APP

1. Visit your app store
2. Download Attendify
3. Search "NSCA P2P"
4. Click "Join" and create your profile

Special Keynote

Manage Your Cyber Risk ... Before It Manages You

Former Governor Tom Ridge tells you how to defend against this new style of warfare — cyber risk — while still implementing state-of-the-art technology and giving your clients what they need and want



Education Sessions

- Addressing IoT Risks
- Building a Managed Services Sales Machine
- Healthcare Solutions of Tomorrow: Prepare Today for Rapid Change
- How Managed Services Change Your Marketing and Client Communications
- Integrator Cybersecurity: Protecting Your Business and Customers
- Merging Digital and Physical Workplaces
- Pivot Past the Definition of Insanity: Immediate RMR Creation
- Smart Buildings and Their Stress on Technical Infrastructure
- Technology Solutions for K-12 and Higher Education
- What's Moving to the Cloud Next (and How to Make Money When It Does)

What Attendees Say



"Pivot to Profit is different than any event I've been to. The focus on monthly revenue and new technology trends will continue to force us outside of our norm."

— Jim Bozarth, Alliant Integrators



"Pivot to Profit inspired me to come away with a goal of 50% of annual revenue from managed services within five years. With what I learned, our company is making significant progress on this goal."

— Chuck Fairchild, Fairchild Communication Systems



"Pivot to Profit opened our eyes to other areas of business, revenue, and ways to manage financials."

— Patt Bowles, Lone Star Communications



"Each time I attend, I gain valuable information that has been beneficial on the financial and ownership side."

— Dawna Payne, Texadia Systems

Pivot to Profit Partners



Pivot to Profit Sponsors



REGISTER

Pivot to Profit • Oct. 23-24, 2018 • Atlanta Airport Marriott • Atlanta, GA • www.nasca.org/p2p

MEMBER ADVERTISEMENT

BELDEN

SENDING ALL THE RIGHT SIGNALS

Technology is Evolving. Evolve with It!

Technology is changing what we do, and how we do it. Network, audio and video performance expectations continue to grow as more people connect with more devices. To support these new connections, network infrastructure must be able to accommodate more bandwidth, longer distances and faster data delivery. Whether your project calls for traditional cabling, or advanced copper or fiber designs, Belden has a full breadth of products to meet your clients' ever-changing demands.

Visit www.belden.com or call 1-800-BELDEN-1 (800-235-3361) for more information.

COME A DAY EARLY! On Oct. 22, two special events will benefit our entire industry.

ignite Golf Outing

Canongate 1 Golf Club • Sharpsburg, GA

Help increase awareness and raise money for NSCA's IGNITE program, an initiative to attract, engage, and encourage students and young professionals to our industry.

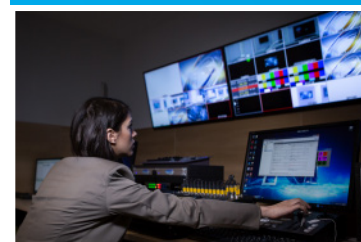
Register at <http://info.avisystems.com/nsca-ignite-golf-tour-2018>.

Build-A-Bike, sponsored by alliantgroup

Atlanta Airport Marriott

Teams will be provided with parts and tools to build new bikes that will be given to the Joseph B. Whitehead Boys & Girls Club of Metro Atlanta. Network, meet new colleagues, and learn how to use problem-solving and teamwork to get these bikes out on the road.

Email kperkins@nsca.org to register!



NSCA

Success Story:

THE VALUE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT TRAINING

After a recent organizational restructure, Lone Star Communications decided to add a new layer of superintendent positions to its operations department. The creation of these positions also created the need for training.

“Originally, our superintendents and project managers were acting in a combined role of project manager,” explains Dan Hiatt, senior vice president of operations for **Lone Star Communications**. “As a result, a lot of our project management duties weren’t being closely looked at. When things got busy, the project management role would understandably take a back seat, and our employees would concentrate instead on their superintendent roles.”

So job duties were separated, along with a reorganization of teams and departments, to establish defined superintendent and project management roles. After this change, Hiatt wanted to make sure that everyone understood their purpose, and how the two new roles would interact.

