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Caine & Weiner Plugged In to Conference Circuit



Caine & Weiner values the relationships we have with our clients, and is always eager for the chance for face-to-face networking at local, regional and international conferences. Here are some of the fall conferences in which Caine & Weiner is participating:

NACM Connect: Caine & Weiner is an exclusive alliance partner of the NACM Connect Family of Companies — affiliates of the National Association of Credit Management, and is proud to have a presence at their regional conferences. We hosted a booth at the Super Credit Bowl conferences in St. Louis Sept. 19-20 and Chicago Oct. 17-18.



St. Louis: Right, Caine & Weiner's Frank Dispensa (left), Terri Cramer (3rd from right) and Brad Robinson (2nd from right), along with NACM Connect's Rochelle Wilson (2nd from left) and Phil Lattanzio (right), present the Google Home door prize to Jason Mott with MFA Incorporated (3rd from left). Below left, Caine & Weiner's Frank Dispensa (center) led a roundtable discussion on **Collections Best Practices** along with Crescent Parts & Equipment's Staci Cima and Fabick CAT's Chuck Levy.



Right, Caine & Weiner's Brad Robinson led a session on **Negotiation Techniques**.



Congratulations to Larry Lipschutz of French Gerleman Electric Company! He is the winner of the \$25 VISA gift card drawing for completing our survey about Frank and Brad's presentations.



Transportation Revenue Management Group

TRMG: The Transportation Revenue Management Group Conference—RMG members are in the freight transportation industry. Caine & Weiner is proud of the strong relationships it is building with this association.



Congratulations to Lee Pena with Travel Centers of America, winner of the YETI Tumbler door prize, presented by Caine & Weiner's Kenny O'Rear.



Clockwise from left, Kenny O'Rear chats with John Arnold with Travel Centers of America, Jeff Paschal with Premier Trailer Leasing, and Lee Pena, also with Travel Centers of America.



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The Caine & Weiner Team looks forward to seeing everyone at the 2019 NACM Credit Congress!





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Mark Milstein has 20+ years of extensive and diverse collection and BPO experience and is a recognized industry expert, serving on the board of the CU Users Group, and is regularly asked to be a panelist or presenter by clients, industry peers, and vendors.

Mark is one of the country's leaders on The Collector System from Columbia Ultimate Business Systems which is utilized by Caine & Weiner.

As COO, Mark provides the leadership for Caine & Weiner's collection strategy, quality assurance, IT, compliance programs, vendor relationships, and collection management team. Mark has a B.S. degree at the University of California -Santa Barbara and also completed the Coro Foundation's prestigious Public Affairs Fellow program in San Francisco.

Mark can be reached at (818) 251-9375 or mark.milstein@caine-weiner.com

The Technology and Transformation of Commercial Collections

By Mark Milstein, Caine & Weiner Chief Operating Officer



In IACC's April 2018 B2B article, they conducted a Q&A with Mark Milstein, focusing on technology and its use in commercial collection – where it's been, where it stands now and where it's going. <https://www.commercialcollector.com/news/the-technology-transformation-and-commercial-collections>

Q: How far has technology come in recent years with regard to its use in the industry?

Most "long-timers" in the industry may agree that the internet is the biggest technological change in terms of how we conduct business once we all got off working cards and computerized our files. At first, dropping the self-addressed stamped envelope mailed requests, microfiche machines, thermal faxes and Haines books, in favor of simple access to email and online records, was amazing. But now things have taken another jump forward in some very interesting and complex ways. The ubiquitous adoption of smartphones and availability of the web to sell services have blurred all types of lines and created new opportunities and challenges.

Q: What technologies are being used today to make collections easier and to accelerate the process?

Today a company website, Facebook page, Twitter feed or Yelp review might signal that a company has moved or is out of business, for example, long before any digital record hits a formal corporate online record. A walk to find the right Haines book for a nearby search has long since been replaced with simple internet search, which has now advanced even further with Google kindly providing a street view of the business location and its neighbors. These are all exciting advancements that will no doubt continue as the rate of change and technological advancement continue to accelerate in our world.

Q: What challenges have new technologies created for the industry?

On a somewhat more complex note, we find some challenges presented by the convergence of consumer and commercial worlds. More and more people are creating simple companies as a second career, or home-based business, often with little to no effort to separate their personal information from their business activities and perhaps no thought about incorporation or proper business licensing and taxes. As they conduct business they create debts that walk a thinner and thinner line between consumer and commercial obligations. Depending on the type of debts collected, it is now common for agencies to be presented with a variety of choices on whom to skip-trace and contact in our efforts to collect accounts. Those choices can quickly run afoul of rules established to access certain information sources. When the commercial debts are closely tied to individual names, agencies can quickly involve skip tracing efforts that return a large number of consumer-based phone or address leads, for example, but many of those will end of being for different people. How we elect to work those leads can quickly result in confusion and legal demands from non-liable parties that are contacted, for example under the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) legislation.

