

# THE ROAR

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION OF THE NEMEON COOPERATIVE

December 2023

## A Letter from the Chairman of the Board

With the fourth quarter of this year quickly passing us by, I can't help but think about how quickly the months, years, and our lives pass us by. I remind myself to think about how fortunate we all are, and to be thankful for said blessings, which include family, friends, and yes, our businesses!

Speaking of our businesses, we're fortunate to have a partner like NEMEON, which helps to bring us closer to our vendors, gives us an avenue to share ideas, problems, conversations with our fellow members, and gives us more strength and visibility as part of a buying group. All these give us more power to compete. That said, we all must work together as a unit, so the vendors know that NEMEON is a force in this industry.

Here's something to think about. We, the independents, are closer to our customers than any of the "so called" big three competitors are to their customers, AND the vendors and the

big three know this as well! It's important that when we all talk to our vendors, we should remind them of this fact. It would also help to explain the real history of this industry to some of the vendors, in that, we, the independents, brought the vendors to the dance. There was no "big three" in those days. We expect the vendors to understand and appreciate us! Believe me, it doesn't hurt to poke them a little, because most of the vendors people don't even understand the history of this industry as they haven't been around long enough! I'm in the fourth quarter of this game, so I can get away with calling the vendors out, but I do try to "splain it to them" in a nice manner! As an old pro football coach once said, "It's not the size of the dog in the fight that matters, but rather the size of the fight in the dog!" I know that our members are fighters!! We are proud to be members of NEMEON, and I always point this out to the vendors. **Happy Holidays to you all!**

*Ross Riddle*



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**FRONT COVER** A Letter from the Chairman - Ross Riddle

**PAGE 3** CEO / President Letter - Dave O'Donnell

**PAGE 4** IT Department - Unleashing the Power of AI

**PAGE 6** Benefits of NEMEON Membership

**Page 7** Member Spotlight - Eastern Michigan Distributors Co.

**PAGE 9** LionGUARD University

**PAGE 10** Commercial Corner - Vic Anthony

**PAGE 11** See you at NEMEON Prosper in January

**PAGE 14** NEMEON Network

**PAGE 16** Vendor Spotlight - Ply Gem - Cornerstone Building Brands

**PAGE 17** NEMEON Member List

**PAGE 19** NEMEON 2-Step Members

**PAGE 20** NEMEON Preferred Vendor List

**PAGE 21** New Preferred Vendors for 2024

**PAGE 22** Aquire 4 Hire



**NEMEON**  
Team Members

2136 Ford Parkway #8074  
St. Paul, MN 55116

Phone: 651-788-7810  
[www.NEMEON.com](http://www.NEMEON.com)



*President CEO*  
Dave O'Donnell  
ddonnell@NEMEON.com  
Cell: 843-901-0467



*Vice President*  
Vic Anthony  
vanthony@NEMEON.com  
Cell: 973-897-6033



*Member Benefits Director*  
Scott Snowball  
ssnowball@NEMEON.com  
651-229-6454



*Controller*  
Mary Haupt  
mhaupt@NEMEON.com  
651-788-7812



*MBR Services/Marketing*  
Andi Voelker  
avoelker@NEMEON.com  
651-229-6455



*IT Manager*  
John Reynolds  
jreynolds@NEMEON.com  
651-788-7814



*Administrative Assistant*  
Kelli Redington  
admin@NEMEON.com  
651-788-7810

As we reflect on the achievements of 2023, it is essential to set our sights on the horizon and prepare for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. In an industry as dynamic as ours, staying proactive is key, especially considering the potential shifts in the market.

Before delving into the future, let's take a moment to celebrate our successes. The past year has been marked by growth, resilience, and the unwavering commitment of each member of the NEMEON family. We've navigated a buoyant market with skill and determination, establishing ourselves as leaders in the respective markets. However, as seasoned business owners, we know that markets are prone to fluctuation. While we have enjoyed a prosperous period, it's crucial to acknowledge the signs that suggest a potential shift in the winds. Economic indicators, industry reports, and customer feedback should be closely monitored to detect early signals of market changes.

