

# comfort zone

ISSUE 4:VOL 5

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## boosting energy efficiency with variable frequency drives

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, 65% of electrical energy used in commercial and industrial systems comes from electrical motors powering centrifugal pumps and fans.

Because HVAC systems are a large energy consumer, highly efficient systems offer a tremendous opportunity for energy and monetary savings.

Many of these savings can be accomplished through the use of variable frequency drives (VFD). Other than the hottest and coldest days of the year, system motors can operate much more efficiently at reduced capacities and speeds. Systems with variable speed fan motors have the ability to deliver variable air volume (VAV) flows. This allows the airflows to exactly match the system's heating and cooling demands and offers electrical energy savings.

VFDs also contribute to the overall comfort level by regulating air and water flows according to heating or cooling load. Reduced maintenance costs and down times can be realized from soft starting the motors instead of starting the motor at full speed and

drawing locked rotor amperage. VFDs also eliminate short cycling of motors, which will result in longer equipment life. Incorporating VFD technology on a combination of motors (evaporator and condenser fans, compressors, and centrifugal pumps) optimizes cost savings and energy efficiency.


When retrofitting systems with VFDs, payback periods range from one to two years depending on the type, size, and application, which is a very short payback period, considering that most commercial systems have 15–20 year life cycles. Estimates state that motors incorporating VFDs and linked to the building's DDC system are up to 65 to 75% more efficient than motors operating at a constant speed at line voltage.

Ultimately, more efficient HVAC systems create more energy-efficient buildings, which in turn conserves energy resources. ☐☐☐



### the essentials of social networks

Below are a few tips to help you connect to your customers and promote your brand through social networking sites.

- **Include a current head shot.**
- **Develop a short but sweet tagline** that sums up your company.
- **Fill your bio page with details** so customers can form connections with you through similarities.
- **Keep your information updated.**
- **Create a social networking plan.** 

### before delaying maintenance, know the true cost

Deferred maintenance is when maintenance doesn't get performed for a long period of time. But what cost does deferring maintenance really have?

The results of putting off maintenance can range from simple component failure to equipment dying much too soon to the failure of the entire location.

What is your risk when major equipment breaks down or systems fail? It's important to not only look at the estimated value of deferred maintenance but to also focus on the liability it represents. Certain systems impact different areas of your building and you must take wear and tear into consideration, as well as the risk to contents and people in your building. Sometimes deferring maintenance isn't the best solution.


Deferred maintenance is a financial decision—spend money now or spend money later. One goal of the facilities manager is to ensure funding to support regular maintenance and to cover the backlog of deferred maintenance items. Here are some tips to make an effective business case to secure future funding.

- Evaluate the current cost of the maintenance request and compare it to the liability of deferring maintenance.



If you decide to wait until later to perform the work, ensure that this amount is placed in your budget and estimate a cushion for possible replacement.

- Use historical data and determine the long term cost versus the current period spend.
- Estimate the risk potential. As a result of deferring maintenance, will there be a hazard or liability? Will revenue decline because of declining customer experiences? How about employee morale? There are many ways to argue risk; you just need to identify where the potential for risk may impact.

In today's economy, businesses are looking for ways to reduce expenses and hold on to cash. Although deferred maintenance may seem to be an effective way to cut cost, it's actually a cost avoidance tactic that may cost you twice as much down the line. Incorporating an ongoing preventive maintenance program with a trusted provider is one of the most efficient and effective ways to reduce expenses. Partnering with a company that understands your needs and has the ability to work strategically with you, will yield desired results every time. 

### employee spotlight

**Name:** Kevin Kisala

**Position:** Sales Engineer

**Years at Air Comfort:** 15 years

**Major job responsibilities:** Designing, estimating, selling and project managing

**For me, a perfect day at work is:** Having lots of sales, projects to bid, and projects to manage!

**The best part about my job is:** Not being stuck behind a desk all day; no two days are ever the same. I love interacting with customers.

**Education:** BS—Mechanical Engineering (Purdue)

**Certifications:** Licensed Professional Engineer and LEED AP

**Family:** Hot wife—Kami; sons Keegan (9) & Tyler (8); daughters Gracie (5) & McKenna (2)

**If I could do it all over again, I would:** Not let the unimportant, trivial parts of life trouble me

**Three words that best describe me:** Honest, sincere, dependable

**If a movie was made about my life, the title would be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ would star in it:** Parenthood, Steve Martin

**Favorite band:** Black Eyed Peas 

### leed q & a

Kevin Kisala, PE, LEED AP Sales Engineer



**Q:** The accreditation allows you to do what?

**A:** Gain a greater understanding of the rating system.


**Q:** What parts of a building are involved in the LEED certification process?

**A:** You name it—HVAC, domestic water, storm water, irrigation systems, lighting, paints and coatings, carpeting, and almost all building material system controls.


**Q:** Why is LEED certification important to building owners?

**A:** Benefits like tax rebates and zoning allowances, lower operating costs, increased asset value, energy and water conservation, a healthier environment for the occupants, and reduction in greenhouse gas emissions.

**Q:** How does having three LEED accredited professionals benefit Air Comfort customers?

**A:** As LEED APs we are familiar with the rating system and the HVAC credits available. We can assist in gathering and documenting the data required to obtain these credits. Building owners are eligible for one credit simply for having a LEED AP on their project, so we literally bring one credit with us on day one. 

### air comfort history

Air Comfort began in the back room of Ed Wheeler Publishing, then moved to a larger space at 1307 Michigan Ave, which gave us a huge presence in downtown Chicago for almost a decade. It was during this time that Air Comfort's character was developed through excellence, value, and performance. Shareholders who saw the opportunities contributed, as did customers who saw the advantages of air conditioning, and finally the employees who rose to the challenges. 





## THE UNIFIED GROUP

together we make the difference

We are an independent association of the country's elite HVAC commercial contractors. We help our members increase productivity, profitability and customer retention, and we also provide a network for national and regional customer business solutions. Visit us at [www.theunifiedgroup.com](http://www.theunifiedgroup.com).

### blaster's trivia—winter 2010

1. Name the two teams in the 1935 World Series.
2. Who was the manager of the 1935 Chicago Cubs?
3. Name the Governor of Illinois in 1935.
4. Name the University of Chicago football player who won the Heisman Trophy in 1935.
5. The New York Giants lost to this team in the 1935 NFL Championship game.

If you know the answers to all five questions, contact Carol at 708.345.1900 x292 or email [williamsc@aircomfort.com](mailto:williamsc@aircomfort.com). 

Air Comfort is a full-service HVAC provider specializing in design and installation of new equipment, retrofits of existing systems, and emergency service.

**Air Comfort**

[aircomfort.com](http://aircomfort.com)

2550 Braga Drive  
Broadview, Illinois  
60155  
p 708.345.1900  
f 708.345.2730