He had seen Nadim Sawaya, principal at **Enterprise Performance Consulting**, an NSCA Member Advisory Councilmember, present in the past, and knew that his expertise spanned project management. So Hiatt reached out to NSCA to learn more about how Sawaya might be able to help ease the transition for employees impacted by the restructuring.

How the Training Works

On the first day, staff members from a variety of departments were invited to join the training. Discussions were focused on the purpose of project management, the roles of project team members, and tips and advice to establish a successful career in project management. By including adjacent team members, such as IT, engineers, estimators, and warehouse employees, everyone had the chance to learn how project management fits into the big picture — and how it impacts everyone else’s roles and responsibilities.



“When we talked about some of these deeper subjects, like estimating, it was helpful to have everyone in the room together so we could all hear about the different aspects and considerations that go into estimating,” Hiatt explains. “It was great for the employees to discuss estimating labor rates so they could see all the elements involved — not just basic employer costs. It was a conversation that most of them hadn’t had before, and it was eye-opening for them to discover why and how we come to the prices we do.”

On the second day of training, a smaller group of project management employees participated to focus on the functional aspects of their roles, including financials, metrics, negotiations, change orders, and working with subcontractors.

The Impact of Knowledgeable PMs

“Nadim brought stories to everything he taught, and they’re so easy to relate to,” says Hiatt. “He has a huge amount of information that he loves to share. He’s absolutely an asset.”

As a result of Enterprise Performance Consulting’s training, Hiatt has seen an increase in confidence from the company’s project managers. They now understand their responsibilities, and recognize how they impact others. The company’s new superintendents are also more confident in their roles as well.

“It’s hard to put a value on staff training like this,” says Hiatt. “Having a better understanding of roles — not just for the people in them, but for the people around them — is a huge benefit. It helps improve the synergy of our company.” 📍

Don’t Miss This Training!

Enterprise Performance Consulting is leading two more project management training sessions this year.

Oct. 9-12 in Boston
Nov. 6-9 in Dallas

Get details at www.nasca.org/local-training.



CAN CLOUD VIDEOCONFERENCING IMPROVE YOUR TEAM’S EFFICIENCY?

It’s official: We spend *a lot* of time dealing with emails. In fact, **research** from Bain & Company shows that executives receive, on average, about 200 emails a day. The typical supervisor spends an entire day each week handling emails. This type of communication won’t go away anytime soon — and it can definitely support collaboration — but what other options are out there to improve efficiency and productivity? (And help you get some of this time back?)

As videoconferencing has morphed over the last few years, becoming mobile and relying on the cloud, it has quickly created a way to maintain strong communications with coworkers (onsite and remote), clients, partners, and anyone else you work with.

Employees no longer expect (or want) big, fancy, over-the-top videoconferencing systems. They want an easy-to-use option that can be deployed on whichever device they want to use: laptop, tablet, phone, desktop, etc. And younger employees now entering the workforce *expect* this service to be available. They’re already using Skype, FaceTime, and Google Hangouts to videoconference with friends and family members — so it makes sense that they’d want this service at work, too.

They also want a service that can be used anywhere — not a videoconferencing solution that must be used inside one specific room and connected to your enterprise network. Videoconferencing is no longer limited to scheduled meetings in large conference rooms. Thanks to the cloud, it has become mobile and now offers flexible, ad hoc calling. Workplace efficiency is at its best when people can participate in video meetings no matter where they are — at home, in an airport, or down the hall in a huddle room.

If cloud video sounds like a good option for your organization, here are a few pointers from **NSCA Business Accelerator Videxio, managed by Visitec**, on how to make a seamless transition ...

Appoint a Project Manager

Find someone willing to learn the basics who can also administer user accounts on behalf of your company (and provide training and onboarding when necessary). This project manager could be an individual or a small group of people.

Choose a Platform that Lets Everyone Join

The right platform supports a fantastic video experience regardless of the device or software being used — and regardless of whether the user is on your company network or not. Your cloud video provider should:

- Support mobile devices and traditional devices/systems
- Offer the ability to join through a regular browser
- Be compatible with other video software
- Offer audio-only if individual users can’t (or don’t want to) join using video

Create a Training Plan

Arrange quick, in-person training sessions or put together easy-to-use, how-to guides. In some cases, your service provider may be able to help onboard employees. During this training, make sure to let employees lead “practice meetings” so they can try things out in a low-pressure environment.