In the face of a potentially declining market in 2024, diversification becomes our shield. Exploring new product lines, services, or untapped markets can protect our business against economic downturns. Consider expanding into product categories that are related to your offerings, or targeting emerging markets where demand might be on the rise.

Our customers are the lifeblood of our business, and maintaining strong relationships is paramount. Engage with your clients, seeking feedback and understanding their evolving needs. Offering personalized solutions and excellent customer service will not only retain existing customers but also attract new ones through positive word-of-mouth.

## Reflecting Back and Looking Ahead

The roofing industry is evolving, with technological advancements playing a significant role. Embrace digital tools that enhance efficiency, streamline operations, and provide valuable insights. Keep a keen eye on this as there are new advancements almost daily.

The business landscape is ever-changing, and staying informed is a continuous process. Attend NEMEON meetings, stay updated by participating in our conference calls, and keep an eye on competitors. Adaptability is a key strength of the independent, be ready to pivot your strategies based on emerging trends and market dynamics.

As we head into 2024, let us approach it with the same enthusiasm and determination that brought us success. By proactively addressing potential challenges and embracing new opportunities, NEMEON members will not only weather any storm but continue to thrive and lead the industry.



## Unleashing the Power of AI: A Journey into the Future

### What is AI in simple terms:

In this newsletter, we'll explore the latest developments in AI and their implications for the future. Artificial Intelligence refers to developing computer systems that perform tasks that typically require human intelligence and interaction. This includes learning from a given data set, like sales of material; recognizing patterns such as when materials are needed the most; helping to make marketing decisions and solving problems. AI systems use algorithms and data to simulate human-like thinking and decision-making processes. AI has many applications already in use, from virtual assistants like Siri and Alexa to self-driving cars, and it continues to advance rapidly, reshaping many industries and various aspects of our lives.

Melissa Dunson from Tamko recently shared in our podcast how they leverage artificial intelligence and are implementing it in all their departments. In Podcast #18 *Tamko AI*, Melissa talks how not only Tamko, but businesses worldwide are leveraging AI to improve operations and customer experiences. Chatbots and virtual assistants improve customer service by quickly and accurately responding to questions. Machine learning looks at large databases to find trends, allowing for better decision-making. The creation of images from words helps to design marketing materials and websites. The possibilities are limited only by what you can think of.

### Ethical Considerations:

As AI advances, ethical concerns are at the forefront of most discussions. Issues such as bias in AI algorithms can reflect the creators' biases and prejudices. Privacy is also a massive concern as these systems often rely on large amounts of personal data to function, which raises questions about how this data is collected, stored, and used. Many people worry about job loss and replacement, as was demonstrated by the SAG strike. It is a concern that images, and material created by AI could replace both actors and writers. The internet is already filled with misinformation created this way, and regulations must be implemented to curb the issue.

### Conclusion:

AI's future is promising, with application growth in nearly every aspect of our lives. AI is reshaping industries and providing innovative solutions to complex problems, from healthcare to education, business, and transportation. However, it is crucial to navigate this path with ethics and responsibility in mind. As we continue to unlock the power of AI, we must ensure that it serves humanity and upholds our values. The journey into the AI-driven future is exciting and filled with potential, and it's up to us to make the most of it. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is becoming an indispensable part of our business and personal lives, reshaping how we live, work, and interact with the world. From chatbots that help provide customer support to creating images from scratch to help you express your ideas, AI is transforming the world, and it continues to be a driving force behind change.



Photo by Tim Stief

Have any technical questions?

Contact John Reynolds at  
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## Benchmarking

One of the more daunting tasks for the independent business owner is comparing their results to similar sized business in the related industry. This information is difficult to come by and the usefulness of the available data is questionable. Targeting areas for improvement in every organization is key to long term success. Benchmarking is a proven solution to these problems. NEMEON now offers benchmarking to the entire membership at no direct cost. Profit Planning Group, a proven leader in the collection and analysis of benchmarking data, will provide these services to NEMEON members.

