

Patti Perspective

May 2015

Greetings!

When bad things happen in industrial settings, forensic engineering provides a means for clarification in legal questions of liability, responsibility, and the administration of justice. Patti Engineering offers forensic engineering services and has served as an expert witness. Learn more about forensic engineering in the article below.

We are changing it up a bit this month for the Patti Personnel Spotlight, as we want to take this opportunity to highlight a great friend and colleague who has decided to leave our ranks to pursue a new opportunity. Ken Kutchek spent the past 18 years helping to build Patti Engineering into what it is today. We wish Ken great success in his new venture!

Forensic Engineering - Vital to Determining Legal Liability

Did you know Patti Engineering offers forensic engineering and can serve as an expert witness for litigation cases? In this article we will share

insights on forensic engineering and give examples of the cases we have participated in.

What is a forensic engineer?

When bad things happen, forensic engineers figure out what happened and why, through the use of science, engineering, investigation, research, analysis, reverse engineering, failure analysis, and application of codes/standards. If you are familiar with the popular police investigation TV shows like NCIS and CSI, it is the same concept, just technical engineering based forensics.



What is an expert witness?

An expert witness, by virtue of education, training, skill, and experience, has expertise and specialized knowledge in a particular subject, sufficient that others may rely upon the witness's scientific or technical opinion about an evidence or fact issue within the scope of his expertise.

The typical expert witness case includes the following steps. The case can be settled any point along the way.

Step 1 - Information gathering, investigation, research, analysis, and reading of other expert reports.

Step 2 - Expert Report - detailed formal written summary of findings, opinions and conclusions based on the facts, data, and evidence.

Step 3 - Deposition - attorneys ask the witness a series of questions about facts and events related to the lawsuit, to allow the parties to learn all of the facts before the trial. The judge and jury are not present. The deposition is recorded and a transcript is produced at a later time.

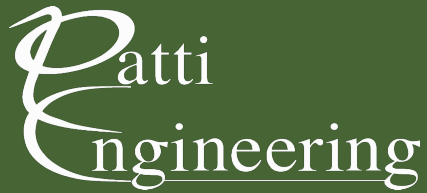
Step 4 - Trial - similar to the deposition but now in front of the judge and jury.

Forensic engineering, in the realm of serving as an expert witness, requires the highest level of



ethics, truth, objectivity, thoroughness and integrity. Patti Engineering has

been hired for a number of forensic engineering projects.



Patti Engineering's first expert witness case involved an accident/fatality in a highly automated warehouse distribution center. Patti Engineering was hired

by the attorney of the family (plaintiff) to help investigate, analyze and determine "how did the accident happen" and "why did the accident happen."

Ken Kutchek stated, "I inspected the facility, the automated equipment, the controls and the safeties. I reviewed many, many documents, including transcripts of depositions of plant personnel, operating procedures, operating training logs, safety procedures, safety training logs, maintenance procedures, maintenance training logs, maintenance service logs, manufacturers equipment operating procedures, maintenance procedures/schedules etc., etc. In the end, I was able to make some solid opinions and conclusions as to the cause of the accident." The case settled after the expert report.

Another expert witness case involved a commercial contract dispute between an automated process manufacturing company and a controls system integrator. Patti Engineering was hired by the attorney of the controls system integrator (defendant) to help assess "what happened" and "why did things go wrong." After inspecting the facility and the automated equipment, countless documents were reviewed - transcripts of depositions of plant and contractor personnel, contract documents, proposals, purchase orders, change orders, scope documents, specifications, schedules, meeting minutes, emails and so on. In the end, Ken was able to deliver solid opinions and conclusions as to the contract dispute. Again, this case was settled after the expert report.

Other examples of expert witness cases Patti Engineering has consulted on include lawsuits involving disputes over intellectual property of industrial automation software and lawsuits regarding the liability of an industrial process automation accident. In industrial litigation cases there is no substitute for hiring a forensic engineering expert. An accomplished expert provides the scientific clarification and big picture perspective of the technical details and evidence, which a legal team needs in order to help guide the legal direction of its case.

To learn more about Patti Engineering's Professional Engineering services, [contact us](#) or visit our [website](#).

