

# Business Communicator



## Technology Enhances Safety at BakkenLink Pipeline LLC



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# Business Communicator

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**Changes in the way you do business** can come from service provider updates, new technology, a shift in your knowledge, or simply the passage of time. In this issue of *Business Communicator*, we explore all these types of changes and how they can mean positive things for a company.

First, it's time for a changing of the guard here at RTC. Shane Hart is now heading up the Cooperative, and I have stepped into a supportive role until my retirement in June. Because Shane is experienced and dedicated, you can look forward to great things ahead. See more on page 3 in **Change of Duties at RTC**.

On pages 4 and 5, you'll learn how **BakkenLink Pipeline LLC** has enhanced its oil transportation safety processes based on fiber technology from RTC. Safety is a primary concern for this company. It employs a redundant communication system to transmit information about the pipeline, but internet is its first communication choice.

If your company makes solicitation phone calls, you won't want to miss the **Robocall Rules for Businesses** on page 6. You may think you know what's allowed and what's not, but to avoid legal problems, it's better to err on the side of caution.

Finally, Facebook has changed the way it presents information to users, but that doesn't mean you can't still use it as an effective marketing tool. On page 7, learn **7 Tips for Increasing Facebook Engagement**.

As I prepare to leave RTC, I have no doubt that the company remains in good hands. With Shane Hart at the helm, and a terrific group of employees and members, I look forward to hearing great things about RTC for a long time to come.

No matter what changes your business is going through, RTC wants to be part of your success. Don't hesitate to call us any time we can help.

Sincerely,

Royce S. Aslakson  
Outgoing CEO/General Manager



## Change of Duties at RTC

New roles ensure a smooth transition to new leadership



Royce Aslakson



Shane Hart

Two RTC executives, CEO/General Manager Royce Aslakson and Assistant General Manager Shane Hart, are changing roles to ensure a smooth transition in leadership. As of January 1, 2015, Shane is heading up the Cooperative and Royce has moved into a support position until his retirement, planned for June 1, 2015.

### Dedication and Experience

Shane has been in several positions during his 17 years at RTC. He started at RTC in 1998 as an Accountant and was promoted in 2001 to Office Manager. He became Human Resources Manager in 2007 and was then promoted to Assistant General Manager in 2009.

In his new role, Shane will continue to perform duties related to company oversight, but with more authority and responsibility. Co-op members should note that Shane is now the main point of contact for RTC.

**Shane will do a great job leading RTC into the future.”**

— ROYCE ASLAKSON, OUTGOING CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

Royce’s current role is supporting Shane while he transitions into his new position. His 28 years of experience at RTC bring tremendous value to what he can offer in this role. Royce started at RTC in 1987 as an Office Manager Trainee; in 1988, he became an Office Manager. He was promoted to Assistant General Manager in 1998 and became

General Manager in 2001. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) was added to the General Manager title in 2004.

Royce advises Hart, “Always stay in touch with RTC co-op members, so you know their wants and needs.”

### Mutual Appreciation

Royce says, “RTC has been a great place to work, and the time has come to turn over the reins to a younger mind.” He is looking forward to his retirement, so he can spend more time with family, especially his grandkids.

**“I thank Royce for his leadership of RTC, his mentorship of me, and his friendship to all.”**

— SHANE HART, NEW CEO/GENERAL MANAGER

Shane echoes Royce’s sentiments, saying, “RTC has been, and continues to be, a great place to work.” He adds, “I thank Royce for his leadership of RTC, his mentorship of me, and his friendship to all. It has truly been a pleasure to work for Royce and I wish him the best in his retirement.” Shane is excited and grateful for the opportunity to fill his new position. He says, “I look forward to working with the RTC Board of Directors and the entire RTC membership.”

Royce adds, “Shane will do a great job leading RTC into the future. My best wishes to him and the Board, Management, and Staff as they support the technologies of the future.”

# BakkenLink Pipeline LLC

Partnering with customers to safely transport crude oil



**B**akkenLink Pipeline started in 2012 to develop a project that had been in the works for several years. The project involved building an oil pipeline from the Beaver Lodge area to link with the Keystone XL Pipeline. When the Keystone XL project was put on hold, the new pipeline was built in a similar location — through the heart of the Bakken oil field with an outlet going to a rail terminal where crude oil is shipped via rail to various markets.

Since then, the company has taken on additional customers and expanded its pipeline further to the north. Vice President of Operations Darren Snow explains, “Our pipeline system is used by numerous oil companies to transport between 60,000 and 70,000 barrels of oil per day.”