Track Progress

With cloud video, you can easily track usage and call history. This data can help you:

- Track overall usage to see who may be struggling with technology adoption
- Determine whether you have enough equipment and users
- Determine whether you need to add more user licenses

If you want to learn more about using cloud video, and how it can easily become part of your day-to-day communications, login to www.nasca.org to watch a free archived webinar, *Why Cloud Video?*, presented by **NSCA Business Accelerator Videxio, managed by Visitec**. 📍



PREPARING FOR the Workforce of the Future

By Jill Silman Chapman, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, MS-HRM

The uncertainty of what work life will look like in the future raises lots of questions — and anxiety — for employers.

Will we still have blue-collar and white-collar jobs, or will we move toward a no-collar workplace? Will automation create a more mechanical workforce augmented by human creativity and contribution, and result in a culture of human and machine collaboration? Will virtual employees become the norm?

The work world is caught in a dizzying whirl of change due to digitization, the rise of automation, and shifting demographics.

No one knows for sure what will motivate workers in 10, 20, or 30 years, but knowing where we are today — and planning for what we think will happen tomorrow — will help us face the future more confidently.

Where We Are Today

There's more talk than ever before about the Millennial generation — it's rapidly becoming the largest concentration of workers. The balance of workplace power is shifting. Despite this shift, drivers for talent acquisition and management remain the same among all generations and include the desire to:

- Contribute
- Make a difference
- Be valued

Along with these drivers, all workers expect:

- Trustworthy leaders
- Feedback
- Learning

Where You Should Be Headed

Look toward the future with your workforce. Attracting, motivating, and retaining top talent requires recognizing your employees' needs and responding to them to remain competitive and relevant.

Consider these seven areas where you can have an impact today while also positioning your organization well for the future, whatever it brings.

1. Non-Hierarchical Workplace

A shift in traditional career pathing of advancement recognizes careers of achievement, where people are happy in the job they're doing and don't want to be promoted into a job they don't really want or may not be suited for. Today's employees believe they should be able to earn more compensation, credibility, or power for continued contributions to the role they're already in.

2. Transparent Organizations that Foster Trust

A significant trend in business is toward transparency. A younger workforce that grew up sharing their lives on social media are demanding that employers be open and honest about company information. As a result, more companies are sharing financial information with employees. The more transparent your company is, the more your employees trust you.

One of the most significant contributors to an organization's success is trust. Employees who perceive their companies as fair, dependable, and competent have a higher level of trust and are more willing to work hard for that company.

3. Highly Collaborative, with Remote and Flexible Workplaces

Collaboration in the workplace has always been important, but it has become increasingly so as more businesses offer telecommuting and remote work options for employees. Benefits of collaboration between teams and employees, whether remote or in office, include better organization and delegation of tasks, improved progress tracking, and increased productivity.

Consider what positions you have that can be handled remotely or with a flexible schedule.

4. Culture of Ongoing Feedback

The need for continual feedback tends to be associated with Millennials, but it's important to every generation. Employees who don't receive the feedback they want will likely look for work elsewhere. Effective feedback doesn't have to be a formal process. Supplement formal meetings with informal conversations, emails, texts, and IMs, and include peer-to-peer conversations.

5. Physical Amenities to Fit Needs

Your company will be viewed as innovative and will likely have higher-performing employees when you offer them options for how and where they can work. But this doesn't mean wiping offices out and starting from scratch. Determine the environment that works best


for your workforce. Community tables and open spaces foster creative environments, but employees who need to focus for best productivity need their own desks and private meeting spaces.

6. Personal Development

Employees respond to a positive coach who can make a difference in their success. Millennials, in particular, view their managers as their No. 1 source of personal development — and they want that more than managerial direction. They want managers who will inspire them, surround them with great people, and be authentic in their interactions. Sharing struggles and successes goes a long way toward being approachable and becoming a role model for employees to emulate.

7. Sense of Belonging

If an employee doesn't feel like they're part of the team, they'll be looking to leave. You need to embrace and celebrate a diverse workforce that brings different skills and perspectives to the table. Build relationships across differences, and enforce anti-discrimination and harassment policies.