The process starts when the member completes the confidential online survey provided to NEMEON by Profit Planning Group, with the financial results from the prior year. The member's confidential data is analyzed, and a detailed report is prepared that compares the key operating results in the various categories. The report targets the areas for improvement, along with the areas that are performing well for the submitted reporting period. In addition, the member's data will be anonymously compared to other NEMEON members for the same reporting period. The comparison to like sized businesses in roofing and siding distribution is invaluable. Members that currently use benchmarking report that it is the single most helpful tool they use in the day to day management of their business.

## EDI

The E.D.I. program delivers Preferred Vendor invoices to you electronically. Your company will have its own secure web-based Document Center available to you. This is set up and ready for you to access once you fill out the Member Designated Contact Information form. With your own company document center, you will have on-line access to twenty-four months of invoice history, and you can store, print or view invoices. Not all of the Preferred Vendors are currently in the program; but as vendors join this project, they will discontinue sending you paper invoices and send them electronically only. You will be notified in advance of the participating vendors.

## LionGUARD University

**LionGUARD University** is a training initiative that has proven to be successful in helping NEMEON reach our primary objective of connecting NEMEON Distributor Members with our Preferred Vendors.

The University was launched in February 2013 as a platform to bring cost effective Preferred Vendor Training to our Members. LGU allows Suppliers to post training modules (new products, repair training,

safety training) allowing Member Distributor Salesperson training online 24 hours a day 7 days a week. Each module includes a quiz to ensure students understand and can apply the training on future sales calls. LionGUARD University has turned out to be a very cost-effective training method with no cost to the membership.

**Professional Development:** Added to LionGUARD University in 2017, this resource offers our members a wide variety of courses in Management, Software, Human Resources, etc. These courses are geared for your office, sales and warehouse personal. You can find these courses on the LionGUARD University website.

## NEMEON Network

The NEMEON Cooperative provides its membership with a turnkey, fully administered digital signage program. This is a tool that is used to advertise, highlight products, and educate your customers. Choose from hundreds of content options, including the weather, trivia, headline news, "how-to" videos, and product details and information. The content list is growing every day and currently we have over 400 Preferred Vendor commercials and 22 hours of content available. The Network is fully customizable to your specifications and can be updated by your company on demand. The program will be administered on your behalf from our office. Joining is easy, with little to no out-of-pocket expenses.

## Acquire4Hire

Starting in 2021 NEMEON started offering *both* Members *and* Vendors the add on benefit of a one-stop hiring solution. Acquire 4 Hire is a program that assists in distributing job posts across the web and manages the applicants all in one place. The app offers a full circle solution by providing job posting templates, salary suggestions, then as applicants apply you are able to track the hiring process and customize the workflow all the way to the job offer.

## Savings4Members

Our long-standing relationship has saved Member's thousands of dollars by providing vetted solution partners for the everyday business needs. Their sole purpose is to save your business money by leveraging the tools you use every day to run your business. With over 20 partnerships designed to save you money, it is worth reaching out to see how they can help you. Some examples include credit card processing, fleet fuel cards, financing, office supplies, shipping, uniforms, waste and recycling just to name a few.



Eastern Michigan Distributors Co. was first incorporated in 1954. The main products manufactured and sold at that time were aluminum siding and related metal items. Over the years the concentration evolved to include roofing, lumber, vinyl siding and gutter products.

In the 1970's the current owner and president, Michael J. Lueck, was hired in from the company's CPA firm as the staff accountant. Over the next few years, he grew to have a passion for the industry. In 1979 during a downturn in the economy in Michigan, the company was to be sold and the owners filed for bankruptcy.

Mike took a risk and bought the company from his employers. This was quite a risk for a young man in his 30's with 8 children to feed and not many assets or cash!

After some shifting of vision and a lot of grit and hard work the company changed direction to offer more lumber, roofing (commercial and residential) and related building supplies rather than manufacturing aluminum products.

Mike then made the decision to offer rock salt during the winter months which kept the

company going in the off season. He even sold Christmas trees to the local Detroit neighborhood customers for a season or two in the early 80's.

The early 1990's brought on the second generation who are now officers of the company. Jacob Lueck and Diana Geier helped bring the company to where it is today. A successful and vital part of the Detroit and Southeast Michigan building and remodel community!