Q: What's the update on the Sept. 2017 IACC article focusing on the TCPA legislation? <https://bit.ly/2HVdRWj>

While we all have some added hope that ACA's recent court success against the FCC will result in some cleaner TCPA protections, nothing is certain at a national or state level. It would seem that we will need to continue to be vigilant at the state level, as well as legislatures, and public limited companies may look to step into the perceived void left by recent actions by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. *[Editor's Note]* According to a March, 2018 article from JD Supra, LLC, on March 16, 2018, the United States Court of Appeals, in a 3-0 decision, sided with ACC International in its challenge to the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) July 10, 2015, Omnibus Order through which the FCC had sought to expand the reach of the Telephone Consumer Protection Act of 1991. On balance, that decision is a win for business and industry, as it will help curtail class actions brought against legitimate businesses trying to connect with customers.

Q: Do you see any new technologies coming in the near future that will affect the industry?

At least some of the primary providers of industry software solutions as well as ancillary services are pushing hard to meet society's demand for Omni channel communication flexibility and those service offerings will continue to make it easier and less expensive to blend voice, email and texting communication options for our industry.



MISSION/VISION STATEMENT: We enhance cash flow for the global business community through the creative and effective utilization of accounts receivable management systems and innovative solutions.



Making Connections



Caine & Weiner participated in NACM Connect Member Appreciation events in St. Louis, Chicago and Wisconsin.



St. Louis:

Caine & Weiner's Joe Batie and Frank Dispensa attended the St. Louis event at a St. Louis Cardinals game. Pictured from top (left to right) are: Frank Dispensa, NACM Connect's Rochelle Wilson, Brauer Supply's Donna Crouch, and Joe Batie; Frank Dispensa, Tubular Steel's Dave Zahler, and NACM Connect's Phill Lattanzio; Rochelle Wilson, French Gerleman's Larry Lipschutz and Joe Batie.



Chicago: Caine & Weiner's Joe Batie and Frank Dispensa attended the Chicago event at a Chicago Cubs game. Pictured clockwise from below left (left to right) are: Ferguson Enterprises' Erica White, Joe Batie, and NACM Connect's Lillian Novak; Frank Dispensa, Bob O'Brien and Lillian Novak; Bob O'Brien, Frank Dispensa and NACM Connect's Phil Lattanzio.

Wisconsin: Caine & Weiner's Jim McGee and John Pucin attended the Wisconsin event on a Lake Geneva boat cruise. Pictured clockwise from top left (left to right) are: NACM Connect's Nick Pokrifcak and Frank Schetski, Medela's Natalie Woods, and Jim McGee; John Pucin and Uline's Victor Ireland; John Pucin, Thermach's Chuck Schulz, Jim McGee and NACM Connect's Phil Lattanzio



The Biz is Caine & Weiner's quarterly client newsletter.
 Editor: Jennie Hirtzel
 Marketing Manager
 jennie.hirtzel@caine-weiner.com
 (502) 425-3490

In the News: Caine & Weiner visits Gannett

Caine & Weiner's Joe Batie, left, and Frank Dispensa, right, visited with Renee Swatters and Sarah Riggins at the Gannett offices in St. Louis. Gannett has been a Caine & Weiner client since 2004.

Highway to Recoveries

Caine & Weiner's Joe Batie was one of three panelists selected to participate in an interactive lecture at the CLLA Western Region Conference. The topic of the interactive lecture was "The Highway to Recoveries—Collecting & Litigating Transportation Claims." The lecture covered the basics of collecting and litigating a freight claim, including strategies for recoveries, federal and state constructs, necessary documentation, discounted rates, and responses to typical defenses raised by debtors.






Changing Public Perception— One Regulator at a Time

The Institute for Collection Leadership is helping to rebrand the accounts receivable management industry

By Anne Rosso May for ACA International's *Industry News*



ICL Wants Your Input!

ICL wants to hear your story. And they think others should too. Please complete their **Call Volume Survey** about your experience with third-party debt collection. ICL would like to hear from credit managers as well as collection agents and others in the accounts receivable management industry.

CLICK HERE
to share
your truth!



You probably don't want to play a word association game about debt collectors with anyone outside of the accounts receivable management industry right now, and that's exactly what the Institute for Collection Leadership is working to change.

For years, our industry has been tainted by inaccurate characterizations and a fundamental misunderstanding of the modern debt collection process. When ICL was founded in 2015 by a coalition of ACA International members who are all large agency accounts receivable management professionals or affiliate members, the group's mission was simple but momentous: to address the broader strategic challenges of our industry, including presenting a positive, unified message to lawmakers, regulators and the general public, *Collector* magazine editor Anne Rosso May reports in the **September issue**.

ICL began by launching a public relations campaign called Collect the Truth, which featured a website with videos and written testimonials from accounts receivable management professionals and consumers, all speaking in support of the industry, Rosso May reports.

"That was a great starting point," said ICL Chair Lisa Im, CEO and board chair of Performant Financial Corp., "but now the group is ready for a more targeted approach."