No one has a crystal ball to show us what the workplace of the future will look like, but these practices can be pillars for your business success today and into the future. 

Jill Silman Chapman, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, MS-HRM, is a senior performance consultant with Insperity, an NSCA Business Accelerator.

MEMBER ADVERTISEMENT

Accu-Tech®

We're Known by the Companies We Keep



YOUR LOW VOLTAGE SOLUTIONS DISTRIBUTOR

Accu-Tech and its manufacturer partners continue to distribute and deliver the latest comprehensive solutions available to the market. Partnering with Accu-Tech provides you with the peace-of-mind that the systems installed in your facility will be high-performance and reliable.

OUR SERVICES

- Financing and Credit
- Logistics
- PO Consolidation
- Project Services Team
- Kitting and Staging
- Dedication to Innovation

VERTICAL MARKETS

- Data Centers
- Federal Government
- Healthcare
- Security Solutions
- Vendor Partners
- Transportation

www.accu-tech.com

New FINANCIAL ANALYSIS OF THE OF THE INDUSTRY Available

The long-awaited, updated Financial Analysis of the Industry report is now available, revealing valuable information that you can use to benchmark and compare expenses, profits, sales, and other data against industry peers of similar size and business focus.

The *Financial Analysis of the Industry* details the industry's performance based on data collected from 100+ integration firms that participated in the 2018 Cost of Doing Business survey earlier this year.

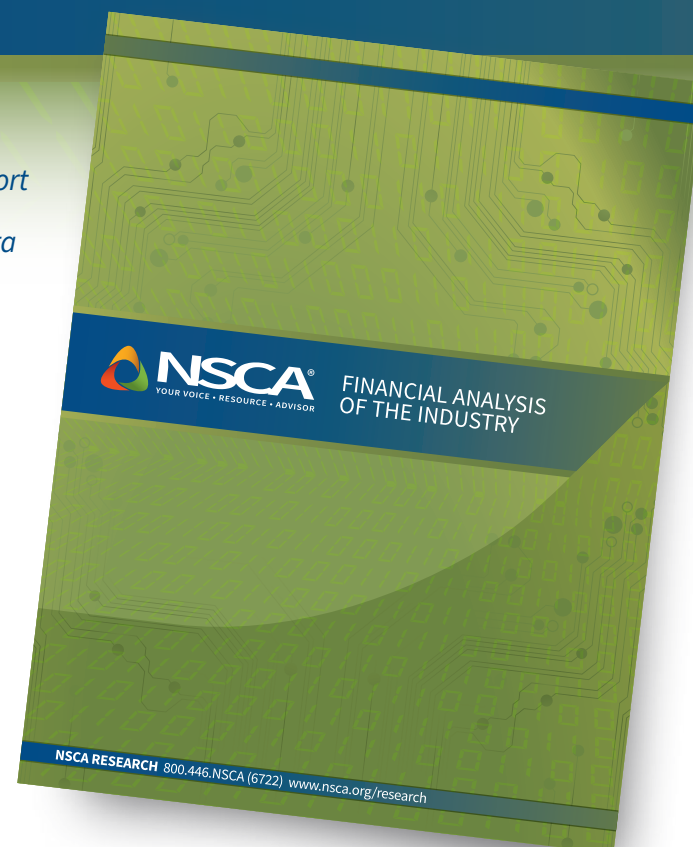
The report offers a few interesting insights this year when compared to the last report, published in 2016:

- An increase in backlog, indicating that there's plenty of work available
- Increased profits
- No increase in RMR revenue

These findings indicate that many integrators are still struggling to get their managed services programs off the ground. In those cases, consider attending NSCA's upcoming **Pivot to Profit** event in Atlanta in October (see pages 4-5 for details), which explains how to smoothly transition into this new opex world, where everything imaginable is "as a service."

The information in the *Financial Analysis of the Industry* provides an in-depth look at integrator operations and dynamics, and helps you better understand the financial health of your own companies (and your firm's performance compared to others). The report also includes verbatim responses about the biggest challenges integrators anticipate in future years.