In 2006, Diana's son, Mark Geier joined the family business as a teen. Mark is now the branch manager of our second location that was opened in 1998. This location is in the City of Southfield which is a suburb of Detroit. This store complements our Detroit store by serving a wide audience of customers and extending our reach throughout all southeast Michigan.

Eastern Michigan Distributors Co. prides itself on being a diverse and open company that takes care of our employees. We offer a full range of benefits including full family medical coverage paid at 100%. This has been very important to us.

We've been able to maintain and thrive each year. Our sales have doubled in the last few years. We thank our employees and loyal customers for this. COVID was a tough time for all. Thankfully we were able to maintain our staff and had a record year in 2020 and 2021 thanks to them.

Our fleet has grown each year as well. Eastern went from 5 trucks in 2010 to 12 in 2023!

We look forward to many more years in business here in Michigan and the Metro Detroit area.

Learn more about our products and services at <https://easternmichdistributors.com>.



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LionGUARD University is your online learning resource. It offers everything from Preferred Vendor education, professional development, and compliance courses. In an effort to complete vendor education opportunities, we have recently added direct access to their education platforms. You will need to create separate logins for each.



Atlas Roofing offers learning opportunities for both Distributors and Contractors. Create an account and start learning.



The GAF Learning Portal offers specific products training and professional development. You are awarded for completing quarterly playlists with top quality NEMEON co-branded items. When registering for an account for the Branch us Nemeon. By using the Nemeon key word, GAF will be able to track your participation in our program.



OCU offers learning opportunities for both Distributors and Contractors. Create an account and start learning

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Carlisle Construction Materials recognizes that continuing education is crucial to advancing and improving the industry. CCM University offers on-demand e-Learning courses that are approved for AIA & IIBEC accreditation and can be taken by industry professionals looking for continuing education. CCM University offers educational courses for Carlisle, Versico and Hunter Panels.

All VELUX products come with easy to read, step by step illustrated installation instructions. PDF version of instructions are also available for download. Click on the logo to link to video resources that help you install your VELUX skylights, roofwindows, sun tunnels and skylight shades.



Karnak offers a Certified Restoration Advisor Training Portal that consists of 16 courses on roof repair and restoration. After completion of the program you will be rewarded with a gift.



## Just Like That..the Roofing Version

The expression “just like that” is showing up all over the place these days. It first caught my eye as the title to Bonnie Raitt’s Grammy Award winning song this year, not the latest version of the Sex and City TV show. I will leave it at that.

It feels like the commercial roofing business has had a “just like that” moment. Three years after the pandemic induced a frenzied nightmare, the bad old days and ways are coming back with a vengeance.

I just looked at the third quarter SPRI market numbers. It was ugly, but not surprising. The race to the bottom had already started “just like that.” Disappointing but again not surprising.

Why does it feel like all the craziness has returned? Did the industry not learn anything? Did anyone notice that building owners are willing to pay more to get and keep their buildings dry

and functioning? Why do we refuse to accept a fair profit for the liabilities manufacturers, distributors and contractors expose themselves to every time a project starts?

Why is more capacity being added when the term long lead time has vanished from the industry? Why have commercial roofing warranties become a pricing football again? Has the life span and serviceability dramatically improved “just like that,” so a lower price is in order? Who makes these decisions?

None of this makes any sense. There are a lot of smart people running these companies. It’s time for them to act that way.

*Vic Anthony*



The NEMEON Team wish you all a wonderful holiday season – warm time with family and friends and peace for the coming year!

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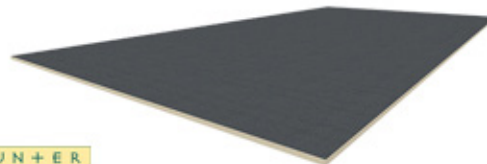
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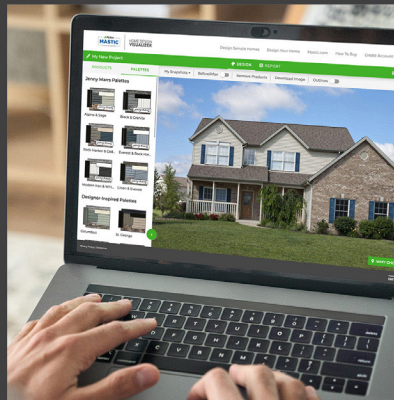
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To learn more about our products, please contact Dan Kozak at [dkozak@qualityedge.com](mailto:dkozak@qualityedge.com) or 630-730-6658.