In April 2018, ICL signed on with The Herald Group, a public affairs firm based in Washington, D.C., which is working to dispel misperceptions about the accounts receivable management industry and advance a positive narrative to key influencers, including media, regulators, policy experts and lawmakers. The Herald Group's plan for ICL is ambitious, dogged and wide-ranging. It includes a public education campaign that relies on key influencers and thought leaders outside of the industry from some of the nation's leading think tanks to write editorials and blog posts, give interviews and informally advocate for debt collectors, Rosso May reports.

"The whole point is to have third parties say the things we've been saying for years," Im said. "We believe other organizations care intensely about the positive impact of our industry on the economy, on small businesses, on our contribution to great diversity in the workplace. The truth about our important contributions on many sectors of the United States' economy and the American consumer has not been highlighted to regulators and staffers. It's in our best interest to have these third-party partners challenging misperceptions and highlighting the facts about how ICL's members serve a critical role for businesses and consumers."

In addition to working with third-party advocates, ICL and The Herald Group are strengthening relationships with members of the media, including journalists at *Politico*, *American Banker*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Bloomberg* and *The Hill*, to explore opportunities to get our message out on hot topics like reforming the Telephone Consumer Protection Act and illegal robocalls. ICL is also pursuing research projects and producing relevant fact sheets it can use to address broader strategic challenges in the industry, and to help clear up confusion about the industry.

Im said the Collect the Truth website will be updated "to meet the group's evolving focus on legislators and regulators, transforming into a landing page where a broad audience, including people on the Hill, can get information about the debt collection industry and corrections to inaccurate news articles in the mainstream media." It's no small feat to rebrand an entire industry, but Im said ICL members are up to the challenge.

"Addressing serious regulatory challenges that have taken decades to form requires a strategic commitment," Im said. "For example, there's no way we're going to condition an environment that's better suited for our industry in one year. But in two to three years, for instance, we expect there to be a fairly significant understanding of where legislators can go when they see an untruthful article blasting our industry. They can go to our website and understand the process of how the industry really works.

They will know we are exhaustively self-regulated, good for the economy, ensure more people have access to critical lines of credit, and that we represent one of the most diverse workforces across industries."

That may seem like a relatively small step, but Im is confident it will lead to bigger wins down the road.

For more information on ICL, visit www.collectionsleadership.org.

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Recession in 2020?

Published on Cortera blog July 19, 2018
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With a booming U.S. economy, why are some businesses preparing for a recession? As history would tell it, the longer an economic boom lasts, the closer we're getting to a downward spiral. In modern history, a recession has occurred approximately every eight years. It's the economic ebb and flow that simply can't be avoided. With the last recession ending in 2009, economists are saying entering another is not a matter of if, but rather a matter of when. So, what could cause a recession? How might it affect companies? And, how can businesses prepare themselves in advance?

Causes of a Recession: Tariffs put in place by the Trump administration could cause an increase in prices on many goods in the US, causing inflation and increased rates for businesses that will move their way up the supply chain. This has many executives on edge, causing companies to pull back on spending and keep tighter reins on finances. Prices for steel and aluminum are expected to raise for businesses and consumers. All of the uncertainty surrounding trade could affect corporate spending in a big way. Decision makers tighten the limits, which trickles down throughout the economy.

Oil Prices: Today, inflation might be caused by the trade war, which will cause oil prices to spike. Sudden hikes in the price of oil have always affected the nation's economy. For companies, they make transport costs higher, causing cutbacks in orders and shipments. A high price of oil equals a high price of business operations, meaning the price of oil also affects other production and manufacturing. A halt in manufacturing orders such as durable goods trickles down the pipeline, leading to a loss of both quality and quantity.

Effects on Trade Credit Lines: Clearly, a recession would have an impact on trade credit lines and accounts receivable portfolios. Businesses may start paying their providers and suppliers late, with partial payments, or not at all. Delinquent or severely late payments could cause other providers to tighten credit limits or stop extending completely, disrupting cash flow and ultimately supply chain. This cycle could position a business unable to repay its debts, eventually leading to closure or bankruptcy.

What to Do? Economists are making predictions that another recession is inevitable, with some estimating 2020. Cortera recommends lenders to keep a close eye on the companies where credit is extended. Best practice is daily monitoring to identify changes in risk and monthly portfolio reviews to take a deep dive into accounts and identify broader trends. Information with indicators into the financial health of a company will be important, as well as predictive capabilities so you can identify potential for default in time to act.

COMMERCIAL COLLECTOR CERTIFICATION

Congratulations to Caine & Weiner's Graham Funderburk and William Schultz

Having a certified staff increases agency productivity while also providing an effective marketing edge, since clients and potential clients recognize certification as confirmation of both expertise and trustworthiness.

For nearly 50 years, the International Association of Commercial Collectors, Inc. (IACC) has promoted excellence through the training and education of commercial collection professionals. IACC believes that collectors must be knowledgeable about a wide variety of issues for their agency to compete effectively in the challenging commercial collection industry.

The IACC Certified Commercial Collector Course explores the following topics:

- Methods of contacting debtors
- Skiptracing
- Overcoming objections to payment
- Asset location training
- Collection problems and solutions
- Commercial law definitions
- Using a sales approach to collections
- Motivating the debtor to pay
- Various credit instruments