"Early on in my position as vice president of Sound Image's integration division, I needed to conduct a financial analysis of our division as a key component of my business plan," says Larry Italia, former vice president of Sound Image's integration division. "I had our numbers, but needed some benchmarks for comparison to see where we sat in respect to fellow



integrators. The *Financial Analysis of the Industry* was an invaluable resource for me. It was comprehensive; virtually any metric I wanted to benchmark was there (e.g. headcount, revenue per employee, bid vs. design-build, etc.). In particular, the financial data (SG&A, balance sheets, etc.) was an important tool for me."

The *NSCA Financial Analysis of the Industry* is free for Gold and Platinum NSCA members. Members who completed the Cost of Doing Business survey receive a customized copy of this report with additional valuable information and insight exclusively for their organizations. ▲

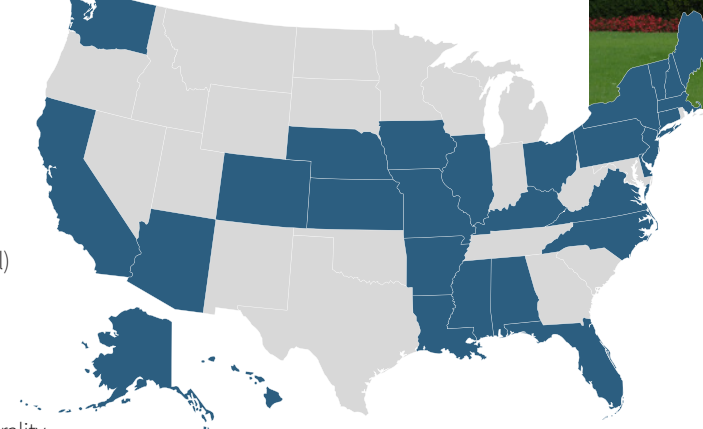
NEW WAY TO TRACK BUSINESS-IMPACTING LEGISLATION IN YOUR AREA

Every year, new legislation impacts the way you do business. Sometimes, these impacts are positive — but sometimes they're not. NSCA works year-round as your advocate, supporting your business through government affairs and legislative tracking and reporting.

To help you keep up with the legislative activity in your area, we unveiled a new online resource at www.nasca.org/cq-roll-call.

This page features updates on major public policy and government affairs efforts focusing on:

- Cybersecurity
- Internet of Things
- Jobs, technology, & STEM
- Labor laws and prevailing wages
- Licensing (company and individual)
- Regulations and code compliance
- School security
- Taxation
- Telecommunications and net neutrality



Once you click on your state, a list of bills appear, along with the date they were introduced, their status, the bill, sponsors, and the latest action taken on the legislation. By clicking on the bill number, you can get specifics on that bill and what it means for you.

This map also provides updates on federal legislative activity; click the lower box marked "U.S." to see it.

This page also features an interactive U.S. map where you can click on your state to view current legislative activity (the map may take a few seconds to load and populate — it contains a lot of information!) Blue states indicate current activity; gray states indicate no recent activity.

At www.nasca.org/cq-roll-call, you can also find the elected officials in your area, and connect with your legislators about the legislation you do or don't support. By playing an active role and taking a stand when there's a call to action, you can be a voice for our industry, too! ▲

MEMBER ADVERTISEMENT

What if...

System design and management was as easy as drag-and-drop?



See why the sky's the limit and try it free.
Learn more at: www.SystemSurveyor.com/nsca

System Surveyor captures and organizes floor plans, device detail and photos in a single easy to use interface. Update information on the fly using a web-browser or mobile tablet.

 **systemsurveyor**



web: www.systemsurveyor.com | email: info@systemsurveyor.com | twitter: [@systemsurveyor](https://twitter.com/systemsurveyor)

Integrators:

Manage Your Cyber Risk ...
Before It Manages You

PIVOT
TO PROFIT

powered by NSCA PIA SYNEX

Oct. 23-24, 2018 • Atlanta Airport Marriott • Atlanta, GA • www.nsca.org/p2p

MEMBER ADVERTISEMENT

Paint the town
PURPLE!

BrightSign®

Join us at New York
Digital Signage Week!

<http://newyork2018.digitalsignageweek.com/>



USA 408.852.9263 | International +44 1223 298500
www.brightsign.biz