"The NEMEON Network is a welcome addition to our showroom. Nothing but positive feedback from our vendors and customers thus far. Every NEMEON Member should be a part of the Network!" - Ross Riddle, South Coast Shingle

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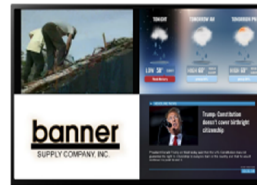


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**NEWS**  
News, sports and home repair channels entertain visitors during showroom wait times.



**WEATHER**  
Informative weather graphs show current radar conditions as well as hourly and daily forecasts



**SPECIALS & UPCOMING EVENTS**  
Sales often spike after suppliers' feature products or advertise new product discounts.



**VIDEOS**  
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## Part of the **Cornerstone Building Brands** Family

The [Ply Gem](#)® brand delivers the industry's most comprehensive portfolio of designed exterior solutions. From the cladding that wraps the home down to the metal, trim and accents that complete it, Ply Gem brands and product lines are expertly engineered to provide seamless compatibility, enduring beauty, proven protection, and peace of mind.

Part of the Ply Gem portfolio of brands, **Mastic**® and **Variform**® are nationally recognized by contractors and builders for their durable, low-maintenance and eye-catching vinyl siding products with industry-leading warranties.

**Mastic** combines premium exterior style with uncompromising performance so building professionals can create homes at the pinnacle of quality, resilience and curb appeal. Leveraging advanced science, innovative engineering and cutting-edge R&D, Mastic siding solutions are designed to stand out—and stand up to mother nature at her worst. Plus, pros get access to more tools, more training, more support and more rewards from a partner who is invested in their success.

With a 50+ year legacy built on trust, **Variform** delivers not only effortless style but also proven performance that stands the test of time. Designed to ensure easy installation and upkeep, Variform products provide peace of mind to professionals, allowing them to aspire to the next level of building excellence with confidence.

Loyal Ply Gem, Mastic and Variform contractors are encouraged to join the [Cornerstone Building Brands Rewards program](#) - built to reward the hard-working contractors who have helped us become the #1 Vinyl Siding manufacturer in North America. Simply register online and submit your invoices to earn points on eligible Ply Gem purchases. Use those points to unlock business building tools and redeem exciting rewards.

Ply Gem, Mastic and Variform are leading brands in the **Cornerstone Building Brands** family of brands.



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 Blackton, Inc.  
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 Britton Lumber Company, LLC  
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 Lakeside Siding Supply  
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 NAPA Builders Supply  
 Northwest Drywall & Roofing Supply  
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 Passaic Metal & Building Supplies  
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 Premium Siding Supply  
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\* SureNail® Technology is available only on Owens Corning Duration® Series Shingles. SureNail® Technology is not a guarantee of performance in all weather conditions. For patent information, please visit [www.owenscorning.com/patents](http://www.owenscorning.com/patents)

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## NEMEON

Preferred Vendor Committee



**Bill Baldauf**  
 LakefrontSupply  
 773-509-0400  
 bbaldauf@lakefrontsupply.com



**Jay Moffit**  
 Dealers Supply Company  
 503-390-5511  
 jay@dealerssupply.com



**Brandon Riddle**  
 South Coast Shingle  
 949-347-7444  
 brandon@southcoastshingle.com



**Alan Hopper**  
 Hopper Roofing & Siding Supply  
 219-696-6621  
 alan@hoppersupply.com



**Gary Murphy, Jr.**  
 American Roofing Supply & Bldg Prod.  
 504-522-8887  
 gwmjr@AmericanRoofingSupply.com



**John Rogan**  
 Passaic Metal & Bldg Supplies Co.  
 973-546-9000  
 jrogan@pampco.com

## New Preferred Vendors for 2024

NEMEON is proud to announce that the Vendor Committee has approved three new preferred Vendors for 2024 and beyond. All three of the vendors, Suppli, Grizzly – ASE, and BlueTape, will be attending the 2024 annual meeting in Bonita Springs, Florida.