Patti Spotlight - Ken Kutchek

"Change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

-John F. Kennedy

Change is upon us here at Patti Engineering. After 18 years with Patti Engineering, Vice President of Operations, Ken Kutchek is pursuing a new professional venture. At a farewell party earlier this month, we wished Ken great success with his new endeavor.



Ken and Sam Hoff, CEO of Patti Engineering, met back in 1997 while volunteering with Habitat for Humanity. A few weeks later Ken became employee number 7. Ken started on the ground floor as electrical controls engineer and worked his way up to Vice President of Operations and helped to build the company into what it is today.

As Ken left us he shared his thoughts with our entire team. "I have really enjoyed working with all of you for the last 18 years," said Ken. "Patti Engineering is a great company with a bright future. The Patti team is one of a kind, a very talented group of people, that really care about doing it right, and a great culture to go with it - professional, but laid back, flexible and fun, but with a real "get-r-done" foundation. Patti Engineering has really been like a family to me. I really appreciate everything that Sam and Patti have done for me over the years. The one thing I will miss the most about working for Patti Engineering is the people, I have made a lot of good friends and have had many good times over the years."



Ken playing cards at on of our Fun Fund events!

Ken will be working for his own company, Dynamo Engineering (www.Dynamo-Engineering.com), and will specialize in forensic

engineering. Specifically, he will be doing expert witness work relating to lawsuits, criminal cases, accident investigations, fire investigations, and insurance investigations in the fields of electrical power, industrial automation and electrical equipment. Ken has more than 25 years' experience in electrical engineering and automation controls. He earned a BS in Electrical Engineering from Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) in Chicago and is a licensed Professional Engineer in Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas.

Ken has been involved in a number of forensic engineering projects for Patti Engineering and will continue to assist Patti Engineering with forensic engineering cases in the future. "I really enjoy the challenge of investigating, analyzing and problem solving the cases - it's just like solving a puzzle," explained Ken. "My wife Melissa and I never miss an episode of NCIS (and not to mention watching the reruns a few times too). Another bonus is the variety; every case is unique and different in its own way."

Instead of replacing Ken, Patti Engineering's executive team has taken this opportunity to restructure the organization. Ken's responsibilities have been dispersed among our team. The Organization is taking a team approach with team leaders responsible for leading and mentoring the engineers assigned to their team.

Ken was a great contributor to our team and we enjoyed many good times. Ken lives in Lake Orion Michigan with his wife Melissa and 19 year



old son Kyle. When not hard at work, he enjoys relaxing by playing on the lake.....boating, water skiing, tubing, jet skiing, hanging out on the pontoon boat or at the Lake Orion Boat Club. In fact, Ken hosted a number of our 'fun funds' - Patti Engineering funded fun times with coworkers.

"Ken is family to us here at Patti Engineering," commented Sam Hoff, CEO, Patti Engineering. "While Ken is pursuing a new professional path, we will still be connected - both on a personal level as friends and a business level as we use Ken in the future as a contractor. On behalf of our entire team, we wish Ken all the best!"

On a fun note, did you know....



Ken and his wife Melissa are Jimmy Buffet 'Parrotheads' As Ken explained it, "We go see Jimmy Buffet every year and our mission/goal is to go to every Margaretville in the world. This year we knocked off Jamaica, Cozumel Mexico and Grand Cayman!"

We work as partners with our clients. When you need an expert to help solve automation challenges, we are here to add value to your solution - enhance efficiency, increase productivity, and work with your team as a trusted resource. Visit our **website** for more information on our areas of expertise, or call us (248)364-3200 for a free initial consultation.

Thank you for your interest in Patti Engineering.

Best regards,

Georgia H. Whalen
Director of Marketing
Patti Engineering





On May 5th, Patti Engineering announced our VP of Texas Operations, Steve Palmgren, was awarded the 2015 Rising Star Award from the Control System Integrators Association in recognition of engineering innovations and his leadership in Patti Engineering's successful expansion to Texas.

Read more in the press release

here: <http://pattiengineering.com/newsroom/patti-engineering-steve-palmgren-awarded-2015-csia-rising-star/>

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