## Superior Customer Service

To keep this operation running, BakkenLink Pipeline employs 27 people in North Dakota with an operations office in Mandan and a field office in Fryburg. The company’s headquarters is in Houston, Texas. Snow notes, “As a small company, we’re a tight-knit group that focuses on superior customer service, which means doing what we say we’ll do, working safely, and being transparent with customers.”

Customers respond to this focus. Snow says, “They view us as a partner because the transportation piece is critical to their businesses. We help them get their product to market, and they know they can count on us for that part of their operations. Our employees will work long hours, nights, and weekends — whatever it takes to make sure we deliver on what we promise. We do have competition,

and we believe going above and beyond is what makes our customers choose us. We’ve demonstrated that we’re willing to put forth that effort.”

The recent fluctuations in oil prices are a concern to everyone in the oil industry, notes Snow. “However,” he says, “we have solid customers, and we perform a necessary part of getting crude oil to market safely and efficiently.”

## Monitoring is Key

To ensure BakkenLink Pipeline can monitor its pipeline, RTC provides fiber, phone, internet, and point-to-point Ethernet services. The company runs leak detection software that is constantly taking data from transmitters on the pipeline and sending pressure, flow, and temperature readings back through its data system to its operation center. DOT-qualified control room operators analyze the data 24/7/365, so they always know in real time if there’s a problem. Snow comments, “The fiber gives us the means to transmit data back and forth from those points. It’s a fast, safe, efficient way to transfer data.”

Snow adds, “We use several redundant services as part of our communication strategy to ensure safe and reliable pipeline operations. If one service goes down, we switch to another so we don’t miss a beat in monitoring our pipeline. Fiber is our preferred method but we have other options we can use. In addition, the communications services allow us to provide information to our customers, which helps them make more informed business decisions.”

## Fiber Services from RTC

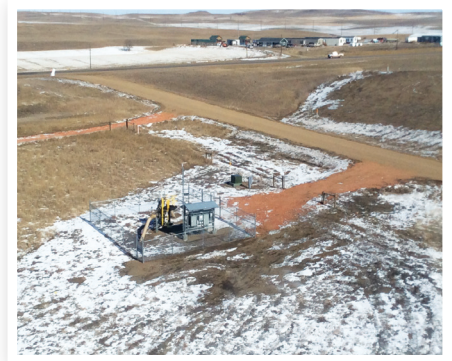
Because communications are so critical, downtime can be disruptive. But, says Snow, “RTC has been great at responding to any types of service interruptions. In addition, they’ve been very upfront with us regarding challenges in getting service to the sites where we need it. We understand the volume of service they must provide in this region. Everyone is crazy busy, so we appreciate that they can let us know what to expect.”

RTC Operations Manager Books Goodall comments, “BakkenLink does a great job of monitoring their pipeline network with fiber optic services to minimize accidents. Unfortunately, some companies have unreliable connections and monitoring, so leaks or spills can go for days before someone notices.”

BakkenLink Pipeline is a good example of the new businesses that have appeared in RTC’s territory due to the oil boom. Goodall says, “We work well together and we’re able to provide fiber to their facilities, often in remote locations. Many people are shocked that we can do this, but it enables us to serve areas and customers that wouldn’t otherwise have fiber access.”



*The BakkenLink receipt point terminal (above) and mainline valve location (below) are served by fiber.*

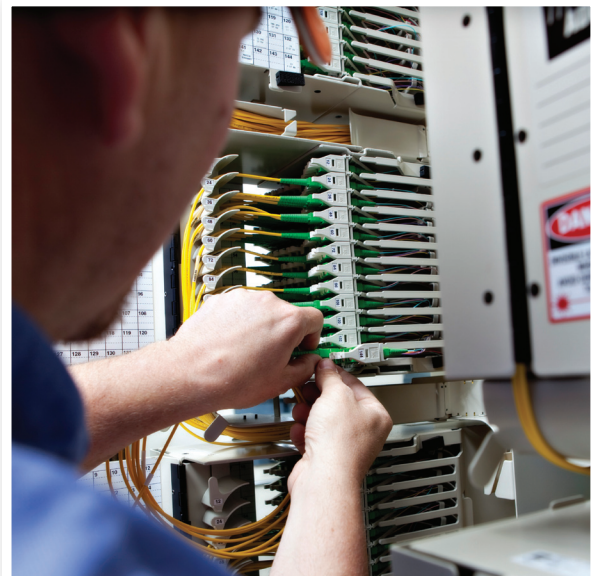


**The communications services allow us to provide information to our customers, which helps them make more informed business decisions.”**

— DARREN SNOW, VICE PRESIDENT, BAKKENLINK PIPELINE LLC



*RTC prepares to place fiber in the ground to connect customers such as BakkenLink Pipeline.*



*An RTC employee works on a fiber connection in one of our central offices.*

# Robocall Rules

## for Businesses

Myths and facts to help you obey the law



**I**f your company makes solicitation phone calls, you may not be aware of all the rules. Here are just a few myths and facts to help you get it all straight.