Suppli is a software company that gives independent construction material suppliers a turnkey online customer payment and account management experience (think letting customers pay from a mobile-first portal or straight from a text / email paylink) that instantly levels the playing field against the national brands who've invested billions in customer-facing portals / apps.

They also provide a suite of A/R tools that frees up credit departments from manual tasks and increases margins. Suppli is working with top suppliers today including a few NEMEON members. Suppli is based in Austin, TX and backed by some of the top venture capital funds in the country.

Learn more at: [www.gosuppli.com/](http://www.gosuppli.com/)



Specialized in the roofing equipment manufacturing since the 80s, and under the reunified name Grizzly / ASE as a 2022 milestone to recognize our growth in north America, we are now the sole leading manufacturer of roofing equipment in North America to offer 2 complete lines of equipment from hand tool to heavy duty motorized solution including kettles. We're proud to join NEMEON and partner exclusively with US distributors to offer

our complete lines of equipment as well as exclusive lines of high-end products such as Express torches.

Learn more at: [www.grizzlyequip.com/](http://www.grizzlyequip.com/) and [www.asequip.com/](http://www.asequip.com/)



BlueTape is a financing and payment company tailored for the construction industry. Its innovative and easy-to-use solutions have transformed payments in the construction industry. BlueTape offers contractors, builders, and remodelers a quick and hassle-free way to finance their building materials on the go. It also enables building material dealers to automate their AR, streamline their payment system, and offer extended financing options to their trade customers. All loans on the BlueTape platform are originated by CBW Bank, member FDIC.

Learn more at: [www.bluetape.com/](http://www.bluetape.com/)

Please contact any NEMEON team member if you would like to be contacted by one of our new vendors. Check the NEMEON website for program details for each of these 3 new vendors.



## Hiring made easy



Eliminate the hundreds of dollars spent to post on each job board



Solve for scattered emails lost in inboxes



Streamline hiring across locations

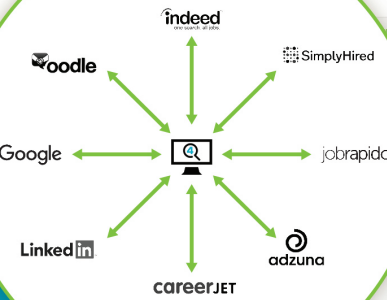
- ✓ **Create job posts in minutes**
  - Recommended job templates and salaries
  - Reference Job Post Library of 1000+ popular posts

- ✓ **Post jobs across the web with a single click**
  - Jobs instantly added to top Job Boards
  - Career Page automatically populated with open jobs

- ✓ **Manage applicants all in one place**
  - Multi-user applicant tracking system
  - Custom hiring workflows
  - Automatic courtesy emails to applicants

A single solution to distribute job posts across the web and manage applicants all in one place

Posted	ID	Title	Location	Views	Submitted	Incoming	Candidates	Status
2		Director of Marketing for New Business Ventures	Manchester, NH	265	24	0	1	Paused 2-11-2018
		Talibanova Cloud Developer	Manchester, NH	152	6	6	0	Paused 9-12-2018
		Senior	Manchester, NH	75	6	0	0	Paused 12-4-2019
			Manchester, NH	212	32	30	1	Paused 4-30-2019
			Manchester, NH	0	0	0	0	Paused 6-14-2019
			Manchester, NH	109	8	0	0	Paused 10-27-2019
			Manchester, NH	1	1	0	0	Paused 10-29-2019
			Manchester, NH	1	0	0	0	Paused 10-29-2019
			Manchester, NH	4	0	0	0	Paused 10-29-2019
			Manchester, NH	0	0	0	0	Paused 10-29-2019
			Manchester, NH	1	0	0	0	Paused 10-29-2019
			Manchester, NH	3	0	0	0	Paused 10-29-2019



For more information and support visit [acquire4hire.com](http://acquire4hire.com)  
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