**Myth:** It's okay to use technology to make calls automatically.

**Fact:** Yes, but you are required to connect the consumer to a sales representative within two minutes. If one isn't available, you must play a recorded message telling the consumer who you are and the number you're calling from. You must also provide a way to opt out.

**Myth:** It's okay to call a customer with whom my company has an established relationship.

**Fact:** You may call for up to 18 months after the consumer's last purchase, delivery, or payment, unless they ask you not to call again.

**Myth:** My organization is a nonprofit, so it's okay for me to make solicitation calls.

**Fact:** That is true, with some caveats. You are not required to use the main Do Not Call list, but you should maintain an in-house one as a courtesy. If you use a for-profit marketer to make calls, you must maintain an in-house Do Not Call list.

For more information about the FTC's rules, visit [ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/qa-telemarketers-sellers-about-dnc-provisions-tsr](http://ftc.gov/tips-advice/business-center/guidance/qa-telemarketers-sellers-about-dnc-provisions-tsr).

## DO NOT CALL SOLICITOR NOTIFICATION

RTC is required to post the following notice per the Do Not Call Registry:

*As a part of the requirements of the Do Not Call Registry, which was established by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and Federal Trade Commission (FTC), RTC must notify businesses of the national Do Not Call rules and regulations. We recognize that few of our customers use our services for*

*telemarketing; however, because we do not have records indicating which customers may do telemarketing, we are sending this notice to all business customers.*

*If you are a company, individual, or other entity that makes telemarketing calls, it is very important that you familiarize yourself with the operations of the national Do Not Call Registry and the rules requiring checking of the national registry as part of making telemarketing calls. Unless you fall under one of the exceptions established in the FCC/FTC rules (such as the exception for telemarketing by charitable*

*organizations or for prior business relationships), you may not make telemarketing calls to numbers included in the national Do Not Call Registry. Before you rely on one of the exceptions, you should consult the rules.*

*For information about the regulations, visit the national Do Not Call Registry at [www.donotcall.gov](http://www.donotcall.gov). The FCC and FTC rules governing telemarketing and telephone solicitation can be found in 47 C.F.R. § 64.1200 and 16 C.F.R. Part 310, respectively.*



# 7 Tips for Increasing Facebook Engagement

Simple strategies to encourage likes, comments, and shares

Facebook remains a powerful way to keep fans informed of new products, give them a convenient way to contact you, increase loyalty, and provide an easy format for fans to share information about you with friends.

The key to Facebook success for companies has always been engagement— attracting fans and providing ways for them to interact with your page, your company, and your brand. Some companies do this better than others, and the competition has become even more fierce since Facebook changed its algorithm in ways that mean a declining number of fans even see company posts.

The companies that get the most engagement are those that actively make a point of fostering it, and those who know how to work effectively with the new algorithm. Here are some strategies you can use to increase engagement on your company's Facebook Page:

## 1. Post information related to your brand.

Consider the example of a bookstore. It will be more likely to get a response when it posts items related to books (such as authors' birthdays, book quotes, or publication news) than when it posts generic comments such as, "TGIF"

## 2. Post questions and invite followers to respond.

The bookstore could post something like, "What's your favorite book to cool off with?" on a hot summer day.

## 3. Use media beyond just text.

Photos, videos, and links, in that order, get the most responses.

## 4. Post exclusive content.

Make your page worth visiting by posting information fans won't find anywhere else. This could include advance notice about sales, special discounts, or contests that could win fans a prize.

## 5. Post regularly.

Once or twice a day was a good posting schedule before the new algorithm kicked in. Now, it might make sense to post more frequently.

## 6. Take advantage of personal accounts.

Facebook's new algorithm favors personal account post over business page posts. Fortunately, your company is made up of people with personal accounts! Ask them to post your company's content to get it exposed to as many people as possible.

## 7. Post more frequently during heavy Facebook usage times.

People tend to use Facebook more on weekends and toward the beginning and end of the week, as well as between 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

Finally, consider paying for Facebook advertising. While free Facebook was fun while it lasted, the reality is that this still-popular social media service has changed. You can essentially set your own price, and the amount you'll pay will depend on a number of factors. Facebook provides detailed information to help you choose.



# Like and **Learn**

Like RTC's Facebook page  
and learn all kinds of  
valuable information:

- RTC announcements, promotions, and events
- Upcoming activities
- Warnings of internet or phone scams
- *Business Communicator* highlights

Stop by [www.facebook.com/RTC.Voice.Data.Video](http://www.facebook.com/RTC.Voice.Data.Video)

